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THE Nigeria Standard



VOL. 13 NO. 812

WEDNESDAY, Thursday 18, 2024

N200

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NNPCL uncovers 83 illegal refineries

The Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited (NNPCL) says it has in the past one week uncovered no fewer than 83 illegal refineries in the Niger Delta.

The NNPCL disclosed this on its X handle recently as

part of its war on crude oil theft, saying 15 illegal pipeline connections were also discovered within the same period.

"In the past week, 15 illegal pipeline connections and 83 illegal refineries have been uncovered in the Niger Delta," the NNPCL said.

According to a video

shared with the post, it was disclosed that between January 6 and 12, a total of 211 incidents of oil theft and vandalism were reported.

The NNPCL also said 15 illegal pipeline connections were also discovered within the same period.

NNPCL in a documentary shared on X, stated that

between January 6 and 12, 2023, a total of 211 incidents of oil theft and vandalism were reported.

It said 15 illegal pipeline connections were also discovered within the same period.

NNPCL in a documentary shared on X, stated that between January 6 and 12, 2023, a total of 211

incidents of oil theft and vandalism were reported.

It also said that it inspected an illegal crude oil vessel loaded with thousands of metric tonnes of crude, adding that the 23 crew onboard the vessel have been arrested.

It disclosed this in a post on its official X handle on

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Kyari



Plateau State Governor, Barr. Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang on Monday is seen laying wreath at the J.D. Gomwalk Secretariat Roundabout Cenotaph during the 2024 Armed force Remembrance Day Celebration. PHOTO: DANLADI DUK

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Nigeria's inflation hits 28.92% amid high food prices

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Tinubu

Nigerians resort to herbal concoctions over cost of drugs

As the prices of drugs continue to soar, many Nigerians are opting for cheaper traditional herbal concoctions to meet their healthcare needs without caring so much about the possible negative implications.

Alluding to this trend, the

federal government recently stated that 81.6 percent of the country's population of over 200 million, up from 70 percent in 2018, were relying on traditional medicine as their primary form of healthcare.

The devaluation of the

naira and exits of two pharmaceutical manufacturers including GlaxoSmithKline (GSK), a UK-based pharmaceutical company, has pushed up the prices of several essential drugs in recent months and put them out of reach for many citizen,

particularly low-income earners who are already squeezed by the growing high inflation and poverty in the country.

For example, the price of Actifed Action tablet skyrocketed from N4,000 before the exit of GSK to N13,000, and that of GSK

Ampiclox jumped from N900 to N15,000. In addition, the price of Voltaren pain relief cream rose from below N5,000 to N12,000; Ventolin inhaler, from N3,000 to N15,000; Augmentin 1g tablet, from N4,000 to N43,000; and

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Monday night, noting that the move was part of efforts by the company and its partners to halt the menace of crude oil theft.

It said, "Earlier today, the Group CEO (Chief Executive Officer) of NNPC Ltd, Mr Mele Kyari, and the Chief of Defence Staff, General Christopher Musa, were in Oporoza, Warri, Delta State, to inspect MT Kali, an illegal crude oil vessel loaded with thousands of metric tonnes of crude oil."

It stated that the vessel was intercepted by Tantita Security Services, a private security firm, in collaboration with the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps, "while it was loading directly from an offshore platform in Bayelsa State."

The national oil company added that "all 23 crew members onboard the illegal vessel have been arrested."

According to NNPC, during the inspection tour of the illegal vessel, General Musa stated that the military remained committed to working with national oil firm and other government and private security agencies to halt the menace of crude oil theft in the Niger Delta.

He was quoted as saying, "We are committed to stopping all acts of criminality in Nigerian waters. We are also sounding a note of warning to the perpetrators of this crime that enough is enough."

"The country is bleeding and we need all funds to

NNPCL uncovers 83 illegal refineries



develop as a nation. It is by stopping these acts of criminality that we will be able to achieve that dream."

In another post on X, the oil firm stated that it uncovered 83 illegal refineries in the Niger Delta region in the past one week.

It said 15 illegal pipeline connections were also discovered within the same period.

NNPCL in a documentary shared on X, stated that between January 6 and 12, 2023, a total of 211 incidents of oil theft and vandalism were reported.

Recall that a week ago the company revealed that it discovered 52 illegal refineries in the Niger Delta region in the past one week.

It had also stated that 32 illegal pipeline connections were uncovered, at the time the 52 illegal refineries were destroyed in the Niger Delta.

"Between December 30, 2023 and January 5, 2024, 157 (oil theft) incidences

were recorded from several incident sources, including Nigeria Agip Oil Company, 62 incidents; Pipeline Infrastructure Nigeria Limited, 29; Maton Engineering Limited, 18; Tantita Security Services, 8; Shell Petroleum Development Company, 4; NNPC Command and Control Centre, 2; and Government Security Agencies, 24," the company stated.

It explained that in the past week, the 52 illegal refineries were discovered in Abia, Imo, Rivers and Bayelsa states, adding that the 32 illegal connections were uncovered in several parts of the Niger Delta, including Bayelsa, Rivers and Delta states.

The company said illegal connections were also removed and repaired along the central corridor in the Niger Delta, while seven illegal storage sites were uncovered in Akwa Ibom State, where buried drums of crude oil were unearthed.

Nigeria's annual inflation rate rose to 28.92 per cent in December 2023 from 28.20 per cent in November, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) said Monday.

The statistics office said the December 2023 headline inflation rate showed an increase of 0.72 per cent points when compared to the November 2023 headline inflation rate.

The NBS said on a year-on-year basis, the headline inflation rate was 7.58 per cent points higher compared to the rate recorded in December 2022, which was 21.34 per cent.

"This shows that the headline inflation rate (year-on-year basis) increased in December 2023 when compared to the same month in the preceding year (i.e., December 2022)," it said.

Furthermore, the bureau said on a month-on-month basis, the headline inflation rate in December 2023 was 2.29 per cent, which was 0.20 per cent higher than the rate recorded in November 2023 (2.09 per cent).

This, it said, means that in December 2023, the rate of increase in the average price level is more than the rate of increase in the average price level in

Nigeria's inflation hits 28.92% amid high food prices

November 2023.

According to the report, the food inflation rate in December 2023 quickened to 33.93 per cent on a year-on-year basis, which was 10.18 per cent points higher compared to the rate recorded in December 2022 (23.75 per cent).

In recent years, food prices have been on the rise across Nigeria. The situation deteriorated due to the impact of government policies such as the removal of subsidies on petrol, among others.

In July 2023, Mr Tinubu declared an immediate State of Emergency on food insecurity to tackle the increase in food prices.

He also directed that "all matters pertaining to food & water availability and affordability, as essential livelihood items, be included within the purview of the National Security Council."

In its inflation report on Monday, the NBS said the contributions of items on the divisional year-on-year level to the increase in the headline index are food & non-alcoholic beverages (14.98 per cent), housing water, electricity, gas & other fuel (4.84 per cent), clothing & footwear (2.21 per cent), and transport (1.88 per cent).

Others are furnishings & household equipment & maintenance (1.45 per cent), education (1.14 per cent), health (0.87 per cent), miscellaneous goods & services (0.48 per cent), restaurant & hotels (0.35 per cent), alcoholic beverage, tobacco & kola (0.31 per cent), recreation & culture (0.20 per cent) and communication (0.20 per cent).

The report said the percentage change in the average CPI for the twelve-month ending December 2023 over the average of the CPI for the previous twelve-month period was 24.66 per cent, showing a 5.81 per cent increase compared to 18.85 per cent recorded in December 2022.

The food inflation rate in December 2023 was 33.93 per cent on a year-on-year basis, which was 10.18 per cent points higher compared to the rate recorded in December 2022 (23.75 per cent).

The NBS said the rise in food inflation was caused by increases in prices of bread and cereals, oil and fat, potatoes, yam and other tubers, fish, meat, fruit, milk, cheese, and egg.

"On a month-on-month basis, the Food inflation rate in December 2023 was 2.72 per cent, this was 0.30 per cent higher compared to the rate recorded in November 2023 (2.42 per cent)," it said.

It explained that the rise in food inflation on a month-on-month basis was caused by a rise in the rate of increase in the average prices of oil and fat, meat, bread and cereals, potatoes, yam & other tubers, fish and milk, cheese, and egg.

"The average annual rate of food inflation for the twelve months ending December 2023 over the previous twelve-month average was 27.96 per cent, which was a 7.02 per cent points increase from the average annual rate of change recorded in December 2022 (20.94 per cent)," the report said.

Mutfwang promises better welfare to Armed Forces

By PETER TITLE

Activities marking the 2024 Armed Forces Remembrance Day in Plateau State have been rounded up with the laying of wreaths at the J,D Gomwalk Secretariat Cenotaph

Governor Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang promised to enhance the welfare of the Armed Forces. The news was received with joy by those present.

Among those who laid the wreaths Governor Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang, Speaker Plateau State House of Assembly, Rt. Hon. Gabriel Dewan, Chief Judge of Plateau State, David Mann, General Officer Commanding 3rd Armoured Division, Nigeria Army and Commander Operation Safe Haven, Gen. A. Abubakar, Nigerian Air Force, NAF, Commander 557, AVM Usman Abdullahi,



Mutfwang

Commissioner of Police, Julius Alawari, the Chairman State Joint Traditional Council and the Gbong Gwom Jos, Da Jacob Gyang Buba, Chairman Nigeria Legion and Representative, and wives of Fallen Heroes.

The Governor in an interview with journalists, restated his commitment to championing improved welfare for both retired and active security personnel for effective service delivery.

Governor Mutfwang underscored his administration's unwavering commitment to providing essential support to enable serving officers to fulfill their constitutional duties amidst provocations from terrorist elements targeting innocent communities.

He applauded the professionalism of security officers, especially the General Officer Commanding 3rd Division and Operation SAFE HAVEN Commander, Major Gen. A E. Abubakar. And stressed the need for proactive approach in identifying and addressing any issues among the ranks to ensure optimal service delivery.

"We will continue to honor our fallen heroes who sacrificed for our nation's security," affirmed Governor Mutfwang. He used the opportunity to convey condolences to the families of those who lost their lives or were injured in service.

Governor Mutfwang called on the people of Plateau State to support government initiatives aimed at restoring

lasting peace.

Former Governor, Sen. Jonah David Jang, speaking at the RHINO Officers Mess, Maxwell Khobe Cantonment, lauded the efforts of serving officers in addressing the nation's current security challenges. He called for closer collaboration between serving and retired officers to contribute to the fight against terrorism and other criminal

activities.

Chairman of the Nigerian Legion, Plateau State, Col. CNC Sati B. Yilwatda, expressed gratitude to Governor Mutfwang for his intervention towards improving the living conditions of his members.

He reassured of the contributions of his members towards a peaceful and united Plateau.

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Nigerians resort to herbal concoctions over cost of drugs

alternative due to the high cost.

"I did not believe it when the sales attendant told me N11,500. I got this product for less than N4,000 two years ago or so. I simply bought another drug, then combined it with some natural remedies and I got better after all," she said.

In August 2023, GSK, after over 50 years in Nigeria, announced its decision to discontinue the direct commercialisation of prescription medicines and vaccines in the country. The British multinational pharmaceutical company cited operational challenges, including difficulties in maintaining a steady drug supply and the scarcity of foreign exchange, leading to a strategic shift towards a third-party distribution model.

Following suit, French pharmaceutical player Sanofi-Aventis Nigeria Limited announced its departure from Nigeria in November 2023, effective February 2024. The

decision has raised questions about the future availability and affordability of vital medications, such as the anti-malarial Larium and the anticoagulant Clexane, which will now be distributed solely by third parties.

Although it is not a pharmaceutical company, Procter & Gamble's decision to transition to an import-only model by the end of 2024 is expected to impact the availability of essential healthcare products like Vicks Vaporub and Pampers diapers.

the cost of drugs.

Eyinnaya, who is a local shoe cobbler, is one of the millions of Nigerians living below the poverty line.

The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) said in 2022 that over 133 million Nigerians were living in multidimensional poverty due to a lack of access to health, education, and living standards, alongside unemployment and shocks.

The country's double-digit inflation rate, which stood at 28.9 per cent in December 2023, has further squeezed the finances of many Nigerians.

The surge in prices of essential drugs is further exacerbated by Nigeria's heavy reliance on importation due to a lack of adequate local capacity, leaving it susceptible to shocks.

In 2023, Nigeria imported medications worth N81.81 billion from July to September. This is an increase of 68 per cent from the N48.74 billion worth of drugs imported in the same quarter of 2022, according to the NBS.



Hardship disintegrating families in Nigeria: Any way forward?

As we give God gratitude for the gift of life and a new year, it is pertinent to acknowledge that many families in Nigeria are in a big financial mess, in a ditch, and in dire straits. The institution of marriage is thereby threatened by unforeseen contingencies occasioned by the economic and political instability in the country. OBIOTIKA WILFRED TOOCHUKWU writes.

