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Nigerians face hard times as inflation hits all

IN Nigeria where prices are rising at the fastest rate in 18 years, the rich are also crying.

Several Nigerians considered rich are struggling almost as much as the country's poor as rampant inflation affects every class of Nigerians from those earning

multiple figures to those living on two dollars a day.

"I have to cough up N41 million every 90 days to pay school fees for my three children in the UK," an affluent Nigerian who did not want to be named said. "I have sold my house in London just to meet up with the bill," the

person told our source.

The same fees were about N20 million last year but the devaluation of the naira last June, which paved the way for a more than 40 percent slide in the currency in the more accessible parallel market, has left parents with children schooling abroad

scampering for extra cash.

The naira devaluation is not the only factor driving fees higher. The cost of private education in the UK is increasing at its fastest rate in over a decade. Fees have increased by an average 5.6 percent this year, compared with a 4.1 percent increase in 2020

and only 1.1 percent in 2021, according to a 2023 census of the Independent School Council's (ISC) 1,395 member schools.

Beyond education, healthcare is another area where the affluent are feeling the pinch. Medical treatments that were once considered routine and

affordable have now become significantly more expensive. This increase is partly due to the higher costs of medical equipment and drugs, most of which are imported and now cost more due to the weakened currency.

Some drugs have risen by

Continued to page 1

Tinubu charges military on non-partisanship, pledges support

PRESIDENT Bola Ahmed Tinubu has charged the Armed Forces of Nigeria to remain non-partisan, but vigilant in upholding democratic principles.

Tinubu made the call on Monday when he visited Maiduguri, the capital of Borno State to commission electric buses procured by the State government as part of measures to

cushion the effects of fuel Subsidy removal.

He promised to provide the necessary support for the military to keep the troublers of the nation at bay.

The President declared that he will win the battle to keep Nigeria safe.

President Tinubu, who acknowledged the Army's commitment to national security, emphasized their

role as a guardian of constitutional order during elections.

He said: "The professional conduct of the Armed Forces during the elections in Bayelsa, Imo and Kogi states underscores your role as a guardian of our constitutional order and democracy precepts. In this regard, the Nigerian Army must remain

completely non-partisan, but vigilantly pro-democracy.

"We also note with great satisfaction the many civilian-military projects across the country, some of which will be commissioned during this Conference.

"These projects not only bring the military and civilian population into closer affinity and mutual

understanding, they also serve the practical purpose of tangibly improving the living conditions of the people."

Citing the recent procurement of new aircraft as a testament of his resolve to upgrade national defence capability, President Tinubu reiterated his administration's commitment to advancing the modernization of the

military, with a focus on improving mobility, communications, and offensive striking capabilities.

The President expressing the nation's gratitude for the service and sacrifice of the Armed Forces, recalling his earlier approval of N18 billion in Group Life Assurance benefits for families of fallen heroes.

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Governor Mutfwang harps on fostering peace, unity

By PETER TITLE

GOVERNOR Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang, of Plateau State has reaffirmed his commitment in fostering peace and unity, aimed at elevating God's righteousness in the state.

Declaring this during a Sunday church service held at the Church Of Christ in Nations(COCIN), LCC Nyanya, the Governor



Continued to page 1 Tinubu visits Maiduguri, grieves over Kaduna bomb victims at Shehu's Palace

News

Tinubu charges military on non-partisanship, pledges support

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He also pledged government support for the welfare of serving personnel and their families.

The Minister of Defence, Abubakar Badaru, said the President's new approach to empowering the force and enhancing intra-military collaboration has boosted the morale of the Armed Forces.

He said: "Mr. President, you are a man of your word. Your Renewed Hope agenda assured Nigerians of progress in the fight against insecurity. The men of the armed forces are more committed than ever before."

"They see the progress they are recording. They know the damage they are inflicting on our enemies. They have high morale."

Our enemies do not because of your leadership. Thank you, Mr. President," the Minister stated.

Badaru pledged to sustain his support for the military in the provision of infrastructure, assuring that the administration will invest in their operational capabilities.

The Chief of Army Staff, Lieutenant General Taoreed Lagbaja, said the ongoing military operations in different parts of the country had significantly weakened criminal elements and checkmated farmer-herders crises in various parts of the country.

He said: "Notwithstanding these achievements, we know the importance of continuous evaluation and this conference will be instrumental in formulating long-term strategies to bolster our ability to carry out our constitutional responsibility in the year 2024."



Tinubu

Nigerians face hard times as inflation hits all

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1000 percent after the withdrawal of healthcare giant, GSK, from Nigeria, added to already rising prices.

"I bought two packets of Augmentin for N114,000 last week and I still can't believe it," another Nigerian said. The same drug would have cost him less than N12,000 three months ago. "I even had to google it to confirm the seller was not lying," the person said.

For the Nigerian elite, the increasing inflation rate, which hit a record 27.3

percent in October, is not just a number in economic reports; it's a drastic change in their lifestyle and financial planning.

The situation is even more dire for the poorer segments of the Nigerian population.

For them, inflation is not just about adjusting budgets or cutting down on luxuries; it's a matter of survival.

With prices for necessities like food, shelter, and clothing skyrocketing, many are struggling to make ends meet. For those living on as little as two dollars a day, the current economic

situation means having to choose between food and other essential needs.

The cost of staple foods has increased dramatically, pushing many to the brink of hunger. The situation is exacerbated by the fact that many low-income earners are engaged in jobs with little to no protection against inflation, such as casual labor or small-scale farming. As prices rise, their income remains stagnant, eroding their purchasing power and pushing them deeper into poverty.

For Nigerians who can afford to plan towards escaping the cost of living crisis in Nigeria, it is even more difficult. Canada, for instance, a choice destination for many Nigerians seeking to flee the country, has increased the proof of funds required for international students by 100 percent to \$20,000 from \$10,000.

In naira terms, when the devaluation is factored in, it means a Nigerian seeking to go to school in Canada must now have N20 million as opposed to the N7 million that would have been required before June.

What's worse is that the rampant inflation in Nigeria still has legs to run even when other countries are starting to report a slowdown in rates.

When inflation data for November is published on Wednesday, it is likely to reflect another surge as prices continue a steady march to 30 percent by December, as predicted by several economists.

Inflation will continue to rise in early 2024, as a result of market reforms made in June 2023 and ongoing currency volatility on the black market, which handles a sizable share of currency

FG moves to cancel unused oil exploration licences



The Federal Government has disclosed plans to cancel oil exploration licences granted to companies but remain

unused without any exploration activities.

A check on recent data from the Nigerian Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission (NUPRC) reveals that over 60 percent of the 53 prospecting licenses granted to both local and foreign oil companies have lapsed. While 33 have already expired and remain unrenewed, four are said to be entangled in contract disputes.

Although the licenses have not been automatically revoked, the enactment of the Petroleum Industry Act (PIA) in 2021 empowered the NUPRC to assess the technical and financial capabilities of companies holding oil exploration leases.

In this regard, Chief Executive Officer of NUPRC, Gbenga Komolafe, said the regulatory body is no longer inclined to allow companies to retain these leases indefinitely.

Komolafe said only companies possessing both viable technical expertise and financial support would retain their licenses.

"Based on PIA (Petroleum Industry Act), the commission is focused on delivering value for the nation, so only firms that are technically and financially viable will keep their leases," he said, adding that the commission would initiate reviews of these leases, and awards of new leases would be "subject to specific terms and conditions."

Gov. Fintiri swears-in 50 chairmen

FIFTY Chairmen have been sworn in by Governor Ahmadu Umaru Fintiri as the new Chairmen of Development Areas at a ceremony held at the Banquet hall of Government House Yola on Monday.

Represented by his Deputy, Mrs. Kalatepwa Farauta, the governor reminded them that every member is on a rat-race to deliver on the governance collective vision where no one is left behind and nothing is left untouched.

He enjoined them that as administrators they

constitute the government at the grassroots.

Fintiri urged them to create the right image for the state which are poor, as such, they should make themselves available and willing to listen and solve problems at that level.

The governor appealed to council chairmen to accord the Development Areas all the necessary support to deliver on their respective mandate.

"We must ignite in the people a spirit of hard work and a sense of responsibility".



Fintiri

Gov. Mutfwang harps on fostering peace, unity

Continued from page 1

expressed confidence in the unity of Plateau people under his administration, asserting that significant initiatives would commence when the state stands united.

"I trust God that it shall be well with Plateau. Our trust is in the Lord, and as we embark on this journey, we should all pray for unity in the Church, standing on the side of truth, justice, and equity to exalt God's righteousness on the Plateau," he stated.

Governor Mutfwang, who was filled with joy in the presence of God, urged the congregation to remain steadfast in prayer. He thanked the Church for their support, acknowledging that the journey of building a new Plateau is guided by God.

Rev. Ezekiel Mangai, leading a special prayer for the governor, expressed hope for divine intervention over the



Mutfwang

challenges in Plateau and prayed for wisdom and courage for Governor Mutfwang to sustain the positive initiatives he has started in the state.

In a sermon titled, "Inviting the Unseen Guest," Rev. Ishaya Sok drew inspiration from John 2:1-11, highlighting the miracle of turning water into wine by Jesus Christ and emphasized the importance of inviting Christ into marriages for strong and united families.

The governor, accompanied by Senator



Business & Economy

Local food machine production for economic growth

The quest for self-reliance in food production, processing, preservation and packaging can be fully realized when the issue of local fabrication of food machines and equipment is brought to the front burner by relevant policy makers as well as stakeholders and adopted holistically. Nigeria cannot be talking about sustainable revolution in the agric sector if we continue to import sundry food machines, most of which could be produced locally if the enabling environment is provided. AYO OYOZE BAJE writes.

THE advantages are enormous. The technological ingenuity of our local scientists, mechanical engineers, systems designers, food technologists, agric economists and even welders would be put to good use. Thousands of jobs would be created. It would enthrone and sustain the culture of technological acquisition instead of distant dream of the so called technology transfer. No country worth its salt would willy-nilly transfer its money-spinning technological knowhow to another, least of all Nigeria which has refused to use what it has (abundant natural and human resources) to get what it wants (economic stability).

Similarly, we would save scarce foreign exchange and reduce capital flight. Indeed, experts are agreed that if the near comatose Ajaokuta Steel Company which kicked off on July 13, 1979 with a global contract agreement signed between the Federal Government and Messrs Tyajzh -Prom- Export (TPE) of the defunct USSR, had been seen through to its logical conclusion, Nigeria's manufacturing industries would have reached a high level of capacity utilization. By now we would have been making more money by processing our cocoa beans, coffee, cashew nuts, cassava chips and sesame seeds before exporting them. This would strengthen the value chain.

Unfortunately, we still import most of the machines required for virtually all the processes that would enhance food security. Apart from hoes and cutlasses, most machines needed for modern agricultural practices, including tilling of farmland, weeding, sowing, irrigation, crop spraying and harvesting are imported to the detriment of our national economy. For years, the Manufacturing Association of Nigeria (MAN) had asked the Federal Government for the lowering of tariffs for this equipment without focusing on the gains inherent in local production. Yet, the rolling mills, thermal power plant and mechanical repair shops of the Ajaokuta Steel Company would have taken good care of production



of several of these.

On paper, we had policies in this direction. But lack of adequate funding and lack of synergy between the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources and that of Science and Technology, as well as Trade and Investment has led us to a situation whereby we depend on foreign technology to solve our immediate challenges. For instance, PRODA in Enugu meant as an intellectual incubator for our technological leap was frustrated due to lack of funds and sustained political will. As part of its mandate on Engineering Services, the Engineering Division of FIIRO was to meet the needs of research and development work in addition to industries and general public. But most of its noteworthy inventions and innovations are stalled due to inadequate fund injection.

If it had been fully funded as it happens in China, India, the United Kingdom and United States, the various designs and fabrication of Machinery and Equipment (M and E) needed to demonstrate the technical feasibility of

completed Research and Development (R and D) would have been earning reasonable revenue. How many Nigerians know that it is also involved in cutting of various types of gears, machining of spare parts, production of cast components of iron and aluminum materials up to 200 kg weight? Glass blowing, refurbishing of spark plugs, electroplating of metals, metal forming, cropping, aluminum welding, heat treatment and foundry casting all fall within the ambit of its core functions.

Amongst the machines locally fabricated are cabinet tray dryer, extruder, cassava mash mixer, solar dryer and cassava chipping machine. Others are oil filter press, hydraulic press for cassava processing, essential oils distillation plant and groundnut Sheller. Therefore, if the Ajaokuta Steel Company was in full operation the afore-stated would have been mass produced to fast track food processes that are carried out manually at the rural areas.

With the benefit of local technology we now have mechanized cassava flour production, production of fufu,

dry milling of grains and legumes, fruit juice extraction, cassava-wheat flour composite flour bread making and instant pounded yam production. Others are soy-garri production, soy-ogi, soy-dawadawa, starch production, edible mushroom production and bottling and preservation of palm wine.

To maximize the huge potentials in this largely untapped sector of the food industry a lot still has to be done from both the public and private sectors.

The Federal Government should embark on assessing the areas of inventions and innovations from various departments of food science and technology, agriculture, agric engineering and related arms of engineering across the country and their financial implications for mass production. What types of food machines have been invented and fabricated? Who invented or innovated them - individuals, universities or research institutes? Where are they located? What are their uses? Where, if possible can we obtain local raw materials for their production?

In essence, we need to have far-reaching plans of an industrial revolution far beyond Vision 20-2020. We have to itemize the food machines we are currently importing but which we have the capacity for local production. These have to be categorized into the following:

1. Machines for food production.
2. Machines for local food processing.
3. Machines for food preservation.

Truth is, the era of over dependence on foreign technology at the detriment of ours has come and gone. Policy makers would do us a world of good by cashing in on available opportunities by re-organizing our internal processes for increased revenue drive. The food industry is no doubt the easiest means of job creation and we have the human capacity, abundant talents, natural resources and even the money required to galvanize this sleeping giant from its long slumber.



Business & Economy

CAC to delist over 91,000 companies

THE Corporate Affairs Commission is set to delist 91,843 companies for failing to file their annual returns with it.

In a list published on its website, the commission listed 91,843 companies for delisting (2,738 less than the 94,581 it initially published in August). This is still less than the initial 100,000 companies that CAC said it would remove in an earlier announcement.

In July, the Registrar-General and Chief Executive Officer, CAC, Garba Abubakar, revealed that the commission would delete 100,000 registered companies from its database for failing to file an annual return.

He said, "CAC steps up enforcement of 100,000 companies to go off its register for failure to file an annual return."

At the time, Abubakar announced that the commission would send notice of striking off to the affected companies before

embarking on the action as enshrined in section 692 of the CAMA, 2020.

In an update on December 5, CAC said, "Further to its earlier notice of the commencement of striking off the names of Companies from the Register of Companies and published on August 2, 2023, the Commission hereby notifies the General Public that the list of Companies that have failed to comply with the provisions of the Companies and Allied Matters Act 2020, to file up to date annual returns is now ready for publication in accordance with the provisions of Section 692 of the Act.

"Companies who filed complete annual returns in response to the earlier publication are advised to confirm removal from the list of Companies to be struck off. The updated list for publication is available on the Commission's website."

It noted that any company that filed complete annual returns but still has its name on the list should send a mail with evidence of filing to compliance@cac.gov.ng not later within 30 days.

It further stated that it is unlawful for any company whose name has been struck off the register of companies to carry on business unless its name is first restored to the register by an order of the Federal High Court.

It added, "The General Public should note further that the striking off of the name of a Company from the Register of Companies is without prejudice to the powers of the Commission to enforce any liability arising under the Act against the directors of the struck off Company."

THE Central Bank of Nigeria has suspended the processing fees of two per cent and three per cent previously charged on all cash deposits above N500,000 for individuals, and N3m for corporates with immediate effect.

This development followed the lingering cash scarcity that had persisted in different parts of the country.

In a letter signed by its acting Director of Banking Supervision, Dr Adetona Adedeji, it said, "The Central Bank of Nigeria therefore suspends the charging of processing fees of two and three per cent previously charged on all cash deposits above these thresholds with immediate effect."

According to the document, the suspension would remain in effect until

CBN suspends changes on large deposit



Cordoso

April 30, 2024.

The apex bank directed all financial institutions

regulated by it to accept all cash deposits from the public without any charges going forward.

Nationwide darkness looms as national grid collapses again

ABUJA, Lagos and other major of cities in Nigeria have been thrown into darkness following another collapse of the country's national electricity grid.

The Transmission Company of Nigeria (TCN) confirmed this in a statement on Monday.

The nationwide outage occurred in the afternoon, leaving power consumers across the country in total darkness.

According to a statement signed by Ndidi Mbah, TCN's spokesperson, the restoration of the national power grid is already ongoing.

Although Mbah said that

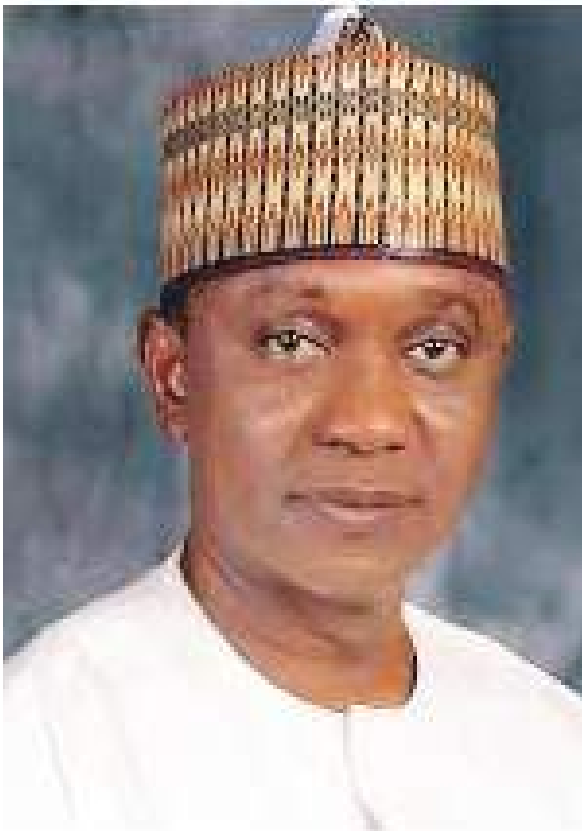


Adebayo

power supply has already been restored in Abuja and a few other areas, but some parts of the capital city are still in darkness as at the time of writing this report.

"Abuja has already been restored, so have different areas. Full restoration ongoing," she said.

Monday's seizure marked the second collapse since mid-September when distribution firms nationwide reported unavailability of bulk electricity from federal infrastructure.



Abubakar

Currency in circulation falls by N1.39trn

THE currency in circulation impact of inflation on the has significantly dropped by purchasing power of N1.39 trillion. According to consumers.

The amount of naira in Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), circulation increased by 141% the currency in circulation fell since February 2023, when the to N1.39 trillion in January country faced a severe cash shortage that sparked protests September 2022.

According to the latest data decline in the amount of cash from the CBN, the currency in circulating in the economy. circulation reached ₦2.76 Analysts attribute this decline trillion in September 2023, up to a number of factors, from ₦982.1 billion in February including the implementation 2023, the lowest level since of the cashless policy, the rise 2016.

The decline in currency in payment channels, and the circulation may also have negative effects on the

economy. For example, it could lead to a reduction in economic activities, as businesses and consumers may have less cash available to spend as witnessed in the past few days.

Although, the CBN has attributed the shortage to large amount withdrawal by Deposit Money Banks (DMB) and panic withdrawal by banks customers, who are not depositing enough cash in return.

The apex bank has insisted that there is enough currency in circulation to meet all demands for this season.

Why BUA cement retailers retain old prices

CONTRARY to expectations by builders and sundry consumers arising from the announcement of a cut in this, chief among which is the ex-factory price of BUA cement to N3,500, retailers are still selling the product at the old market price.

Across major markets in the country, where available, a 50kg bag of

BUA cement is selling for an average price of N5,500. Various reasons have been adduced for this, chief among which is rising transportation costs due to subsidy removal.

The management of BUA Cement had, precisely on October 1, 2023, announced a reduction in the ex-factory price of their product to N3,500 per 50kg per bag, down from N5,500, assuring that the new price would take effect from October 2, 2023.

Two months later, the market is yet to see a reflection of the 'new' price as, according to market watchers and the product retailers, the price has remained unchanged as the old one still prevails.

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Mustapha Umaru, an industry expert and Equity Research Analyst at CSL Stockbrokers Limited, said that the expected price

reduction hasn't been noticeable due to retailers factoring in transportation costs, especially in the light of the subsidy removal.

Other regions, the effect might not have materialized yet due to the limited reach of BUA," Alabi said.

But a BusinessDay market survey reveals that the story isn't any different even in the north. In Abuja, for instance, Monday Okafor, a major distributor in the Nyanya area of the city, told our reporter that the price reduction had not been effected, adding that both BUA and Dangote brands were available but selling at old prices.

Since listing on the exchange, BUA Cement has recorded revenue growth over the past two years. Revenues have grown more than threefold to N361.0 billion in 2022 over the past five years, driven mainly by volume and price growth has a more extensive presence. However, in first half of 2023.

"The impact of the price reduction may be noticeable in northern regions where BUA cement has a more extensive presence. However, in first half of 2023.



Business & Economy

Jubilation as government kick-starts dry season farming

A new dawn beckons for dry season farmers in the country as the government has kick-started the programme meant to run in all the states; ONCE more, the dry season is here. Usually, it comes with heat, dryness, and harmattan. On a general note, it's not the best farming period for farmers except irrigation farming which is practised on a low-scale in Nigeria and largely restricted to areas that do not lack water seasonally. SUNNY IDACHABA writes.

HOWEVER, in line with the need for self-reliance in food production and food security, governments in sub-Saharan Africa, including Nigeria, are devising new methods of ensuring that all year-round, foods of all shades are available to the people. This is borne out of the fact that in many parts of the continent, there are crops that are grown per season, including the dry season period. This is probably the reason the federal government is proactively engaged in the pursuit of dry season farming.

Investigations by this reporter revealed that apart from certain crops like palm trees and assorted fruits that naturally thrive during the dry season, and in particular the harmattan period, there are other crops being deliberately cultured to thrive in the dry season and that is the idea behind the dry season farming.

Therefore, as part of measures to address the food shortage in the country, the federal government flagged off the 2023/2024 dry season farming on November 25, 2023.

According to a statement by the technical adviser on strategy to the minister of agriculture and food security, Kingsley Osadolor, in line with that development, there would be a 50 per cent drop in the price of agricultural inputs, as it plans to distribute a range of agricultural inputs, including seeds, fertilisers, herbicides and pesticides to farmers to boost dry season farming. He said the 2023/2024 dry season farming is expected to take place in all the 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT).

A major aspect of the programme, he said, is the availability of irrigable land where the dry season farming would occur. While highlighting funding for the project, he said, "The 2023/2024 dry season farming would be boosted by an African Development Bank facility and implemented under the National Agricultural Growth Scheme and Agro-Pocket (NAGS-AP) project.

"The implementation is ICT-driven with earlier steps taken to geo-locate farmlands, enumerate, register and cluster no fewer than 250,000 farmers."

Some of the selected crops, according to him, are wheat, rice, maize, sorghum, soybeans, and cassava.

In addition to this, he said wheat farmers across the country had been guaranteed



off-take of their produce by the Flour Millers Association of Nigeria "as soon as the produce is ready."

The Jigawa example

In line with this, Blueprint Weekend gathered that Jigawa state government has planned to engage over 42,000 to 84,000 wheat dry season farmers across its 27 local government areas, with 50% input subsidy in the 2023/2024 Federal Government Wheat Development Programme.

While 150,000 to 250,000 farmers are expected to be supported nationwide, this number can be expanded to 300,000 and 500,000 farmers respectively, if two farmers can share one hectare of the land and make use of it judiciously.

The state government alone has secured 40,000 out of the total 100,000 hectares of land allocated by federal government for the 2023/2024 wheat dry season farming in the country. In actual fact, the state is given 40% of the entire 100% hectares of land proposed for the programme.

Saturday last week was the official flag-off ceremony of the 2023/2024 dry season farming under the National Agricultural Growth Scheme and Agro-Pocket Project (NAGS&AP) held in Kadume, a farming community in Hadejia local government area of the state.

The governor, Malam Umar Namadi, told the wheat farmers in the state to be happy because all they needed

to do "is to work hard to justify the assistance rendered to them by both the state and federal governments to boost the production and increase the yield of their farm inputs."

He said, "It is the attainment of our state and national development objectives of food security, economic diversification and empowerment of the citizens, especially the rural farmers.

"The Wheat Development Programme is an integral part of the Renewed Hope Agenda of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu aimed at accelerating the nation's drive to achieve food security.

"It also perfectly aligns with several aspects of our 12-Point Agenda for Greater Jigawa particularly as it affects food security, economic diversification, job creation, provision of sustainable means of livelihoods for the citizens and overall poverty reduction.

"One of the resolutions under our 12-Point Agenda is to ensure full exploitation of the state's agricultural potentials through all-year round production by bringing more of our Fadama lands under cultivation."

In line with the vision of the scheme in the state, each of the farmers would be provided with input subsidy support granted by the federal government that is equivalent to 50% of the estimated cost of packaged input requirements thereby amounting to about N361,000 per hectare.

The full package, according to further investigations, comprises appropriate mix of fertiliser, inorganic liquid urea, organic fertiliser fortified with booster/growth enhancer, certified wheat seeds and

herbicides.

Each farmer is only expected to pay 12.5% of the total cost of input package equivalent to about N42, 125 per hectare at the point of input collection, the balance of N135, 275 would be recovered after harvest.

In order to provide comfort to the farmers, the state government has worked out an arrangement with Nigeria Incentive-Based Risk Sharing System for Agricultural Lending (NIRSAL) to provide guarantee for the balance of 37.5% of the cost of inputs supplied.