Many families do not know how to move forward, make progress or advance because the leadership in the country has crippled every citizen, blocking all avenues of advancement. A good number have chosen to retreat in the villages as they could no longer cope with the expenses of city life. A lot of families in Nigeria are at a financial crossroads – basic needs are not within reach, taking care of the sick and elderly has become cumbersome.

Definitely, we may have to ask ourselves – who caused this? And how did we arrive at this juncture? The president, senators, governors, the political class and their families are having their best life to the mockery of the less privileged. Not just that they make future plans on how to amass wealth, they steal public funds and continuously impoverish the masses.

Basically, a family is the nucleus of the society. Every societal ill develops and starts from the families. It's true that in developed countries, flourishing economies, there could be domestic violence, lack of love or divorce which could result from deception, manipulation and hardness of human heart yet hardship, suffering or unfavourable environment could as well bring hatred, neglect, abandonment and strife to loving and peaceful couples. Families in Nigeria have been unduly stressed in recent times due to misappropriation in governance and economic instability.

Persistently, families have found themselves to be financially stressed these days and in our climate. The high inflation occasioned by the removal of fuel subsidy trumps up regrets, anxieties and worries in the minds of parents. Not just



school fees, health and other challenges, there's no peace in the heart of average parents in Nigeria. We may not be medical experts but it is pure scientific fact that stress in whatever form generates a psychosomatic effect.

Undoubtedly, more than 20% of Nigerians do not have an income of more than ₦50,000 in a month and if we do the mathematics, we would realise the cause of high incidence of violence, breakups, anger and hatred in so many families. Some young couples abandoned their partners in

search of greener pastures abroad while others have stopped their kids from attending schools. As such, the contemporary Nigerian family structure has witnessed transformation such as an increase in single parenting, separation, divorce, baby-daddy and baby-mama.

Unfortunately, poverty's icy grip tightens around Nigerian families, squeezing the life out of their dreams. With unemployment rampant and inflation soaring, putting food on the table becomes a daily battle.

Parents, burdened by the weight of providing, become withdrawn and irritable. Stress spills over into parenting, creating a toxic environment for children. The pursuit of survival often overshadows sensibility, leaving families emotionally distant.

Again, the spectre of violence haunts many Nigerian families. From the insurgency in the North to the kidnappings and armed robberies plaguing other regions, insecurity tears families apart. The constant fear and displacement erode trust and stability. Children raised in such an environment carry emotional trauma, impacting their mental and emotional well-being. At a point when children could no longer get what they need from their parents, they seek for instant gratification and respect for the elderly wanes.

The Nigerian government's repeated announcements of waivers, education grants, and assurances, though seemingly benevolent, have failed to address the struggles of poor citizens. The insincerity and political posturing of the government perpetuate issues like insurgency, ethnic cleansing, insecurity, inflation, and unemployment. The absence of subsidies and high exchange rates further hampers efforts to ease the lives of ordinary citizens. In this failure, leaders celebrate, citizens suffer, and

malevolence prevails.

Certainly every Nigerian is a

understanding. Love imposes a tremendous responsibility on all members of a family but this responsibility cannot be accomplished in hardship and lack.

In Nigeria, New Year resolutions are rare amid a murky political climate, profound economic distress, and uncertain prospects for prosperity. Intentions for self-improvement often succumb to trauma, conflict, and widespread suffering. The fear of survival, misfortune, and death is palpable, especially for those above 40 without a family or stable income. Nigerians, sceptical of government interventions, navigate these challenges with resilience, acknowledging the persistent struggle for stability.

Nigerians need fortitude which is the mental and emotional strength needed to face difficulties with courage. If we say Nigerians should respond to life from a defensive position rather than an offensive; we may wake up one day to hear that a city, town, village or tribe has been wiped out. Do we now suggest a revolution? Even though life holds hardship, we can move forward into beauty. Hardship, pain and discomfort could make a life deep rooted and grounded.

Obiotika Wilfred Toochukwu: Awka – Nigeria
S h a r e

Undoubtedly, more than 20% of Nigerians do not have an income of more than ₦50,000 in a month and if we do the mathematics, we would realise the cause of high incidence of violence, breakups, anger and hatred in so many families. Some young couples abandoned their partners in search of greener pastures abroad while others have stopped their kids from attending schools. As such, the contemporary Nigerian family structure has witnessed transformation such as an increase in single parenting, separation, divorce, baby-daddy and baby-mama. Unfortunately, poverty's icy grip tightens around Nigerian families, squeezing the life out of their dreams. With unemployment rampant and inflation soaring, putting food on the table becomes a daily battle. Parents, burdened by the weight of providing, become withdrawn and irritable. Stress spills over into parenting, creating a toxic environment for children. The pursuit of survival often overshadows sensibility, leaving families emotionally distant.



Business & Economy

FG issues new licenses to 13 electricity companies

THE Federal Government through the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission has issued 13 new licences for the generation of off-grid and embedded power, independent electricity distribution, as well as for the trading of electricity.

It said the new licences were issued in the third quarter of 2023, as the cumulative quantum of electricity to be generated by the licensees was 40.9 megawatts

Under the section titled, 'Licences and Permits Issued or Renewed,' in the latest third quarter 2023 report of NERC, it was revealed that five new off-grid generation licences that would generate 8.81MW were issued during the review period, as well as one new licence for embedded generation of 5MW.

On other licences that were issued, the commission said, "One new licence for Independent Electricity Distribution Network, one new licence for trading, three off-grid generation licences, one embedded generation, and one IEDN licence."

It explained that the commission issues licences for electricity generation, transmission, distribution, trading and system operations in the Nigeria Electricity Supply Industry.

"For activities that do not require licenses based on the provisions of sections 65-68 of the Electricity Act 2023, but still require authorisation from the commission, such as off-grid captive power generation and mini-grid development, the commission issues permits to the operators following a review of the relevant applications," the NERC stated.

Nigeria generates between 3,500MW and 5,000MW of electricity for the over 200 million people across the country, a development that has been described as poor for Africa's biggest economy.

On Monday, for instance, the country's power generation at 6am was 4,357.09MW. Peak power generation the preceding day was 4,579.5MW, while off-peak power generation on the same day was 4,062.98MW. Many parts of Nigeria, particularly rural communities experience blackouts due to the country's meagre power generation.

In June 2023, Nigeria was designated the country with the largest number of people lacking access to electricity, as 86 million of its over 200 million population were living without electricity as of 2021, according to a joint report by some international agencies.

The report compiled by the International Energy Agency, International Renewable Energy Agency, United

Nations and the World Health Organisation, stated that the countries with the largest number of people without access to electricity as of 2021 include Nigeria (86 million), Democratic Republic of the Congo (76 million), and Ethiopia (55 million).

However, the Federal Government and operators in the power supply space have been making efforts to increase the country's electricity output over the years, which led to the privatisation of the successor generation and distribution companies in November 2013.

The issuance of licences for the generation of electricity by the government through NERC is another way of boosting the country's power supply and reducing the number of persons who lack electricity.

Providing further explanation on the 13 new power generation, distribution and trading licences, the NERC in its report stated that Daybreak Power Solutions Limited received eight licences for various off-grid power

generation projects in Lagos, Abia, Borno, Kano, Oyo and Abuja.

Ekiti Independent Power Project got a licence for the development of a gas-fired 5MW embedded power project to be constructed in Ekiti State.

Olokiti Power Distribution Limited received an Independent Electricity Distribution Network licence that would be operational in Ekiti State.

Ember Power Limited got an electricity trading licence, while Island Power Limited got a licence for the development of a 10MW embedded gas-fired power project in Lagos.

Also, Energy Company of Nigeria Limited was issued an Independent Electricity Distribution Network licence that would be operational in Lagos State.

Power consumer groups have repeatedly condemned the poor electricity supply in Nigeria despite the trillions of naira invested in the sector. They have also charged the government and operators to work harder to deliver adequate electricity to Nigerians.

Pension assets hit N17.7trn on diversified investments strategy

NIGERIA'S pension net asset value rose to N17.7 trillion at the end of October 2023, from N15 trillion in January 2022, and this was driven by diversified investment strategy, the Pension Fund Operators Association of Nigeria (PenOp) said.

According to PenOp, 2023 was a good year for pension fund investments, represented by some of the asset classes in pension fund portfolios.

"From the commencement of the year until October 2023, ordinary shares witnessed a noteworthy increase of N58 billion, underscoring their robust performance. Simultaneously, Federal Government bonds exhibited substantial growth, marking an impressive uptick of 1.94 trillion"

According to the Association, in contrast, there was a slight reduction of N19 billion in investments in the money market during October.

"This suggests a strategic reallocation of pension fund assets to other classes. Notably, investments in infrastructure experienced a positive surge, showing an increase of N17 billion during this period."

"These shifts in asset values signify a responsive and diversified investment strategy, optimizing the portfolio to capitalize on varying market conditions and opportunities.

Quoting the data from the National Pension Commission (PenCom),



Dahir

Protect, preserve, conserve environment, minister charges Nigerians

THE Federal Ministry of Environment has called on all Nigerians and stakeholders to take personal responsibility for the protection, preservation and conservation of the environment.

The Minister of Environment, Balarabe Abbas Lawal made the call during a retreat organized by the ministry for Directors, Heads of Agencies in Kaduna State recently.

Lawal stated that Departments, Agencies, Programmes and special projects of the Ministry shall work collaboratively for the actualization of the Ministry's mandated deliverables derived from the Presidential priorities.

He further said procurement plans should be completed early and submitted to the relevant agencies of government to ensure timely release of funds.

"Discontinue the use of single use plastic within the Federal Ministry of Environment and its Agencies to drive a culture of waste reduction."

In addition, he urged staff of the ministry and its agencies to demonstrate leadership by example by implementing other

CREDIT to the government fell for the second consecutive months by 45 percent to N5.16 trillion in November 2023 from N9.39 trillion in October in 2024.

Data obtained from the Central Bank of Nigeria, CBN, Money and Credit Statistics for the review period showed that credit to the government had declined by 72.4 percent in October to N9.39 trillion from N34 trillion in September 2023.

Meanwhile, credit to the private sector fell MoM, by 6.0 percent to N59.7 trillion in November 2022 from N63.5 trillion in October 2023.

Consequently, the Net Domestic Credit (NDC) to the economy fell for the second consecutive month to N64.9 trillion in November 2023, representing an 11 percent (MoM) decline from N72.9 trillion in October 2023.

In the 2024 financial year outlook for the banking sector, analysts at CardinalStone Research noted that banks will likely retain restrictive credit lending policies this year.

"The noticeable increase in banks' 9M'23 risk assets was driven by a 38.7 percent

Credit to FG declines 45% to N5.16 trn



Cardoso

surge in loans which surpassed last year's growth of 18.2 percent and the 5-year Compound Annual Growth Rate, CAGR, of 14.6 percent.

"This credit growth was largely propelled by the impact of currency devaluation on banks'

foreign currency loans.

"To our minds, 2024 is likely to be a year of correction for credit growth due to the sustained macroeconomic issues in the country.

"Banks are likely to retain restrictive credit lending policies, targeting sectors and obligors that are relatively more creditworthy.

"Hence, we expect financial year (FY'24) loan growth to revert to a 4-year mean of 19.9 percent". Currency outside banks hits N3.08 trn.

Meanwhile, the CBN data also showed that currency outside banks reached N3.08 trillion in November 2023, representing a 14.5 percent MoM increase from N2.69 trillion in October.

Similarly, currency in circulation increased MoM by 11 percent to N3.34 trillion in November from N3.01 trillion in October.

investment in ordinary shares grew from N1.1 trillion in 2023 to N1.59 trillion at the end of October 2023, while investment in Federal Government Bond grew from N9.48 trillion in January to N11.42 trillion in October.

Whereas investment in Money Market dropped from N1.88 trillion in January to N1.69 trillion in October 2023, infrastructure fund investment gained, rising from N113.49 billion in January to N130 billion in October last year.

strengthening of relationships between supervising officers and their subordinates as key strategies to enhance performance," he stressed.

The Minister stressed the need for reinforcement of the forest guards in line with the vision of

Mr. President to rid our forests of bandits.

"Develop the capacity of the participants in the performance management system and unbundle the presidential performance targets to the relevant departments and agencies.

The Minister said effective communication and conflict management mechanisms are needed to cascade management decisions to all levels of staff in order to deliver on the Ministerial Mandates.

He noted that there is a need to build capacities, provide frameworks and collaborate with relevant stakeholders to access additional funding for environmental sustainability.

Lawal explained that there is a need to expand our current strategy for circular management of waste to capture small scale producers and the informal sector in the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Programme.

The retreat had as its theme: "Policy Embedment and Synergy of Prioritised Action for a Renewed Hope in Environmental Management"



Abbas



Business & Economy

Nigeria should lead Africa's battle against illicit funds

AFRICAN countries losing about \$90 billion in illicit financial flows annually, in addition to other losses through illicit resource flows and resource theft, fiscal policy disincentives, and excessive dependence on commodity exports for foreign exchange earnings? This is one of the stories that break the heart. Added to the volatility of global market prices and highly vulnerable supply chains, the dire economic situation of African countries comes to full glare. BALARABE MOHAMMED writes.

A graduation ceremony for the first cohort of the African Development Bank's Public Financial Management Executive Training Series under its Public Finance Management Academy for Africa (PFMA) rounded off the recent workshop on "Enhancing Accountability, Transparency and Curbing Corruption and Illicit Financial Flows in Africa" in Abuja

Dr. Tope Fasua, the Special Adviser to the President on Economic Affairs in the Office of the Vice President, did not fail to beat our drum as a nation on the occasion. "As the largest economy and most populous country in Africa, Nigeria occupies a very strategic place in the economic development ecosystem of the continent," he said.

He added: "Public financial and debt management remains on the front burners of the government's Renewed Hope Agenda for economic growth and shared prosperity for all citizens. Key economic policy objectives of the government include optimization of revenue mobilisation and tax reforms, blocking of leakages in public finances, improving public procurement and spending efficiency, and supporting the business environment for private sector investments and job creation."

In essence, he was reminding Nigerian officials who have benefited from the training



about their responsibility to lead the rest of Africa in delivering on the expectations of the Public Finance Management Academy for Africa that has been providing the 18-month structured executive training on public financial and debt management to over 145 participants from across all the regional member countries of the Bank.

It is reassuring that institutional partners are volunteering their resources – both in human and financial capital – to co-design and co-deliver the capacity development programs under the PFMA. Among those who received honourable mention at the graduation were the

following: International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, Africa Finance Corporation (AFC), African Tax Administration Forum (ATAF), Collaborative Africa Budget Reform Initiative (CABRI), African Organization of English-Speaking Supreme Audit Institutions (AFROSAI-E), Inter-Governmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa (GIABA), Commonwealth Secretariat (COMSEC), and others.

AfDB has launched a program to produce a Public Service Delivery Index (PSDI) to provide an independent and standardised system for assessing the delivery of public services by Public Servants.

The goal is to work with Partners to establish a prize to incentivize improvements in the management of public resources and deliver improved quality of public services to countries.

It has also developed Country Diagnostics in addition to technical assistance to countries, peer-to-peer learning and networking embedded in the 18-month structured executive training program, systems for Domestic revenue mobilisation (DRM), Macro-fiscal modelling and forecasting (MFMF), prudential budgeting and expenditure planning and management (including performance-based budgeting and medium-term expenditure frameworks, sustainable borrowing and sustainable debt management, reporting and transparency (including debt sustainability analysis (DSA).

Given the growing NGO role in economic development, AfDB emphasises public-private partnerships, deepening financial markets, and strengthening audit systems to boost transparency and curb illicit flows.

The Bank is also pleased with the PFMA Policy Lab Unit (PLU) who are the core Faculty Members for the delivery of the PFMA CD program. These include Hon. Mohamed Boussaid, Former Minister of Finance, Morocco; Hon. Seth Terkper, Former Minister of

Finance, Ghana; Prof. Osita Ogbu, Former Economic Adviser to the President and Minister of National Planning, Federal Republic of Nigeria; Dr. Abraham Nwankwo, Former Director General Debt Management Office Nigeria; Dr. Edouard Nsimba, Global Macro-modelling Expert, Angola; Mr. Etienne Yemek, PFM Expert, Cameroun; Prof. Ibi Ajayi, Professor of Economics, University of Ibadan, Nigeria; Mr. Johan Krynauw, Former Head of Debt and Asset Management National Treasury of South Africa; Mr. Juan Jose Pradelli, PFM Expert, Argentina; Dr. Mariam Rashid Umarji, PFM Expert, Mozambique.

Government officials often forget the skills acquired in expensive overseas training shortly after returning. Despite this trend, recent training beneficiaries have strong reasons to apply their knowledge consistently. The significant number of trainees from Nigeria contributes to this impetus. The workshop's relevance to addressing a critical threat to Africa's economic development, covering various topics in public financial management, is pivotal.

These topics include domestic revenue mobilisation, macroeconomic modelling, public budgeting, expenditure management, public debt sustainability, public-private partnerships, and efforts to combat corruption, money laundering, and illicit financial flows in Africa.

Stakeholders anticipate a strategic document from participants, outlining the application of workshop-acquired skills. This strategy aims to leverage Nigeria's legal and institutional frameworks. The challenge lies in harmonising these with the African Development Institute's perspectives at the African Development Bank.

These AfDB initiatives should, hopefully, propel the giant of Africa to take a leading role in encouraging measures against illicit funds flow within the continent.

Sources: *Businessday*

"It is reassuring that institutional partners are volunteering their resources – both in human and financial capital – to co-design and co-deliver the capacity development programs under the PFMA. Among those who received honourable mention at the graduation were the following: International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, Africa Finance Corporation (AFC), African Tax Administration Forum (ATAF), Collaborative Africa Budget Reform Initiative (CABRI), African Organization of English-Speaking Supreme Audit Institutions (AFROSAI-E), Inter-Governmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa (GIABA), Commonwealth Secretariat (COMSEC), and others."

Politics

Despite efforts to steal my mandate, justice prevails

From
ABBAS GUNGURA Bauchi

THE Executive Governor of Bauchi State, Senator Bala Mohammed, appreciated the Federal Government under the good leadership of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu for not interfering with the judicial process of the Supreme Court, between himself of the opposition party PDP and Sadiq Baba Abubakar of the APC, the ruling party.

Governor Bala expressed the appreciation while addressing PDP supporters and other well wishers on Saturday at the Government House, Bauchi shortly after his return from Abuja, after the judgment that went in his favour.

He also extended greetings and commended the Supreme Court for doing justice to all the appeals before it, pointing out that the landmark judgment delivered on Friday had redeemed the image of the judiciary as the last hope of the common man in the country.

The Governor revealed that he could not sleep for seven days before Friday, 12th January, 2024 when the Supreme Court in a unanimous judgment, stamped his reelection as the duly elected governor.

"My sleepless night was caused by a clique of former leaders of the state who concocted different lies against my person at the Presidency in order to steal my mandate.

"They did everything possible to bring me in collision course with my friend, the Vice President, Kashim Shettima as well as Mr President, Bola Ahmed



Mohammed

Tinubu who loves what we are doing here in the state."

He lamented that "They told the Presidency that I am a problem and will give them more problems if I remain the governor. But to the glory of God, we did everything possible and we emerged victorious at the end of the day.

"They are not happy that we are working, doing what they could not do while in office despite getting more money than we are getting now. We will continue to work for the good of all the people of the state, in fact, we are just starting. They will see more than what we did in the first term.

"Our focus now is how to get a competent successor at the end of our tenure, someone who will do better than what we will do in 8 years. We have our children, our members who can fit appropriately. We will no

longer allow strangers to be governor in Bauchi State, only those whose roots are well known from any part of the state," Governor Mohammed stated.

Bala's victory is a perfect will of God

THE Chairman and Chief Executive officer of Spiderweb Security Company Limited, General Yakubu Usman (RTD), has described the victory of Governor Bala Mohammed from the Governorship Election Petition Tribunal to the Supreme Court as a perfect will of God.

General Yakubu made the assertion in a signed press release issued to journalists in Bauchi, where he and the entire staff of the company congratulated Governor

From
TERESE TUHWA, Makurdi

THE All Progressives Congress, APC, Benue State Chapter has nullified the suspension of members of the party with a call that all grievances should be channeled to the appropriate quarters.

This was contained in a communique at the end of the meeting of the State Working Committee of the party with the Benue State Governor, Hyacinth Alia in attendance.

According to the communique which was read by the APC Chairman, Austine Agada at the APC Secretariat in Makurdi, the unity of the party had led them to win a lot of seats in the last general elections and they would not allow anything to bring disunity in the party.

The party called on all to sheathe their swords and join hands with Governor Alia to move the state to greater height.

The APC also warned against meetings that were capable of fomenting trouble and urged members

Benue APC voids



Agada

to avoid overheating the polity.

The party leadership, according to the communique, passed a vote of confidence on President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, Vice President Kashim Shettima,

Secretary to Government of the Federation, Senator George Akume and Governor Hyacinth Alia for all they have been doing for the development of the state.

witnessed rapid development especially in the areas of peace, security, education and healthcare. And it is time for Bauchi State people from all political parties and all ethnic sub-groups to rise up and support our God ordained governor

It is clear that you have put in a lot of hard work and dedication to deserve your re-election for another four years in office to pilot the affairs of Bauchi State"

"Your achievements in the last four years is a

- Gen. Yakubu

testimony that Bauchi State will grow in leaps and bounds and attain more height's under your watch in another four years in infrastructural development, security and cooperate co- existence among different ethnic groups living in Bauchi State.

Your Excellency, your victory at the Supreme court and the massive votes you polled across the state at the last election to come first among other qualified candidates is a sign that you are the popular choice of the peace loving people of Bauchi State".

"Indeed, your victory and declaration as the Governor of Bauchi State is divinely ordained, thus the continuous growth of Bauchi State and her citizens are assured in a prosperous city under your leadership".

General Yakubu, therefore urge the executive Governor to continue building Bauchi State as the best state in the North East and in Nigeria as a whole for more sustainable developments in terms of rapid and mega economic development.

"Your Excellency, the spontaneous jubilation on the streets of Bauchi and all the nooks and crannies of Bauchi State that followed the Supreme court judgement eloquently speaks the fact that you are the choice of the people", he stated.

PDP group urges Atiku not to contest 2027 presidential election

A political pressure group in the Peoples Democratic Party, PDP, the Concerned PDP League, CPDPL, has urged the party's presidential candidate in the 2023 presidential election, Atiku Abubakar, not to contest again in 2027.

The group gave the advice in Abuja on Sunday in a communiqué of a meeting signed respectively by the league's National Secretary, Tasiu Muhammed and acting National Director of Publicity and Strategic Communication, Gbenga Adedamola.

It also urged the Chairman of

PDP Governors Forum, Governor Bala Mohammed of Bauchi State not to nurse any ambition for the presidential office until 2031, to avoid a repeat of what happened to PDP in 2015 and 2023.

The group in the communiqué said its advice was for interested aspirants from the North to understand that the South has eight years to do, before power returns to the North in 2031.

"Our advice is also to ensure stability in the political system of the country," the group said.

It advised the party to be cautious of those factors

responsible for its failure in the 2023 general election and avoid them as it prepares for the 2027 general election.

"As we all know, the year 2023 was a very challenging year for our great party, with us losing the presidential election due to failure to abide by our party constitution 2017 as amended and failure of leadership.

"Also, some unpatriotic and unappreciative members elected on our party platform defected with our mandate to other parties, and the courts allegedly transferred our votes to other political parties.

"This year 2024, we want to plead with members and especially leaders of our great party to know that they will have to make great sacrifices, such as, withdrawal of court cases, grudges, suspension of personal and divisive interests.

"This is for the interest and unity of the party, to enable us to defeat our common opponent, the All Progressive Congress (APC) in future elections, which has failed Nigerians beyond human imagination," CPDPL said.

The PDP group, in spite of the support for a Southern candidate for 2027 presidential election, condemned the statement credited to immediate past governor of Benue, Samuel Ortom, for declaring support for President Bola Tinubu's

undeclared ambition for 2027.

This, the CPDPL said was at the expense of any presidential candidate the PDP would present for the 2027 presidential election.

"We also vehemently condemn the overbearing attitude and actions of the immediate past governor of Rivers State and FCT minister, in PDP and in his state.

"In the same vein, we strongly condemn the incumbent governor of Rivers for failing to acknowledge the role or intervention of the party in ensuring peace between him and his predecessor.

"It is also unfortunate that the governor has deliberately failed to mention the party in his speeches since he became the governor.

"He should have the courage to come out straight and tell us if he wants to defect to another party because his actions are confusing.

"All we hear in his speeches is "the president or president Tinubu did this and that", the group said.

As regards the Rivers Assembly members that defected to APC, the group reiterated that their seats remained vacant, since the votes of PDP could not be transferred to APC.

It urged the Independent National Electoral Commission, INEC, to within the stipulated period in the law, conduct elections into those offices, in order not to deprive the people of those Rivers constituencies their



Politics

Betta saga and corrupt indoctrination of youths

We had begun to witness a major shift in political movements that's giving rise to more youth participation in the governance of countries. More recently, Gabriel Attal, a 34-year old was appointed France's prime-minister by the President Emmanuel Macron government, who himself was a 37-year old politician when he became the youngest President in the world. Examples of youths that have received mandates to govern in different aspects before their Forty-first year include Chile's Gabriel Boric, Ecuador's Daniel Noboa, El Salvador's Nayib Bukele, and there are also others. OHIMA AGANS-OLIHA writes.