Namadi made the local farmers, both the small and the large scale, to know that the federal and state governments have given topmost priority to the agricultural programme; therefore, all hands must be on deck to ensure its success.

Elaborating

According to Governor Namadi, "Over the years, Jigawa state has successfully pursued an agricultural transformation agenda which has significantly contributed to our nation's quest for food security and economic diversification.

"Today, Jigawa state is a leading producer of rice, sesame and hibiscus among many other crops."

Continuing, he said, "I am happy to mention that the mantra of 'Farming is a Business' pursued over the years has worked well for us where more and more people have embraced farming beyond subsistence level.

"It is a common knowledge that Jigawa state is the heart of wheat production in Nigeria with potential to provide up to 200,000 hectares for wheat production.

"These developments informed the choice of the state as the primary focal state for the Wheat Development Programme."

Partnership with FG

"The Wheat Development Programme partnership with the federal government is in line with our resolve to sustain progress and built on previous achievements of the agricultural transformation agenda. It is in line with our objectives to sustainably improve the socio-economic well-being of our citizens," the governor.

Assurances

The minister of agriculture noted that dry season farming is an integral part of the National Agricultural Growth Scheme and AgroPocket (NAGS-AP) Project made possible by a \$134 million loan facility advanced to Nigeria by the African Development Bank (AfDB).

"In wheat alone, we aim to support between 150,000 and 250,000 farmers with 50% input subsidy to cultivate between 200,000 and 250,000 hectares with an expected yield of 1,250,000 tonnes of wheat.

"Extension, detailing innovative irrigation techniques, promoting water conservation and good agronomic practices (GAP) are also being mainstreamed.

"I would like to point out that we are deploying wheat tolerant heat varieties like Borlaug 100, Attila. We will progressively invest in irrigation infrastructure projects to optimise water usage and mitigate the challenges posed by the dry season farming," the minister said.

Gratitude

Wheat farmers were full of appreciation of the event because each of them was given enough chemical and organic fertilizer, insecticide and other implements including tractors.

Speaking to this newspaper, the farmers said they benefited several times from the government's intervention where farm inputs were provided to each of them at a subsidised rate.

"Although we were benefitting from the fertiliser subsidy and other implements under the state government, but on assumption of office, Governor Namadi made the business easier than it was in the past.

"Now, the farm equipment are accessible at a cheaper rate and all the machines and other inputs the governor promised were truly provided to the true dry season wheat farmers," a wheat farmer, Abdu Naha Hadejia, said.

Others said they were optimistic about having a bumper harvest this year because the state had provided tractors across the 27 local governments to ease the cultivation of land.

Now that the pilot scheme has been done in Jigawa state, everyone is waiting for how other states would queue in, but, according to Pa Isaiah Momoh, a farmer in Kogi state, many state governments would rather dwell on politics and elections because of their selfish interests as against the genuine needs of the people.

Politics

Bauchi Governor endorses appointments of 28 aides

From **ABBAS GUNGURA, Bauchi**

IN his determination to provide and enhance efficient, all inclusive and good governance to the people of Bauchi State, Governor Bala Mohammed, has endorsed the appointment of 21 Senior Special Assistants (SSAs) and seven Special Assistants (SAs).

The appointments were recently signed and made available to journalists in Bauchi through a press statement by Comrade Mukhtar Gidado, who serves as spokesman of the state Governor. He pointed out that all the appointments take immediate effect.

According to the press release, the new appointees are expected to bring their wealth of experience, skills and expertise to the implementation of government policies and programmes that address the needs of the people of Bauchi State.

It further explained that the individuals chosen have demonstrated exemplary dedication to the development of Bauchi, embodying the values and vision of the governor.

"The merit-based appointments underscore the commitment of the governor to fostering transparency, accountability, and good governance, as their appointments will further strengthen the state government's capacity to deliver on its mandate and fulfil its promises to the citizens of the state," he said.

Our correspondent in Bauchi reports that the appointees and their assigned responsibilities are as follows- Abubakar Ladan Yari, SSA, Special Duties; Musa Sulaiman (Mai Poster), SSA, Governor's Office; Al-Ameen Maisule Muhammad Zirami, SSA, Religious Affairs; CP Hermes U. Makama (rtd) appointed as



Bala

SSA to the Governor on Police Affairs; El-Harun Sule Dambam, SSA on ICT; Khalid Garba Barau, SSA, Empowerment; Adamu Abubakar Barde, SSA on ACRESAL project; Bala Saleh (Bala Rambo), SSA Youth, while Lawal Muazu returned as SSA New Media to the Bauchi Governor and Aminu Ahmed Kobi, SSA, Traffic Management.

Others include Magaji L. Zakka, SSA, Christian Religious Affairs; Hafiz Umar Mai-Auduga, SSA, Trade and Artisans; Habiba Umar Alkaleri, SSA, Office of the First Lady; Sulaiman Malami Ahmed, SSA, Protocol; Sani A Mohammed, SSA, Security; Mr. Nasiru Yahuza, SSA, Small & Medium Enterprises; Eric Anyamene, SSA, Strategy and Special Duties; Hassan Grema, SSA, Liaison Affairs; Yahaya Y.M. Baba, SSA, Domestic; while Garba Yusuf Alkaleri appointed as SSA to the Governor on Special Duties and Isaiah Danganana, SSA on Political Affairs.

The seven Special Assistants (SAs) are Bukata Isaiah, SA, Governor's Office, Kabir Abdullah Musa and Mohammed Bappa Aljyu, SAs

on Domestic; Auwal Ahmed Abdullahi, SA on Protocol to the First Lady. While Lawal Toro, Hon. Musa Zango and Joshua Wakari Yewuri will serve as SAs Photography, Transformers and Community Development respectively.

From **John FWAH, Kaduna**

ALL the 109 senators of the Federal Republic of Nigeria have donated their one-month salaries, amounting to N109m to the victims of drone mishap in Tudun Biri, Igabi Local Government Area of Kaduna State.

The Deputy President of the Senate, Senator Barau I. Jibrin, announced this at the Kaduna Government House when he led a high-powered delegation of the Senate to the state recently.

The senators were received by the state governor, Senator Uba Sani.

Senator Barau, in a statement by his Special Adviser Media and Publicity, Ismail Mudashir, said the money would be sent to the state governor for onward delivery to the victims.

The governor thanked the senators for their donation.

The Senate delegation comprising the Senate

Tudun Biri: Senators donate December salaries to victims



Jibrin

leader, Senator Micheal Opayemi Bamidele; the Chief Whip, Senator Ali Ndume; Minority Leader, Senator Abba Moro; Deputy Minority Leader, Senator Kamarudeen Olarere; Senator Abdulhamid Malam-Madori.

Others include Senator

Aliyu Ikra Bilbis; Senator Ibrahim Bomo; Senator Ibrahim Lamido; Senator Abdulaziz Yar'Adua; Senator Victor Umeh; Senator Muntari Dandutse; Senator Lawal Usman; and Senator Emmanuel Udende. They were also at the Barau Dikko Hospital to condole with the victims.

... Reps Northern caucus pledge N350m

By **JOHN FWAH, Kaduna**

THE Northern caucus of the House of Representatives have pledged N350 million for the rebuilding of Tudun Biri community, Igabi Local Government Area of Kaduna State that was recently bombed by a military drone attack.

Speaking on the project, he said it will include blocks of classrooms, a clinic, police post, solar borehole and solar electrification among others.

This was disclosed by the leader of the Northern caucus, Al Hassan Ado Doguwa, when he led members of the caucus on a condolence visit to Kaduna recently.

Doguwa announced that the donation was in addition to the earlier donation of N45 million made to victims by



Doguwa

the Speaker, House of Representatives and the Kaduna State Caucus in the green chamber of the National Assembly.

The former House leader also announced that the three southern caucuses of the House of Representatives

have decided to support the cause with a sum of N30 million.

Doguwa commended the Tinubu-led federal government for promptly reaching out to victims and for taking charge of the victims' welfare.

The caucus further appreciated the government's intention to rebuild the community and pledged to follow up, to ensure appropriate compensations for the victims and the community as promised by the federal government.

Doguwa said the caucus is poised to provide the legal framework for the compensation, and also ensure that families of those that were killed are adequately captured in the compensation scheme.

He appealed to the affected community and the leaders to remain calm and law-abiding while thanking the government and Governor of Kaduna State for keeping to their responsibility of ensuring law and order in the state.

Doguwa said the caucus is pleased with the charitable commitment of the Nigerian military and other security agencies for their patriotic

commitments to combat the upsurge of insurgency, banditry and other criminal activities that plagued some parts of the country.

He decried the various attacks by bandits and other criminal elements, adding that the caucus resolved to a condolence visit to commiserate with the government, the leaders of Tudun Biri community and survivors of the unfortunate incident.

At Barau Dikko Teaching Hospital, where the House members checked the welfare of the injured victims, Doguwa donated N1 million cash to the patients for their upkeep.

In his remarks, the State Governor, Senator Uba Sani urged the lawmakers to ensure that the victims get justice, by ensuring that the incident is investigated, so as to fish out the culprits.

According to him, investigating the incident is the most important thing that should be done by the National Assembly so as to prevent further recurrence of such mishap.

He said, "I am happy we are all on the same page with the President, Vice President and members of the National Assembly on the need for an investigation over the unfortunate incident."

The Governor stressed the need for the National Assembly to look into the laws guiding the operations of the Nigerian security forces, saying that the legislations are obsolete and not in tandem with the current global practices.

He also thanked the lawmakers for their donation, saying the projects to be executed in the community will go a long way in changing the lives of the people

Senator Gyang mourns Hyat

From **DORCAS PANKYES, Abuja**

THE sudden death of Engr. Sunday Hyat, Mni, the immediate past Head of Civil Service, Plateau State, came with utter shock and disbelief, says Senator I. D. Gyang, as the deceased was not known to be under any major health threat.

This was contained in a press statement signed by Barr. Evelyn Pulle, Media Assistant to Senator I. D. Gyang, Esq, and was issued to press men Monday in Abuja

The statement said Senator Gyang, who was a colleague and neighbour to late Hyat for many years, testifies of his amiable, calm, humble, gentlemanly

disposition and one who demonstrated resourcefulness, diligence and excellence in service that saw him rising to the zenith of the civil service as Head of Service, Plateau State.

Hyat's life was one that profited and added immense value to Plateau State, Aten nation, Jiyep Hwolshe community and much more. He shall be greatly missed for his encouraging presence and amazing impact.

Senator Gyang prays to God to comfort Hyat's wife, children, aged mother, siblings, the Atar Aten and Aten nation, GOSA, Jiyep community, and Plateau State over his painful demise.

May God grant the gentle soul of our dear brother and

friend Hyat, eternal rest, Amen!



Politics

Dynamics of power play on the Plateau

The battle for the soul of the number one political seat on the Plateau, the seat of governor, is far from being settled. The recent outcome of the ruling of the court of appeal which sat in Abuja and invalidated the mandate of His Excellency, Governor Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang, is a pointer to this reality. When the governor who was elected under the platform of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) was sworn-in on May 29, 2023 following his declaration as winner of the keenly contested governorship election on March 18, 2023, it was thought, in many quarters, that the battle was over but the current turn of events is saying it is not yet uhuru for the governor yet, AYUBA YILGAK'HA writes.

It will be recalled that after results were collated for the March 18 governorship poll, the Independent Electoral Commission (INEC) through its Returning Officer (RO) and Vice Chancellor, Federal University, Lafia, Professor Idris Amali, declared and returned, Barr. Mutfwang who scored 525,299 as the winner as against the candidate of the All Progressives Congress (APC), Prof. Nentawe Yilwatda Goshwe who scored 481,400 of votes cast.

Not satisfied with the outcome, Professor Nentawe challenged the outcome in what has come to be known as 'water tight petition.' The case was heard and unanimously dismissed for lack of merit by the Plateau State Governorship Election Petition Tribunal (PSGEPT) on Friday, September 22, 2023. Delivering the judgement, the tribunal panel led by Justice. R. Irele-Ifineh held that the petitioner(s), the APC and its candidate, Prof. Nentawe lacked the *locus standi* to contest the party structure of a party they were not part of, either as members or aspirants. It said the issues of party structure/nomination raised by them were pre-election matters which they lacked the *locus standi* to challenge. The tribunal, also, held that the PDP conducted a second unchallenged congress on September 25, 2021, in obedience to the ruling of Justice S.P. Gang of the Jos High Court. Therefore, the APC and its candidate failed to establish its allegation electoral malfeasance.

Not satisfied with the tribunal ruling still, Professor Nentawe Yilwatda quickly filed an appeal at the Appeal Court Tribunal (ACT), Jos Division. The case was indexed and heard but the ruling was reserved for a later date leaving the electorates in treacherous suspense.

On November 18, 2023, a circular from the appeal court conveying the date for ruling on the matter was circulated which reads: "Judgement notice CA/J/EP/PI/GOV/52/2023 Btw: Dr. Nentawe Yilwatda Goshwe All Progressives Congress (APC) and Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) Mutfwang Caleb Manasseh, Peoples Democratic Party (PDP). Take notice the above mentioned Appeal is fixed for judgement on 19th November, 2023 by 12:00 noon at Court Of Appeal, Abuja Dalhatu Mansur."

When the breath taking circular got to the public, particularly in the state, the citizens, particularly, the sympathisers of PDP and APC were anxious about what the outcome will be. This was an extension of the anxiety and cacophony of debates including street protests in Jos and Abuja generated by earlier judgements of the lower tribunal and appeal courts.

Right from the time of electioneering campaigns, the elections and the aftermath of it, a lot of 'water' has gone under the bridge leaving the state literally and unnecessarily polarised along religious and tribal lines. The authority that be in the state and those challenging the legitimacy of it all know that the state is gasping for air of unity amongst all the tribes, religions and the political class of the state.

The much expected judgement day came and considering that the incumbent governor won at the



Mutfwang

tribunal level, there was no one who could predict with absolute certainty the direction the pendulum would swing. Both camps were tensed with merchants of speculation and propaganda having a field day over a ruling they have no iota of control over.

It was in this atmosphere that I composed and posted a piece titled, "In pursuit of a good name". A good name has no alternative: It is all that matters in the lives of noblemen which our judges ought to be, in thick and thin. Preserve yours."

The brief piece was goal specific. It was deliberately aimed at dousing the tension and anxiety that was building in the state. It was, also, targeted at reminding the bench (panel of judges) of their sacred responsibility of dispensing justice without fear or favour, should the reminder gets to them through the promising waves and possibilities of contemporary social media!

It is no news that in recent times, rightly or wrongly, our courts are under heavy crossfire and public scrutiny following the courts' rulings on election matters in recent times. For instance, the ruling that brought Governor Hope Uzodimma of Imo state to power. Recall, also, that a retiring Justice of the Supreme Court, Hon. Justice Dattijo Muhammad, made unsettling criticisms on the court he was retiring from when he revealed that the Chief Justice of Nigeria (CJN) was exercising "absolute powers" and, therefore, the court had become 'something else'. And interestingly, this damaging insinuation came on Friday October 27, 2023, barely a day after the court validated the election of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu.

The hour came and the three panel of judges led by Justice Elphreda Williams-Dawodu delivered the unanimous judgement which invalidated the tribunal judgement that affirmed the victory of incumbent governor, Barr. Caleb Mutfwang and ordered the withdrawal of the Certificate of Return (CoR) earlier issued him by INEC and to re-issue another to the appellants, the APC and its candidate, Professor Nentawe



Yilwatda

Yilwatda.

The main thrust of the appeal by the APC candidate bothers on issue of qualification which his counsels argued was both a pre and post election matter under Section 177 (c) of the Nigerian Constitution, 1999 as well as Section 80 and 82 of the Electoral Act, 2022. This position was countered by the defendant the people's Democratic Party and its candidate, the incumbent governor. However, the court ruled that Mutfwang was not validly sponsored by the PDP as provided by Section 285 (2) of the Nigerian Constitution. Therefore, it concluded that the appeal brought by Professor Nentawe Goshwe of the APC succeeded and thereby granted!

As it stands, the APC and its governorship candidate had lost at the tribunal; the PDP and the governor has also lost at the appeal. This makes the league table scores 1-1 in favour of both sides. With the subsisting ruling, governor Mutfwang and his party only has one extra window of opportunity to challenge the judgement of the appeal court and, from all indications, they will do that. This means there is a pending fight-to-finish legal battle ahead. This, also, implies more tension in the state for both camps, especially, when these anxious supporters concede to the dictate of their emotion and, not the power of their conviction and faith in God who is the ultimate decider!

Plateau State is at the verge of making a unique but not new history should the subsisting appeal judgement scale through at the Supreme Court. The implication will be that governorship elections in the state will be conducted off-season with all its implications. Should the incumbent succeed at upturning the appeal court judgement, on the other hand, it will be the first time intermittent victories and defeats are being witnessed in any governorship legal tussle in the state with all its implications too. Whichever way it goes, Plateau state will never remain the same. Going forward and for every discerning mind, the unfolding events are lessons that will forever remain a school in institutional strengthening

as it affects the courts and/or internal party democracy as it affects our political parties.

The issues at stake have now left the ballot and, are in the domain of the courts where our collective intelligence is limited except you are a member of the bench, especially, judges selected by the respective courts to seat on this matter. Every interested person would have wished to have a say or air his view on the matter but to no avail; our power as electorates end at the ballot. If you are not assigned to be at the bench, whatever you say or do will be of no consequence at this stage.

Should governor Mutfwang and his party scales through the last hurdle, the state will remain green. In the same vein, should professor Nentawe and his party win at the Supreme Court, the state will, equally turn blue. Blue or green are just colours, by the way. Whether the state goes from green to blue or from blue to green, no Plateau citizen has the power to decide anything at this level except the Supreme Court, highest court in the land.

In a democracy, constitutionalism is very critical. In a constitutional democracy, the will of the majority matters but the ruling of the courts which follows, at least, the power of micro majority decision of judges in any matter is binding too. As it stands, the people have spoken at the ballot; the lower tribunal court has spoken; the court of appeal has also, spoken. Let's be patient for the Supreme Court to decide should the matter gets there within 14 days after ruling. Of course, the process of election involves the creation of constituencies; setting up of party structures and membership, nomination of candidates; election and declaration of candidates which could be challenged at the tribunal right up to appeal court or Supreme Court as the case maybe. It is a long administrative and citizenship engagement protocol which requires meticulousness from all stakeholders: The courts, INEC, political parties as well as candidates and, indeed, the electorates!

Because I'm not a bencher under whose hands this matter will be decided and put to rest, it makes no

sense if I take side now. The poll is over and will be a total waste of time if any citizen, in the present circumstance, chooses to take side. However, permit me to draw the attention all parties to the fact that we all need each other. All powers belong to God and He dispenses such powers the way he pleases irrespective of our bias wishes. Interestingly, there is only one governorship seat in the state (one tenure that is subject to renewal through periodic elections). If the development of the state is all that we ever aspire for, then, let us drop all primordial sentiments and join forces together to build the state after the final judgement. We cannot settle for less under any guise!

Whether it is "the Time is Now" or "the Generation Next", does not matter. It is inclusive growth and sustainable development of Plateau which is the essence of politics that matters. After all all these slogans are mere philosophical mantras; it the quality of the leader or leadership that can breath life into them!

In the state, currently, what is being witnessed in all of these cacophonies are nothing but changing dynamics of power play: The intervening role of the courts and their sweet or bitter consequences. While those who lost at the poll or courts of final jurisdiction (appeal) for national and state assembly are already counting their losses, those that scaled through are counting their gains. Whichever side of the divide you belong, understand that politics is a game and the players must cultivate the spirit of sportsmanship. The winners must show maturity and willingness to carry everybody along while the losers gallantly bear the cross of defeat, hoping that there shall be another time to try again. As citizens, we are challenged to pray more for the peace and security of Plateau state. God, they say, rules in the affairs of men. My earnest prayer is for God to bless the state and all those who are determined to work together to build a heritage full of enduring legacies for the corporate benefit of both the present and future generations.

In the state, currently, things are happening in quick succession and, so, it is hard to track and predict any outcome with precision. Even authorities in rational expectations theory could hardly say it certainty; not even prophets, soothsayers and/or magicians. This shows the days ahead will be puzzling and interesting.

As a citizen, my humble counsel to our justices always is to do what makes them worthy arbiters as required by ethics of their profession and worthy brokers of justice as expected by God who elevated them. Together, we are solemnly obligated to seek the corporate peace of the land and, add not to its woes. Only then can we be fit to be called worthy citizens.

In the school of life, never give up on your dreams too soon or celebrate them prematurely. There is so much uncertainty in the scheme of things in Plateau state but, there is high prospect for collective victory too. All things, the scriptures says, work for the good of those who believe in God. Therefore, whatever happens shall end in praise because God is the ultimate authority. He alone is in charge of Plateau State!

IMAGES

GOVERNOR MUTFWANG AT COCIN LCC NYANYA ABUJA

Plateau State Governor, Barr. Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang on Sunday worshiped with brethren at Church of Christ in Nation, Local Church Council (COCIN LCC) Nyanya, Abuja



Governor Mutfwang delivering his goodwill message at the service



Cross section of members of COCIN LCC Nyanya



From left, Sen. Dr. Simon Mwadkon, Hon. Isaac Kyale Kwallu and others that accompanied the Governor



COCIN Women Fellowship during the service



Cross section of worshippers at the service



Some TEKAN Women Fellowship listening keenly



Governor Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang (middle) flanked by Rev. Ezekiel Mangai, leading Pastor of the Church and Rev. Ishaya Tsok with others in a group photograph

PHOTOS: DOPPA'S OFFICE RAYFIELD, JOS



Cross section of COCIN LCC Nyanya members at the service

Politics

Repositioning amalgamated APC support groups

The recent dissolution of the management team of the support groups in the All Progressives Congress, APC, was received with mixed reactions across the APC family. To many, it was a welcome development, citing the prolonged leadership crises that have torn apart the members to justify the dissolution, MUHAMMED IBRAHIM writes.

THE crises erupted shortly before the 2023 general elections, and led to the removal of the groups' Director General, Dr Nasiru Ladan Argungu, from office. The attitude of the typical Nigerian politician quickly manifested, as the ousted DG fought back leading to factionalisation with two camps emerging, one headed by him and the other led by Hajija Dr. Maryam Yunusa Danjaki, who was Ladan's deputy.

Accusations and counter accusations reigned as each camp engaged in smear campaigns, ignoring the negative consequences of their clashes to the party and candidates, who relied on the groups to mobilise votes at the elections. It would seem that APC leadership at the time, under Senator Abdullahi Adamu, was indifferent to the support groups' crises as things turned out.

This indifference was linked to the emergence of Bola Tinubu as the party's presidential flag bearer at the primaries, which was against the wishes of the top leadership of the party, including the presidency, that was actually rooting for its preferred candidate (this was later confirmed by Abdullahi Adamu himself to news men, after he was forced out of office, shortly after the election).

Not keen on getting its own candidate, now President Bola Tinubu, elected, the former leadership under Abdullahi Adamu simply turned a blind eye on the support groups and allowed them to fight dirty. The groups remained in disarray while the elections came, with only a faction, led by Maryam Yunusa Danjaki, securing the rare privilege of having a private audience with Tinubu in his residence in Maitama, Abuja.

At the end of that meeting, Tinubu reportedly ordered that some mobilisation funds be given to the group members to travel across the country to mobilise their members to vote for the party. Shockingly, after securing victory for the party, the support groups received no accolade, nor mention by the party leadership as having contributed to the successful outcomes at the elections.

The new party leadership under its current National Chairman, Abdullahi Umar Ganduje, therefore inherited the crises as one of the legacies of his predecessor. However, he now appears to have been influenced by the briefs given to him by the officials in charge of the support groups directorate, which must have informed the dissolution of the groups management, thus, ending the groups' conflicts of over a year.

The party, in addition to the dissolution, has hinted at the likelihood of conducting elections into all the executive positions in the support groups, and to distribute the positions across



Ganduje

the six geopolitical zones for equity and fair representation. Signals from the national secretariat of the party, show that the office of the next Director General of the support groups will be zoned to the South-west.

This can hardly be faulted given that the former embattled DG and his vice were all from the North-west, and the bulk of the dissolved management positions

were also held by northerners, in complete abnegation of fairness and justice. With the new development, the coast may now be clear for the emergence of a more credible leadership from the South-west that will effectively manage the affairs of the support groups and prepare them for the 2027 general elections.

Prominent among the names

being suggested to lead the new Amalgamated APC Support Groups is Alhaji Salman Akorede, a renowned ICT guru and family member of Alhaja Habibat Mogaji, the late Iyaloja of Nigeria, and mother of Mr President. Sources around the presidency claim that Salman is favoured not only because of his family links with Mr President, but, that, he was instrumental to the formation of Abibat Mogaji Beneficiaries Vanguard (AMBVBAT) and a number of support groups spread across the South-west and other parts of the country that campaigned vigorously for Tinubu.

He was the national director ICT, at the support groups head office in Abuja, as well as the Lagos state coordinator of the Amalgamated Support Groups. He is a well traveled with connections in the political and ICT world, experienced business man and public administrator, all attributes he will bring to bear on the job. It should be expected, rightly, that President Tinubu will not take chances that will allow support groups to fall into the kind of ugly situation witnessed

under the former party leadership.

Against the backdrop of the well known plan for a second term, Mr President will need to get the right handle on the APC support groups to run his re-election campaigns in 2027 seamlessly. Many have the wrong notion that the support groups hold the ace for President Tinubu's re-election, given the threat by the opposition parties that may coalesce into a formidable political force to wrest power from the ruling APC in 2027.