BY sheer coincidence, the current Nigerian government has also appointed a 37-year old youth, Dr. Betta Edu to serve as the youngest federal cabinet minister in the history of the country.

The rise in youth involvement in government, often under 40, stems from disillusionment and frustration with unfavourable plans. Country-specific reasons include environmental factors, economic conditions, social disposition, and public perception. Despite controversies, youth leaders like Estonia's Kallas and El Salvador's Bukele reflect social traditions or endorse unconventional policies. In Nigeria, corruption is sadly normalised, driving the push for inclusive youth engagement.

While the country is still grappling with how its most critical institution, the Central Bank of Nigeria, purposely and opaquely dodged its true financial position for the past 7 years without admonition from the Legislators, troubling financial activities involving its youngest minister Betta Edu has become a major subject across homes in the country.

As the minister for Humanitarian Affairs and Poverty Alleviation, Dr. Betta Edu, is tasked with implementing the relevant social welfare programmes of the government. She is being accused of violating government financial rules which forbid officials from transferring government funds to private bank accounts of government staff.

Transferring ministry funds to a private account undermines law enforcement oversight, enabling diversion to individuals not in the National Social Register. A previous controversial 44-billion Naira transfer from the



Edu

ministry's NSIPA fund to a private account exacerbates the situation. Concerns arise over officials being emboldened due to lenient laws against government asset diversion.

Meanwhile, the receiving banks could have also identified those suspicious transactions and immediately reported the incident to the authorities. In countries such as USA, UK, the banks are obligated to notify the authorities of suspicious/or bank transaction activities above

certain currency thresholds, so the NFIU or the CBN could have even become aware of NSIPA's unauthorised bank activities that contravenes CBN's daily cash-transfer limits for corporate businesses, and it's uncertain if the local banks involved even notify Nigeria Financial Intelligence unit -NFIU.

Also in those listed countries, their financial regulatory enforcement authorities are quite proactive and tend to initiate investigations into inappropriate fraudulent activities with little reliance on a whistle-blower or informants.

The EFCC's response to the matter is reactive, and when dealing with extremely critical intrinsigence, the agency only functions when an insider provides information of possible wrong-doing. Everything so far appears improper!

Even the justification given by another youth minister, Olubunmi Tunji-Ojo of the Interior ministry, whose private company is one of the recipients of Betta's 3-Billion Naira ministry contracts, that he has not violated government rules, shows how pervasive corruption has destroyed normal government operation in Nigeria. As a federal minister and the owner of a private company that participates in any government contract, irrespective of which ministry awards the contract, this is referred to as illegal enrichment.

It's not only a conflict of interest, but a significant breach of government trust.

The ICPC and EFCC should conduct a comprehensive investigation into government ministries and agencies, exploring instances of funds ending up in staff members' private accounts. Questions

arise about the Finance ministry's tendency to delegate responsibilities to self-accounting entities and the Auditor-general's failure to detect the illegal scheme during routine audits.

Law enforcement's apparent awareness of such practices remains perplexing, as they often withhold information on guilty officials, contributing to the pervasiveness of illegal activities. This echoes past cases, like the accusations against former Head of Federal Civil Service Winifred Oyo-Ita. Reports from Arise TV also reveal a civil servant from NIRSAL working as a director in Tunji-Ojo's private company.

Our public officials, notably the Judiciary and Legislative branches, exhibit a lack of comprehension regarding ethics. If asked, accused ministers might fumble to define it. Amid public outcry over soaring living costs, the new cabinet ministers are covertly amassing wealth from federal funds, further breaching the public's trust. This trend raises alarming questions about ethical conduct within the government.

Whatever the case, the youths we are championing to participate more in the governance of the country have equally been indoctrinated in widespread corrupt practices, to the extent that they are now hardened and emboldened to openly justify dubious acts without fear of repercussion from the law, the law-enforcement agencies or the public.

We are destroying the future of the youths and the next generation simply because the lawmakers are unwilling to strengthen established laws against corruption!

The rampant corrupt practices around the country must re-emphasise how vigorously important it is for leaders, to repeatedly reinforce the significance of what public trusts means to the youths of the country.

Reforms can only begin when accountability becomes the new tradition in government.

It's how normal societies evolve and function!

OHIMA AGANS-OLIHA, writes from agans.oliha@gmail.com

"As the minister for Humanitarian Affairs and Poverty Alleviation, Dr. Betta Edu, is tasked with implementing the relevant social welfare programmes of the government. She is being accused of violating government financial rules which forbid officials from transferring government funds to private bank accounts of government staff. Transferring ministry funds to a private account undermines law enforcement oversight, enabling diversion to individuals not in the National Social Register. A previous controversial 44-billion Naira transfer from the ministry's NSIPA fund to a private account exacerbates the situation. Concerns arise over officials being emboldened due to lenient laws against government asset diversion."

IMAGES

2024 ARMED FORCES REMEMBRANCE DAY CELEBRATIONS

Plateau State Governor, Barr. Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang was at the 2024 Armed Forces Day celebrations and laid the wreath at the J. D. Gomwalk Secretariat Roundabout Cenotaph Jos on Monday



Governor Mutfwang taking salute on arrival at the event



Chairman, Local Government Service Commission, Hon. Chief Simon Tangni (right) with other dignitaries at the celebrations



Cross section of Nigerian Army/Air Force inspected by Governor Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang of Plateau State



From left are, Commissioner of Environment, Hon. Peter Gwom, former Speaker, PLHA, Rt. Hon. Titus Ayuba Alams and the Executive Secretary, Plateau State Emergency Management Agency, Hon. Sunday Abdu



From left are, PDP State Chairman, Hon. Chris Hassan, SGS, Arc Samuel Jatau, CoS, Engr. Jeremiah Satmak, HoS, Barr. Rauta Dakok and Rear Admiral Samuel Bitrus Atukum, former Military Governor of Plateau State



From left are, former Governors, Rear Admiral Samuel Bitrus Atukum and Sen. Jonah David Jang with Gbong Gwom Jos, His Majesty Da Jacob Gyang Buba CFR



His Majesty, Da Jacob Gyang Buba CFR, Gbong Gwom Jos (left) with the Security Adviser to the Governor, Brig. Gen. Shipi



Gun salute (reveille) by the Army and NAF in honour of Fallen and Living Heroes

PHOTOS: DANLADI DUK

Politics

Remembering Sen. Abubakar, a model for legislators

One politician in Gombe who I believe is yet to get proper accolades will be the Late Senator Idris Abubakar, and I daresay that in Gombe we are yet to see a politician in Northern Nigeria, replicate his bravery and fearlessness. DARIUS SAMSON writes.

FOR those who do not know, at the beginning of the 4th Republic, Sen. Idris was in the centre stage in the face off, between the Legislature and the Executive in Nigeria.

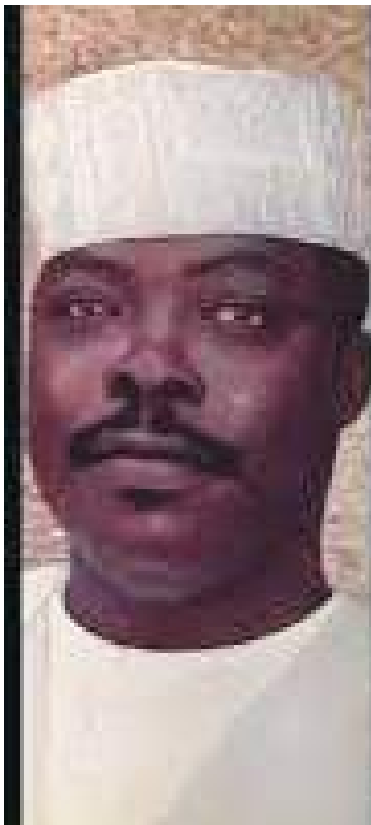
This was when former President Olusegun Obasanjo dared to remove the then Senate President, Chuba Okadigbo, to which Sen. Idris in no ambiguous terms stated, "...I do believe that it would not serve the interest of any person outside the Senate to impose (his), will on the Senate." Calling out President Obasanjo for having what he called an 'excessively inordinate interest' in the removal of Chuba Okadigbo as the Senate President.

I mean, boy, that was a bravery in it's own class to stand up to Obasanjo and call him out like that. This was a lawyer, a bloody civilian if you may, standing up to Obasanjo and his militarised political cabal at that time. He insisted that President Obasanjo could not of his whim, remove Chuba Okadigbo, that he must first present before the Nigerian Senate whatever issues he has against it's President, and allow the Senators decide. That was when he dropped his famed quote: "Democracy is no respecter of persons, it's a respecter of institutions; it is a respecter of constitutionality and due process". A few months later Senator Idris will be the first Senator in the 4th Republic to move for the impeachment of a sitting President, over his non-implementation of the Appropriation Act. He gave meaning to the word "opposition", making sure the Executive Arm stood on their toes and did what was required of them.

More than encomiums, I think there is a need to borrow a few wisdom on the political ideologies he possessed, perhaps it'll serve as a lesson to our current political class, especially those from Gombe South.

Since his passing, we rarely hear our Senators raise cogent issues on the floor of the house, regarding how our democracy will be shaped. We want to hear our legislators do more 'ayes' and 'nays' on the floor of the house.

We need them to hold government officials accountable, we need them to probe misappropriations and corruption on behalf of the people. We need them to move motions that will shake the fabric of this nation and change our course for good. As the Late Senator rightly posited, "...you have to carve a niche in the political psychology of Nigerians while contending at the same time with the fact that you have to work. The work cannot wait for the time that Nigerians are comfortable, and even the work you do is not understood by



Abubakar

Nigerians...and if you don't resist the temptation and compromise by sacrificing quality on the altar of speed in the interest of convenience; while you may be satisfying a very short term interest of populism, you would be sacrificing a long term interest of what is beneficial to democracy.

This statement after over 2 decades of his passing still holds true. While it is good our representatives are sharing cash here and there and have chosen to engage in the politics of welfarism, they must never forget that they are primarily responsible for Nigeria's democracy.

This also applies to those in the Gombe State House of Assembly too, who seem to have no business at all except to rubber stamp activities of the Executive Governor.

To the best of my knowledge, ever since Hon. Bldr. Samuel Markus Wina moved the anti-

kidnapping bill, which was signed into law by the Executive Governor, Alh. Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya, we are yet to see it's implementation.

There is even now a brewing housing crisis in Gombe, and there is no legislation by the State House to move for better housing conditions and streets for every of it's settlement.

You will go to areas that are supposedly "newly developed", especially when they are not high brow areas and you find indiscriminate buildings, no streets of passage. Today, here in Gombe, there are areas that if God forbid a fire outbreak occurs, it'll consume several properties and even where there is a firetruck, it wouldn't be able to pass.

This is in addition to drug abuse and addiction among young children, underage prostitution, excesses of heads of institutions and government parastatals while the Gombe State legislators sit idle.

Most recently, Gombe United has been under fire for their terrible performance, the Governor has claimed the state is sinking millions of Naira into the team, how come the Gombe State legislators are yet to conduct a probe?

You will wonder what then are their responsibilities. In fact you will rarely hear the Gombe State House of Assembly in the news because there is absolutely nothing worthwhile to report.

In remembrance of the erudite Senator, I hope politicians especially legislators are able to take a cue from his wisdom and do the needful, to strengthen democracy and hold the Executive arm accountable. **Dairus Samson is a journalist. He writes from Gombe.**

Supreme Court: We never traded off Kano with NNPP

— APC

THE All Progressives Congress (APC) has dismissed speculations that it may have deliberately traded off the governorship seat in Kano state as part of an arrangement to stave off any possible post-adjudication violence.

It said what played out at the Supreme Court last Friday was essentially a matter of law decided strictly by esteemed arbiters.

The ruling party also said the alliance of opposition parties being canvassed by the presidential candidate of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) in the 2023 polls, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, would fail before 2027 elections, just as his past advocacy in that regard had fizzled out.

While the APC had won at both the tribunal and Appeal Court, Supreme Court decided in favour of the New Nigeria Peoples Party (NNPP) in the governorship election petition in Kano state.

Speaking to newsmen Sunday in Abuja, APC's Deputy National Organising Secretary, Nze Chidi Duru, said while the party would have loved to win the state, it would continue to bow to the decisions of the courts.

According to the former member of the House of Representatives, "law is what it is. Law is based on law and then on facts."

He said: "The judiciary spoke and that is why we have the various tiers of the judiciary. You have the trial courts and then you have the Court of Appeal, thereafter you have the Supreme Court and that is not in any way to denigrate the understanding of the learned justices who were at the various levels of adjudication systems. The trial court appreciated and pronounced the fact as they understood it and the same thing happened when they went to the Court of Appeal. It was also basically to that extent they appreciated the matter and those in the final court saw it differently and then of course pronounced judgment based on the facts that were before them.

"So, it does not in any way

denigrate one section of the arm of the judiciary against the other and it is in the wisdom of our founding fathers that we have these various layers of adjudication process; that first, if you err at the trial court, then those at the higher courts may then look at it and find a different understanding based on the understanding that they have.

"I did not see any politics in it. I did not also see any arrangement based on that. What did happen was that at the trial court, they understood the fact differently, at the Court of Appeal they also understood it but more importantly at the Supreme Court which is the final arbiter in the judicial process, a different understanding was given to it and a pronouncement was made accordingly.

"Law is what it is. Law is based on law and then on facts and if for anything, I want to believe that we should applaud our judiciary for again rising up to the occasion and then espousing the law in a way that Nigerians are confident that you can actually take your differences and grievances to an impartial arbiter and there will be justice dispensed in a way that is satisfactory to all parties involved.

"It is also commendable in a way that it did also suggest that even if there is the suspicion of an interference in the arm of government that Friday's ruling and exposition on the part of the judiciary also did show that they are essentially independent. It gives confidence to both the political actors that the only way you can win election really and frankly is to reach to the electorate; to canvass your views, your ideas and your ideals, share your manifestos with them and then when you win, you win fair and square."

On the advocacy by former Vice President Atiku for political alliance among the opposition parties, Duru said the President Bola Tinubu-led APC administration would continue to deliver the dividends of democracy to Nigerians in such a

way that the party would remain unassailable in the lead up to the next general elections.

"I do not know; I cannot speak for the opposition. I can only tell you that the events of the last few days have also engineered optimism on the part of Nigerians that this government is a listening government that it is one that hearkens to the views of Nigerians.

"I mean, it couldn't have happened before now that when the general public felt that a certain functionary of government was acting in a different manner, that a listening government would say, 'You know what? You are not guilty but you should step aside to enable an unfettered investigation into those 'allegations' against the person. And that is what this government represents.

"You have also seen a lot of positive actions that have been taking place in the last few weeks. It gives a sense of hope to Nigerians that yes, if we continue to work on this path, that APC will also become unassailable in the next few years leading to the next election."

"For me, we will continue to hope that the opposition parties would rise to the occasion to give a formidable and constructive engagement to our political party but it is theirs to provide such opposition and it is for us in the APC to continue to take the lead.

"In any political dispensation you would like to know and understand what the other person is doing so that you can be way ahead of them in the engagement of the Nigerian public. I think that in the next few months, Nigerians will continue to see that this government is working very hard in their own interests and they will continue to give support to the government to ensure that it delivers the dividends of democracy to Nigerians," said the APC chieftain.

Similarly, Kano state Governor Abba Kabir Yusuf said President Tinubu and Vice President Kashim

Shettima ignored the pressure to interfere in the legal battle while it lasted.

In a statement by the governor's media team, Yusuf said: "As a true democrat and progressive, I call on my opponent and his supporters to join hands with me in the crusade of developing our dear state, Kano, for the betterment of its teeming indigenes).

"People of Kano need leaders with vision, passion, zeal, and commitment to initiating projects, and programmes that have a direct bearing on their lives in all facets.

"Alhaji Abba Kabir thanked Almighty Allah, the most exalted for the victory. He also commends the people of Kano for their support, steadfastness, prayers, sacrifices and brevity as well as the Supreme Court judges for upholding the glory of the judiciary.

"He also appreciated NNPP leaders at all levels particularly the leader of Kwankwasiyya Movement, Sen. Rabi'u Kwankwaso, for his guidance and support during the trying period."

"The governor noted with pleasure how President Bola Ahmed Tinubu and his Deputy, Kashim Shettima, didn't interfere in the apex court judgement despite stiff pressure from disgruntled quarters."

Also, the NNPP has hailed what it described as the courage of the justices of the Supreme Court, saying they upheld the principles of fairness.

Briefing newsmen in Abuja, acting National Chairman of the party, Abba Ali, said the verdict affirmed the victory of NNPP and its candidate.

"We know what APC stands for in Kano. The NNPP has a different ideology from other parties. We don't fight or undermine others unlike what they do.

"But we still extend our hand of fellowship to other political parties. Already, our governor, after the ruling, said he would carry other political parties in Kano along," he said.

NEWS

PLSG promises support to armed forces to thrive

BY PETER TITLE

THE Executive Governor of Plateau State, Barrister Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang, has reiterated the commitment of his administration towards providing the necessary tools and enabling environment for the Armed Forces to effectively discharge their constitutional responsibilities of protecting the lives and property of citizens in the state.

He stated this during the Interdenominational Thanksgiving Service marking the 2024 Armed Forces Remembrance Day, held at Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA), Unity Church, Rayfield, Jos on Sunday.

The Governor described the interdenominational service as a divine arrangement, being the first service he attended after the Supreme Court validated his election as governor.

According to him, "This is a service in remembrance of our fallen heroes. And indeed, we want to thank God for those great men and women who devoted themselves to the service of the nation and in the line of duty, lost their lives while others were maimed or became incapacitated. Some died in the course of battle, some died as a result of injuries sustained in the course of protecting the nation, and they left their loved ones behind.

"Unfortunately, as a nation, we have not done well in looking after those who have served the nation appropriately. I am praying that as a nation, we will do better in looking after those who have served the nation," he stressed.

Governor Mutfwang described the Armed Forces as a crucial and critical institution for the survival of Nigeria and called for adequate attention to issues that will improve and boost the morale of the personnel for selfless service.

"I will continue to advocate that the President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces will insist on the return to true professionalism within the armed forces



Mutfwang,

and the security agencies. And I am sure when we begin that journey, it will be worthwhile."

He described the Supreme Court judgment that validated his election as a victory not only for him but for Plateau citizens.

The Director of ECWA EMS, Rev. Elisha Mc Philips, who delivered the sermon, took his text from Psalms 23, saying that as long as God remains our shepherd, we shall not lack anything.

The clergy expressed confidence in the Nigerian Army to end the ongoing terrorism, armed banditry, kidnapping, and other criminal activities in the country.

Former COCIN President, Rev. Pandam Yamsat, offered special prayers for the Nigerian Legions and the Armed Forces and prayed for more wisdom and knowledge to carry on with the herculean task of safeguarding Plateau and the nation.

MWCG presents relief materials to IDPs in Mangu

From JIDAUNA DARING Mangu

AS part of efforts to reduce the hardship being faced by the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), Mwaghavul Women Collaboration Group (MWCG) Namujiwul Balka Outreach has presented food and clothing relief materials to IDPs in Mangu Local Government Area (LGA) of Plateau State.

Our correspondent reports that the presentation of the relief materials was made at the IDPs Camp, Pilot Science Primary School, Bungba Mangu town, recently.

Speaking shortly before presenting the items, the convener of the group, Mrs. Nakris Gayus, who was represented by Dr. Mrs. Nalong Henry Yale, told the IDPs that the reason for their visit was to empathize with them over the unfortunate attacks on their communities.

Mrs. Dakwal commiserated with the IDPs over the death of their loved ones through the hands of evil men. She added that IDPs who are victims of gruesome attacks, were displaced from their ancestral homes as a result of the brutal attacks meted on them for no justifiable reasons by people whom she described as terrorists with sole objectives to steal, kill and destroy.

The convener said that they were a group of few Mwaghavul daughters

initiated in October last year with the aim of uniting themselves as women to help displaced people, with emphasis on women's well being, children's education and also to collaborate, network, encourage/support one another in community development.

Mrs. Dakwal called on government to as a matter of urgency, rise to the occasion and live up to its statutory obligation of protecting lives and property of citizens by tasking the security apparatus to rapidly respond to avert the carnage these enemies of growth and development perpetrate.

The group appealed to the government to accelerate processes for the speedy return of all IDPs to their ancestral homes, so as to enable them to prepare their farms ahead of the coming rainy season as a means of ensuring food security.

Mrs. Dakwal appreciated Governor Caleb M. Mutfwang of Plateau State for the proactive measures taken to ensure that peace and unity are sustained in the state.

She also called on other spirited individual to contribute towards alleviating the plight of the residents of these LGAs who are suffering for no

TWO Northern socio-cultural groups, Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF) and NORTHERN Elders Forum (NEF) aims to form a united front.

Towards this end, a delegation of ACF visited the NEF Chairman, Professor Ango Abdullahi, at his residence in Zaria, where they deliberated on issues of unity among members of Arewa groups, to forge a common front for the North and combat its problems head-on as well as combating the challenges in the region.

In a statement recently, the spokesman of ACF, Professor Tukur Muhammed-Baba said the leadership of the Arewa Consultative Forum paid a courtesy call on Professor Ango Abdullahi, member of the ACF and Chairman of the Northern Elders Forum, at his residence in Zaria, to discuss matters of common interests for the region.

According to him, "the ACF delegation was led

2 Northern groups to form united front

From JOHN FWAH Kaduna

by Alhaji Bashir Mohammed Dalhatu, Wazirin Dutse; Chairman, Board of Trustees (BOT), and Chief Mammam Mike Osman, Chairman, National Executive Committee (NEC).

"Other members of the delegation included Ambassador Ibrahim Mai Sule, Turakin Bade (Vice Chairman, BOT), Senator Ibrahim Ida, PhD, Wazirin Katsina (Deputy Chairman, NEC), Alhaji Mohammed Kari, Wazirin Bauchi (Vice Chairman, NEC), Alhaji Murtala Aliyu, Mutawalen Gombe (Secretary General), Mallam Bukar Zarma (Secretary, Leadership Selection Committee), Prof. Tukur A.

Muhammad-Baba, (National Publicity Secretary) and Manir Mustapha (Administrative Secretary)."

Mohammed-Baba remarked that after exchanging pleasantries and condoling with Abdullahi on his recent loss of a grandchild, the delegation had an extensive discussion on matters of interest.

He stated that the delegation briefed Abdullahi on the inauguration of a new leadership for ACF as well as the resolve of the leadership to regenerate and reinvigorate the organisation in outlook and impact as it seeks to guide and influence national discourse on issues relevant to Northern Nigeria such that the region will overcome its varied existential challenges and, ultimately, regain its unity.

crime of theirs. Dakwal pointed out the group presented the items as a token of their love to salvage the unfortunate situation in this harsh economic period.

The group equally commended the Mishkaham Mwaghavul, Da. John Putmang Hirse for his unwavering fatherly role in ensuring peace building efforts in his domain.

THE NIGERIA STANDARD reports that the items presented include 12 bags of maize, 65 tubers of yam, food seasonings, clothings, soaps, moisturizers, toilet papers, torch lights and hair combs, among others.

Responding, shortly after receiving the items, the representatives' of the national body of Mwaghavul Development Association (MDA) and women wing of the association both applauded the group for coming to the aid of the IDPs with food and clothing, relief materials. They also assured the group that the items presented were going to be shared in a transparent way to the IDPs in the four different camps.

Also speaking with our correspondent, some of the IDPs expressed delight and thanked the group for the show of concern to their plight at their various camps. They said that life has not



Nakris

been easy as far as the situation currently being faced at their various camps is concerned.

NAFDAC vows to make illicit trade unattractive

From Jidauna Yanung Abuja

THE National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC), has vowed to reduce fake drugs and make illicit trade unattractive in the country. Similarly, the agency had appealed to the National Assembly to expedite the review of penalties against counterfeiting. The Director General of the

agency, Prof. Christianah Adeyeye in a statement in Abuja, argued that stiff penalties without an option of fine would discourage perpetrator from engaging in such illicit trades.

According to her, NAFDAC having achieved ISO900:2015 certification and World Health Organization (WHO) maturity level 3 would continue in its efforts to combat the scourge of substandard medicines.

News

Sokoto govt vows to ensure regular projects inspection

From ANENE AIKE, Sokoto

THE Deputy Governor of Sokoto State, Alhaji Idris Mohammed Gobir has sworn to ensure regular inspection of all ongoing projects under the state Ministry of Works and Transport where he is serving as the commissioner.

He stated this while inspecting the rehabilitation of Kasuwar Daji road networks and Wajeke five hundred housing units in Wamakko Local Government Area of the state.

The Deputy Governor, who is also the overseer of the state Ministry of Works and Transport, stated that the measure is aimed at ensuring that the projects were executed according to specifications.

At the Kasuwar Daji road networks project, Gobir expressed satisfaction with the construction of drainages and culverts being carried out. He added that it is hoped that the contractor ZBCC Ltd would maintain the tempo up to the completion level of the project.

Gobir, the Sokoto State Deputy Gov also revealed that a few days ago, Governor Ahmed Aliyu was at the site for a similar inspection to see things for himself. All of these, he said, indicate the commitment of the present administration to ensuring all contracts awarded are executed based on contract



Gobir

agreements and specifications.

The Deputy Gov also urged contracting firms to ensure they complete the project within three months or get revocation according to the contractual agreement.

Earlier, the Site Engineer of the construction firm, Isah Dan'iya Argungu told the Deputy Governor that work on the construction of drainages and leveling of the road is going smoothly.

Engineer Argungu pledged the company's determination to complete the project as scheduled.

At the Wajeke Housing construction site, the Deputy Governor expressed satisfaction as some houses were at roofing and linter levels.