In order to prepare for the epic battle, Mr President will need a trusted and close ally to manage the affairs of the APC support groups, which would be relied upon to provide the needed counter force and buffer against the opposition and other forces within the party, that may be working against the interest of Mr President. This, perhaps may be a pointer to the interest Mr President is reportedly showing in having his trusted person to take charge of the Amalgamated APC Support Groups, as a key strategy for the 2027 reelection bid. Time will tell!

Amb. Dewan's rise to fame

This is an era where young people have the prospect to shine, and this opinion is especially apparent in the sphere of politics, writes BEN OMUSA.

IN the months past, especially after the 2023 General Elections, I wrote an article titled, The Emergence of the Youngest Legislator in Plateau State - Hon. Ambassador Kudangbena Dewan Gabriel, which deliberately was not published. In that article, I wrote about a certain youthful man with a progressive mind, who knows the nuts and bolts of government and familiar with grassroot politics, who became a shocker to his constituents and his political opponents in other political parties, a cultured, learned and God-fearing personality.

Today, that young man, is the Rt. Hon. Speaker of the Plateau State House of Assembly. He emerged as his own political god-father in YPP.

Before I proceed, let me set a reminder of a well-known maxim - 'whom God has blessed, no one can curse.' This is regardless of whatever one thinks of the person.

Rt. Hon. Amb. Chief. Kudangbena Dewan Gabriel's rise to fame did not come to many as a surprise given the political prowess, power, and prestige exhibited since his declaration to represent the good people of Pankshin North in the State House of Assembly during the 2023 election. They are pointers to the fact that the young man would excel progressively in the political stage.

His jet-speed so far in the political pathway would leave one with the thought that he probably may have come into politics using 'kayan mata' or most

appropriately, 'kayan politics. 'Kayan mata is a shallow perception in the society to mean good luck trinkets to get whatever one wishes to acquire in life, but the political gods of politics are in his favour given the fervor that came with his political aspiration. He is gradually climbing the Ladder of Faith; he will accept it as his fate. The Ladder of Faith is tall. And progress is usually gradual, almost imperceptible. You will never know when he has taken the next step toward the top.

Like Gen. Yakubu Gowon's rise to power at an early age, Rt. Hon. Dewan will ride on the political horse back for months. Rt. Hon. Dewan is a kin to the former Head of State Gen. Yakubu Gowon as they share the same ancestral history of same tribe. To say appropriately, the Speaker is the former Head of State's son. Philosophers have put it rightly; 'time can only be replaced by birth.' History was replicated.

Being the second youngest Speaker in the history of our dear country trailing after Rt. Hon. Dimeji Bankole of the 6th National Assembly in the House of Reps, will no doubt impel him to live in promise of his political campaign slogan of 'Service to Humanity.' He will succour on those youths who were given political opportunities, but failed. He started well, he will end well. He is level-headed, a political flatworm, a deft politician, a dark horse and a grandeur, who has the Midas touch to bring about the desired development the State needs.

I laughed when critics asked the



Dewan

question; can Rt. Hon. Dewan be able to ride on the crest and wave into the comfortable bowels and bosoms of the Plateau State political conundrum? The obvious answer is yes.

He was stigmatized by some political actors that he should not have fallen for such political manipulations by power gamblers and grabbers into accepting the position of the number three man in the State. For you to sustain that argument, you have to place a background against the origin of the drama that came with his emergence and the origin is sufficiently in the public domain. It is a fait accompli. He will fight for political justice, political fairness and political rectitude.

Whatever analogy one would come up with pertaining his emerging as the Speaker, let us bear in mind that Rt. Hon. Dewan has ignited an irreversible wave among the Nigerian youth. Our attention and energy should be channeled towards the progress and development of the State and the nation at large. At his prime, he has paid the price for democracy; his primary interest is service to humanity.

In conclusion, on behalf of all well-meaning, and fair minded citizens and youths of Plateau State, who believe in their youthful leader to sail them through to the promised land on the democratic stage, I wish to unveil his 2027 political party campaign slogan; 'Dewan is the One! To the glory of God!

NEWS

IHSOSA elects new national executive committee

From
MUSLIUDEEN ADEBAYO, Ibadan

A new set of National Executive Committee that will pilot the affairs of Islamic High School, Orita Basorun, Ibadan Old Students Association for the next two years has emerged recently.

The election was witnessed by elders in the association, delegates and observers from various sets, as well as the school principal, Alh. Abdullahi Fasasi, who is also an alumnus of the school.

In the peacefully conducted election held at the school premises based on the delegate system, members of the association elected an 8-man executive committee.

The election saw the emergence of a senior lecturer at the Lead City University, Ibadan, Dr. Bayo Busari elected as the national president.

Also elected into the executive committee were Lateef Adesina and Muftau Olaniyi Zubair, who were returned as vice president, and general secretary respectively for a second term of office.

Other members included Omowumi Emmanuel as Assistant General Secretary, Olubisi Abiola Davies Ojo as Public Relations Officer,



Busari

Ismaila Oyebayo Bello as treasurer, Quadri Olorunseun Ishola as financial secretary while Nafisat Yetunde Adejumo was elected welfare officer.

In a short acceptance speech, the new national president expressed his appreciation to the founding fathers of the association and the outgoing Executive Committee for sustaining the course of development for

the school.

He emphasised the pivotal role that old students' associations have played in the education sector of the state.

Busari called on the state government, under the leadership of Engineer. Seyi Makinde to further partner old students' associations.

He said that "government alone can not fund education in the state."

From
ABBAS GUNGURA, Bauchi

THE Centre for Information Technology and Development (CITAD) has called on the government to remove all barriers hindering access to basic education for persons living with disabilities (PLWD) to enable them to achieve their potentials in life.

According to the organization, the barriers or challenges included infrastructure as most schools lack special provisions for persons with disabilities, thereby creating the impression that PLWDs are ignored by their respective state governments.

The CITAD Bauchi Programme Officer, Mr. Mujahid Ibrahim, made the plea in an interview shortly after the conduct of a roundtable by some PLWDs organized at the state office recently in commemoration of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities as part of the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence.

"We had a roundtable discussion on inclusive education with women and girls with disabilities. We have discussed a lot of things with them, a lot of challenges. Of course, our moderator, Mrs. Larai has helped us in identifying the challenges throughout the session", Ibrahim said.

Mujahid Ibrahim noted that some of the challenges are from the government and policy-makers. While some are from parents, and some are

Remove barriers to basic education for PLWDs - CITAD

digital, cumulatively causing barriers that are hindering persons with disability from accessing education, especially basic education.

He explained that hindrance to accessing basic education has shown very dangerous statistics looking up research by UNICEF and other organizations. It disclosed that 15 percent of the people living across the world are persons living with disabilities (PLWDs).

"Among this 15 percent, about 80 - 85 percent of them are persons living with disability who have no access to basic education. Now, looking at this, we consider contributing by inviting some of those persons, especially women, and girls with disabilities, and discussing with them their problems and experiences", Ibrahim said.

The Bauchi CITAD Chief gave the challenges for the PLWDs to access education as infrastructure in which school buildings do not make special provisions for persons with disabilities. He stressed that "It is trying to create an oil impression that PLWDs are ignored by the state."

"They don't care whether those persons have access, whether they can easily access education or not. And there are so many things, including the issue of sensitizing and training the teachers themselves".

"Also, part of the challenges are coming from the parents. As the PLWDs were saying, right from the time they were born, there were negative attitudes of the parents

towards the children and PLWDs, showing them that they were not the same as other kids, in such a way that they don't even deserve to go to schools".

"There is also this issue of stigma even in the school among their peers or the teachers. People even call them names. They are also human beings and are feeling these negativity".

"The other challenge is also that education is quite expensive for most parents to afford. The PLWDs, most of them are coming from families with poor backgrounds. Things seem quite expensive, even for the government to purchase such resources like brailing documents and other special facilities for teaching".

"There is this issue of segregating them to a low level. Let's have an inclusive environment where both those with disability and those without disability are merged in same classes and taught together so that we can address this issue of stigmatization and name calling to be addressed", Mujahid explained.

Malam Mujahid Ibrahim then advocated for the government's efforts directed at using existing policies that promote inclusiveness.

Unfortunately, the policies were not being implemented and called for the policies implementation, such as social inclusion policy and other policies that have to do with education.

Bello Presents N258.2B budget for 2024

From
AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

GOVERNOR Yahaya Bello of Kogi State recently presented N258,278,501,339.00 Appropriation Bill for 2024 before the Kogi State House of Assembly for approval.

The 2024 proposed budget of N258,278,501,339.00 is a gain against N197,599,674,912.00 revised approved budget for the year 2023.

Tagged budget of consolidation and continuity for inclusive growth,

Governor Bello disclosed that this makes the 2024 draft budget higher by N60,678,826,427.00 compared to the 2023 revised budget, representing a 30.71% increase.

"This total budget outlay is divided into recurrent expenditure of N145,736,429,609.00 representing 56.43% and

capital expenditure of N112,542,071,730.00 representing 43.57%".

"The year 2024 draft budget has been drafted to enhance Internally Generated Revenue, aggressive pursuance of repayment of debt owed to us by the Federal Government, provide more conducive environment for our development partners across the world to contribute to the state economy; mobilize private sector investments to the state; encourage Public-Private Partnership (PPP). And more importantly, block all wastages and leakages in our revenues as well as emphasize the completion of all ongoing projects/programmes while bringing on board, few new critical ones that are in line with the priorities of the New Direction Administration" he stated.

Bello added that some of the

critical areas of the state economy that the 2024 budget will focus on, includes good governance and leadership, infrastructural development and maintenance, education and human development, improved health care and social welfare, agriculture and rural development, security and peace building, women empowerment and gender equality.

Other critical areas the 2024 budget will be focusing on, according to Governor Bello, are environment and sustainable development, industry and commerce, information and communication technology and innovation, youth empowerment and sport development, entertainment, culture and tourism development, housing, enhanced internally generated revenue, water and sanitation.

Earlier in his address, the Speaker, Kogi State House of Assembly, Rt. Hon Aliyu Umar Yusuf, noted that the budget is expected to be a reflection of the resolve of the people of the state to address their critical needs.

"While I understand the resource constraints we face as a state, which is not peculiar to us, I hope the budget would prioritise investment in the future of the state by consolidating and solidifying the areas the state has recorded positive gains and areas of advantage".

The Kogi Assembly Speaker stressed the need for the government to as a matter of urgency, consider including Quran and Arabic studies in the curriculum of all primary and secondary schools in the country.

He said "You will agree with me that the habit of wholesomely or largely depending on the Federation Allocation is no longer feasible as it is affecting the ability and preparedness of government to provide effective governance.

"It is high time we explore alternative means of funding the budget. This could be in the form of expanding the government tax net, blocking leakages, centralized revenue generation, and ensuring that other means of gathering revenues are explored to enable the government to provide essential services to the citizens".

Give formal recognition to Qur'anic, Arabic schools - cleric

From
MUSLIUDEEN ADEBAYO, Ibadan

AN Ibadan-based Islamic cleric, Mallam Ali Abdullsalam, has called on governments at all levels to give formal recognition and support to schools of Quranic and Islamic Studies.

He noted that this is necessary in order to reduce crime and promote societal values across the country.

Alli who doubles as the Director of Ali Institute for Quran Memorisation (AIQM), Ibadan, made this declarations during the 4th graduation ceremony of the institute held at International Conference Centre, University of Ibadan recently.

Abdullsalam, while speaking, said that the recognition would help to ensure that youths are being fed with required spiritual diet and thereby reducing crime and promoting uprightness in the society.

He also called on the government to as a matter of urgency, consider including Quran and Arabic studies in the curriculum of all primary and secondary schools in the country.



He said, "This will go a long way in inculcating the pristine teachings of Islam in the kids at young age and making them useful citizens as they grow up."

"Government should provide employment for graduates of Arabic and Quranic schools, as this will go a long way in sanitising the society. The more God-conscious youths get employed, the more criminality is reduced in the society".

Abdullsalam noted that over 2,000 students had attended the institute since inception in 2016 for either part-time, full-time, short- or long-term programmes.

He said that memorisation of the Quran would never limit or hinder the progress of a child, but improve it. The cleric added that giving only western education, without sound Quranic knowledge, was like a beautiful vehicle with faulty engine.

The director further called on parents and guardians to avail their children opportunity of learning and memorising the Quran for them to be spiritually

grounded to navigate the journey of life.

In their remarks, the Spiritual Father of the occasion, Sheikh Dawud Ajide, Director and Founder, Madrasatu Nahdatuh Islamiyyah, Ikotun, Lagos State and Sheikh Abbas Zakariyya, said that it was imperative for Muslims to have Quranic knowledge and utilise it well.

Also speaking, the Asiwaju Adinni Musulumi of Ibadan, Alhaji Hassan Giwa, called on the graduands not to relent in constantly studying the Quran for them not to forget what they were taught.

On his part, the Chief Medical Director, Federal Medical Centre, Keffi, Nasarawa State, commended the institute for the progress made since inception and significantly impacting on character of the graduands, while reducing moral decadence in the society.

One of the graduating students, Fadhullah Adeagbo, appreciated the institute and parents for impacting them with Islamic knowledge.



News

18 dead, 27 injured on Abuja-Kaduna road crash

-FRSC

From JOHN FWAH, Kaduna

THE Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) has confirmed that 18 persons died and 27 others sustained injuries in a road crash on the Kaduna-Abuja expressway, at the weekend.

The Kaduna Sector Commander, Mr Kabir Nadabo, disclosed that the auto crash occurred at Audu Jhangon village along the expressway.

Nadabo explained that the crash occurred at 05:20hrs, when a vehicle (DAF trailer) with Number plates : KUI 430XC, with overloaded goods, lost control and fell into a ditch.

He said: "Initial reports indicated that the driver was at high speed, probably due to fatigue. The combined rescue teams of RS1.114 Zhipe Unit Command and RS1.16B Dutse Outpost conducted the rescue operations."

"The crash involved 65 people, where 27 were injured and 18 people were



OYEYEMI

deceased. The injured have been taken to the nearest hospital for treatment" Nadabo said on receiving news of the crash, he visited the scene to have first-hand information as well as direct the rescue team on the

evacuation of the deceased to the morgue.

"I also directed the tow truck to remove parts of the accidented trailer blocking part of the road. The operation is ongoing, and the road is free for movement," Nadabo said.

Man disguises as armed robber to kill wife

From ABBAS GUNGURA, Bauchi

Bauchi State Police Command has confirmed the arrest of a 35 year old man by its detectives for allegedly disguising as an armed robber and attempting to kill his wife with a pestle.

This was disclosed in a press statement titled, 'Husband disguises, assaults his wife' and made available to journalists in Bauchi over the weekend.

The statement which was signed by the Commands Public Relations Officer,

Superintendent Mohammed Ahmed Wakil, said the suspect intended to kill his wife, sell off the television set in their house and use the money to furnish his shop.

Wakil said the man, during investigation, confessed that he raised a false alarm that thieves had invaded the house.

"On December 2, 2023, detectives attached to 'A' Divisional Police Headquarters, Bauchi arrested Tijjani Ahmadu Diye, male (35) for

assault, causing grievous hurt and attempting to commit an offence to-wit culpable homicide.

"On receipt of the report, a team of detectives were drafted to the scene and evacuated the victim to Specialist Hospital, Bauchi, where she was accorded necessary medical attention.

"Preliminary investigation revealed that the suspect admitted the allegation against him without much resistance.

"In his confession, the suspect raised a false alarm that armed robbers entered their house. He quickly entered the bedroom, met his wife and asked her to cover her head with a scarf.

"He moved out of the room, covered his face with a scarf, armed himself with a pestle, came back to the bedroom, and started hitting her with the pestle.

"The suspect further confessed that he intended to neutralise her and take their television and sell it to raise money to furnish his shop."

The PPRO said the Commissioner of Police, Auwal Mohammed, has directed that the case be transferred to the State Criminal Investigation for discreet investigation to unravel more on the incident.



This soaring prices of goods

ALL is not well with our country. Things are hard and the citizens are not smiling neither are they happy with the way their country is being run. Since the 29th of May, 2023, prices of goods and services have been on a free fall. This is because President Tinubu on receiving the mantle of leadership, with fiat, removed fuel subsidy and this has brought about untold hardships, pain and anguish in the land.

Many families no longer can afford three square meals per day. The average families have resorted to 1-0-1 methods of feeding while others manage a meal a day. These have led to the spiking in the crime rate and the consequent fall in the standard of living of the people. The moment the President announced the removal of fuel subsidy, everything took a turn for the worst. Petrol stations across the country closed and started adjusting their pump prices even when they had not exhausted their old supplies, prompting an inflation that can only be equated to the experience of 1983 during the Shehu Shagari period, when the prices of goods and services were beyond the reach of the common person. Indeed, the period is remembered for the long queues people had to experience to buy foodstuff and other essentials.

At it is today, you buy something at a cost in the morning, when you come back for the same goods in the afternoon, you are likely to find that the price has changed. When you question the seller, you would be told that there has been an increase in the cost of that commodity. Sadly, government seem to have been rendered impotent in the face of these daunting challenges being faced by the people.

Even the 2024 budget of the Federal government for agriculture is not enough to meet the food needs of the country. But

we must give kudos to the present government for upping the sectorial allocation from a paltry 1.25 percent in 2023 to 10 percent in 2024. We hope that as the government settles, it would be able to do more so as to give agriculture its pride of place and ensure food security in the land.

As a matter of fact, the government must do everything to end the poverty in the land. Maybe, the idea of a price control board can be toyed with to help ameliorate the hardship being faced by the people. On the hand, other agricultural inputs should be made available and on time to our farmers to encourage them. A situation where these inputs are brought at the end of the rainy season is

“ Many families no longer can afford three square meals per day. The average families have resorted to 1-0-1 methods of feeding while others manage a meal a day. These have led to the spiking in the crime rate and the consequent fall in the standard of living of the people. The moment the President announced the removal of fuel subsidy, everything took a turn for the worst. Petrol stations across the country closed and started adjusting their pump prices even when they had not exhausted their old supplies, prompting an inflation that can only be equated to the experience of 1983 during the Shehu Shagari period, when the prices of goods and services were beyond the reach of the common person.”

unacceptable since most of our agricultural practitioners depend on rain fed cultivation. Also, dry season agriculture should be encouraged to serve as supplement to the rain fed cultivation.

Our silos which are found all over the country should be put to maximal use. Government should put in place deliberate measures to mop up all excess agricultural products which it could resell to the populace in times of difficulties such as the one we are faced with at the moment. Business people should not be given the free hand to buy large quantities of grain just to later sell at cut throat prices to the people. Least one be misunderstood here. By all means business men and women should be allowed to do their thing but government can also participate so as to help the people.

On the whole, government must be systematic in whatever it does. Policies must be thought through before being tested. A situation where the President just wakes up and make a pronouncement without thinking about the consequences does not speak well of us as a people. Our country cannot be a giant with a foot of clay. We must work towards being who we are because we are a country of great potentials given the exploits of our countrymen and women who have been given opportunities.

Osimhen wins CAF player award

At last Victor Osimhen wins the CAF football award which was last won by Kanu Nwankwo in 1994. Osimhen saw off Egypt's Mohammed Salah and Achraf Hakimi of Morocco. Osimhen had a successful 2022-2023 season with Napoli and scored 26 times in 32 games. He is also the first Nigerian to finish in the top ten of the Ballon d'Or vote with an 8th place finish.

Barcelona star, Aisat Oshoala stamped her imprint on the African women player of the year winning it for the 6th time.

News

Mutfwang condemns destruction of lives, property in Mangu

By PETER TITLE

THE Executive Governor of Plateau State, Barr. Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang, has frowned at and expressed deep sorrow over the recent atrocities committed by suspected herdsmen in Gudum village, Mangu Local Government Area where lives were lost, and property valued at millions of Naira destroyed.

In a condolence message, signed and made available to our correspondent in Jos by the Director of Press and Public Affairs (DOPA), the governor sympathized with the affected families, denouncing the barbaric and unacceptable nature of the orchestrated attack.

It revealed that available information indicated that the assailants set Edward Latu's house ablaze, trapping women and children inside two rooms. Seven individuals were rescued after forcing the doors open.

Regrettably, the statement indicated that Edward Latu



Mutfwang

and two others succumbed to brutal gunshot injuries during the incident.

The Governor also extended heartfelt condolences to the communities of Mararaba Pushit District and Pinper in Kombun District, Mangu Local Government Area,

which were similarly attacked on November 29, 2023.

Expressing his resolve for justice, Governor Mutfwang directed security agencies to pursue the attackers, emphasizing the need for them to face the full wrath of the law.

From Abbas Gungura, Bauchi

Governor Bala Mohammed of Bauchi State has expressed his administration's commitment and willingness to continue collaborating with stakeholders to enhance the welfare of women and children in an effort to eradicate sexual and gender-based violence in the state.

The state governor gave the assurance recently while welcoming the state action Committee on Sexual and Gender-based Violence (SGBV) under the leadership of the First Lady, Hajiya Aisha Bala Mohammed, at the Council Chamber of the Government House, Bauchi.

Bala Mohammed while commending members of the committee for their active participation in educating and enlightening the public on the effects of the abuses, promised to intensify efforts by taking the responsibility as a leader to call on stakeholders across the state to rally behind the advocacy to ensure the

Governor Bala commits to eradicating SGBV



Mohammed

success of the campaign.

Governor Mohammed called on the action group to look inward by involving parents, civil organizations, religious and local leaders in the campaign. He emphasized on the importance of being circumspect and providing

security agencies with the needful information.

He reiterated the commitment of his administration to ensuring that criminals are crushed and dealt with, issuing a stern warning that anybody caught over indulging or sabotaging the campaign will not be entertained.

Speaking earlier, the State First Lady, Hajiya Aisha Bala Mohammed, commended the governor for his support and contributions to the development of the committee, assuring him of their continued collaboration for the growth and development of Bauchi State.

Aisha Mohammed used the medium to appreciate the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs, Social Welfare and Child Development for their support since the inception of the committee.

Women Affairs Ministry gets highest budgetary allocation

By EZEKIEL DONTINNA

THE Plateau State Government has approved and upgraded the first ever highest budgetary allocation of over one point five billion Naira (#1.1b) to the state Ministry for Women Affairs and Social Development. This is to help meet the pressing needs of the ministry which has hindered its smooth operations.

The Commissioner for Women Affairs and Social Development, Hon. Caroline Panglang Dafur, disclosed this recently, while declaring open the Media Roundtable on the occasion marking 16 Days of Activism 2023, held at the Valada Hotel in Jos, the Plateau State capital where discussants from CSOs, Nigeria Union of Journalists, Nigeria Association of Women Journalists, Human Rights, etc, were in attendance.

The Commissioner said, "When I came on board, they had already defended the budget of four hundred million or so but I said no. What are we going to do with four hundred million? How are we going to handle the problems of women, children and other needs?"

"So, I had to meet the Commissioner for Budget and Planning and his Permanent Secretary and I told them we have to revisit this budget because I cannot work with this budget to meet the ministry's current demanding needs that had

been a serious challenge to the state.

"So, we were able to tap the budget to one point one billion Naira (#1.1b). For implementation, I strongly believe that Governor Mutfwang has the women and children in mind and he is not going to play with that because so far, there is no memo that I have submitted to him that he has not signed", she enthused.

Dafur, therefore, assured participants that this government was going to take the issue of women and children very seriously and that the Ministry would continue to organise activities that have to do with awareness creation across the 17 Local Government Areas of the state.

Earlier, the State Focal Person of the Media Network for Women, Peace and Security (WPS), Mr. Wika Gofwen, described the theme: "Unite! Invest to Prevent Violence Against Women and Girls", as apt and commended the UN-Women for supporting the programme in the fight against gender violence.

He said the media roundtable discussion was going to be a magnifier that would add value as they work towards seeing that they break the ongoing silence in gender violent issues that have affected women and girls. This will help address this unfortunate situation.

However, the panel discussants barred their minds starting with the State Chairman of the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ), Mrs. Ayuku Pwaspo, who was represented by her Vice, Mr. Pam Musa. She called on stakeholders to collaborate with the NUJ in creating more awareness to the public on violence against women and girls to reduce the insensitive reports of gender violence.

Also as Discussant, the State Chairperson of National Association of Women Journalists (NAWOJ), Mrs. Nene Dung,

urged stakeholders to stop paying lip service in terms of budgetary provision to rape cases if really they care to address violence against women and girls and would not only appear on the 16 day activism commemoration.

Other discussants who stressed on the need for collaboration included; the State Coordinator of Media Peace Network, Mathew Tega, representative of Women Mentors, the representative of State Coordinator HeForShe, Mr. Stanley Smiles Mani

NGO organises free surgery for cleft-lip, palate patients

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

GOOD Smile Africa Advocacy Initiative, a non-governmental organization (NGO) in partnership with the Kogi State government, will between 21st to 23rd December, 2023, offer free surgery for cleft lip and palate patients in Kogi.

Dr. Osodin Timothy Eromose, Consultant Oral & Maxillofacial Surgeon and Director of Good Smile Africa Advocacy Initiative, gave the hint while briefing journalists in Lokoja, on the lined up activities for the free surgery.

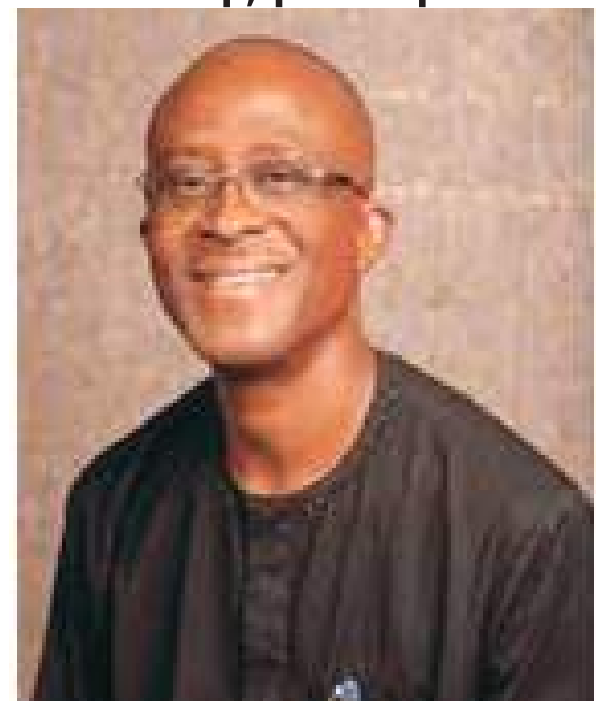
Dr. Eromose told journalists that the free surgery will take place at the Specialist Hospital, Obangede in Okene Local Government Area of Kogi

State beginning from 8:00am daily.

He therefore called on the cleft lip and palate patients to avail themselves of the opportunity, by turning out in their large numbers for the free surgery.

The Consultant Oral & Maxillofacial Surgeon, explained that the gesture is part of the humanitarian services of his organization to put smiles on the faces of the victims who cannot afford to pay for the cost of the surgical treatment.

Dr. Eromose also called for joint partnership between government and wealthy Nigerians in ensuring that the less privileged in the society, have access to adequate health delivery services at no cost.



Eromose

Foreign News

Rwanda row: PM Sunak faces crucial test

BRITISH Prime Minister Rishi Sunak spent the weekend trying to persuade rebel MPs from his own party to back his latest plan to send asylum seekers to Rwanda ahead of a crucial House of Commons vote on the policy.

The embattled Conservative Party leader wants to hand over refugees and migrants to the African nation for potential resettlement in a bid to discourage people from crossing the English Channel to Britain in small boats.

Following the UK Supreme Court's [decision](#) last month to strike down the original legislation on the grounds that Rwanda is not a safe country for asylum seekers, Sunak introduced the so-called Safety of Rwanda Bill, which would make it harder for courts to challenge British deportations to the landlocked republic.

On Tuesday evening, the bill faces what's called a second reading, which is the first parliamentary test.

But the 43-year-old faces a potential rebellion from the centre of his party, over concerns his policy contradicts international law.

As well as concerns that the policy is illegal by international law, Conservative politicians further on the right declared on Sunday that the proposed bill was not "sufficiently watertight".

While Sunak has denied that Tuesday's crunch is essentially a vote of confidence in his premiership, he is spending the



British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, left, meets Rwandan President Paul Kagame at Downing Street in London

hours ahead of the event trying to convince the rebels to vote with him.

UK media outlets are reporting that up to 40 MPs could abstain or vote against the bill – a number high enough to vote the bill down.

Academic Tim Bale likened Sunak's predicament to that of former Conservative Prime Minister Theresa May's ultimate failure to deliver on Britain's 2016 vote to leave the European Union during her tenure.

Bale said May was forced to stand down in 2019 after being "unable to negotiate a withdrawal agreement with the EU that would simultaneously satisfy all sides of a parliamentary party that – just like it is now – was not only

ideologically split but panicking about polling which suggested it was losing support big time".

The professor of politics at Queen Mary University of London told Al Jazeera: "The only difference is there's no Boris Johnson-type figure waiting in the wings to take over, meaning that they're probably stuck with Sunak – an agonising position both for him and for his MPs."

The first Briton of Asian descent to secure the UK premiership took office after the resignation of Liz Truss in October 2022 after she had served 44 days in the post. Sunak was Britain's chancellor of the exchequer from 2020 to 2022 under former premier Johnson.

THE United Nations mission in Mali has officially ended a 10-year deployment in the country, its spokesperson said, in a pullout ordered by Mali's military government.

The mission, known as the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), lowered the UN flag in its headquarters in the capital Bamako, its spokesperson Fatoumata Kaba told the AFP news agency on Monday.

The symbolic ceremony marks the official end of the mission, she said, even though some of the elements of it are still there.

A "liquidation phase" will take place after January 1, involving activities such as handing over any remaining equipment to the authorities.

In June, Mali's military government, which seized power in 2020, demanded the departure of the mission, deployed since 2013, despite being in the grip of attacks by armed groups in the Sahel region.

The withdrawal of MINUSMA troops has ignited fears that fighting will intensify between Malian forces and armed groups for territorial control.

The mission had maintained about 15,000 soldiers and police in Mali for the past decade. About 180 members have been killed in hostile acts.

As of Friday, more than 10,500 uniformed and civilian MINUSMA personnel had left Mali, out of a total of about 13,800 staff at the start of the

UN peacekeeping mission in Mali officially ends



Goita

withdrawal, the UN mission said on X, the platform formerly known as Twitter.

Since being told to leave, MINUSMA has left 13 positions in Mali and has yet to close sites in Gao and Timbuktu in the north.

Last week, the UN mission handed over the Mopti camp in central Mali, one of the hotbeds of violence that has plagued Sahel for years.

The Mopti camp most recently housed peacekeepers from Bangladesh and Togo, and in the past, hosted Egyptian, Pakistani, and Senegalese contingents.

The pullout went smoothly, unlike recent withdrawals in Mali's volatile north which took place under fears of a military escalation between the army and rebel groups, Kaba told AFP.

The UN troops were initially welcomed by Malians who hoped that the foreign soldiers would be able to help the Malian

military drive back the rebels who had captured large swaths of land in the north.

Ten years on, however, the peacekeepers are leaving unceremoniously with the instability far from resolved. Thousands of people have been killed, and hundreds of thousands have been displaced by the violence.

After seizing power in August 2020 citing mounting insecurity, Mali's government ditched the alliance with former colonial power France, preferring rapprochement with Moscow and the private army Wagner Group. Another military takeover happened in May 2021.

The presence of the mercenaries has drawn strong [condemnation](#) from Western countries, who argued that the presence of the Wagner threatens Mali's stability. Moscow and Bamako continue to insist that the Russian fighters are merely trainers helping local soldiers combat rebel groups.

Additional US aid to Ukraine, a 'fiasco'

ANY further United States aid to Ukraine will be a "fiasco", the Kremlin has said ahead of a [meeting](#) in Washington between US President Joe Biden and Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

Moscow is also "very attentively" watching developments as the two leaders are set to meet on Tuesday, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said.

Zelenskyy's visit is part of a last-ditch plea to US lawmakers to keep military support flowing as he battles Russia.

As the Ukrainian leader visits the White House and Capitol Hill, Biden's request for billions in additional aid for Ukraine and Israel is at serious risk of collapse in Congress.

"It is important for everyone to understand: The tens of billions of dollars pumped into Ukraine did not help it gain success on the battlefield," Peskov said, speaking at a news conference in Moscow on Tuesday.

The Kremlin spokesman said

the outcome of the meeting would not change the situation on the front line in Ukraine, nor the progress of Russia's "special military operation" in the country.

He added that Zelenskyy's authority was being undermined by his government's "failures" in the ongoing war.

"Let me be frank with you, friends. If there's anyone inspired by unresolved issues on Capitol Hill, it's just Putin and his sick clique," he said, speaking to soldiers at the National Defense University in Washington, DC.

Zelenskyy and Biden have argued that helping Ukraine resist Russia's invasion, launched in February 2022, is in the mutual interests of both countries as support for Ukrainian aid hits [political snags](#) in the US.

During their talks, the two plan to discuss a way to rally support for the military aid plan primarily focused on Ukraine and Israel.

Last week, [Republicans blocked](#) the plan after walking out of a

classified briefing on Ukraine amid demands for US-Mexico border reforms. Some Republicans are opposed to giving a "blank cheque" for Ukraine.

The US Congress has approved more than \$110bn in security assistance for Ukraine since Russia launched its invasion but

has not approved new funds since the Republican Party gained a majority in the House of Representatives in January.

Biden has asked Congress to approve an additional \$61.4bn in support for Ukraine as part of a larger \$110bn package that includes more funds for Israel and other issues.

As Gaza reels, Ukraine war feels distant

EVEN though Ukraine lies 6,000km (3,728 miles), two seas and half a dozen national borders away from Ali Hussein's hometown, the raven-haired 29-year-old tour guide still feels for the war-torn ex-Soviet nation.

"India is close to Russia and we buy Russian weapons, [but] I am fully on Ukraine's side," he told Al Jazeera, standing next to one of the terracotta-coloured buildings that gave Jaipur, a megalopolis of 3 million people, its sobriquet of India's "Pink City."

He was referencing New Delhi's decades-old ties to Moscow dating back to India's 1947 independence and the fact that over the past five years, India has gone on a \$13bn spending spree on Russian-made weaponry.

He also has personal ties to Ukraine. His cousin attended a medical school in the northeastern city of Kharkiv, like thousands of Indian students who brave harsh winters and a new language of instruction to get a degree at a much lower cost than at home or in the West.

But Hussein is a rare exception. Dozens of Indians asked this reporter in 10 cities from Delhi to the Pakistani border a similar question: "Is the war over?"

Europe's bloodiest armed conflict since World War II is not top-of-the-hour or headline news any more. Since October, it has been eclipsed by the Israel-Palestine conflict.

But the Middle East war has not only changed the news agenda in the Global South, a term meaning Latin America, Africa and much of Asia. It has also confirmed the

worst fears of many in the region – that Western powers are far less likely to empathise with Palestinian suffering, compared with that of Ukrainians.

"The confrontation between Israel and Hamas has not only boosted the Kremlin's hopes of changing the mood around the war in Ukraine but also strengthened its belief that the Western-centric system of international relations is breaking down," according to Nikita Smagin, an expert with the Russian International Affairs Council.

The war in Gaza has also "nullified all the results of rapprochement between the West and the Global South, and in this context, the war benefits [Russian President Vladimir] Putin," Kyiv-based analyst Aleksey Kushch told Al Jazeera.

Ukraine is well aware of the trend. President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's trip to Argentina last week is widely seen as an attempt to win the hearts and minds in Latin America.

Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, with widely-reported war crimes, the shelling of civilian areas and, threats to [Europe's largest nuclear station](#), was met with global condemnation.

While Western nations were quick to support Ukraine, a sovereign nation with its own national identity that stood up to Russia's occupation attempts, their backing of Israel's operation in Gaza has raised doubts and sparked cries of hypocrisy.

"The typical comparison people make between Ukrainians and

Palestinians is how the West is treating the former so differently than the latter," said Seda Demiralp, a professor of political science at Istanbul's Isik University.

European Union Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, for example, has consistently condemned what she has called Russian "acts of pure terror" on civilians in Ukraine, but failed to criticise Israel for its brutal campaign in the Gaza Strip, which has killed more than 18,000 people in just more than two months.

The alleged double standards irk Global South nations.

The latest episode of the Israel-Palestine conflict escalated after Hamas, which governs Gaza, attacked southern Israel, killing at least 1,200 people and taking more than 200 captive. Israel responded quickly, promising to crush Hamas with its relentless bombardment.

Malaysia was quick to accuse the West of "ignoring Palestinians" while providing "swift" support to Ukraine.

"Why are there two different approaches? For instance, in the Ukraine crisis, the Western powers swiftly provided support to Kyiv. Unfortunately, when it comes to Palestine, it is entirely disregarded," Deputy Prime Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamid reportedly said.

Another point of tension is rooted in perception.

Western media outlets cover the killings of Israelis in more detail than those of Palestinians – a macabre



Biden

Foreign Commentary

White House race heats up with cries of dictatorship

North America correspondent Dictatorship - or at least the threat of it - has been a topic of much discussion in American politics this week. writes Anthony Zurcher.

AS Donald Trump continues his seemingly easy march to the Republican presidential nomination, critics have been sharpening their attacks on him.

Neoconservative scholar Robert Kagan penned an essay in the Washington Post warning that "the odds of the United States falling into dictatorship have grown considerably". And former Republican congresswoman Liz Cheney, another vocal critic of Mr Trump, told CBS the US was "sleepwalking into dictatorship".

The former president dismissed these warnings as more evidence of "Trump Derangement Syndrome".

Then, at a town hall forum in Iowa on Tuesday night, Trump - who has frequently lavished praise on strongmen like Russia's Vladimir Putin and North Korea's Kim Jong-un - threw petrol on the fire and danced around the flames.

As some US news headlines put it, Trump seemed to confirm the worst fears of his critics - that he would become a "dictator" if re-elected to the US presidency.

However, the exchange was a bit more complicated than that.

Fox News moderator Sean Hannity was attempting to prompt the former president to dismiss the accusation that, if elected next year, he planned to abuse presidential power to punish his enemies, as Trump has sometimes



Trump

implied in past comments.

"You are promising America tonight, you would never abuse this power as retribution against anybody?" Hannity asked.

And that's when Trump, again venturing into that grey area between humour and seriousness, said he wouldn't abuse his power... "except for day one" of his next term in office.

He added that he would take unilateral action on border security and energy extraction (to "drill, drill drill", as Trump put it).

"After that, I'm not a dictator," he concluded.

Such half-assurances haven't exactly come as a

relief to Trump's critics across the political spectrum.

According to them, democracy would be tested in a second term because there would be fewer safeguards.

They say the former president has himself talked about weaponising the justice department and of replacing civil servants with loyalists. And they warn this time he would not have experienced figures in his cabinet willing to object to more extreme proposals.

A Trump super PAC hit back that the real authoritarian is in the White House now.

"Joe Biden abuses his power to target journalists,

politicians, activists, and concerned parents," Make America Great Again Inc wrote in an email on Wednesday.

IMAGE SOURCE, REUTERS

Image caption, Trump supporters say it is Biden who abuses presidential power

One of Trump's Republican presidential rivals, former Arkansas Governor Asa Hutchinson, told the BBC's Americast that while Trump may never fully embrace the term "dictator", a second Trump term in office could be dangerously authoritarian.

"Whenever you're looking at an authoritarian president, that assumes more power, and disregards Congress, disregards the court and the judiciary and the decisions they make, that is a consolidation of power in one branch of government," Hutchinson says. "That's not how our country was designed, and it is autocratic."

It's what Hutchinson said after that, however, that should be concerning to Joe Biden's presidential campaign. If, as is widely predicted, Trump and Biden are the two major-party nominees in 2024, the former Arkansas governor would look for another option.

"I'm not going to pick [Biden] over Trump," Hutchinson said. "I will be looking for alternatives to support if that was the

scenario."

Back in 2020, and again in the early months of his 2024 presidential campaign, Biden has tried to position himself as a choice for disaffected Republicans in addition to independents and members of his own party.

But despite worries about a potentially autocratic candidate on the Republican line - one who plays fast and loose with the term dictator - Hutchinson would not entertain backing the incumbent Democrat.

Public opinion polls a year from election day aren't particularly reliable, but recent head-to-head surveys pitting Trump against Biden are enough to indicate that the contest will be close. And if the outspoken anti-Trump Hutchinson is looking for a presidential alternative, he is probably not the only one.

With the upstart political group No Labels considering offering a centrist candidate, and others - like Liz Cheney - toying with the idea of independent bids, disaffected voters may have other options on the ballot.

In an election where every vote will be precious, it's a dangerous place for Biden to be. And, according to Trump's fiercest critics on the right, it's a dangerous place for the country to be.

In his Washington Post essay, Kagan warns that Trump is closer to winning the presidency, thanks to Republican support and national mood, than many understand - and that his actions once elected would be more dangerous.

He says Trump and his allies will engage in a campaign of persecution, targeting perceived enemies while many Americans stand idly by.

Many Americans, including millions of Trump supporters, do not see it that way, of course. And come next November, a plurality could return the former president to the White House in spite of all the high-minded warnings of academics like Kagan.

It's becoming clear, however, that Biden and the Democrats will frame this election as one where democracy is at stake. And, with dictator talk, joking or serious, Trump seems to be goading them into doing so.



Feature

Path to economic stability, collective prosperity in Nigeria

IN Nigeria's socio-political landscape, a perplexing conundrum persists: the transformation of leaders from champions of the people to figures seemingly aloof once power is attained. This disconnect, often resulting in decisions starkly contrasting with the nation's economic and social realities, is deeply troubling. A prime example is the decision to send an astonishing 1411 delegates to a conference in Dubai, a move defended by the government but seen by many as a blatant case of fiscal irresponsibility.

This disconnection from reality is plainly evident in the country's economic trajectory. The alarming 53% increase in the USD to Naira exchange rate – from 753 to 1170 between May and November – starkly highlights the dire economic situation. This scenario, largely a product of administrative inefficiencies, policy misalignment, and corruption of the previous administration, has worsened under the current administration, contradicting promises of economic stability and good governance. The economic downturn has severe consequences, exacerbating the suffering of Nigerians. The middle class is eroding, transforming many into beggars. The desperation for migration is at its highest in decades, yet the administration continues business as usual, mirroring the apathy of preceding governments.

In response to these challenges, a multi-faceted approach towards governance and economic management is imperative:

Leadership by Example: Effective leadership transcends policymaking; it involves embodying the desired change. Leaders must reflect the sacrifices they expect from their



citizens, including reducing their salaries, curbing non-essential government spending, and adopting lifestyles that align with the economic conditions of the average Nigerian.

Rationalizing Government Expenditure: The excessive delegation to Dubai serves as a stark reminder of the need for a fiscal discipline. Every governmental expenditure must be rigorously assessed for its necessity and contribution to the national interest, preventing wasteful spending and ensuring optimal use of resources.

Transparency and Accountability in Governance: Government's decision-making, especially in financial matters, must be transparent and accountable. This entails providing clear justifications for decisions, such as sending large delegations abroad, and ensuring effective utilization of public funds.

Stabilizing the Forex Market: The foreign exchange market's volatility is a critical economic issue. Stability can be achieved

through policies that attract foreign investment and promote economic diversification, alongside efforts to bolster foreign exchange reserves and ensure a transparent forex allocation system.

Promoting Local Industries and Manufacturing: A robust economic model necessitates a focus on local industries. Supporting local manufacturing and businesses reduces import reliance, saves foreign exchange, and generates employment. For example, using locally manufactured vehicles for government purposes would conserve foreign exchange and stimulate the domestic automotive industry.

Investing in Infrastructure and Human Capital: Infrastructure development is vital for economic growth and stability. Investments in roads, power, telecommunications, and other key sectors will boost business, attract foreign investment, and enhance quality of life. Equally important is investment in education and healthcare, crucial

for a skilled and healthy workforce. **Inclusive Governance and Stakeholder Engagement:** The government must engage with various stakeholders, including the private sector, civil societies, and international entities. This inclusive approach ensures comprehensive and responsive policy-making. **Cost-Cutting Measures at All Levels:** Implementing cost-cutting measures throughout all government levels is essential, including downsizing bureaucracy, minimizing overseas travel, and adopting energy-efficient practices in government operations.

Fostering Economic Resilience: To build an economy resilient to global shocks, Nigeria must diversify its economic base. Moving beyond oil dependency to sectors like agriculture, technology, and renewable energy is crucial. This diversification will create a buffer against global oil price fluctuations and open up new avenues for growth and employment. **Enhancing Social Welfare Programmes:** Strengthening social welfare programmes is vital for cushioning the effects of economic hardship on the most vulnerable. Programmes focused on food security, affordable housing, and healthcare access must be prioritized, ensuring that the basic needs of the populace are met.

Promoting Educational Excellence and Innovation: Education is the bedrock of societal advancement. Investing in educational infrastructure, teacher training, and technology integration in schools will prepare future generations for the challenges of a globalized world. Emphasis on STEM

(Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) education and innovation will drive development and position Nigeria as a leader in the global economy.

Environmental Sustainability and Climate Action: Environmental sustainability must be integrated into national development plans. Addressing issues like deforestation, pollution, and climate change is essential for preserving natural resources and ensuring a livable environment for future generations.

Building International Partnerships: Nigeria must actively seek and foster international partnerships for trade, investment, and cultural exchange. These partnerships can provide access to new markets, technologies, and ideas, further bolstering Nigeria's position on the global stage.

Encouraging Entrepreneurship and SME Growth: Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are the backbone of any economy. Providing support through favourable policies, access to finance, and business development services will spur entrepreneurial growth and job creation.

In conclusion, Nigeria is at a critical crossroads. The decisions and actions of our leaders today will shape the nation's future. A shift towards prudent, accountable, and genuinely committed leadership is needed. The road to economic stability and collective prosperity lies in responsible governance and leadership that not only promises change but also embodies it in every decision. The Nigerian people are prepared to support leaders who display these transformative qualities – leaders who truly represent and serve the people.

"At the core of today's leadership capability test is our threshold for dealing with UNCERTAINTY. No doubt it takes an agile leader to continuously anticipate and embrace changing realities without getting buried under the pressure of having to almost persistently change course, amend the strategy and sell this to the team in a way that inspires hope of ultimate or eventual success – this is the hardest part because it takes conviction to continue to be what a Leader ought to be at its core – "A frame of Possibility. While asked what the key attributes of an agile leader are during the Leadership training I referred to earlier on; a few of these words featured in my response;- Self Mastery, Flexibility, Decisiveness, Continuous Learning, Transparency and Accountability. Nonetheless the key question to ask is: – Are you an agile leader? I have highlighted below what in my opinion are the key attributes of an agile leader:"

THE NIGERIA STANDARD

With Palang Kasmi

Health

Avoid getting ill this Christmas

By DAVID SAUNDERS

ALTHOUGH the viruses responsible for cold and flu infections are circulating all year round, they tend to ramp up in winter – which is why we need to take extra precautions to keep ourselves healthy and well.

Fighting off a viral infection over Christmas isn't just miserable to deal with, it can also derail your festive plans – causing you to have to take time off work and miss out on quality time with family and friends.

With winter upon us, we asked experts to share some infection-busting tips to keep you in fighting form.

Close your laptop and get an early night

If your work is winding down at Christmas, it's tempting to burn the midnight oil and squeeze in a few more Netflix episodes before bed, but this could put you at a bigger risk of getting sick.

"More than a third of adults get fewer than the bare minimum amount of sleep needed to keep our risk of health problems in check," says Mike Molloy, founder of M2 Performance Nutrition, who recommends a minimum of seven hours sleep each night, but says eight hours is even better.

"When we don't sleep enough, our T-cells and B cells don't work as well, increasing vulnerability to bacteria and viruses," he explains. "Both T cells and B cells are vital for fighting off colds and the flu." To make sure you're hitting your sleep numbers, Molloy advises sticking to a sleep schedule, limiting caffeine in the evening, using a ten minute journaling session before bed and keeping your bedroom cool.



Put real, whole foods into your trolley

One of the few benefits of the current pandemic is that many of us are spending more time at home, which means we're able to cook healthy food from scratch.

"Eating wholesome foods such as fresh fruit and vegetables on a daily basis will ensure optimal vitamin and mineral levels to help your body shield you from infections and allow your immune system to function properly," says Molloy.

"It's also important to eat a wide variety, as the vitamins and minerals in food work together to provide your body with what it needs and function optimally." You don't need to spend tonnes of money at the local organic shop to reap the benefits either. Tinned and frozen options are a budget-friendly way to add more veg to your plate.



Think hygiene first
Gut microbiologist Dr Kate Stephens says: "There is

research to suggest that viruses can spread more easily in colder months, which can affect your body's immune system.

"It's important to be as hygienic as possible during these months, something we're all more mindful of since the start of the pandemic, therefore washing your hands often is a given." If you've battled a cold already, Stephens – who is speaking on behalf of OptiBac Probiotics – says you should be sure to change your toothbrush head and wash daily items such as bed sheets, towels and water bottles to get rid of any harmful bugs which may still be lurking.

Take a deep breath and relax

The pandemic has been a stressful time for many, plus the lack of sunshine can really affect your mood in the winter, so it's important to do things that help lift your spirits and tackle stress.

"Looking after your wellbeing is so important, as this can also affect your immune system and overall gut health," says

Stephens.

"Most of your serotonin is actually made in the gut, so if you keep it happy, it will keep you happy." She adds: "I'd also suggest practising some simple mindfulness exercises or winding down by reading a book to help you feel more relaxed."

Get physical

Adding a couple of workouts into your weekly schedule can not only improve your physical health, but also your overall wellbeing during the winter.

"Physical movement keeps your bowels moving and your immune system strong," says Stephens.

"Exercise is also a known stress reliever and can help you feel happier and healthier during the cold winter months. If it's too chilly to exercise

outside, try a home workout or better yet, a virtual yoga class, which combines care for both the body and the mind."

Stay warm and hydrated

It's a no-brainer, but when it's cold outside, it's advisable to prioritise practicality over style. A blazer and jeans might look great on Instagram, but it won't serve you well when the temperature drops.

"Getting outside for fresh air if you're currently in a lockdown will be really important, but if it's raining outside and you get drenched, it's important to get warm, and quickly," says Stephens.

"Always bring a spare pair of socks with you to avoid wet feet giving you a chill. We also need water to regulate our body temperature and maintain many bodily functions, so keeping hydrated is essential for all aspects of health, including supporting our microbiomes and immune system."



THE NIGERIA STANDARD

With Palang Kasmi

Well-being

10 tips for Christmas on a low budget

WHILE Christmas can be a time of joy, it can also be a time of financial pressure.

However, the good news is you don't have to spend a lot of money to have a merry Christmas.

Here are some ideas for how you can save some money at Christmas time by planning and being creative with gifts, decorations and wrapping paper.

Here are 10 tips for how to do Christmas on a low budget

Work out a budget and be creative to stick to it

Planning is everything. In preparation for Christmas, sit down and work out exactly what your budget is and think about ways you can stay within it. This applies to presents, food and trips away. Try having a second-hand Christmas where you and your extended whānau and friends get all your presents from the op shop. Or maybe you could



make your own gift tag.