He said that apart from houses, the project included the construction of mosques, schools, hospitals, and police stations among others.

The Deputy Governor was accompanied on the visit by the Permanent Secretary of the ministry, Abdulkadir Ahmad, and the Director, Civil Engineering, Engineer Atiku Mohammed Shagari.

FG to establish fashion hub in Benue

From TERESE TUHWA, Makurdi

THE federal government has announced plans to establish a world class fashion hub in Makurdi the Benue State capital for use by small businesses in the tailoring cluster in the state within 90 days.

President Bola Ahmed Tinubu who announced this in Makurdi during the flag off of the National Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) Clinic in the state, said the National Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) programme was one of his initiatives for job creation for Nigerians.

Represented by his Vice, Senator Kashim Shettima, the president described the state as the most endowed state in the federation in terms of fertile land. And pointed out that Benue has no reason being a poor state.

According to the president, the reason for holding the first expanded National Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) Clinic in the state was in recognition of the role the people played in offering the nation a means of trade and a vehicle for driving the MSMEs sub-sector.

He called for peace and unity of purpose among leaders and elites in the state in order to harness its full potential to bring development.

The president commended people of the state for their hard work, excellence in arts, creativity, agriculture as well as commerce. He added that the reputation and diligent efforts of everybody in Benue was such an inspiration for the nation.

He congratulated Governor Hyacinth Alia on his recent

victory at the Supreme Court and for also hosting the first National MSMEs clinic and urged the people to seize the opportunity and forge a path for posterity and leverage on the resources at their disposal to create a thriving ecosystem for the success of their micro small and medium enterprises.

Earlier in his address, the state Governor, Rev Father Dr Hyacinth Alia, said his administration was working round the clock to create an enabling environment for all businesses in the state to thrive.

Governor Alia who described Benue as a state with numerous talents and different entrepreneurship skills, added that his administration was committed to enhancing welfare of the state through judicious use of available resources.

He said the government and people of the state have not taken the MSMEs initiative for granted, especially as it was happening in the state for the first time. They appreciated President Tinubu and his Vice, Sen. Shettima for flagging-off the programme in the state.

The governor who enumerated some of the challenges facing small scale businesses in the state to include insecurity, difficulty in securing business licenses and lack of loan facilities, called on the federal government to sustain collaboration with the state in this regard.

While appreciating the president for the donation of a 250 kva solar at the Benue State University through the Office of the Vice President, the governor said the state will continue to key into the renewed hope agenda for more



Tinubu



Managing our fragile space

Plateau State has been faced with a myriad of challenges all fronts. From outright hostility from our neighbours to deliberate manipulations and unfortunate connivance from even within the State. Indeed, selfishness has become the hallmark of some individuals who should have been the leading light in most of our communities. From the onset the Plateau personality was known for his respect for constituted authority and the willingness to do that which is right and honourable. Our politics was never a do or die neither was it pursued in the manner the present crop of people play the game now. The Plateau man was known for his decency and steadfastness and was never found on the wrong sides of the divide.

Sadly, these virtues have all been jettisoned and are replaced by alien and unknown characteristics which do not serve our purpose. Hard work has been supplanted by laziness. Our youth find more pleasures in pursuing matters that do not pay rather than engaging in tasking activities which dividend are rewarding and fulfilling. It is now common to see young and energetic people waste away in the name of politics. They would rather serve as thugs to political gladiators than engage in profitable and productive ventures which would pay in the long run.

Our heritage is abundant and left to strangers who take advantage of our lack of interests to milk our resources and create holdings which are disadvantageous to our people. We claim to be adroit at politics yet we are scarcely able to win some positions that would naturally have been achievable without much stress. The toxic nature of our discourse on our various platforms lends credence to the fact that we are a divided people. We seem not to have any common ground when it comes to politics. We

throw all caution to the wind just to satisfy our paymasters. We take ourselves to the cleaners and we become the laughing stock of the society.

Reading through our platforms on the social media has not only become nightmarish but it is indeed, frightening. The divide is so sharp that one wonders what has happened to the Plateau spirit of respect for elders. Yes, we know that we owe our elders respect and therefore have our ways of passing message that would correct but that is no more the case. We now shave the heads of our elders in public. We need to do a rethink. We cannot wish away the fact that we are a people grounded and steeped in culture and have our ways of resolving our issues. That too is not to say that all the elders are doing is right. They too need to change their approach to issue that have to do with the young ones.

As it is often said, respect begets respect. Our leaders must show understanding and strive to correct in love. They must realize that it is their failure to provide leadership that has brought us to this pass. They must, therefore, take measures to bring us back from the brink of the precipice and ensure we are back to the path of growth and development.

"That should not be the case. We must engage them and bring modernity to bear on our traditional method which hitherto yielded little. Our people of means must also start building small cottage industries so as to add value to some of these resources before they are sold off."

We must look out for one another so that even when we make mistakes, we are sure that there is someone who is watching and can beat us back into shape. We must resolve as a people that politics, no matter how fractious should not divide us because it is just a means to an end. That means that even though it is important, it must be done with decency and decorum.

Our traditional institution must also be jolted out of its present slumber. It has shown a lack of capacity to altruistically adopt to the changing times. It should not be business as usual. We cannot forget in a hurry that we owe tomorrows generation some debts. If our parents had destroyed and desecrated our land tenure system, nothing would have been left for the present generation so we should tread the path of caution. We have our standards which we were known for let that be our guide as we find modern methods to navigate this challenge.

As a people endangered from all fronts, what is left for us to do? We must first bring back the virtues of hard work which we were hitherto known for. Laziness cannot be condoned in any ramification. We are a resource rich society that is why our neighbours flock to our land to do business and harness our God given resources to their advantage. That should not be the case. We must engage them and bring modernity to bear on our traditional method which hitherto yielded little. Our people of means must also start building small cottage industries so as to add value to some of these resources before they are sold off.

Government on its path must stand in the gap and ensure our people are protected and provided with the enablement to carry out their activities. It must remain neutral and see everyone as its own so that it can have the moral compass to call to order whosoever veers of the mark.

News

Piyo rejoices with citizens over Supreme Court victory

By DUMAH RANDONG

Plateau State Deputy Governor, Mrs Josephine Piyo, has congratulated the people of Plateau State over the Supreme Court judgment that affirmed the victory of Barr. Caleb Mutfwang as the duly elected Governor of the State.

Piyo, who thanked the people for standing with the governor, commended them for the unwavering support and trust they placed in the governor and his team.

The Deputy Governor in a statement signed by her Chief Press Secretary, Martha Nyam in Jos, also commended the Supreme Court judges for their fairness and commitment to upholding justice, which according to her would further strengthen democratic institutions in the country.

Piyo further commended Governor Caleb Mutfwang for his doggedness and steadfastness throughout



Piyo

the entire judicial proceedings, adding that his determination remains a shining example of leadership.

She stated that in spite of the distractions caused by legal battles, their administration is focused on delivering good

governance to the people at all levels.

Piyo urged the citizens to remain united and harness the collective strength and resilience the state is known for and continue the transformational journey towards a more prosperous state.

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

The Director-General, National Intelligence Agency, Ambassador Ahmed Rufai Abubakar, has commended Governor Yahaya Bello of Kogi State for his exceptional achievements in the state.

Abubakar, in a commendation letter he personally signed and addressed to Governor Bello, congratulated him on his notable strides since he assumed office as Kogi Governor in 2016. He said that his various infrastructural projects had opened up the state as one of Nigeria's main trade routes.

While congratulating the governor and the Kogi State chapter of the All Progressives Congress for winning the just concluded governorship election in the state, the NIA boss noted that the governor was leaving the North Central state more prosperous, developed and transformed.

He listed infrastructure projects, renovation of the Okene Reference Hospital and the establishment of

You're leaving Kogi more prosperous, transformed

- NIA DG



Rufai

Omi Rice Farm as some of the plethora of achievements of the Yahaya Bello administration.

Abubakar, in the letter, titled, "Acknowledging Your Remarkable Achievements as Governor," explained how Governor Bello's enhanced public services and facilities, added value to agricultural production and

rejuvenated Kogi's economy.

"As your tenure as the Governor of Kogi State draws to a close, I write to congratulate you and acknowledge the notable achievements of your administration during your two tenures as governor since you assumed office in 2016.

"I would also like to congratulate you and the Kogi State chapter of the APC for winning the just concluded gubernatorial elections.

"During your time as Governor of Kogi State, the various infrastructural projects undertaken by your administration have significantly improved the state's connectivity and accessibility as one of Nigeria's main trade routes from the West and South to Northern parts of the country.

"As you conclude your tenure and begin another chapter in your political career, I wish you success in your future endeavours, while enjoying more quality time with your beloved family," Abubakar stated.

PLASU Governing Council appoints new librarian

By EZEKIEL DONTINNA

THE Governing Council of Plateau State University (PLASU) Bokkos, has appointed Associate Professor Allahde Shehu, as the new Librarian with effect from January 1, 2024 within a single tenure of five years (5yrs).

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

The statement said, "The

appointment of Associate Professor Allahde Shehu, as the University Librarian by the university's Governing Council followed the voluntary withdrawal of service by the former university Librarian, Associate Professor Victor Chuks Nwokedi to take another.

"The new University Librarian, Associate Professor Shehu is 53 years old and hails from Angwan Mission, Zamko, Langtang North Local Government Area of Plateau State.

"The new University

Librarian attended Government Science School, Kuru from 1981-1988, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, from 1993 - 1998, Masters in Information Management 2009-2011, Masters in Disaster Risk Management from 2011 - 2013 both from Ahmadu Bello University Zaria and Ph.D from Babcock University, Ogun State between 2014-2018.

"He holds a Doctorate

Degree in Information Resources Management (IRM).

He is a member of the Nigerian Library Association, Association of Government Libraries, Medical Libraries Association of Nigeria and was Head of Department of Library and Information Science, Bingham University before his present appointment amongst other professional and career responsibilities", it

highlighted.

According to the statement, "Before the taking over recently as the substantive University Librarian, Mrs. Zainab Maren had coordinated the affairs of the library. The appointment is with effect from 1st January 2024 and is for a single tenure of five (5) years.

"Associate Professor Allahde Shehu is married and blessed with two children".

Gov Bello inaugurates Kabba new varsity

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

As one of the activities marking the completion of his eight years in office, Governor Yahaya Bello of Kogi State has officially inaugurated the third state university sited in Kabba, Tuesday.

The university, established on 26 June 2023, has also conducted its maiden matriculation ceremony for about 1200 students with dignitaries coming from within and outside the state.

Addressing newsmen on Monday at the pre matriculation ceremony held at its permanent site in Kabba, the Vice Chancellor of the university, Prof Kehinde Imisi Eniola, said "The university is poised to train globally competitive,

nationally recognized and locally relevant students who would make both the country and their parents proud.

Prof Eniola disclosed that the institution has already set up a standard to beat the best universities around and to become the best in no distant time.

He vows to lead a team of management that is resourceful, diligent and upright and transparent to both the students and their parents and guardians, stressing that the school has set out in a strong footing.

The VC said the school which was initially approved by the Nigeria University Commission to admit 500 students as take-off, expressed surprise that within three days, the 500 allocation was filled up by the



Bello

students which made the school to seek for more approvals of students intake with NUC now giving them the go ahead to admit 1,750 students.

While thanking Governor Yahaya Bello for his foresight and doggedness in establishing the institution within a few months, he said in less

than five years, the school will greatly transform the socio economic activities of the area.

He later conducted news men around the ongoing projects in the school and noted that the school will offer remedial and IJMB courses to students who could not make up for the admission in this session.