Brown paper ribbon and greenery wrapped parcels

De-clutter and sell

Gather up all the toys, clothes and other things around the house you don't use, wear or need anymore and sell them online. Not only will you make some money, it gives you a chance to have a clear out and de-clutter the house.

Secret Santa for the extended family

If you're having a large family gathering, do a Secret Santa. This involves each person buying one present for a randomly selected member of the family. You can even put a price limit on the present. It helps keep the cost down and is super fun.

Make your own Christmas decorations

Find some old pinecones, bust out the glitter, pens and other craft stuff lying around the house and make your own decorations for the house or the tree. It's fun, cheap, and the kids will love doing it. Here are some ideas to get you started. (external link)(external link)

Volunteer your time as a gift

Volunteering your time as a gift is a great way to save money. It could be a "voucher" to wash somebody's car, babysit or help out with something else. Or you could organise an outing or adventure so you get to spend quality time with your loved ones.

Put a money limit on presents for your partner

Come to an arrangement with your partner on a price limit for a present for each other. It's amazing what you can buy for under \$20, or even \$10, and you'll love the challenge.

Courtesy sustain health magazine



fruit – it will help with the planning and enable you to keep your costs down. It will make them feel good to be able to bring something and save you time in the kitchen. Conversely, if you are going somewhere for Christmas lunch or dinner, take a homemade treat to save money. Here are some ideas for Christmas meals when you need to take a plate (external link)(external link), keep the costs down (external link)(external link), and when you have both health and cost saving (external link)(external link) in mind.

Use the kids' artwork for wrapping paper or gifts

If you're wondering what to do with that large pile of kids' artwork, it has a use! Try it as wrapping paper for presents or buy an inexpensive frame and give it as a present. Commercial wrapping paper is very expensive so keep the large pieces to re-use

or be creative with wrapping:

Try wrapping a gift inside another gift instead of using paper (eg, a tea towel, scarf or handkerchief).

Get a roll of brown paper for wrapping then get your tamariki to decorate the wrapped present with drawings, ribbon, glitter, coloured string, wash tape, and a homemade label or star. Littlies will enjoy making a potato stamp and decorating your parcel with a bit of paint.

Use a newspaper puzzle page for your friends who enjoy crosswords or sudoku.

Put biscuits or homemade jam into a reused (clean) jar, or a pottery bowl from an op shop.

Put your present in a sock and add the other one inside as part of the present.

Make your own fabric drawstring bag.

Keep old Christmas cards, cut out part of the image, punch a hole in it for string or ribbon and

upcycle by passing on your own preloved books, toys and clothes to another family. It'll help the environment as well.

Take advantage of sales

Keep an eye out for sales and discounts. This can save you quite a bit of money. Remember to stick to a shopping list to avoid impulse buys. If you can, plan ahead and buy Christmas gifts gradually throughout the year. That way you can find special things more cheaply and in your own time rather than rushing at the last minute and adding to the cost – and the stress.

Make your own treats,

presents and decorations

There's nothing more touching than receiving a home baked gift from somebody. It could be something as simple as Christmas biscuits or homemade spreads, pickles or jams. Knowing someone has put the time and effort into making something is heart-warming. If you're crafty you could knit, paint or build presents.

Bring a plate

If you're hosting Christmas lunch or dinner, ask your guests to bring a contribution. If you tell them what you'd like – a vegetable dish, salad, fresh



Editorial

Nigerian Military mistakes, one too many

AGAIN, civilian population are the victims of accidental drone-bomb attack at Tudun Biri village in Igabi of Kaduna State by the Nigerian military, which led to many deaths and casualties.

SADLY, the victims of the bomb-strike-gone-wrong were mostly children and women celebrating the Maulud (birthday of Prophet Muhammad) in the area. The death toll is reported to be 85 while community sources claim it's over 100.

CONCERNED by the worrisome incident, President Bola Tinubu, has sympathised with the families of the victims, the people and the government of Kaduna State, and directed a thorough and full-fledged investigation.

LIKEWISE, many bodies, rights groups, and individuals at the national and international levels, have outrightly condemned the man-made tragedy, describing it as an act of carelessness that could have been averted with proper display of professionalism.

HOWEVER, it is commendable that the Nigerian Army has already taken full responsibility for the drone-strike-error and apologised to Nigerians. They have displayed it by visiting and giving compensation to victims, promising not to make such horrid mistakes in the future.

NIGERIAN legislators too have set a historic record, as the 109 senators of the red chambers announced that they are donating their December salaries of N1 million Naira each to families affected by the drone killings.

THE Kaduna attack is said to be one of over 5 accidental bombings and series of similar misdirected airstrikes on civilians by the Nigerian military that have occurred in two years. It is the second military airstrike on civilian populace in the north of the country in 2023.

LIKE the attack in Nasarawa State in January, the Kaduna killing was believed to be carried out by a drone. The police confirmed that at least 27 herders, mainly ethnic Fulani, were killed in the Nasarawa incident. But Fulani groups claimed 40 people were killed and scores of other civilians were injured.

IN Zamfara State, another military airstrike claimed scores of civilian lives in December 2022 while soldiers were repelling attacks by non-state actors on some communities in the Dansadau District of Maru Local Government Area of Zamfara State.

ALSO in July 2022, Katsina State had its own bitter experience, at least six people were reported killed by an Air Force jet in the Kunkunna community of Safana Local Government of Katsina State. Like in Zamfara, the victims of the Katsina attack, were hit by bombs targeted at bandits.

ON April 2022, in Niger State, six children were killed when a Nigerian Air Force jet bombed their residence in Kurebe, Shiroro Local Government of the state. Ironically, the parents of two of the six children who were killed in the airstrike were killed by bandits in 2020. The children were returning from a motorised borehole in the community where they had gone to fetch water.

ON January 2017, in Borno State, the Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) also known as Doctors Without Borders, said at least 52 people were killed after a Nigerian fighter jet 'accidentally' dropped a bomb on an internally displaced persons, IDP, camp in Rann, headquarters of Kala-Balge Local Government Area, Borno State, with reports indicating that another 120 people were injured from the incident.

CLEARLY, this is one too many and must be addressed. Since 2017, military air strikes on civilians have continued and the outcomes of the investigations into them have never been published.

IT is sad that while citizens are suffering from harsh national and global economic policies, such a security agency whose primary role is to protect lives and properties are now the ones killing civilians with bombs and citing mistake' as the cause.

WE suggest that those responsible for these mistakes should be fished out and punished, to serve as a deterrent. Therefore, a comprehensive and transparent investigation into the bomb misfires on innocent villagers should be conducted.

TO build confidence in the populace, and put to rest all the myriad of conspiracy theories and questions in the minds of right thinking people concerning the sad incidents, we suggest that apart from giving full compensation to the victims, Nigerians and the world need answers.

THIS will help in diffusing the kind of tensions the incident is causing, sadly with some dangerous analysis taking religious, ethnic, and political dimensions.

WE also condemn such inciting media analysis by crisis merchants, who are not looking at the humanitarian losses. We rather call for calm, as the authorities unravel the mystery behind this series of tragedies.

A child early foundation for his or her future development provides a strong base for a life abilities and we'll being if children for their future and Growth as a child.

A good discipline child hood education focus on nuturing cognitive, and social and emotional skills, because it is necessary for a child to be educated on early age and also it promotes early literacy, numeracy critical thinking and investment in early childhood educated yields benefits to the child foundation.

However, a good early child education programme also helps the child in the future alive it is important to note that early childhood education can expose and expand the child's scope of learning and growth in the field of study and environment and also expose his understanding in terms of knowledge and development in the learning skill

As a matter of priority emphasis on compulsory childhood education can go through difficult challenges on



Need for early child education

every child, This policy would lay a Better foundation and prosperous future society and helps to prepare children for school and beyond.

Additionally, an early childhood education helps foster positive relationships among families, age mates and peer groups, and it enhance communication abilities and build confidence and good way of speaking English among children .

I want to appeal to Plateau State Government to as a matter of facts place a priority on compulsory education for everychild, through his or her social and emotional skills because it is necessary for a child to be educated on every age so as to expose his or her understanding in terms of knowledge and development in the learning field and I through difficult challenges on every of the childs lives.

Encourage dialogue for peaceful coexistence

AS humans relate with one another on daily basis, there are certainly moments of conflict. These conflicts can result to the lack of peaceful coexistence amidst the group of people or individuals that are involved.

Sometimes, conflict occurs in families, offices or group of people who have same interest and opinion, they may experience conflict when they have a clash with another group of people who have a different interest and opinion.

At anytime conflicts arises, it mostly results in violent act that may cause

lost of resources and sometimes lead to lost of lives and properties. But it is well known commonly that every conflicting situation can be restored either the conflict is between members of a family, group or the society at large.

Imagine the fight and killings that have been happening in some local government in Plateau state and no serious decision have been taken for does times, lives have been taken both adults and children, that is as a result of conflict between tribes, community or even

individuals. All these has to be stoped, government should raise up and take their responsibility of protecting the lives and properties of it's citizen by addressing the conflict and encouraging dialogue for it's people and to live in peace with one another

Government can also help in educating it's citizens to embrace dialogue as a way of handling any conflicting situation within family setting, office setting also organizational setting and help them to see the negativity of being violent.

Peter Sawa Rahab
IT student with Federal Polytechnic Bauchi.

Standard Cartoon



Opinion

By
FUNKE EGBEMODE

Traditional antidotes to infidelity

THESE days, when infidelity in marriage is being discussed or attempts are being made to resolve its outcomes, all the parties involved, especially the children, sustain injuries.

Meanwhile, before we all assume that it is only Yoruba people who have these things, can we all speak up and help couples? I'm sure all our cultures have the good old ways of making husbands and wives stay on the strict straight and narrow path. Just imagine a world where men lose their erection each time they try to do women they are not married to. Imagine a world where women can't be unfaithful, even if they desperately want to.

You know our forebears had traditional antidotes to infidelity? Yes, they did. They had things they said, did and believed would protect the marriage institution, and those things worked. It does not matter what you think of their antidotes. The fact is, today, whatever we are doing is neither working for marriages nor stopping infidelity in its rampaging tracks. Everyone is straying. Nothing is what it used to be.

So, it doesn't matter whether you sneer and say 'jazz' or 'juju' is not your thing, your 'fuji' is not working.

Today's marriage is dancing to a tune only it can hear and that is why everything is out of control, why you don't know for sure who is sleeping with who or if you are the only shareholder in your wife's 'business' or if all your children are yours.

Be honest, in your heart of hearts, deep inside you, ask yourself if you have a choice and access to any of those traditional antidotes, wouldn't you just want to try one or two, at

least? Shouldn't we consider them, considering that all our big Englishes and fancy ways and means have turned marriage into a transit camp, instead of a forever till-death-do-us-part place?

Just imagine that our parents, who didn't bother with colourful wedding proposals, lavish pre-wedding photo shoots, and wedding ceremonies in expensive wedding gowns and suits, had marriages that were devoid of 'I've moved on' just a year after the dance parties that have replaced the 'solemnisation'. They had something solid. We have flux. Taboos, myths, superstitions, call it anything. They worked then and trust me, nobody wanted to find out if they worked then or not, and 90 per cent of the time, those who dared to test them found out that they worked.

There is a compound in my hometown and it was believed that any woman who married any of their men could not divorce and marry another, because any man who married their 'leftovers' would run mad. True story. Women carefully considered their options before marrying into that compound and men with wandering eyes and hands also stayed away from the wives of that family. Once a woman's cheque had been 'uncrossed' by a man from this family, he was the only one who could cash that cheque forever. All and any attempt to go behind the counter to use that cheque led straight to the madhouse, where the native psychiatrist fed the philanderer with a cane in his hand. Unless and until the owner of the cheque joined his ancestors, no man could approach a bank with his instrument.

The Yoruba also have something called 'ayogo,' a traditional quit notice enforcer. It was used to send erring or bad wives away without fuss or noise. Don't bother with the fundamental human rights lecture or the wives' right to defend themselves. It didn't work then. Not that it is working now anyway. All we have now is a lot of noise and hypocrisy.

Imagine how such an antidote curbed the excesses of philandering men who got their kicks from messing around with married women! Methinks whatever that family used protected their marriages better than the most expensive diamond rings and fancy wedding receptions.

You may have also heard of 'tesho,' a Yoruba technology and medical science that guarded against the unwanted carnal knowledge of girls. It was mostly used to protect daughters from rape and pre-marital sex by doting fathers. How it worked? A randy village 'goat' sweet-talked a maiden into his room and attempted to get under her wrapper, his turgid third leg that was standing at attention to devour and ravish suddenly took a bow and went to sleep. Yeah, just like that. Until the father who implanted the tesho removed it from his daughter, no man could penetrate her wall to deflower her.

Imagine being able to implant that on all wives. There would be no DNA brouhaha. All the children of 'Osun' would be 'Osun's children', not half for Osun, half for Oba. In other words, all the children of the husband will be his. No bastards. No suspicion. The area will be cool and

calm. Tell me you do not think this is a better option than the can of worms being thrown in our faces on radio shows and social media.

The Yoruba also have something called 'ayogo,' a traditional quit notice enforcer. It was used to send erring or bad wives away without fuss or noise. Don't bother with the fundamental human rights lecture or the wives' right to defend themselves. It didn't work then. Not that it is working now anyway. All we have now is a lot of noise and hypocrisy. The 'ayogo' was a small amulet usually planted at the entrance of the erring wife's bedroom or behind her water pot. Once she stepped on it or took water from the pot, she packed her bags and left her matrimonial home 'willingly.' My take: If a wife has been confirmed to be stepping out on her husband, how about deploying the 'ayogo'? Powerful, influential men used it then to save themselves the embarrassment of having to be called to 'settlement meetings' about 'generous' wives who made themselves community palliatives.

Imagine a rejected rich cocoa farmer's wife being caught giving it out like party favours to one of her husband's labourers. The 'ayogo' helped the rich man to protect his reputation without the accompanying cacophony of accusation and counter-accusation.

All the DNA shops will have to divest or diversify, right? But the part I like most is the world where men can't fling their third legs in every direction all in the name of wanting to combine ofe Owerri with efo riro. Imagine how nice they will

become at home, knowing they can only play home games, no 'aways'.

These days, when infidelity in marriage is being discussed or attempts are being made to resolve its outcomes, all the parties involved, especially the children, sustain injuries. Isn't it time to consider this local science if we can still find the 'scientists' who can guide us in administering these traditional powders and pills? We have tried everything else, haven't we? If we haven't, why are our 'men of God' being implicated in DNA disputes? It is absolutely saner and more productive to police your marriage with tesho or ayogo.

Meanwhile, before we all assume that it is only Yoruba people who have these things, can we all speak up and help couples? I'm sure all our cultures have the good old ways of making husbands and wives stay on the strict straight and narrow path. Just imagine a world where men lose their erection each time they try to do women they are not married to. Imagine a world where women can't be unfaithful, even if they desperately want to.

All the DNA shops will have to divest or diversify, right? But the part I like most is the world where men can't fling their third legs in every direction all in the name of wanting to combine ofe Owerri with efo riro. Imagine how nice they will become at home, knowing they can only play home games, no 'aways'.

Funke Egbemode was managing director/editor-in-chief of New Telegraph Newspaper, president of the Nigerian Guild of Editors and commissioner for information in Osun State. **Email: egbemode3@gmail.com**

Nigeria's generations: Past, present and future

NIGERIA has undergone several diminishing labellings such as a rich but poor country, squalor in the midst of affluence, a country that is not worth dying for, Africa's failed asset, state without nation and what have you.

These negative, yet authentic and reliable indicators, are the darkness of our fatal disappointment and major failure to make the country great and improve our bad living conditions despite its tremendous human and natural resources. They are bad descriptors for our development flaws and how our generations have been shaped all these years.

We have traversed the vast terrains of history, politics, economy, national integration and other odysseys which have continued to be reflective of the essence of our existence in addition to being entangled in mixed predicaments. But it seems we always refer to the past as better than today. And if tomorrow comes, we will glorify today like a deity. It is suggestive that we have lost faith in attaining a better Nigeria or we have unanimously carved out a niche for an impending doom to occupy our psychology.

We are relentlessly descending from the point of development to the point of underdevelopment as entrenched in our public mood, global status and what is pragmatically on the ground at home. Who carries the blame? The discerning mind accuses all of us as being indicted. From leadership to followership, from Southern Nigeria to Northern Nigeria, from the extreme end of Port Harcourt to another extreme end of Kano, Akure to Benin, Umuahia to Makurdi, we are all guilty.

The greatest question is, how are we going to halt, if not revert this perpetual deterioration? Think about our generational evolution and how it affects our collective existence with a view to ascertaining our

By ABDU ABDULLAHI

prosperity or otherwise. Generations come and go. Some are self-destructive while others are self-constructive. Some are a blessing whereas others are a curse. Some are wasted like mountain of refuse, others are as useful as a training tool. But the greatest generation is the one with enduring legacies. It lives forever in the minds. The worst generation is the one that neither inspires nor prospers.

Both successful and unsuccessful generations derive their status when they rightly or wrongly align with all the key issues vis-a-vis the prevailing socioeconomic and political, and cultural manifestations. Their viability or the contrast rests on well defined and articulated core values, focus and functions, which are partially or holistically adapted to the emerging trend. While some generations are founded on weaknesses of the past without national vision and consciousness, others are transformative, compelling and struggling to evolve a paradigm shift from complex to simple, from general to particular.

Generational evaluation has to do with a conflict of 'what' and 'who' idiosyncratic elements. 'What' is all encompassing while 'who' is a narrowed projection. The generation that aspires to preserve future generations is influenced by the 'what' variable. The generation of the 'who' is an endangered entity. The 'what' of a generation is capable of overwhelming its circumstances, while the 'who' of a generation is overwhelmed by the circumstances.

The late Balarabe Musa captured our predicament when he was unjustly impeached as the governor of Kaduna state, "We are today living in terms of great

changes, the old order is crumbling fast, new systems of life and activities are emerging...." What are some of these changes? Is the average politician not more concerned with consolidating power than rendering services? Is the average business tycoon not accumulating wealth without according it moral values? Is our average bureaucrat not enmeshed in self-esteemed worship? Can the average imam or pastor exonerate himself from creating human 'gods' rather than submitting to the omnipotent God? Is the average Nigerian not rendered helpless, made to collapse without intervening forces?

Every generation has its own history. This is an orchestrated chemistry and symbiotic relationship. History, generation and the people form a family. One cannot exist without the other. They are a filled space of striving for the evolution of nations and individuals, of national values and systems, of constructive practices and processes. Frantz Fanon teaches us that every generation must have a mission to fulfill or betray. Thus, generation is all about changes and challenges and how we are prepared to address them.

The first generation of post independence Nigeria was very formidable. Its leading protagonists ensured that it revolved on personal integrity, intellectual discipline and proportional love for the country. It was this excessive passion for Nigeria that prompted the late Prime Minister, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa to express his fears of seeing a country that would be like a hell for the majority and a heaven for a few.

The first generation of post independence Nigeria did all it could to realise its full potential that would be premised on accountable leadership which

would be a milestone for development. That generation wanted to invent a new Nigeria of durability and reliability. The same generation had all its expression in public character and integrity. The heroes of that generation fought all the external obstacles and the obstacles within themselves in order to achieve a state of perfection.

Since it was the first generation of post independence Nigeria, it had the strength and confidence to break away from the remnants of colonial establishment, face the consequences and re-write history. But eventually, it never achieved a meaningful end as it was destroyed by the barrel of the gun. That unfortunate event ushered in the genesis of Nigeria's lingering religious, ethnic, political, economic crises which have continued to hold the country to ransom.

One of the greatest threats to the next generation is the prevailing social media abuse. It is a boosting industry that is laying a chaotic house for the next generation. Its overwhelming potency is a dangerous signal because many users promote hate speech and other related anti social vices. It is a surest way to national disintegration and dislocation. Our social media has lost social value and viability. It is practically an anti social media dominated by generational decadence. It is a virus against unity, humility, empathy, reasoned thoughts, valued judgment, moral cohesion, etc.

Transferring the cumulative mess of this generation to the next will not be cumbersome. However, what will be difficult for the next generation is to liberate itself from the failures of the current generation.

Abdullahi writes from Ringim, Jigawa state via aaringim68@gmail.com
07036207998,

Change of Name

<p>BUNTAL</p> <p>I, formerly known as SAIDU YAU, now wish to be known and addressed as BUNTAL YAU SAIDU. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>SULEIMAN</p> <p>I, formerly known as IDRIS KAREEMAH SULEMAN, now wish to be known and addressed as SULEIMAN KARIMATU IDRIS. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public please take note.</p>	<p>ILIYA</p> <p>I, formerly known as ILIYA ISHAYA MACHIDO, now wish to be known and addressed as ILIYA ISHAYA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>CHINWENDU</p> <p>I, formerly known as CHINWENDU CHIDIEBUBE PHILIP, now wish to be known and addressed as CHINWENDU CHIDIEBUBE NWANKWO. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please</p>	<p>GLORIA</p> <p>I, formerly known as GLORIA JOHN, JOHN, now wish to be known and addressed as GLORIA JOHN DAGYA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>RANGYA</p> <p>I, formerly known as BITRUS RANGYA SOLOMON, now wish to be known and addressed as RANGYA SOLOMON BIT. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>
<p>DALYOP</p> <p>I, formerly known as KANENG AYUBA LUKA, now wish to be known and addressed as DALYOP VICTORIA BULUS. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>DAVOU</p> <p>I, formerly known as DAVOU DAWENG PAM, now wish to be known and addressed as DAVOU DAWENG SIMON. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public please take note.</p>	<p>BULUS</p> <p>I, formerly known as BULUS SARAH KANENG now wish to be known and addressed as BULUS SARAH ADIE. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>EZE</p> <p>I, formerly known as EJIKE CHRISTIAN EZE, now wish to be known and addressed as EZE CHRISTIAN. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>MAMMAN</p> <p>I, formerly known as ISEAC GRACE, now wish to be known and addressed as MAMMAN GRACE ISAAC. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>JAMES</p> <p>I, formerly known as PETER JAMES NAANYEP, now wish to be known and addressed as JAMES NAANYEP. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>
<p>UMAR</p> <p>I, formerly known as UMAR SALMANU ALIYU, now wish to be known and addressed as UMAR SALMAN ALIYU. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>MERCY</p> <p>I, formerly known as JAMES ADAMU-BON MERCY, now wish to be known and addressed as MERCY ABIDEMI. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public please take</p>	<p>ZAKARIYA</p> <p>I, formerly known as ZAKARIA KAKA TITUS, now wish to be known and addressed as ZAKARIYA DABUWA TITUS. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>JEMIMA</p> <p>I, formerly known as JEMIMA KYANA JINKIRI, now wish to be known and addressed as JEMIMA KYANA CHING-YIN. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>UZINYIA</p> <p>I, formerly known as JOSEPH FAVOUR UZINYIA, now wish to be known and addressed as UZINYIA JOSEPH ASHIDOITIANG. Date of birth 23/05/1986 wrong date, correct 23/05/1988. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>LUKA</p> <p>I, formerly known as DAMSEN LUKA MAKSHAKAT, now wish to be known and addressed as LUKA PANMUN. Correct date of birth is 12/12/1994 not 1/1/1990. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>
<p>LUCKY</p> <p>I, formerly known as LUCKY YUSUF YOHANA, now wish to be known and addressed as LUCKY YUSUF DOGOL. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>JEDID</p> <p>I, formerly known as JEDID MAINA, JADID MAINA WAZIRI AND JEDIDIAH MAINA WAZIRI, now wish to be known and addressed as JEDID MAINA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>LOWANG</p> <p>I, formerly known as DAMARIS BITRUS MAFENG, now wish to be known and addressed as LOWANG DAMARIS BITRUS. 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 JACOB RACHEAL, now wish to be known and addressed as MOSES RACHEAL ADEWUMI. Correct date of birth is 3/9/1999 not 3/9/1990. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>AMINA</p> <p>I, formerly known as AISHA ABDULLAHI, now wish to be known and addressed as AMINA ABDULLAHI. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>CLETUS</p> <p>I, formerly known as CLETUS LINDA BIODUN, now wish to be known and addressed as CLETUS LINDA OBY. 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 ANDREW KEVIN HARUNA, now wish to be known and addressed as HARUNA KELVIN. 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 AKPAN MERCY JIMMY, now wish to be known and addressed as WILLIAMS MERCY JIMMY. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>DAMAR</p> <p>I, formerly known as AKOR JENNIFER AYO, DAMAR JENNIFER AYOR, now wish to be known and addressed as DAMAR JENNIFER AKOR. All former documents remain valid. Nasarawa State University, Keffi and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>TWAN</p> <p>I, formerly known as TWAN SOLOMON DAGUN, now wish to be known and addressed as TWAN DAGUNG SOLOMON. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>MUHAMMAD</p> <p>I, formerly known as ASHIRU MUHAMMAD, now wish to be known and addressed as MUHAMMAD ASHIRU ALIYU. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>GAMBO</p> <p>I, formerly known as NANSIK BAKO, now wish to be known and addressed as GAMBO NANKAR NANSIK. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>
<p>JOHN</p> <p>I, formerly known as JOHN BINKAM sssssssssssKAIWA, now wish to be known and addressed as JOHN BINKAM ABEMU. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>BABA</p> <p>I, formerly known as BABA FRIDAY SUNDAY, now wish to be known and addressed as BABA FRIDAY SAMUEL. 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 DEBORAH STEPHEN PAYARALLA, now wish to be known and addressed as JOSEPH DEBORAH AZI. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>NASIR</p> <p>I, formerly known as AHMAD NUHU NUHU, now wish to be known and addressed as NASIR AHMAD NUHU. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>EDEH</p> <p>I, formerly known as CHUKWUDI SAMUEL EDEH now wish to be known and addressed as EDEH CHUKWUDI SAMUEL. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>MONDAY</p> <p>I, formerly known as MANAJA JOSPHINE, now wish to be known and addressed as MONDAY JOSPHINE JUWUYA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>
<p>NIMCHIT</p> <p>I, formerly known as NIMTUR NIMCHIT IBRAHIM, now wish to be known and addressed as NIMCHIT PONSACK LADONG. All former documents remain valid. NMDC, all concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>ADAMU</p> <p>I, formerly known as ABUBAKAR KHADIJAH HADIZA, now wish to be known and addressed as ADAMU KHADIJAH HADIZA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>RAPHAEL</p> <p>I, formerly known as RAPHAEL LINDA BLESSING, now wish to be known and addressed as RAPHAEL LINDA SAMANTA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>BATURE</p> <p>I, formerly known as DANAZUMI TALATU, now wish to be known and addressed as BATURE TALATU. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>AGBOCHINI</p> <p>I, formerly known as MATHIAS AMEH, now wish to be known and addressed as AGBOCHINI MATHIAS AMEH. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>BLESSING</p> <p>I, formerly known as BLESSING ANYEBE GODFREY, now wish to be known and addressed as BLESSING OYIKENE GODFREY. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>
<p>YAKUBU</p> <p>I, formerly known as YAKUBU, ASHEADZI TSAKU, now wish to be known and addressed as YAKUBU, ASHEADZI MARY. 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 HARUNA YOHANNA, now wish to be known and addressed as HARUNA YOHANNA TUMBA. My correct date of birth is 28/11/2001 not 1/01/1996. All former documents remain valid. NIN and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>JOSEPH</p> <p>I, formerly known as ABOK ASHOM, now wish to be known and addressed as JOSEPH ABOK ASHOM. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>DORATHY</p> <p>I, formerly known as DORATHY PETER OKOYE, now wish to be known and addressed as DORATHY IFY IFEACHOR. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>PAM</p> <p>I, formerly known as ZI RUTH SAMUEL, now wish to be known and addressed as PAM RUTH SAMUEL. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>YOHANNA</p> <p>I, formerly known as IZANG DAVID NYAM, now wish to be known and addressed as YOHANNA DAVID NYAM. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>
<p>LAR</p> <p>I, formerly known as LAR PONBIN, now wish to be known and addressed as LAR NANLIR KPARBIN. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>GAMDE</p> <p>I, formerly known as MERCY GAMDE, now wish to be known and addressed as GAMDE GAMKAT TIMNAN. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>DASHANG</p> <p>I, formerly known as SAMUEL COMRET APPOLO'S, now wish to be known and addressed as DASHANG SAMUEL COMRET. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>BINCHANG</p> <p>I, formerly known as LYDIA B. WAIDU, now wish to be known and addressed as BINCHANG WAIDU LYDIA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>HANNATU</p> <p>I, formerly known as HANNATU MARGARET AGWOM, now wish to be known and addressed as HANNATU MARK AGWOM. All former documents remain valid. Pension Board, Access Bank all concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>BALA</p> <p>I, formerly known as MAIKATAKO UDAFFO PATIENCE, now wish to be known and addressed as BALA PATIENCE DOY. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>
<p>MOHAMMAD</p> <p>I, formerly known as MOHAMMED SADIQ TUNDE, now wish to be known and addressed as MOHAMMAD SADIQ TUNDE. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>ANAS</p> <p>I, formerly known as ANAS GARBA BABALE, now wish to be known and addressed as ANAS GARBA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>VICTOR</p> <p>I, formerly known as VICTORIA, MARIA, now wish to be known and addressed as VICTOR, MARIA OTILEKJET. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>AHMAD</p> <p>I, formerly known as AHMAD AMINU, now wish to be known and addressed as AHMAD AMINU SALIU. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>GOWOK</p> <p>I, formerly known as GOWOK MOTION T., now wish to be known and addressed as GOWOK TAPSHIKWAN SUNDAY. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>STEPHEN</p> <p>I, formerly known as STEPHEN SATI, now wish to be known and addressed as STEPHEN SATI LONGSHI. My correct date of birth is 23/8/1985. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>