Allahde

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	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT	NAME OF DECEASED PERSON	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT	NAME OF DECEASED PERSON	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT
Masoyi Danladi Kwarke late of Abuja FCT, died on the 18th January, 2023 at Abuja FCT.	Masoyi Kwarge Emmanuel of Airforce Base Jos Plateau State. The lawful brother of the said deceased.	Ngukusuk Dikat Luka late of Plateau State died on the 9th March, 2023 at Jos, Plateau State.	Timothy Ngukusuk Luka of COCIN Church Dingak Bokkos LGA, Plateau State. Lawful brother. of the said deceased.	Gotom Shikshera Chinke late of Plateau State died on the 12th February, 2023 at Qua'an Pan, LGA Plateau State.	Gotom Nengrumma Jacob of behind Abbatoir Market Jos South LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.
SGT. Shade Bello late of Plateau State. Died on the 12th May, 2023 at JUTH, Plateau State.	Lukman Kasim of Yingi Rayfield Jos South LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased	Barau Bawa Abubakar late of Plateau State. Died on the 20th October, 2023 at Bauchi State.	Mohammed Abubakar Bawa of Yan Shanu Nasarawa Jos North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.	Chief Henry Ogirri late of Plateau State. Died on the 15th January, 2023 at Lagos State.	Mercy Ogirri & Reuben Ogirri of Rayfield Jos South LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son/widow of the said deceased.
Kerker Maisamari late of Plateau State died on the 27th July, 2021 at Kerker Jos East LGA, Plateau State.	Inah Agiya Kerker Jos East LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased	Yakubu Pam Zat late of Plateau State died on the 28 July, 2023 at Heipang, Barkin Ladi LGA, Plateau State.	Pam Yakubu Pam of Kwi Village Near Airport Barkin Ladi LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.	Choji James Margeret late of Plateau State died on the 12th July, 2023 at K/Vom, Jos South LGA, Plateau State.	Choji Stephen Gyang of K/Vom Jos South LGA, Plateau State.. Lawful son of the said deceased.
Long Fa'anlat Damian late of Plateau State died on the 28th February, 2023 at Doemak Qua'an Pan LGA Plateau State.	Long Swarle Edmund of Doemak in Qua'an Pan LGA, Plateau State . Lawful son of the said deceased	Masaya Yusuf late of Abuja FCT died on the 25th May, 2022 at ASD Pada, Abuja FCT.	Yilkes Yusuff Nababa of ASD Pada Abuja FCT. Lawful son of the said deceased.	Dung Musa late of Plateau State died on the 12th January, 2022 at BHUTH, Jos Plateau State.	Musa Samson Dung, Fan Barkin Ladi LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.
Idris Abdu late of Plateau State died on the 20th May, 2023 at BUTHU, Jos Plateau State.	Aisha Abdu No. 8 Rotimi Ojegbile Street Dawaki Model City, Abuja FCT. Lawful daughter of the said deceased	Wakili Ali late of Kaduna State died on the 25th March, 2021 at Gen. hospital Saminika Kaduna State.	Sani Aliyu Saminaka Lere LGA, Kaduna State. Lawful son of the said deceased.	Hassan Nimmak late of Plateau State died on the 4th June, 2016 at PSSH, Jos.	Nanloh Nimmak Vongtau of Mile Four Langtang South LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.
SGT. Luka Jonathan late of Plateau State died on the 24th March, 2020 at COCIN Hospital Panyam, Mangu LGA Plateau State.	Gupiya Shedrach Jonathan of COCIN Church Vodni Mangu LGA, Plateau State . Lawful brother of the said deceased.	Nannim Dul late of Plateau State died on the 14th Nov, 2021 at Dibbin, Langtang North LGA Plateau State.	Dul Desmond Warokfa of Aliyu Kama Road Nasarawa Langtang North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.	Helen Enbentonu late of Benue State died on the 21st March, 2022 at Gen. Hospital Otukpo Benue State.	Samuel Entonu & Odeh George of NO.5 Ojira Road Otukpo Benue State. Lawful son/husband of the said deceased.
Rose Chinyere Uloneme late of Imo State died on the 26th March, 2021 at Cottage Hospital, Qualla, Qua;an Pan LGA, Plateau State.	Uloneme Scholastica Chioma of Kurgwi Qua'an-Pan LGA, Plateau State. Lawful daughter of the said deceased.	Chomo Abigail Mangai late of Plateau State died on the 3rd March, 2023 at Akwanga, LGA Nassarawa State.	Mangai Deborah Jere of Dahwol Vwan Near COCIN LCC Zawan Jos South LGA, Plateau State. Lawful sister of the said deceased.	Martha Uzoamaka Ekwenchi late of Anambra State died on the 19th October, 2023 at BHUTH, Jos.	Mbanefo Mbonu Ekwenchi of No.31 Utan GRA, Rock Haven Jos LGA, Plateau State. Lawful husband of the said deceased.
Joseph Agwom Nyam late of Plateau State died on the 4th April, 2018 at PSSH, Jos.	Joshua Joseph Nyam of Mining Co-operation Junction Tudun Wada Jos North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.	Bulus Ishaya late of Plateau State died on the 6th March, 2022 at Jos, Plateau State.	Bulus Rhoda of Zaruma Close Farin Gada Jos North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful widow of the said deceased.	Mwo Ishaku Jallaboi late of Plateau State died on the 18th December, 2023 at Jos, Plateau State.	Jallaboi Jummai Gift of Bida Bidi Jos North LGA, Plateau State. The lawful widow of the said deceased.
Dung Francis Chuwang late of Plateau State died on the 31st July, 2018 at Jos, Plateau State.	Francis Dagwom Chuwang Dung of C/O COCIN LCC Ratyi Du Jos South Plateau State the lawful son of the said deceased.	Deme Giwa late of Plateau State died on the 1st March, 2022 at Danto Ganawuri, Riyom LGA Plateau State.	Mann Ibrahim Gywa of Danto Ganawuri Riyom LGA, Plateau State. The lawful son of the said deceased.	Mancha Musa Michael late of Plateau State died on the 27th September, 2023 at Jos, Plateau State.	Mancha Martins of Dayah Zawan Jos South LGA, Plateau State the lawful son of the said deceased.
Kwande Jibrin Bawa late of Plateau State died on the 3rd February, 2006 at Yelwa, Shendam LGA Plateau State.	Hashimu Jibrin of Angwan Iya Yelwa Shendam LGA, Plateau State. The lawful son of the said deceased.	Adaw Agok late of Plateau State. Died on the 5th May, 2021. At Bokkos, LGA Plateau, State.	Fibi Agok COCIN Central Bokkos LGA, Plateau State. Lawful widow of the said deceased.	Damulak Oliver late of Plateau State. Died on the 29th May, 2023. At Shendam, LGA Plateau State.	Clement Damulak of new Congo Shendam LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased
Ayuba Yahaya late of Plateau Stat died on the 19th Nov, 2023. At Jos, Plateau State.	Ayuba Yahaya Zainab & Ayuba Aisha of 11 Tudun Wada Ring Road Jos North LGA, Plateau State . Lawful sister of the said deceased.	Josephine Funke Kogo late of Plateau State died on the 7th Oct, 2023. At Fed. Med. Cen Jabi Abuja.	Tokumboh Emmanuella Kogo & Edwin Oluseye Kogo Opp. ITF Training School Bukuru Jos South LGA, Plateau State. Lawful daughter/son of the said deceased.	CPL. Adas Achin late of Plateau State died on the 17th July, 2021. At kunduu, Village Niger State.	Lydia Adas of Federal low-cost Kissayhip Bassa LGA, Plateau State. Lawful widow of the said deceased.
Yusuf Jiji late of Plateau State died on the 6th Sept, 2023. At Bukuru, Jos South LGA Plateau State.	Emmanuel Jiji of M.T.C Bukuru Jos south LGA Plateau. Lawful son of the said deceased			Bitrus Zakka Goldit late of Plateau State died on the 1st April, 2022. At Dadin Kowa, Jos South LGA, Plateau State.	Zakka Joseph Goldit of Agric Quarters kufangJos South LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.

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

Foreign News

US condemns Iran for 'reckless' missile strikes

THE US has condemned Iran over ballistic missile strikes on Iraq's northern city of Irbil on Monday night, calling them "reckless and imprecise".

Iran's Revolutionary Guards said they struck what they claimed were an Israeli "spy headquarters" in Iraq's semi-autonomous Kurdistan Region.

Four civilians were killed and six hurt in the attack, local authorities said.

Iraq recalled its ambassador from Tehran, condemning the strikes as a "blatant violation" of sovereignty.

There has been no comment from Israel.

The Revolutionary Guards also said they carried out missile strikes on "terrorist bases" in Syria in response to a recent suicide bombing in Iran claimed by the Islamic State (IS) group.

In a separate development on Tuesday morning, Kurdish counter-terrorism forces said they had shot three armed drones flying over Irbil's airport, where US and international forces are stationed, Reuters news agency reported.

There was no immediate claim, but an umbrella group of Iran-backed militias known as the Islamic Resistance in Iraq has said it was behind similar attacks.

The Iranian strikes come amid heightened tensions across the Middle East since the war in the Gaza Strip between Israel and the Iran-backed Palestinian group Hamas began on 7 October.

Iran has declared that it does not want to get involved in a wider conflict, but groups in its so-called "Axis of Resistance" have been carrying out attacks on Israel and its allies to show solidarity with the Palestinians.

Lebanon's Hezbollah movement has exchanged cross-border fire with Israeli forces; Shia militias have launched drones and missiles at US forces in Iraq and Syria; and Yemen's Houthi rebels have attacked ships in the Red Sea.

Israel has reportedly carried out strikes that killed a Hamas leader in Lebanon and a Revolutionary Guards commander in Syria, while the US has killed an Iraqi militia leader in an air strike in Iraq and bombed Houthi targets in Yemen.

Iraq's government condemned Iran's "aggression" on Irbil.

The Kurdistan Region Security Council said multiple ballistic missiles launched by the Revolutionary Guards struck civilian-populated areas of Irbil around 23:30 local time (20:30 GMT) on Monday.

Local news outlet Rudaw reported that loud explosions shook the city and that several residential buildings on the road between Irbil and the north-eastern suburb of Pirmam were damaged heavily.

Peshraw Dizayee, a multimillionaire real estate magnate, was killed when a missile hit his home, the ruling Kurdistan Democratic Party said.

An 11-month-old baby was also among the dead, according to Rudaw.

The Revolutionary Guards said in a statement that the missile strikes were a "response to the recent evil acts of the Zionist regime in martyring [Revolutionary Guards] and resistance commanders".

The missiles "destroyed one of the main headquarters of Israel's spy agency Mossad in Iraq's Kurdistan Region", which had been used to "develop espionage operations and plan acts of terrorism", they claimed.

However, the Kurdistan Region Security Council said it categorically rejected "this unfounded pretext" and accused the Revolutionary Guards of



Biden

frequently employing "baseless pretexts for assaulting Irbil" when it posed no threat.

The Kurdistan Region's Prime Minister, Masrour Barzani, condemned the "cowardly attack" and urged the federal government in Baghdad to "take a principled position against the flagrant violation of Iraq's and the Kurdistan Region's sovereignty".

The Iraqi foreign ministry said the government "strongly denounced the Iranian aggression on Irbil" and would "take all legal measures against it", including filing a complaint to the UN Security Council. It also announced the formation of an investigative committee to "prove the falsity" of Iran's claims.

Later, the ministry recalled the Iraqi ambassador from Tehran for consultations and summoned Iran's charge d'affaires in Baghdad to protest.

"We will continue to assess the situation, but initial indications are that this was a reckless and imprecise set of strikes," Adrienne Watson, spokesperson for the White House National Security Council, said in a statement.

"The United States supports the sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of Iraq," she said, adding that no US personnel or facilities were targeted.

The UN mission in Iraq said: "Attacks, by any side, violating Iraqi sovereignty and territorial integrity must stop. Security concerns must be addressed through dialogue, not strikes."

The Iranian foreign ministry said it respected the sovereignty and territorial integrity of other

Zelenskyy calls for unity at Davos to stop Russia

PRESIDENT Volodymyr Zelenskyy says the West should show unity and called for more support for Ukraine to ensure that Russia does not prevail.

In a speech at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Zelenskyy said that the West's worries about escalation had lost Kyiv time in its struggle against Russia.

He added that Putin would pursue his invasion of Ukraine even if fighting pauses on the sprawling front.

"After 2014, there were attempts to freeze the war in Donbas. There were very influential guarantors, the chancellor of Germany, the

countries but was using its "legitimate and legal right to deter national security threats".

In 2022, the Revolutionary Guards carried out a similar missile attack on what it claimed was an Israeli "strategic centre" in Irbil following an air strike in Syria that killed two senior Iranian officers. Later in the year, they hit what they said were the bases of Iranian Kurdish opposition groups in the region.

The Revolutionary Guards also said they had targeted the positions of IS and other "terrorist groups" in Syria's opposition-controlled Idlib province on Monday night.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a UK-based monitoring group, said it was not clear where the missiles landed. Four explosions were heard south-east of the city of Aleppo, within areas controlled by Iran-backed militias, and one blast was heard near the city of Idlib, it added.

White Helmets first responders said a non-functioning medical clinic in the village of Taltita in Idlib province had been destroyed by explosions of unknown origin. Two people suffered minor injuries, they added.

The Revolutionary Guards said the strikes in Syria were in retaliation for this month's suicide bombing that targeted crowds marking the fourth anniversary of Iranian general Qasem Soleimani's assassination by the US.

That attack in Kerman in southern Iran killed at least 94 people.

president of France. But not satisfied with frozen products," Zelenskyy said.



Jong Un

KIM Jong Un met Russian leader Vladimir Putin in September

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has said unification with the South is no longer possible, and that the constitution should be changed to designate it the "principal enemy".

Mr Kim also said three organisations dealing with reunification would shut down, state media KCNA reported.

South Korea's president said it would respond "multiple times stronger" to any provocation from the North.

The two Koreas have been divided since the Korean War ended in 1953.

They did not sign a peace treaty and therefore have remained technically still at war ever since.