News

Mutfwang mourns former HoS

BY PETER TITLE

THE Executive Governor of Plateau State, Barr. Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang has expressed deep sorrow over the demise of Engr. Sunday C. Hyat, the State's former Head of Service (HoS), who died on Friday after a brief illness.

The Governor in a condolence message signed by the Director of Press and Public Affairs (DOPA) and made available to The Nigeria Standard in Jos last Saturday, laments the loss of a leader whose impact in public service has created a void that would be hard to fill.

He fondly recalled moments of joy shared with Engr. Hyat, highlighting his significant contributions during the 37th reunion service of COCIN Gindiri Schools Chaplaincy and the recent opening of the Plateau State Government/Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) and Trade Union Congress (TUC) retreat at Jonggrand Hotel, Bukuru few days ago.

The Governor reminisced about Engr. Hyat's unwavering commitment to peace and his



Mutfwang

noteworthy contributions to the socio-economic and infrastructural development of Plateau State.

He extended his heartfelt condolences to the grieving Hyat family, urging them to find solace in the enduring mark left by their father, husband, and son's selfless service to humanity.

Governor Mutfwang acknowledged Engr. Hyat's exemplary leadership as the

former Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Works, Plateau State, a Fellow of the Nigerian Society of Engineers, and an alumnus of the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS) Kuru.

The Governor, on behalf of his family and the peace-loving people of Plateau State, prayed for God's total comfort to the immediate and extended Hyat family.

By JIDAUNA DARING

SURWASH inaugurates 7 man committee

PLATEAU State Project Coordinator (PC), Sustainable Urban Rural Water Sanitation and Hygiene (SURWASH), Engr. Jonathan Malann, has inaugurated a 7 man Grievance Redress Committee (GRC) under SURWASH programme in Mangu Local Government Area (LGA).

Our Correspondent report that the event took place at the palace of Mishkaham Mangu, in Mangu LGA, last Tuesday.

Engr. Malann said that the function of the GRC was to receive complaints from people particularly on issues that may need clarification. He advised the people of the locality to follow due process in channeling whatever complaint they have to the committee at any time.

He solicited for the support and cooperation of all the benefiting communities. And called on the local government chairman and the traditional rulers to always set their eyes on projects that are going to be located in communities.

Engr. Malann assured the stakeholders that all the districts in Mangu LGA are going to benefit from the SURWASH programme. He added that the projects are expected to start fully next year.

He pointed out that Primary



Malann

Health Care Centers (PHCs) and schools would also be given priority, adding that PHCs and schools are without water facilities. He disclosed that lack of water for girl child use to have good menstrual hygiene in schools have led to dropping out of many girl child in school.

Egnr. Malann explained that about 700 U.S. Dollars have been committed for the programme in 7 states of the federation. He added that for any state to enjoy this money, such state must work hard to benefit from the fund.

He also stressed the need for all hands to be on deck among the benefiting communities' members. And added that SURWASH would not want any issue of compensation to affect that project.

In his remarks, General Manager, Plateau Municipal Water Supply and Sanitation Agency (PLAMWASSA), Mr. Dakat Jelkyes Jacob stressed the importance of the programme, saying that service delivery must be sustained at all times. He urged the benefitting communities to make sustainability their watchword. Jacob also pointed out that the issue of revalidating unfunctional solar and hand pumping boreholes in Mangu LGA would be looked, into so that people would have access to safe drinking water at all times.

In their separate remarks,

Chairman, Transition Implementation Committee (TIC), Hon. Markus Artu and His Royal Highness (HRH), Moses Dawop both expressed happiness with the choice of their locality for the programme.

They promised to work against anything that would stand as a stumbling block for the project. The duo also maintained that the people of their locality are seriously in need of water and sanitation.

They equally assured SURWASH of the benefitting community's readiness to give them the necessary support and cooperation while carrying out the projects. The duo promised to sustain all projects facilities that would be cited in their locality, saying that the programme is key to the entire people of Mangu LGA.

Responding on behalf of the 7 man GRC, Chairman of the Committee, Hon. Markus Artu thanked their people for finding them worthy to serve in the committee. He assured their people that they would be transparent in the task given them and also promised SURWASH that the committee would not disappoint them in the course of discharging their duties.

THE NIGERIA STANDARD reports that the same committees were earlier inaugurated in Bokkos, Jos South, Langtang North and Wase LGAs.

Group demands clients protection during clergy's burial

From MUSLIUDEEN ADEBAYO, Ibadan

A human rights group, Save the Poor and Needy Charity Initiative (SPANCI) has urged President Bola Ahmed Tinubu and the Inspector General of Police, Kayode Egbetokun to provide maximum security during the burial of the late Prophet Joseph Odeyemi Eyinafe Bojesomo.

The group noted that this is necessary in order to avoid loss of lives and property during the burial of the founder of Ori Oke Agbara Emimimo, Efon Alaaye in Ekiti State.

The group maintained that there is a need for the security agencies to provide maximum security during the burial of the late prophet so as to prevent breakdown of law and order.

SPANCI made these declarations in a petition addressed to Tinubu, IGP and other stakeholders.

Our correspondent gathered that the burial of Bojesomo who died in June this year has been fixed to hold between 14th and 16th December this year at the church.

SPANCI has however, appealed to Tinubu, IGP, A I G Z o n e 1 1 , Commissioner of Police in Osun State and other heads of security agencies, to provide maximum security for family of the deceased during the burial so as to prevent breakdown of law and order.

SPANCI President, Comrade Yemi Ezekiel Bello, in the petition, alleged that some people have been planning to cause breakdown of law and order during the burial.

He is tasking Tinubu and security agencies to provide maximum security during the burial so as to prevent loss of lives and property during the burial.

Bello in the petition made available to journalists on Sunday, said that there was a need to inform the stakeholders and the general public that some individuals have been planning to cause breach of peace during the burial.

He said, "Urgent address to Mr President, NASS the CJN, Chairman, National

Boundary Commission, The IGP, The AIG Zone 11, Osun CP, Ekiti CP, The Ekiti State Governor, Osun State Governor, other stakeholders and the general public. "Our client told us that few days ago they had information that the Elerinmo people met and concluded that they will come and start attacking people with guns and dangerous weapons on the mountain from Monday 11th December 2023 to scare people to forfeit the burial plans. Our client said what followed later was the call of one Supo Adewale of Osun State Command, CID with phone number 08034190406 asking about the affidavit and asking

them if they still insist on burying their dad on the said mountain. He said he told him that the boundary commission is on the matter already and Ekiti State government.

"We hereby request maximum security of lives and properties from the Nigeria Police Force IGP and other stakeholders, to avoid the breach of public peace, break down of law and order, killing or loss of human life and protection of the lives and properties of our clients and their visitors before, on or during and after the burial of the late Prophet Joseph Odeyemi Eyinafe Bojesomo on the said mountain coming up this week Thursday 14th to Saturday

Gov Alia proposes N225. 727 budget

From TERESE TUHWA, Makurdi

A total of two hundred and twenty five billion, seven hundred and twenty seven million, three hundred and ninety five thousand, two hundred and sixty naira, ninety seven Kobo (225, 727, 395, 206.97) only has been estimated for the 2024 fiscal year.

Presenting the 2024 budget estimate on the floor of the Benue State House of Assembly tagged, "Budget of infrastructure, development, job creation and poverty alleviation", the State Governor, Rev Fr Hyacinth Alia told lawmakers that the budget was aimed at fixing the broken Benue.

Governor Alia explained that out of the total revenue, recurrent revenue would gulp one hundred and forty three billion, eight hundred and forty million, five hundred and ninety one thousand eight hundred and

ninety two naira thirty eight Kobo (N143,840, 591, 892, 38) only.

The state government share from the federal government according to Governor Alia is expected to be one hundred and twenty billion, (N120, 000, 000, 000) while the Internally Generated Revenue, IGR, is projected at twenty eight billion, eight hundred and forty million, five hundred and ninety one thousand, eight hundred and ninety two naira thirty eight naira (N23, 840, 591, 892, 38) only.

According to the governor, aids and grants from donors have 77.4 percent increase from the last year's projection and revealed that the state expects thirty six billion, nine hundred and ninety two million, nine hundred and thirty two thousand, seven hundred and sixteen naira forty



Alia

three kobo (N36, 992, 932, 716.43) only.

The governor informed that the capital development fund has a slight increase over the 2023 projection of 16.7 percent as the 2024 projection stands at forty four billion, eight hundred and

ninety three million, eight hundred and seventy thousand, five hundred and ninety eight naira, sixteen Kobo (N44, 893, 870, 598.16) only.

Of the total projection, Governor Alia maintained that the recurrent expenditure would stand at one hundred and ten billion, five hundred and eleven million, two hundred and thirty three thousand, nine hundred and sixty five naira, ninety nine Kobo (N110, 511, 233.965.99) only. Personnel cost would be fifty six billion, four hundred and seventy nine million, seven hundred and ninety nine thousand, five hundred and ninety naira, fourteen Kobo (56, 479, 799, 590.14.) only.

He disclosed that non personnel cost or overhead is expected to gulp fifty four billion, thirty one million, four hundred and thirty four thousand, three hundred and seventy five naira eighty four

Kobo (N54, 031, 434, 375, 84.) only. He added that the capital expenditure is expected to gulp one hundred and fifteen billion, two hundred and sixteen million, one hundred and sixty one thousand, two hundred and forty naira ninety nine Kobo (N115, 216, 161, 240.99).

The governor lamented that 2023 recorded poor performance and was highly ridiculous in some sectors. And assured that the 2024 budget would provide infrastructure, create jobs and alleviate poverty.

Responding, Speaker of the House, Mr. Aondona Dajoh commended the governor for the prompt payment of salaries and pensions, road construction, provision of buses for Benue people and assured that the House would give the appropriation bill accelerated hearing for the betterment of Benue people.

PROBATE NOTICE

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

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

NAME OF DECEASED PERSON Fom Silas Jack late of Plateau State died on the 29th April, 2022, at Gen. Hosp. Barkin Ladi LGA, Plateau State.	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT Shedrack Silas Jack, of Kassa Barkin Ladi LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.	NAME OF DECEASED PERSON Yohanna Kaneng Julie late of Plateau State died on the 30th March, 2022 at Gombe State.	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT Emmanuel Yohanna Fom of Abattior Jos South LGA, Plateau State. Lawful brother of the said deceased	NAME OF DECEASED PERSON Maton Isaac Amos late of Plateau State died on the 7th March, 2022 at PSSH, Jos Plateau State.	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT Rhoda Isaac Maton of Forof Kwatas Bokkos LGA, Plateau State. Lawful widow of the said deceased.
NAME OF DECEASED PERSON Istifanus D. C. Kassem late of Plateau State died on the 7th October, 2023 at Gen. Hosp. Shendam LGA Plateau State.	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT Wuruka Kassem Istifanus of Tudun Dorowa Shendam LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased	NAME OF DECEASED PERSON Ayhok Joseph Nehemiah late of Plateau State died on the 29th July, 2019 at Jos, Plateau State.	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT Simon Ayhok & Isaac Ayhok of Angwan Wazari Yakowa Road Kaduna State. Lawful brothers of the said deceased.	NAME OF DECEASED PERSON Azu Iorember Mishael late of Benue State died on the 28th October, 2023 at Jos, Plateau State.	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT Azu Bridget Aki of No.5 Old Airport Road Jos, Plateau State. Lawful widow of the said deceased.
NAME OF DECEASED PERSON Dalung Sylvester Dajan late of Plateau State died on the 10th September, 2022 at Quan-Pan, LGA Plateau State.	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT Dalung Joel Na'anyong of COCIN Church Tudun-Wada Jos North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said	NAME OF DECEASED PERSON Ladi Philip Zih late of Plateau State died on the 7th March, 2010 at Ratsat Rung Foron.	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT Zih Barnabas Philip of Ratsat Rung Foron Barkin/Ladi LGA Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.	NAME OF DECEASED PERSON Danlami Abubakar Jakada late of Plateau State died on the 25th Jan, 2022 at Barkin Ladi LGA, Plateau State.	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT Joshua Danlami (Guardian To) Sharon Danlami (Minor) All of Block 150 Faan Quarters Heipang Barkin Ladi, Plateau State. Lawful sons of the said deceased.
NAME OF DECEASED PERSON Lanem Sylvester late of Benue State died on the 7th March, 2022 at YSSH, Potiskum, Yobe State.	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT Domya Rose Lanem of SacretHeart Catholic Church kabong Gada Biu Jos North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful widow of the said deceased.	NAME OF DECEASED PERSON Mathew Chima Chijioke, late of Plateau State. Died on August 23rd, 2023 at Shendam LGA Plateau State	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT Chijioke Helen of Angwan Poeteng Shimankar, Shendam LGA, Plateau State. Lawful widow of the said deceased.	NAME OF DECEASED PERSON James Dongkur Mairiga, late of Plateau State. Died on November 23rd, 2018 at Rantya, Jos South LGA, Plateau State.	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT Dr. Benedict Baamshal Mairiga of No.1 Goemai close of Sati Gogwin Street Rantya, Jos South LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.
NAME OF DECEASED PERSON Yinusa Raki Ibrahim late of Plateau State. Died on October 21st, 2023 at Kufang, Jos South LGA, Plateau State.	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT Yunisa Umoru Farouk & Salim Ibrahim Ufedojo, All of No. 20 Brown Lang off Kadiri street Lagos State. Lawful son/brother of the said deceased.	NAME OF DECEASED PERSON David Lwet Komgu, late of Plateau State. Died on May 13th, 2023 at Mangu LGA, Plateau State.	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT Komgu Abafaras Dabwonlu of Ruvwang Mangu LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.	NAME OF DECEASED PERSON Muhammed Ibrahim Inuwa, late of Plateau State. Died on October 15th, 2023 at Jos, Plateau State.	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT Bello Ibrahim opp Seminary Katako Jos North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.
NAME OF DECEASED PERSON Pam Jummai, late of Plateau State. Died on July 16th, 2023 at Nasarawa Gwong, Jos North LGA, Plateau State.	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT Bature Kangyang Bulus of COCIN Rim Riyom LGA, Plateau State. Lawful daughter of the said deceased.	NAME OF DECEASED PERSON John Garang, late of Plateau State. Died on May 14th, 2023 at Jos, Plateau State.	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT Aishetu John Garang of No. 6 behind Yelwa Club Bukuru, Jos South LGA, Plateau State.. Lawful widow of the said deceased.	NAME OF DECEASED PERSON Pam Daniel Dung, late of Plateau State. Died on September 21st, 2023 at Heipang, Barkin Ladi LGA, Plateau State.	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT Daniel Emmanuel & Daniel Josephine Pam of Opp. COCIN Church Heipang, Barkin Ladi LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son/daughter of the said deceased.
NAME OF DECEASED PERSON Abdullahi Muhammed Saidu, late of Plateau State. Died on February 16th 2022, at Malam Fatori, Maiduguri.	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT Kabiru Abdullahi of Rikkos Jos North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful brother of the said deceased.	NAME OF DECEASED PERSON Tamanka Samuel Sale, late of Plateau State. Died on the March 26th, 2023, at Jos, Plateau State.	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT Tamanka Monica Kangyang of ECWA Staff Jos North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful widow of the said deceased.	NAME OF DECEASED PERSON Albert Felicia (Also Known As) Albert Felicia Shendat, late of Plateau State. Died on September 13th, 2020 at Jos, Plateau State.	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT Munyon Kenneth John of Jotex Tudun Wada Jos North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.
NAME OF DECEASED PERSON Shezhi Mary late of Plateau State. Died on February 16th, 2012, at Jos, Plateau State.	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT Peter Abba Musa of ECWA Church Utan Jos North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful nephew of the said deceased.	NAME OF DECEASED PERSON Garba Victoria Ashibi late of Plateau State. Died on October 19th, 2023 at Jos, Plateau State.	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT John Nanfa Garba of No. 27 Apollo Crescent Jos North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.	NAME OF DECEASED PERSON Magit Sarah James, late of Plateau State. Died on October 7th, 2020 at Jos, Plateau State.	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT Samson Stephanie Bukar of Police Staff College, Jos South LGA, Plateau State Lawful daughter of the said deceased.
NAME OF DECEASED PERSON Steven Luka Manget (Also Known As) Manget Steve Lucas late of Plateau State. Died on January 27th, 2021 at Mangu LGA Plateau State	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT Uren Elizabeth Steven Manget of Old Legislative quarters Wild Life Park, Jos Plateau State.. Lawful widow of the said deceased.	NAME OF DECEASED PERSON Chohwe Sunday Markus late of Plateau State. Died on November 9th, 2015 at Jos North LGA, Plateau State.	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT Dan Chinge Sunday of Angwan Kasa, Gada Biu, Jos North LGA Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.	NAME OF DECEASED PERSON Williams Obida Manja, late of Plateau State. Died on May 17th, 2023, at Jwak-Maitumbi, Mangu LGA Plateau State.	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT Obidah Charles Manja of Jwak-Maitumbi, Mangu LGA Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.

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

Change of Name

ITODO I, formerly known as RAPHAEL JOEL ITODO , now wish to be known and addressed as ITOIDO JOEL CHIBUZOR . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.	CATHERINE I, formerly known as IBRAHIM CATHERINE BANG , now wish to be known and addressed as CATHERINE BANG GYANG EMMANUEL . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public	MONICA I, formerly known as MONICA CLETUS , now wish to be known and addressed as MONICA DABOEP . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.	JOHN I, formerly known as ABBA JOHN DAUDA , now wish to be known and addressed as JOHN ABBA . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.
RWANG I, formerly known as MWANTIYI SUNDAY , now wish to be known and addressed as RWANG SUNDAY MWANTIYI . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.	AHMAD I, formerly known as AHMADU TORO , now wish to be known and addressed as AHMAD IDRIS TORO . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public please take note.	FRIDAY I, formerly known as AWEYI FRIDAY , now wish to be known and addressed as FRIDAY WEYI . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.	ELIZABETH I, formerly known as ELIZABETH IYABO AJAI , now wish to be known and addressed as ELIZABETH IYABO OKWA . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.
SPACE FOR SALE	SPACE FOR SALE	SPACE FOR SALE	SPACE FOR SALE

PUBLIC NOTICE

LOSS OF DOCUMENT

This is to notified the general public of the loss of Original Certificate of Incorporation and other CAC documents with **RC No. IT/5832** belonging to **CONGREGATION OF THE SISTERS OF OUR LADY OF FATIMA**.

All efforts made to traced the missing document proved abortive.

Concerned authorities to please take note.

**Signed:
Secretary**

DEATH NOTICE

This is to notified the general public of the death of Late Insp. **SUNDAY GYUKS** of Nigeria Police Force, who died on 12th July, 2023 at Lagos and has since been buried.

Concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.

**Signed:
LUCY SABO BLESSING & GIFT
FRANCIS NANSHU**

Water scarcity and health hazard



By VICTOR AII

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Indeed, apart from the



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

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

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

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

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



By YVONNE ISHOLA

ONE of the commonest problems in most families is siblings rivalry. It manifests in a variety of ways. In the formative years, parents often overlook or laugh off their children's expressions of jealousy. A friend once shared how her eldest son was caught in the act of giving his one week old younger sibling some swipes of cane. In this case, it was 3 broomsticks. The baby's high pitched cry was what alerted the mother.

It could have been worst. When asked why he hated his brother so, the 2-year-old said since the mother brought back her baby from the hospital, she had given him little or no attention.

The above example may sound hilarious but could lead to serious issues when not addressed the best way. If not now, in the future.

Parents, child preference and enmity

Parents preference of a child over the other or others has served to bring out the worst in the rejected or unloved child. The worst-case scenario is when it breeds enmity between siblings. A good example is the biblical story of Jacob and Esau, Isaac's famous twins. In their case, the father preferred Esau (because he was an outdoor man and often brought him the game). The mother on the other hand preferred Jacob for the simple fact that he was an indoor man. With the help of his mother, Jacob stole his brother's blessings from their father. That was the last straw on the camel's back. The battle line was drawn.

Esau began seeking revenge. That began a long feud. These twins became sworn enemies who continued fighting all through the pages of the Bible.

The above parents fuelled their children's fight then sat by and watched as they tore each other to pieces. At this point in time, there was nothing they could do to correct their interference with God's plans. It was just God's faithfulness that prevailed.

A middle-aged man was lamenting recently that his mother has labelled him the black sheep of the family. Any time any thing goes wrong in the family especially with his

siblings, she blames it on him. She claims he has run down the family business. This has turned his siblings against him. She warned his elder brother from associating with him if he didn't want to be a drunk. The irony is that he learnt to drink alcoholic drinks through his brother. The man is so bitter and says he misses his dad who is late.

On a lighter note. A man visited a house and asked for the eldest. One of the family members asked if he was looking for the most respected because of his wealth or the eldest in age.

The above anecdote is the reality in most families where parents will dethrone the eldest because he is financially poor and has no social standing. At meetings, his voice will not carry weight

because everyone will always agree with the one who has financial backing. His decision is final. In no time, the eldest would begin to feel unloved and disrespected. This can easily breed disaffection between the eldest and the rich and favourite son.

An embittered lady once disclosed how she was made by her mother to prepare peppered meat for her married younger sister. She did it joyfully, only for her mother to begin ordering her around to serve her younger sister while her sister was treated like royalty. All because she is married to a wealthy man. At the end of the day, she cleaned up after her younger sister and ended up eating the wings out of the whole chicken she prepared.

In some families, it is the brilliant children that are given

preferential treatment. Gifted children are disregarded or treated as dull. This has killed the passion of some gifted children. One of the major reasons why it is said the grave is the richest place on earth because of the many people that die without putting their talents to constructive uses.

Parents have become so materialistic that it is he who pays the piper that dictates the tune. They have thrown morality to the winds and careless whose horse is gored as they look out for their interest.

The word of God says 'wisdom is profitable to direct'. Every parent needs wisdom in handling the home front and the children or we would end up bringing up enemies instead of brothers

"An embittered lady once disclosed how she was made by her mother to prepare peppered meat for her married younger sister. She did it joyfully, only for her mother to begin ordering her around to serve her younger sister while her sister was treated like royalty. All because she is married to a wealthy man. At the end of the day, she cleaned up after her younger sister and ended up eating the wings out of the whole chicken she prepared"

By PETER TITLE

Moses received the Ten Commandments at Mount Sinai in the present day Egypt. These commandments from the Almighty God is glaring in the book of Exodus Chapter 20 verses 1-17. The tablets given to Moses was meant to guard and guide God's creation to be holy in their daily activities so as to gained eternity at the end of their sojourned on earth. The first of the commands amongst others is "Thou shalt have no other gods before me". And this speaks volume to all both Christians as well as other faiths.

Interesting, the Yeshua Kingdom Foundation, where Ten Commandments is located, is not that of Mount Sinai in Egypt. It is a replica of the former, based in Dwei, Du District, Jos South Local Government Area of Plateau State erected by the former Governor of Plateau State, Senator. (Dr). Pastor Jonah David Jang. If you were opportune to be there, it was like Heaven on Earth as gospel artists thrilled the audience non-stop just as dignitaries from all over defied the cold weather to graced this year's Thanksgiving Concert organised by the President and the Management of this foundation.

The Ten commandments monument of the Yeshua Kingdom International Foundation, Dwei, was agog, to say the least as, the Plateau State Executive Governor, Barrister, Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang, renowned preachers of the gospel and gospel musicians, politicians, business men, market women, students and all people from the strata of the society where there to ensure they were part of the occasion.

The date was Friday, 1st December, 2023 and it was the Yeshua Kingdom International, Annual Thanksgiving Concert. By 3:00pm, the Ten Commandments which has the capacity of 6,000 people was filled to capacity with no parking space as well as invited guests keeping to time as well.

The Masters of Ceremonies (MCs), from the famous Jay FM kept the audience on their toes with their rib cracking jokes while the gospel artists added spices and candour to the event. The first artist to performed was Neken Chuwang from the album, Bege Na, followed by, Steve Williz, G- Wills, Ezra Jinang, Apostle Daps amongst others.

When it was the turned of the special guest of honour at the occasion and who is the Executive Governor of Plateau State, Barrister Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang kept audience on their toes by singing special songs and after the rendition reaffirmed his administration's determination to fostering a united and prosperous state, despite the challenges confronting them as a people.

He emphasized the collective responsibility of all citizens in building a peaceful and unified Plateau where people of diverse tribes and faiths coexist harmoniously stressing "We aspire for Plateau to stand united under God, united in the purpose of God, and united in the pursuit of God. I trust that God will bring this vision to fruition in the coming years".

Expressing gratitude for the citizens fervent prayers for the sustenance of peace amid challenges, the Governor was optimistic that Plateau would emerged victorious. He likened the current challenges to the journey from Egypt to the promised land and assured citizens that God would lead them to the land of promise.

"We are confident that God will guide us through the obstacles and grant us the strength to overcome the challenges ahead. This battle is not ours but the Lord's" Mutfwang emphasized.

He appreciated the former Governor and President of the Yeshua Kingdom Foundation, Senator Jonah David Jang for bearing the burden of bringing people together to praise God, and said the event ushers in the yuletide season which is characterized by love, exchange of

The President of the Yeshua Kingdom Foundation, Senator Jang expressed gratitude for God's intervention in Plateau affairs clarifying the ministry's vision centers on worshipping God as well as carrying out His will, emphasizing it's interdenominational in nature.

The Guest Preacher, Pastor Enough A. Adeboye, represented by Apostle Emmanuel Kure, urged believers to be open to God, allowing Him to dwell in their hearts as they walk in truth to please the Lord.



Mutfwang attends Ten Commandments thanksgiving concert



gifts and unity. He encouraged people to utilize the festival of praise as a means to draw closer to God, acknowledging the prevailing spirit of prayer in the state and urging citizens to continue in that direction.

The thanksgiving concert was attended by thousands of worshippers, including dignitaries such as the Gbong Gwom, Jos, Da. Jacob Gyang Buba, Speaker, Plateau State House of

Assembly, Amb. Gabriel Dewan, Secretary to the Government of the State, Arc. Samuel Jatau, Chief of Staff, Government House, Buldr Jeremiah Satmark, State Chairman, People's Democratic (PDP),

Hon. Chris Hassan, Senator Simon Mwadkon, former Minister of Water Resources, Ngo Sarah Reng Ocheke, Commissioners and Head of Service, Plateau State, Mrs Rautha Dakok amongst others.



IMAGES

KKU MATRICULATES PIONEER STUDENTS

The Karl Kum University (KKU) Vom, Jos South LGA matriculated pioneer students of the institute recently at its Permanent Site, Vom by the Vice Chancellor, Prof. Nanven Audu Gambo



Vice Chancellor, Karl Kum University, Prof. Nanven Audu Gambo delivering his speech



Registrar of KKU, Mr. Benjamin Davou Dachomo administering oath



From left are, former COCIN President, Rev. Prof. Soja Bewarang, Rev. Dr. Musa Gotom, Rev. Prof. Pandang Yamsat and Rev. Prof. Dachollom Datiri at the KKU Matriculation



Cross section of pioneer students of KKU taking the oath of the University being administered by the Institution's Registrar



Cross section of royal fathers witnessing the ceremony



COCIN President, Rev. Dr. Amos Musa Mohzo (right) putting heads together with the immediate past Executive Secretary of TETFund, Prof. Suleiman Bogoro



Chief Samuel Mafuyai, retired Reverends Philimon Ruwanfari, Seth Usman Nden (right) with others at the ceremony



COCIN General Secretary, Rev. Associate Prof. Benjamin Pokol (left) outgoing Deputy General Secretary, Rev. Dauda Jimra and others during the KKU matriculation

PHOTOS: KARL KUM UNIVERSITY MEDIA UNIT VOM, JOS SOUTH LGA

Odd World

Beaten by drunk nanny

A mum has shared harrowing pictures of her 2-year-old son in a hospital bed after he was allegedly beaten by an unlicensed care worker who had been drinking.

Stefanie Reichert left her child Giovanni with McKinley Slone Hernandez, 25, at her house on September 1. However, just hours later, her son was left with horrific injuries to his skull and body.

The mum claims she was told by the suspect to rush to the nearby hospital after Giovanni had gone lifeless in the bath. "I received a text message from the suspect saying I needed to rush to St. Anthony's Hospital because my son had gone lifeless after a bath," Stefanie said.

"Once I saw him and all the 50 doctors standing around him, I had to leave the room because it was the worst thing I've ever seen in my life."

The two-year-old had been airlifted to hospital after medics revealed he needed an emergency operation for a bleed on the brain that required part of his skin to be removed. Giovanni was intubated and placed into an induced coma and needed more life-saving operations since. His eventual prognosis is still unclear, according to doctors.

"We had a rough Thanksgiving this year to say the least!" his mother wrote on the child's GoFundMe page. "He had more surgery on Thursday and is still suffering from a fever, pain and discomfort", she added.

"He's pretty swollen and his right eye is swollen shut," she wrote. "He slept most of the day and I'm hoping for a better day tomorrow." The distraught mum, who considered the care worker a "friend" still

has no idea how her son came within an inch of his life.

'She won't admit to anything,' Stefanie, from Lakewood Colorado, Us, told kdvr.com. "All she's said is she was drinking, and he got hurt in her care. I make up scenarios in my head all the time for the injuries he sustained, so I wish I knew."

After spending months in hospital with her son, the mum revealed he doesn't let anybody touch him. "He doesn't like strangers. Now he doesn't like the nurses and the doctors. He doesn't let anybody touch him. We have to do everything for them in there."

Giovanna was described by Stefanie as a previously "happy, healthy, energetic two-year-old". The GoFundMe page, which has raised over \$23,000, added: "As you can imagine, his parents Anthony and Stefanie are completely distraught. We don't want this sweet family to have to worry about anything other than getting their baby boy healthy again."

"Giovanna you are so resilient and so strong, keep fighting baby boy. We love you so much!"

On Thursday, police confirmed a warrant was issued for Hernandez's arrest on felony child abuse charges. She handed herself into Lakewood Police on Thursday evening.

The mum added: "I feel so relieved, but I also feel like she should be charged with more."

"I feel like it's attempted murder, she almost killed my child. You never would think it would happen to you, especially by someone who you consider a friend."

Culled from The Mirror



Rhoda's trial: Unprecedented quagmire

TENSION is gradually mounting in the past few days in most northern states of Nigeria following the reported trial of a Christian woman, Rhoda Jatau in a Sharia Court in Bauchi State where she remained in custody since May 2022 following her comments condemning the brutal lynching of a student Deborah Emmanuel in Sokoto State. Apparently, Jatau, a Healthcare Administrator in Warji Local Government Area of the State has spent at least a year in police detention even as citizens continue to protest over her illegal incarceration. Be that as it may however, the brutal killing of Deborah Emmanuel in Sokoto State has still not taken lightly by civil rights organizations including other stakeholders who have continued to seek for justice for the deceased though the perpetrators of this heinous crime are still at large.

Last Monday, reports indicated that a Bauchi State High Court rejected Rhoda Jatau's "no-case submission" even as Kola Alapinni, lead counsel working for an Abuja based non-profit Foundation for Religious Freedom who is familiar with the case told Al Jazeera that a defence team was expected to make a case when the court sits again in December.

Due to crude fanatical nature of the unacceptable killing of Deborah Emmanuel and the lackadaisical approach to apprehending the suspects, many Nigerians have today become so discouraged on the matter after an unconfirmed report revealed that the suspects who were caught on video committing the crime had managed to escape from the shores of this country. Rhoda Jatau, a Christian and a mother of five children has been imprisoned since May 2022 for allegedly sharing a video condemning the killing of the deceased Nigerian student who was murdered and set on fire by a mob.

Unfortunately, while the killers of Deborah are still at large, an innocent person who only protested over this brutal act is left languishing in incarceration. This is perhaps not the first time that innocent Nigerians are dragged into such an ugly situation without any measures taken to avoid a repeat. A few months back, another innocent citizen, Usman Buda was gruesomely killed after he was framed-up of blasphemy by some unscrupulous elements in Sokoto State. This man was alleged to have blasphemed against Prophet Mohammed only for it to be later discovered after he was killed that it was a complete frame-up. The deceased met his death after an angry mob in a broad daylight bombarded him with stones as captured in that unfortunate video. After he death; it was discovered that the confrontation was sparked off by a theological debate when a beggar started asking for money from passers-by.

As a journalist who has during my course of assignment covered almost all the states of the northern region of this country, it is on record that Christian minorities in some of these Muslim dominated states have not found things

that easy for themselves. Aside unjustified acts of brutal killings; their girls have been forcefully married against the wishes of their parents to Muslim spouses. In some extreme cases, these parents are replaced by hired parents who are Muslims even as the victims are married off without their consent. In many of these place where religious extremism is tolerated, Certificates of Occupancy are not issued for churches to be built there. Thus, where these churches have already been built, government authorities find all fallacious reasons to pull them down.

But again, there are still several examples of unabated intimidation and killings of Christians with impunity in the northern parts of the nation in the past few decades. This negative development has raised fundamental concerns on what measures should be efficiently employed to mitigate the increasing cases of religiously motivated killings with impunity on the land.

But again, it is a known fact that the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria frowns at either extrajudicial killing or jungle justice of any sort. In fact, the constitution in Section 33(1) provides that " every person has a right to life and no one shall be deprived intentionally of his life, save in execution of the sentence of a court in respect of a criminal offence of which he has been found guilty in Nigeria."

According to available statistics and that of the SB Morgen's report in particular, 279 mob justice incidents happened leading to the death of at least 391 individuals between 2019 and 2022 out of which 223 of the cases happened in the south while the remaining 168 occurred in the northern part of the country. As years rolled by however, it has become more evident that this nasty situation is proliferating beyond comprehension in the northern part of Nigeria than in any other region of the nation.

Beyond this unpleasant experience, Christian children are compulsorily made to offer Islamic studies in some of their High Schools which is not the case in Christian dominated states.

Many scholars and community leaders have in the last few years attributed such gruesome acts of inhumanity to religious extremism, intolerance and lack of fear of God in contemporary times. However, some stakeholders have also significantly acknowledged that high degree of ignorance and illiteracy must have also been some of the major factors contributing to this societal menace.

It is against the backdrop of this unfortunate unfolding developments that more efforts need to be done to help ensure that religiously motivated killings are halted in Nigeria once and for all. Therefore, effective and efficient legislations must be put in place to help ensure the protection of Nigeria citizens from getting killed in such a gruesome and inhumane manner with impunity.

Feature

Fuel subsidy removal: Bitter pill for Nigerians

By ADAMU RABIU

THE removal of fuel subsidy by the government in Nigeria sparked a lot of controversies and criticisms from various quarters. The government claims that the subsidy removal is necessary to free up funds for infrastructure development, social welfare, and economic diversification. However, many Nigerians are not convinced by this argument, as they see the subsidy removal as a betrayal of the electoral promises and a burden on the already suffering masses.

The fuel subsidy removal has led to a sharp increase in the pump price of petrol to above N630 per litre in many places, which is an unprecedented hike. This has had a ripple effect on the prices of other goods and services, such as transportation, food, school fees, and health care, etc. The inflation rate has risen to above 27 per cent, the highest ever recorded. The naira has also depreciated against the dollar, and it is now exchanging for more than N800 to \$1 officially, while trading about N1,160 to \$1 in the black market, which is a difference of almost N500 between both markets. These factors have eroded the purchasing power and the standard of living of many Nigerians, especially the most vulnerable, the self-employed, and the unemployed.

The fuel subsidy removal has also triggered a wave of half-hearted protests and strikes, as many Nigerians have expressed their dissatisfaction and anger with the government's decision, while some have adopted a 'siddon-look' approach. The labour unions, civil society groups, and opposition parties have called for a reversal of the policy or a reduction of the pump price. They have also



demanded for an increase in workers who are in the which could be better spent on government to account for the the minimum wage, a review of minority. This show how other sectors. They also savings from the subsidy removal and to ensure the electricity tariff, and an end shortsighted the labour unions claimed that the subsidy was transparen and to ensure to corruption and are. Meanwhile, with the benefiting the rich more than t r a n s p a r e n c y a n d accountability in the oil sector. mismanagement in the oil and hardship that the masses of the poor, as the rich consume accountabi in the oil sector. other sectors. The Nigerians are facing, the more fuel. They further The fuel subsidy removal is a bitter pill for 99 per cent of government, on the other National Assembly members asserted that the subsidy was bitter pill for 99 per cent of Nigerians, who are struggling hand, has appealed for have carted home N160 million encouraging the smuggling, Nigerians, who are struggling patience and understanding, brand new Toyota Landcruiser hoarding, and diversion of fuel to cope with the economic recession and security challenges in the country. The policy has exposed the deep- the best interest of the nation and The fuel subsidy removal is a contentious and complex issue that has divided the nation. On the other hand, some analysts and experts have supported the policy, arguing that the subsidy was unsustainable, inefficient, and prone to abuse. They pointed out that the subsidy was costing the government about N1 trillion annually, and appeals is that on the part of the labour unions they have failed to negotiate for the most vulnerable: the self-employed, and the unemployed, and the state civil servants, and they only negotiated for the federal

"The fuel subsidy removal is a contentious and complex issue that has divided the nation. On one hand, some analysts and experts have supported the policy, arguing that the subsidy was unsustainable, inefficient, and prone to abuse. They pointed out that the subsidy was costing the government about N1 trillion annually, which could be better spent on other sectors. They also claimed that the subsidy was benefiting the rich more than the poor, as the rich consume more fuel. They further asserted that the subsidy was encouraging the smuggling, hoarding, and diversion of fuel to neighbouring countries, where the prices were higher. They have therefore urged the government to stick to its decision and to implement other reforms to cushion the impact of the policy on the people".

On the other hand, some critics and activists have opposed the removal, arguing that the subsidy was a social contract and right of the people. They have contended that the subsidy was providing some relief and subsidy to the people, who are already facing many challenges and hardships. They have also questioned the timing and the manner of the policy, saying that the government should have consulted and carried the people along before taking such a drastic step. They have further challenged the

On the other hand, some critics and activists have opposed the removal, arguing that the subsidy was a social contract and right of the people. They have contended that the subsidy was providing some relief and subsidy to the people, who are already facing many challenges and hardships. They have also questioned the timing and the manner of the policy, saying that the government should have consulted and carried the people along before taking such a drastic step. They have further challenged the

government to account for the savings from the subsidy removal and to ensure transparen and to ensure accountability in the oil sector.

The fuel subsidy removal is a bitter pill for 99 per cent of Nigerians, who are struggling to cope with the economic recession and security challenges in the country. The policy has exposed the deep-rooted problems and structural imbalances in the Nigerian economy, which is heavily dependent on oil revenue and imports. It has also tested the trust and the confidence of the people in the government, which came to power on the platform of change and hope.

In conclusion, all the arguments put forward by the supporters and critics of the fuel subsidy policy are valid. However, to sum all the arguments up, where are the savings going to come from when, in the first instance, it's a deficit budget being run and it is also a deficit budget that was presented a few days back? Will palliative distribution and CNG buses be the way out?

It sounds absurd.

News

PLSG reaffirms readiness to provide environmental friendly policies

BY JIDAUNA DARING

COMMISSIONER for Environment, Climate Change and Mineral Development Plateau State, Hon. Peter L. Gwom has reaffirmed the State Government's readiness to provide environmental friendly policies for all and sundry in the state.

Hon. Gwom who was represented by the Permanent Secretary of the ministry, Lydia Vongkat, stated this at a two day stakeholders consultation and engagement meeting towards achieving Open Defecation Free (ODF) urban communities organized by Plateau State Environmental Protection and Sanitation Agency (PEPSA), held at the De-bridge Hotel Jos, recently.

The commissioner emphasized the need for Plateau State from now henceforth to be rated as PDF state, saying that to achieve this feat, all hands must be on deck when it comes to sanitation in the state.

Earlier in her remarks, Acting General Manager, PEPSA. Anthonia M. Shalwul expressed delight and thanked the participants for honouring the invitation for the workshop. She advised them to give attention to all presentations during the technical session.

Shalwul said that despite the efforts made over the years on sanitation, Open Defecation (OD) still remains a public health crisis in Nigeria. She pointed out that in the North central states, Plateau is ranked second to last in OD.

She maintained that PEPSA is implementing Urban Sanitation in the Sustainable Urban Rural Water Supply Sanitation and Hygiene (SURWASH) project in the state.

Shalwul added that the main objectives of SURWASH were to provide access to water and sanitation service across rural communities, municipalities and urban centres in the state. She pointed out that the agency is leveraging on the presence of the project to provide maximum sanitation services in line with city wide inclusiveness in the urban centre.

The acting GM disclosed that this cannot be achieved without capacity building or training of its staff to respond when it comes to addressing sanitation issues in Jos and Bukuru metropolis.

She remarked that PEPSA, as the leading agency in urban sanitation in the state, desires to have a strong communication and stakeholders engagement to ensure that all stakeholders were informed and consulted before and during the project implementation, to influence projects activities positively.

Shalwul also told the participants that the purpose of the workshop was to



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interface with both primary and secondary stakeholders for urban sanitation to achieve OD by mitigating, networking to create trust among stakeholders, soliciting commitment, consensus and ownership by all stakeholders to ensure improved toilet facilities are provided in all households among others. Reading the objectives of the meeting before the technical session, SURWASH Sanitation and Hygiene Officer, Mrs. Theresa Gyang, stated that the objectives were to provide information on the current sanitation in the state, to raise awareness on the SURWASH programme in the state to synergise with stakeholders

and define roles and responsibilities to develop strategies and action plan for attainment of ODF communities.

Some of the participants who spoke with THE NIGERIA STANDARD said that the programme if implemented would go a long way in addressing the increasing rate of OD in the state.

Our correspondent reports that the workshop featured presentation of overview of SURWASH programme in Nigeria by Plateau State Project Coordinator, Engr. Jonathan Malann, presentation on stakeholder mapping and stakeholder identification among others.

Kogi begins process to domesticate NGP

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

THE Kogi State Government has commenced the process to domesticate the National Gender Policy and its framework

The development is in line with the National Gender Policy which provides guidelines for mainstreaming gender in various sectors of the economy with the overall

goal of reducing gender inequalities and enhancing participation of women, men, girls and boys in socio-economic and political development.

Kogi State Commissioner for Women Affairs and Social Development, Hajia Fatima Kabir Buba while distributing copies of the National Gender Policy in Lokoja at the weekend, said the domestication of the policy will address gender equality,



Buba

From JIDAUNA YANUNG, Abuja

WORRIED by the security situations in the country, the Department of State Services, DSS had concluded plans to deploy locally-produced unmanned aerial vehicle drones, Ak-47 rifles and other platforms as part of operational measures to contain insecurity in the country.

Director General of the agency, Alhaji Yusuf Bichi stated this during his presentation at the graduation ceremony of the Executive Intelligence Management Course EIMC 16 held at the National Institute for Security Studies NISS, In Abuja recently.

While pledging the readiness of the security service to continue to use actionable intelligence for relevant agencies of government, Bichi cautioned citizens against disparaging the leaders.

The event was a culmination of a 10-month strategic and leadership

Disability agency bill excites PWDs in Gombe

underway to establish an agency to cater for the unique needs and welfare of people with disabilities.

THE proposal by the Gombe State Government to establish a law to address stigmatisation, discrimination and other negative attitudes towards people living with disabilities is already exciting members of the Joint National Association of People Living with Disabilities (JONAPWD) in the State.

The State Governor, Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya had in a press statement through his Chief Media Aide, Ismaila Uba Misilli, to mark this year's World Disabilities Day, said efforts are

Insecurity: DSS to deploy drones

programme for 86 course participants with Representatives from Chad, Gambia and Rwanda.

Continuing, the Director General further stated that the agency will continue to pay attention to research and

development among others. He said, "Nigeria is a great and God-gifted country. We have the indices of a great nation, let us avoid pull-him-down syndrome".



Edeh

match because the governor was mourning the death of a prominent politician in the state.

In the statement, the governor promised that "a bill which will seek to create this agency has received the full attention and support of this administration", pledging that, "upon its submission and passage by the State House of Assembly, I will expedite its enactment into law to ensure that the voices and concerns of PWD's are comprehensively addressed".

However, during their own activity to celebrate the 2023 World Disabilities Day with a plan to march to the Government House for a 'thank you' rally, they shelved the

They however assembled at their office in Kasuwan Mata Quarters to receive speeches, talk to themselves and pray for the State Government and also continue to appeal to the governor to accelerate the passing of the bill for the protection of their rights.

Chairman, Gombe State chapter of JONAPWD, Mr Ishiyaku Adamu while speaking to journalists on the sidelines of their celebration at Kasuwan Mata, expressed the member's happiness over the proposed bill. He said, "The governor had personally called us that he was ready to receive us but for the unfortunate death of the Chairman of Gombe Local Government Area and we understand the situation".

According to him, it is a big step forward in terms of promoting the rights of persons with disabilities in Gombe State. He further said that it is timely considering the theme for this year which is "United in action to rescue and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals for, with and by persons with disabilities".

Expressing his members' delight, he said, "You can see that we are having some laws and policies, especially at the national level that will help us.

"Even at the state level, we can see the press release by the governor on 3rd December, 2023, which is the actual day of the celebration. He promised that he is going to pass the State Disability Act and he is going to establish a commission that will cater for the interest of persons with disabilities in the state which we disabled persons have never heard of. The governor himself will make a press release commemorating the day for us. So for us it's a big step forward", he gladly said

Speaking on their acceptability in the society, Mr Ishiyaku said, "We are making progress", but noted that more needs to be done in terms of acceptability and removing barriers for people with disabilities.

He said, "We are still grappling with some issues, discrimination. A lot of our members are facing that and we have challenges in terms of accessing education, health and other employment opportunities for our people".

The International Day of People Living with Disability was set aside in 1992 by the United Nations to celebrate the rights and Independence of people living with disabilities all over the world.

statement encapsulates the essence of our struggle: A fight not just to respond to the devastating consequences of violence, but to prevent it from occurring in the first place".

While noting that violence against women and girls is a global epidemic that knows no boundaries, Akinola emphasized that it permeates every corner of society, transcending race, religion, and socio-economic status. She stressed that it is a violation of human rights and an obstacle to gender equality.

She said "In Kogi State, we do not have official statistics of violence against women; however, despite the tireless efforts of many, the reality remains harsh. Women face domestic violence, sexual harassment and harmful traditional practices.

"But we must not let these statistics define us. We must not become numb to the cries of pain and injustice. Instead, let these statistics be a clarion call, urging us to rise up and demand change. To combat this pervasive issue, we must invest in prevention. The theme "Invest to Prevent" is crucial because it highlights the need for a shift in our approach.

"We need to move beyond reactive measures and invest in prevention initiatives that address the root causes of violence. These investments include: Empowering women and girls through education and economic opportunities".

Sports



Guardiola

Is Man City's 'mini-crisis' over?

By **CHRIS BEVAN**

CITY'S stuttering season was facing another serious setback at half-time of Sunday's game at Luton, with last year's Treble winners 1-0 down and facing the prospect of a fifth straight Premier League game without a win.

Two second-half goals in the space of three minutes from Bernardo Silva and Jack Grealish rescued Pep Guardiola's side, however, and City's fightback provided the perfect response to anyone doubting their credentials for another title defence.

"The team showed their character, but that didn't surprise me at all," said former City defender Micah Richards, who watched their 2-1 win at Kenilworth Road for MOTD2.

"Whenever people talk negatively about them, it just spurs them on.

"I wouldn't say Pep has been touchy recently, but it is like he is taking that criticism and going 'well, if that's what you think, we will show you', and the whole team has got that attitude too.

"They might not win the title, although I believe they will, but they will fight to the end. If someone else does beat them to it, then it is going to be very close."

Guardiola hit back at Gary Neville after last weekend's draw with Spurs, when the Sky pundit claimed City had become "complacent" after winning three titles in a row.

Richards understands why Pep was so unhappy at his side being given that label, and feels it was unfair.

"I don't think 'complacent' was the right word Gary was looking for," Richards said. "I wanted to be sure, so I actually looked it up in the dictionary to be certain about its exact definition.

"It means being so self-satisfied and uncritical of yourselves because of success that you don't even try your hardest, and that's definitely not Pep, or the City side I see.

"I could be wrong, but I don't think that's what Gary meant. I think he just meant that, by their high standards, City are letting teams back into games, where normally they would be ruthless and finish them off.

"If you look at those games they drew, against Chelsea, Liverpool and Tottenham, they had opportunities to wrap all three of them up - if, say, Erling Haaland takes his chance when City are 2-1 up against Spurs, we would not be having this conversation.

"That is not down to a lack of hunger, though, or the team taking their foot off the gas. It never is."

Instead, Richards feels City have missed some of their usual game-changers, with new arrivals like Mateo Kovacic and Matheus Nunes unable to make the same impact in close games.

"People need to remember that Kevin de Bruyne has been out since the start of the season, and City lost Ilkay Gundogan and Riyad Mahrez in the summer," he added.

"The thing I loved about Mahrez was that even if he wasn't playing well, he would always finish games off and get City over the line in vital moments.

"Gundogan and De Bruyne obviously did that a lot too, as well as being such a key part of the way City play. Of course they are missing all three of them in midfield.

"I thought Kovacic played well against Luton but it has been hard for him to come in and adjust to City's system, and it's the same for Nunes as well.

"They are used to playing a certain way but now they have got centre-halves coming into their midfield space, and full-backs too.

"Josko Gvardiol has also found it difficult, because he is one of the best young centre-halves in the world, but Guardiola wants to use him at left-back. It is not as if he is asking him to tuck in, either, because he was flying forward all the time against Luton.

"That's Pep for you - he puts City's system before any player - but I know myself that asking a centre-half to go into full-back areas is not easy to pull off.

"The distances you keep to opposition players are very different to when you are in the middle, and it is easy to be exposed in one on one situations out wide.

"Gvardiol is an excellent defender but he does not want to be out there, stopping crosses and all of that. As he found against Luton, it only takes one small mistake to lead to a goal."

City were a point clear at the top of the table after they beat Bournemouth 6-1 on 4 November, before three consecutive draws and Wednesday's defeat by Aston Villa meant they lost ground on their title rivals.

But Richards does not think their performances dipped significantly during that winless run, and instead claims they have not been at their best defensively all season.

"There has been a big conversation about what's been wrong with City recently, but they have not actually been playing that badly in the past few weeks," he explained.

"What is concerning me, though, because I watch City all the time, is what they are like on the transition, when they lose the ball - and not just in the past few games either.

"They look a little bit more vulnerable this season, and that's the worry for me. I feel for the defenders because once the opposition breaks

past Rodri, it is often three versus two, or four on three at the back.

"Normally they would deal with that, so I wouldn't say it's down to naivety, but City have been conceding more goals in the big moments this season.

"I think losing John Stones, who has started only four out of 16 league games because of injury, has been a massive blow.

"Not just in terms of him as a player who can use the ball, but off it as well. He is such a calm head in those situations and also so good at winning possession in midfield. It makes a huge difference to have him back in the team."

City's latest injury concern is Haaland, who missed Sunday's game due to a foot injury. Guardiola is unsure exactly when he will be fit to return.

It was the first meaningful league match the prolific Norwegian striker had missed since 1 April, when City beat Liverpool 4-1, but Richards feels their performance against Luton shows they can still cope when he is absent.

"If Haaland is out long-term, then I

wouldn't worry," Richards added. "I'd still be optimistic about City, and I like what they are doing.

"Against Luton, they tweaked their shape and allowed Phil Foden to play in a number 10 role. With him in the centre, you are always going to create something."

City are four points behind leaders Liverpool but are actually closer to the summit than they were at this stage last season, when they were seven points adrift of Arsenal after 16 games, and still ended up winning the title with three games to spare.

"Liverpool have got away with it a bit this week, with two late winners," Richards added.

"No-one knows what kind of performance you are going to get from them at the moment, but going forward they always look like they are going to produce when Mohamed Salah is in the team.

"It's the same with Arsenal, who have not been at their brilliant best like last season, but they have still been getting over the line most of the time.

"Another of my old clubs, Aston Villa, have had a fantastic week and I can't speak highly enough of the job Unai Emery has done, but it is going to be very hard for them to sustain that over a long period of time.

"I watch them and think they are an excellent side, but if they lost Ollie Watkins or John McGinn to injury then their team would be totally different.

"We've already seen that happen to Tottenham, when they lost James Maddison and their two first-choice centre-halves, although Cristian Romero is back now after suspension.

"That's the biggest difference between those teams and City, who can replace players without it affecting them as much.

"It's exciting to have a few teams in the race but I still believe City are best placed to win the league, just because of the amount of quality they have in their squad.

"I think people forget that they often have this kind of spell at this time of the year, where they drop points - but come the end of the season it is usually party time again!"



Sports

Osimhen, Oshoala named African Players best of 2023

NIGERIA'S Victor Osimhen and Asisat Oshoala won the biggest individual awards at the CAF Awards 2023 in the Moroccan city of Marrakech on Monday night, 11 December 2023.

Osimhen, the Nigerian striker who made headlines in Italy and also for his contribution in the Super Eagles jersey, won the CAF African Player of the Year for the first time while his compatriot, Oshoala won her record sixth CAF African Women's Player of the Year.

Osimhen's remarkable journey saw him fend off stiff competition from Moroccan full-back Achraf Hakimi and Egyptian striker Mohammed Salah.

Nigerian icon Oshoala secured the CAF Women's Player of the Year for a record sixth time. The attacker's dominance continued as she inspired Barcelona to Champions League glory, finishing as the club's top scorer with 27 goals across all competitions.

Morocco's Walid Regragui was crowned CAF's Best Coach of the Year in the Men's category – recognised for guiding the Atlas Lions to a historic World Cup semi-final run in Qatar.

South Africa's Desiree Ellis secured the Best Coach award in the women's category for her outstanding work with *Banyana Banyana*. This was Ellis' record fourth award in this category, which she has won consistently since 2018.

In CAF InterClub, South Africa and Al Ahly's Percy Tau won the CAF InterClub Player of the Year.

Senegal's Lamine Camara, the 19-year-old FC Metz forward, clinched the CAF Young Player of the Year award, marking his meteoric



Osimhen wins first CAF African Player of the Year award in the men's category while Asisat Oshoala extends a record sixth CAF African Women's Player of the Year Award

rise in African football.

Moroccan prodigy Nesryne El Chad won the inaugural CAF Women's Young Player of the Year award.

Morocco won the Men's National Team award following their performance at the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, while Nigeria won the Women's National Team of the Year award.

Egyptian giants Al Ahly clinched the Male Club of the Year award, with the women's award going to South African side Mamelodi Sundowns.

South Africa dominated the continent's Best XI players in the Women Category while two members of Morocco's World Cup semi-final team were included in the male version.

The ultimate winners in each category were decided through a voting process involving a panel comprising CAF Technical Committee, Head Coaches, National Team captains and media professionals.

Full List of Award Winners:
Player of the Year (Men):

Victor Osimhen (Nigeria, Napoli). **Player of the Year (Women):** Asisat Oshoala (Nigeria, Barcelona).

Interclub Player of the Year (Men): Percy Tau (South Africa, Al Ahly).

Interclub Player of the Year (Women): Fatima Tagnaout (Morocco, AS FAR).

Coach of the Year (Men): Walid Regragui (Morocco).

Coach of the Year (Women): Desiree Ellis (South Africa). **Goalkeeper of the Year (Men):** Yassine Bounou (Morocco, Al Hilal).

Goalkeeper of the Year (Women): Chiamaka Nnadozie (Nigeria, Paris FC).

Young Player of the Year (Men): Lamine Camara (Senegal, Metz). **Young Player of the Year (Women):** Nesryne El Chad (Morocco, Lille).

National Team of the Year (Men): Morocco. **National Team of the Year (Women):** Nigeria.

Club of the Year (Men): Al Ahly (Egypt). **Club of the Year (Women):** Mamelodi Sundowns (South Africa)

AFCON on more than three occasions, after Egypt (7), Cameroon (5) and Ghana (4).

Four of the countries Peseiro picked to be crowned winners of the AFCON flew Africa's flag at the 2022 World Cup including the Atlas Lions of

FORMER Barcelona winger, Emmanuel Amunike, has cleared the air on his choice of Mohamed Salah over Victor Osimhen when African legends were asked about their pick for the 2023 African Player of the Year crown, Soccer.net.ng reports.

In the viral video posted on CAF's social media handles prior to the announcement, the former Super Eagles forward voiced his preference for the Egypt and Liverpool star.

That sparked a backlash among Nigerians as the 52-year-old was tagged as 'unpatriotic' while some felt he was being envious of the Napoli star – who emerged as Africa's best having overcome Salah and Morocco star Achraf Hakimi.

Amid the rage, Amunike had little patience with the undermining comments from his countrymen, while insinuating that he was quoted out of context.

"Good morning house, I want to use this opportunity to clear what some of you are saying in this platform. With all due respect to every one of you that I owe with high regard," the 1994 African Player of the Year said on Nigerian Sports Village Square moderated by veteran journalist Osasu Obayiuwana.

"First of all, I want you to understand the rumours that you guys are [spreading] concerning me not voting Osimhen. I was never elected to vote.

"On our way to the novelty game that we played in

Why I didn't vote for Osimhen

-Amunike

Marrakech here, a former player and captain of the Egyptian national team – who is preparing himself to become a TV producer in Egypt – with his group, he was debating on the Arabian team, and he raised the question between Hakimi and Salah.

"There was a time Osimhen was mentioned in that discussion. He came to me and asked 'Hakimi or Salah'. I have to say Salah. And the reason why I said Salah was because I played in Egypt, I lived in Egypt and I know some of the guys there."

For context, Osimhen was part of Amunike's Nigeria U17 squad that won the 2015 FIFA U17 World Cup. There, the Lagos-born goal machine scooped the Golden Boot and Silver Ball honours.

Amunike continued: "So, there is nothing like voting

against Osimhen. Osimhen is our player and our boy. We are happy about what he has achieved, and we hope he would continue to dream and achieve more for the betterment of his career and the betterment of Nigeria.

"It has come to a time in our culture in Nigeria – with all due respect to you guys, we should stop spreading false news and stop creating false impressions among the people. We are journalists, and our responsibility is to inform the public what is right."

Osimhen, 24, scored 31 goals in 39 matches for the Italian side last season as they won their first Serie A title since 1990.

He joins Rasheed Yekini, Amunike, Nwankwo Kanu and Victor Ikpeba in the hallowed ranks of Nigerians to have claimed the award.



Osimhen salutes Amunike

SUPER Eagles forward, Victor Osimhen publicly acknowledged Nigerian legend and former Golden Eaglets coach, Emmanuel Amunike for his significant impact on his flourishing football career, Soccer.net.ng reports.

During the CAF Awards held in Morocco, Osimhen, while

accepting the esteemed African Men's Footballer of the Year award, expressed his gratitude.

Osimhen who was formerly the Young Player of the Year in 2015 came to the limelight under the guidance of the former Barcelona winger during the under-17 World Cup

campaign.

He attributed a substantial part of his success to Amunike, stressing that without his mentorship, achieving such recognition in the world of football would have been an improbable feat.

"Good evening ladies and gentlemen. First of all, I want to say thank you God for everything. Special thanks goes to Emmanuel Amunike. Without him, I don't think I would be standing in front of you guys holding one of the most prestigious awards in world football. It's a dream come true for me," he said.

Breaking a 24-year gap since Nwankwo Kanu's last victory in 1999, Osimhen became the first Nigerian player to claim the African Men's Footballer of the Year award.

His triumph over formidable competitors like Egypt's Mohamed Salah and Morocco's Achraf Hakimi marked a significant milestone in his career.

Notably, Osimhen stood out as the sole Nigerian player selected in the prestigious CAF 2023 Best XI (Men).

The turning point in Osimhen's journey unfolded in 2015 when he led the Nigerian U-17 team to a glorious victory in the FIFA U-17 World Cup.

His outstanding performance earned him both the Golden Boot and the Silver Ball accolades, setting the stage for his remarkable ascent in the football world.

Peseiro names Senegal, Morocco among

NIGERIA manager Jose Peseiro has made it clear that the Super Eagles are competing with other strong national teams to win the 2023 Africa Cup of Nations.

Apart from Nigeria, the Portuguese football tactician

listed Tunisia, Morocco, Senegal, Cameroon and Ivory Coast as his favourites to win the 2023 Africa Cup of Nations which kicks off in Ivory Coast on January 13, 2024.

Nigeria, under Jose Peseiro, are aiming to become only the fourth Africa team to win the

Morocco who caused a sensation by reaching the semifinals of last year's tournament in Qatar.

The former Venezuela and Saudi Arabia coach underlined that there's no margin for error at the upcoming Africa

cup of Nations and has set a goal for the team.

Speaking to celebrated Italian newspaper *La Gazzetta dello Sport* (subscription required), Peseiro said: "Getting through the group stage is the minimum objective. We are in a group with Equatorial Guinea, Guinea-Bissau and Ivory Coast, the host nation. It is not possible to make a mistake. And then we are not the only ones among the favourites: Tunisia, Morocco, Senegal, Cameroon, Ivory Coast."

"When I signed, the minimum goal was to qualify. Now we have to raise the bar, and to do that I need my best players."

The Super Eagles begin their campaign at the 2023 Africa Cup of Nations against Equatorial Guinea at Alassane Ouattara Stadium, Abidjan on January 14, and then they face host nation Ivory Coast four days later, before wrapping up group play against Guinea-Bissau at the iconic Felix Houphouet Boigny Stadium, Abidjan on January 22.



Sports

Nigeria is a great country to represent- Chris Madaki

By BULUS GAMBO

NIGERIA, the most populous black nation in the world and the crowded in the African continent is home to the round leather game. Past decades, football has been a game which has continued to flourish across nooks and crannies of the nation.

Though in the past few years, the dismal accomplishments of the Super Eagles and some of its aged graded teams have become a source of concern and worry, the fact still remains, many more talents are still not given the opportunity to represent this nation at continental and international competitions. Some of these talents who are found in our domestic leagues and are always ready to represent Nigeria if given the opportunity to do so.

One of such talents is Katsina United's reliable player Chris Madaki. The Plateau State born player has in the past few years proven his worth in the domestic league which has tempted more teams to always look forward to signing him to play for them. Obviously, Madaki's sincere commitment and hard work has seen him playing for several top club sides before settling for the Katsina United football club this season.

Right from his kindergarten years, Madaki knew the tremendous talents he had in football. Though Madaki came from a humble background, he also knew that hard work and discipline paid as far as the game of football is concern. Perhaps, that was the more reason why the promising player decided to follow his dream with the whole



Chris Madaki of his heart.

Speaking with our correspondent, Madaki explained that 'I never had it all rosy considering the challenges which confronted some of us then. Coming from a humble background and without knowing anybody upstairs, it is only when one is focused and prayerfully

determined that a breakthrough happens'

According to him, some of us had every reason to give up when we started considering the hurdles before us. There were days we went for training on empty stomach but it did not deter us from recoding success. We were pushed beyond limits but we endured and kept moving.' 'We played streets football and I played for Giwa United here in Jos, played for JUTH FC and before the breakthrough came. But I can tell you that it was not easy at all. God was able to see us and me in particular through all these difficulties and I give him all the praise.'

Prospects with Katsina United

My coming to Katsina United is God's planned. I believe that in all the steps I take in life and my career, God is always there for me. I thank God and the management of this club for opportunity to prove myself. Katsina United is basically one of the big football clubs in Nigeria. The club has played both national and continental competitions and has proved its worth. Basically, the club will continue to do well in the league.

Our present coach is an experienced one and we have a solid team which with God on our side and determination, we will go far. All that is expected of us as a team is to work extra hard so that we can succeed.

I am determined to put in my best for our team and I also know that the rest of my teammates are also determined. Holistically, though it may not be that easy,

but I am optimistic that our impact will be felt at the domestic league and by God's grace, things will turnout good for the team this season.

Past experiences in the Nigeria League

BY God's grace, I have garnered some basic experience in the league. Mind you, I have played for many club sides in the country. I played for Giwa United here in Jos, played for JUTH FC and Plateau United. I also played for Nasarawa United FC and Kano Pillars where I was the second Captain and now with Katsina United. I think I have had tremendous experience in the domestic league in Nigeria. My journey in the league has been fruitful and I can't thank God enough.

Each journey has been a challenging one, sometimes difficult but serves as a door opener. I am a professional footballer and must try to adapt to every and any situation I find myself in. I think by God's grace; I am going places even as I know more opportunities are on the way. So far so good and I give God the glory.

CHAN competition 2018

To be invited to represent my country to play the African Nations Cup for Home Based Players is a wonderful opportunity for me. Though we were unable to make it to the second round of the competition, I think we did our best. Nigeria is a big country with many promising footballers, so if one is picked out of the many we have, it is a great opportunity which must not be taken for granted. Therefore, I am grateful

and I thank God for this wonderful experience in life.

Dreams of playing in Europe

Every player's dream is to play in Europe. I think playing there exposes one to better opportunities and better source of income. In Europe, one is always able to get the best experience you can think of. I hope to be there in the nearest future and I am working towards that. However, one must be focused on this club and think of giving them my best first. With God by my side, I hope to consolidate on my career and move forward in no distance time.

Challenges in Nigeria Professional League

All professional leagues across the world have their own prospects and hurdles. Therefore, Nigeria is not an exception. However, there is always room for improvement. We are growing and one day we will get there. We only need an enabling environment, good facilities and welfare to enable players sustain their form.

Future plans

I have great plans but I know God is in the centre of it all. Definitely my future is in the hands of God. But for now, I am concentrating on helping my team to make an impact at the domestic league.

MESSAGE TO YOUR FANS

I wish to thank all my fans for their support. I know that we have come a long way together and I will always work hard not to disappoint them. I believe we have great things to anticipate and God helping I will not disappoint them.



Madaki during a league match



Quest



writer

BULLAMA SAMUEL BULUS, PhD

FRAGMENT

"To teach the natives how to read and write in their language so that they could read the Bible in their own language and at later stage to train them for evangelistic work, and to produce teachers for primary and Bible schools. Other reasons for the teaching of western education include the production of auxiliary medical personnel and some low-level manpower for colonial administration and eventually church ministers."

BULLAMA SAMUEL BULUS, PhD

School Apostolate as Mission Strategy in Gombe Division

"The 18th century missionary zeal emerged among the Methodist mission, Anglican, and protestants Christian Mission with the desire to institute various missionary societies and associations to spread Christianity to other part of the world" (Turaki 20). The reason for the emergence of the missionary zeal was as a result of "anti-slavery movement" (Akamisoke 1), "radical philosophies and enlightenment" (Odibi 15) and "rise of industrial capitalism in Europe and United states" (Eckman 78). Hence, "the Baptist Mission which was formed in 1792, the London Missionary Society in 1795" (Vilhanova 250), "Church Missionary Society in 1799". (Babalola 8). And the "Wesley Methodist Missionary 1813 all came into being with a gift to sponsor missionaries beyond their national boundaries" (Falola 152). The "church Missionary society came to Nigeria in 1841" (Crowther 114). The "Wesleyan or Methodist missionaries on September 24, 1842" (Fleck 44), the "Scottish Presbyterian in 1842, the Church of Scotland mission in 1846" (Fleck 46) and the "Roman Catholic Mission in 1868" (Omolewa 53), by 1870, "these missionary societies, agencies concentrated their activities mainly in Southern Nigeria with little efforts to go Northward" (Crampton 49).

Unlike the above mentioned missionary societies, the Sudan Interior Mission hence forth SIM was established and came to Nigeria in 1893 with the aim of spreading the gospel to the interior part of Northern Nigeria which had little or no contact with the Christian faith because it was deserted by other missionary societies. To achieve their aim, SIM began to spread Christian faith through the use of western education. In 1917, SIM came to Tangale -Waja District in Gombe Division of the then Bauchi Province. This study therefore seeks to look at how SIM use education as a mission strategy in Tangale Waja District of Gombe Division, the challenges encountered and its impacts.

The Coming of Sudan Interior Mission (SIM) to Tangale-Waja District

SIM was considered to be the first mission body to work among the various people group of Tangale- Waja District. Andrew P. Stirrett acknowledged that SIM came to know about the Tangale-Waja District, through a letter



First Church Structure which also served as School at Kalorgu (Kaltungo) in 1917. This Picture was sent to the Researcher by Tim Geysbeek SIM Archive USA.

from secretary of the British administration for Northern Nigeria with headquarters at Kaduna appealing to them to consider starting mission work among the non- Moslem groups in Borno and Bauchi provinces. Dr. Stirrett reports thus pointed out that:

"Last call we received a letter from the secretary of the Northern province in which another district official proposes that the Tangale tribe now be open to a representative of the mission to come up and see the tribe with a view to selecting a suitable site for opening work. This tribe numbers 70,000 to 90,000 and is yet in total darkness(18)".

It was by the year 1917 that SIM came to Gombe. The first mission station, "was Kaltungo in 1917, Tula in 1924, Waja in 1925, Billiri in 1928, and Dadiya in 1930" (Maiture 193). All within the present day Tangale-Waja area. The British control of the area by then reduced the risk of entering the area. It was Rowland Bingham, the only one that survived among the three pioneer missionaries with Dr. A.P. Stirrett and Norman W.D. Davis who surveyed the Tangale- Waja area and discovered that the people of the area needed the word of God because, "the people were unreached by any religion other than their own traditional beliefs" (193).

To address this immediate need, Bingham had to return to Canada to share these need with some students of McMaster University. It was during this

period that Mr. John Hall, an Alumnus of the University, with Rev Norman W.D. Davis who graduated two years ahead of John Hall, was moved by these needs and therefore gave themselves to bring the gospel to the Tangale-Waja people. Maiture also pointed out that, "on 19th January 1917, John Stephen Hall and Gordon Charles Beacham arrived Kaltungo as pioneer missionaries to start work among the Tangale -Waja people" (19).

Maiture further pointed out that, two factors militated against the commencement of the mission station: Firstly;

The period coincided with the First World War (1914-1918) which made the recruitment of manpower very difficult. Even in a situation where some people volunteered, the journey by sea was not safe as war submarines were seen flowing all over the routes. Secondly, the period falls within the plagues of Influenza diseases that struck almost the whole of West Africa killing many people. Tangale -Waja was not spared in the epidemic" (20). Even in the midst of these challenges the mission to Tangale-Waja was a success.

Education as a Mission Strategy Used by Sudan Interior Mission (SIM) IN Tangale-Waja District

When Sudan Interior Mission missionaries came to Tangale -Waja District, the place was characterized by challenges of illiteracy as most people could neither

read nor write. On the other hand, the people has not experienced the light of the gospel of Christ. Traditional religious practices, ignorance, illiteracy, poverty, sickness and inter-tribal conflicts/wars were the other major challenges confronting the Tangale-Waja area.

Western Education

Like preaching factor, the education factor was aimed at breaking down particular aspects of the traditional society namely the traditional pattern of thoughts and some traditional way of living in the society. Education accompanied the gospel all the way from Europe, North America, to Africa, down to Nigeria and Tangale-Waja. The main aims of missionary education were first and foremost:

To teach the natives how to read and write in their language so that they could read the Bible in their own language and at later stage to train them for evangelistic work, and to produce teachers for primary and Bible schools. Other reasons for the teaching of western education include the production of auxiliary medical personnel and some low-level manpower for colonial administration and eventually church ministers. (Gideon 101)

This can be considered as the broad objectives of missionary education policy as far as African converts at least at the initial stage were concerned.

As believers responded to the great commission, western education was one of the main mission strategies used by SIM to spread the gospel. In matter of faith and practice, the early SIM missionaries believed strongly in the work of charity and social improvement of the people through education. In addition, central to the SIM beliefs were the emphasis on the preaching of the gospel, missionary itineration and evangelism. Indeed, few years after the coming of the missionaries, learning flourished especially among communities that received them. It has been recalled that: "The primary objective of the early Christian missionaries was to convert the "hearten "or benighted African to Christianity via education, knowledge of the Bible, the ability to communicate both orally and in written were considered essential for a good Christian" (Maiture 36).

The early missionaries also realized the importance of training, preferably through the media of English and the local language.

SIM in Kalorgu Kaltungo Tangale-Waja District

Kalorgu is located at Kaltungo, the first starting point of the SIM missionaries in Gombe in 1917. The structure shown in plate. 1.0 above was a church and a school. During worship service people gathered together for prayer, worship and Bible studies after which they went for evangelism. This was mostly done in the evening. While in the morning and afternoon, the missionaries engaged the local children/adult in western education through literacy class. The primary objective of the SIM was "to introduce the converts to the element of reading and writing and teaching them on how to read the Bible in both teaching and preaching" (Turaki 276). The literacy class contributed to the growth of Christianity among the converts of SIM in Tangale-Waja District specifically and other areas of Gombe they ministered. The major literacy policy of SIM was the transmission of literacy to the illiterates. To properly achieve this, the mission trained the "mission boys" quite early in the literacy programme on how to propagate literacy in the surrounding village and districts.

To be continued