In a speech delivered at the Supreme People's Assembly - North Korea's rubber-stamp parliament - Mr Kim said that the constitution should be amended to educate North Koreans that South Korea is a "primary foe and invariable principal enemy".

He also said that if a war breaks out on the Korean peninsula, the country's constitution should reflect the issue of "occupying", "recapturing" and "incorporating" the South into its territory.

Mr Kim - who replaced his father, Kim Jong-il, as North

Kim Jong Un brands South Korea primary foe

Korean leader in 2011 - said the North "did not want war, but we also have no intention of avoiding it", according to KCNA.

He said he was taking a "new stand" on north-south relations, which included dismantling all organisations tasked with reunification.

Speaking to his cabinet on Tuesday, South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol said that if the North carried out a provocation, the South "will retaliate multiple times stronger", pointing to the South Korean military's "overwhelming response capabilities".

Dr John Nilsson-Wright, who heads the Japan and Korea Programme at Cambridge University's Centre for Geopolitics, described Mr Kim's remarks as "unprecedented", and said it was "highly unusual" for a North Korean leader to depart from the policy of unification.

He added that Mr Kim's anti-Western stance can be traced back to the 2019 summit with then-US President Donald Trump in Vietnam, which ended without an agreement. Mr Kim's comments came as relations significantly weakened on the Korean Peninsula in recent months.

In November, North Korea fully suspended a five-year military deal with the South aimed at lowering military tensions. It promised to withdraw all measures "taken to prevent military conflict in all spheres including ground, sea and air", and said it would deploy more forces to the border region.

The South had partly suspended the agreement days earlier after Mr Kim claimed to have successfully launched a spy satellite into space.

The rhetoric - and provocative actions - from the North have only escalated since then.

He also threatened a nuclear attack on the South, and called for a build-up of his country's military arsenal.

The North has also launched missiles in recent weeks, as well as live-fire exercises close to South Korean territory.

In a report published last week for 38 North, a US-based

organisation with a focus on North Korea, former State Department official Robert Carlin and nuclear scientist Siegfried S Hecker said they saw the situation on the Korean Peninsula as "more dangerous than it has ever been" since the start of the Korean War in 1950.

EU, US urge sustained support for Ukraine war

THE European Union and the United States have urged allies of Ukraine to keep up with their funding as the war with Russia nears the two-year mark, with no resolution to the fighting in sight.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken promised sustained US support for Ukraine in a meeting on Tuesday with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy despite a row in the US Congress on approving new funding.

"We are determined to sustain our support for Ukraine and we're working very closely with Congress in order to work to do that. I know our European colleagues will do the same thing," Blinken told Zelenskyy at the World Economic Forum in Davos.

Jake Sullivan, US President Joe Biden's national security adviser, joined the meeting and told Zelenskyy that the US and its allies were determined "to ensure that Russia fails and Ukraine wins".

Zelenskyy thanked the Biden administration and the "bipartisan support" in the US Congress. "We really count on your support - continuing your huge support," he said.

The Ukrainian leader, who had addressed the Switzerland forum by video link in the past two years, showed up in person, as he faces increasing war fatigue in EU capitals and the US.



Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy speaks with European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen (L) at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, January 16, 2024

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen warned on Tuesday that the West must not let up supplying Ukraine with weapons and money if it wants Kyiv to succeed.

"Ukraine can prevail in this war but we must continue to empower their resistance," she told business leaders at Davos.

"Ukrainians need predictable financing throughout 2024 and beyond. They need a sufficient and sustained supply of weapons to defend Ukraine and regain its rightful territory."

NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg, who also met Zelenskyy at the summit, said Ukraine "was closer to NATO than ever before".

It will be seen as an encouraging sign for Ukraine, which has long sought to join the military alliance and begun developing a reform plan as part of its potential ascension.

Stoltenberg also said there is "cause for optimism" in Ukraine's two-year battle against Russia, despite a "serious battlefield situation".

As world leaders gathered in Davos to discuss how to rein in wars and embrace artificial intelligence, a state of emergency was declared in the southern Russian city of Voronezh on Tuesday following a Ukrainian drone attack.

Russia's Ministry of Defence said five Ukrainian drones were destroyed by air defences over the Voronezh region.

Yelena Fedyainova, whose six-year-old son was injured in one of the attacks, said the drones first

struck at about 2:30am on Tuesday (23:30 GMT, Monday) and blew out the window of her apartment.

"I grabbed the child - there were shards everywhere and smoke," Fedyainova told journalists, the Reuters news agency reported. A girl was injured in the same attack, officials said.

Voronezh, a city of more than one million people, lies some 250km (155 miles) from the border with Ukraine. The city's mayor, Vadim Kstenin, said a state of emergency had been declared in the area to deal with the effect of the attack.

Meanwhile, authorities in the northeastern Ukrainian region of Kharkiv urged residents of more than two dozen villages near the front line to evacuate, citing Russian attacks in the area.

Russian forces captured swaths of the region shortly after invading Ukraine in February 2022 and have kept up efforts to wrest the region despite losing ground there.

"Given the security situation, we are introducing mandatory evacuation of the population from the Kindrashivska and Kurylivska communities of the Kupiansk district," the Kharkiv regional governor announced on social media.

Governor Oleg Syneubov said the order would affect some 3,043 people in the settlements, including 279 children.

Ukraine routinely orders civilians to evacuate from towns and villages under Russian attack but does not always enforce the orders.

Feature

Nigeria: Machiavellian Judges must be punished

After about eight months of legal scrimmage over the overcome of the 2023 gubernatorial polls in Plateau State, the Supreme Court only last week in a unanimous pronouncement finally inverted the judgement of the Appeal Court which had earlier avowed the candidate of the All Progressives Congress, (APC) Dr Nentawe Yilwada as Governor-elect. BULUS GAMBO write.

AS a result of the Supreme Court's ruling, the incumbent Governor, Barrister Caleb Mutfwang of the People's Democratic Party's mandate is affirmed.

Before this reversal, in an unparalleled judicial imbroglio which many legal luminaries labelled an implausible controversial circumstances in most recent times, the Court of Appeal went against contemporary legal applications of the Electoral Act as stipulated to favor Dr. Nentawe, after the presiding Judge based his strongholds on pre-election matters which according to him justified the invalidation of the Governor Mutfwang's victory at the polls.

At the lower tribunal months back after the matter became an issue of litigation, the presiding judge had ruled in favour of Barrister Caleb Mutfwang before the Appeal Court subsequently upturned the decision in favour of Dr. Nentawe Yilwada Goshuwe.

All this while, the dispute before the election tribunals was centered around the sponsorship of the PDP gubernatorial candidate even as the matter of structure or no structure also at a point eventually popped up. While the political class on the Plateau began exhibiting unfamiliar character as the court drama continued, supporters of both candidates eventually threw discipline to the wind maligning each other on public domains. Thus, the social media platform became a central point of attraction; this time for obviously wrong reasons ever imagined.

In its ruling at the apex court last week however, the five member panel of the Supreme Court led by Justice Emmanuel Agim without hesitation reversed the Appeal Court verdict noting that the validity of nomination and sponsorship was not a valid ground to void an election as such.

In furtherance of proper legal procedures which Justice Agim applied during the judgement delivery; he emphasized that the issue of party primaries is an internal matter of the political parties which both the tribunal and the Court of Appeal lacked the jurisdiction to entertain as well as the claim by the petitioners and the appellante court that PDP disobeyed a court order by not conducting another fresh primaries which from the perspective of the law was not so.

Most interestingly, the presiding Justice John Okoro who lamented that lots of people suffered because of all these wrongful judgements by the Appeal Court which sacked several legislators voted under the platform of PDP, he was quick to also warn the legal profession to wake up or else it would render itself irrelevant to the society. This in more definite terms can be interpreted to be that the Appeal Court on this matter failed in its responsibility to



Mutfwang



Abba

be the last hope of the common man in Nigeria.

Sad enough, a near similar situation outplayed itself during the legal battle over the 2023 gubernatorial elections held in Kano State where the Supreme Court was said to have wondered why the lower court had to entertain the issue of membership of political parties and flagrantly disregard the principle of law where it deducted 165,616 votes accrued to the winner of the state's gubernatorial polls and incumbent Governor, Abba Kabiru Yusuf Gida Gida. The lower tribunal had also ruled that the incumbent Governor of Kano State was not a member of the NNPP as at the time he contested the elections. All these legal lasesp recorded in the Appeal Court judgements had painted the court in bad light before the citizens of this great country and beyond.

If not for the wisdom of the Supreme Court in its judgement of last week, Kano State would have been by now set on fire due to complete negligence by the Appeal Court on this matter. Aside these two states which are typical examples of this unspeakable predicament we found ourselves before the rescue, there are perhaps other states which in the cause of these litigations in the aftermath of the 2023 general elections eventually suffered miscarriage of justice. These ridiculous judgements have also portrayed this country as a nation where everything and anything goes for the sake of money and or other parochial interests to the detriment of our collective responsibility and commitment to national integration and

democratic sustainability.

So ashamed of that which transpired in the cause of these tribunal proceedings and judgements, many lawyers and judges were left with no other option than to bury their heads in complete shame. But again, this disgusting narrative evidently continued to dent the reputation of this nation before global comity of nations even as more of such drama unfolded itself during these trials.

While accepting this misfortune in good fate after Supreme Court's proper handling of these disputes, the questions we must ask ourselves is whether right from the onset; these lawyers and judges knew what was right but refused to do it and settled on playing over our intelligence? Does this drama in the temple of justice insinuate the fact that some of these judges went against the sacred principles of law and their anticipated obligations to this country under oath not minding the wishes and aspirations of the law abiding citizen of this country?

Certainly, the infiltration of the political class into the judicial arena with impunity has today also created significantly a negative impression about the independent disposition of the judiciary in Nigeria. For instance, before the Supreme Court judgement which brought credibility to the system,, a prominent Nigerian politician was heard in public domain claiming to know the powers that be in the Supreme Court who can perhaps against all odds turn judgements in his favour. By implication, the politician must have been in deep fiasco thinking that since the entire court system is in his pocket, whether he is

right or wrong, these judges would have no option than to play along with him, a very extremely ridiculous statement which brought anxiety to many sane and right thinking citizens of this country.

Since the emergence of this democratic dispensation in 1999, one of the most cherished arm of government which is admired regularly has been the judiciary. Considered the last hope of the common man, all who seek for justice before it are anticipated to get fairness and justice. Over the years however, it seems the contrary has been the case considering the unabated negative and unpleasant judgements coming out of this independent arm of government.

Yours sincerely still recalls with great nostalgia, the dirt which started oozing out of the sector after binoculars of scrutiny was beamed on some judges a few years back. During these crucial investigations, it was subsequently discovered that the hands of many judges are not clean in this nation.

Coming back to where some of these selfish judges have dragged us into today, this may not be too far from the submission of Justice Okoro who categorically acknowledged the reality of the fact that 'lots of people suffered because of all these wrongful judgements of the Appeal Court which sacked several legislators who won elections under the platform of PDP'.

Before any recommendation and or suggestions can be provided, the President of Nigeria, Ahmed Bola Tinubu should first be commended for not falling into the temptation of interfering with the outcome of

the Supreme Court judgements in the aftermath of the 2023 general elections. Indeed, this single act of Mr. President has not only restored our hope but saved the system from further outrageous radicle. But again, the Supreme Court itself has by this judgements earned the confidence of the citizens of this nation which hitherto had been dragged into the mud.

Be this as it may however, there should be a way of compensation for all winners of these legislative elections on the Plateau now that they have been robbed of their rights and privileges to serve this nation due to miscarriage of justice by the Appeal Courts. Therefore, if these cases cannot be reviewed in the interest of justice, then the system must provide a soft landing for all these legislators who were legally elected to represent their people. In any case, while some citizens of this nation can subscribe to monetary compensation to cushion their financial lost, me think that no amount of money can wipe away the trauma these legislators went through as a result of no fault of theirs.

However, it is highly recommended that all these judges who were involved in these scam judgements be forced to bear the consequences of their gross acts of negligence and deliberate efforts to sabotage our nascent and promising democracy. If we as a people have resolved to make this democracy work for the good of the common man, then some painful decisions must be taken to sanitize the system from corruption tendencies with impunity and it must begin now.

EVER'S WORLD

With PALANG KASMI

By JOHN DONOVAN

Therapeutic ways to change negative thoughts

WE all have thoughts that invade our brains from time to time and mess with our moods. We all get down.

Whether it's your job, your social life, your family, or something completely different, sometimes the negativity can be too much. "We all have it. We all have it," says Mark Reinecke, a professor emeritus of psychology and behavioral sciences at Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine.

Natalie Dattilo, PhD, a clinical health psychologist at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston, agrees. "Thoughts that we have that we would classify as negative or unhelpful are pretty normal. We all have thoughts that somebody might say, 'Oh that's kind of negative.'"

Sometimes it is, and sometimes that's just kind of an accurate description of a bad situation. "But what can you do about those negative thoughts?"

When negative thoughts become a problem

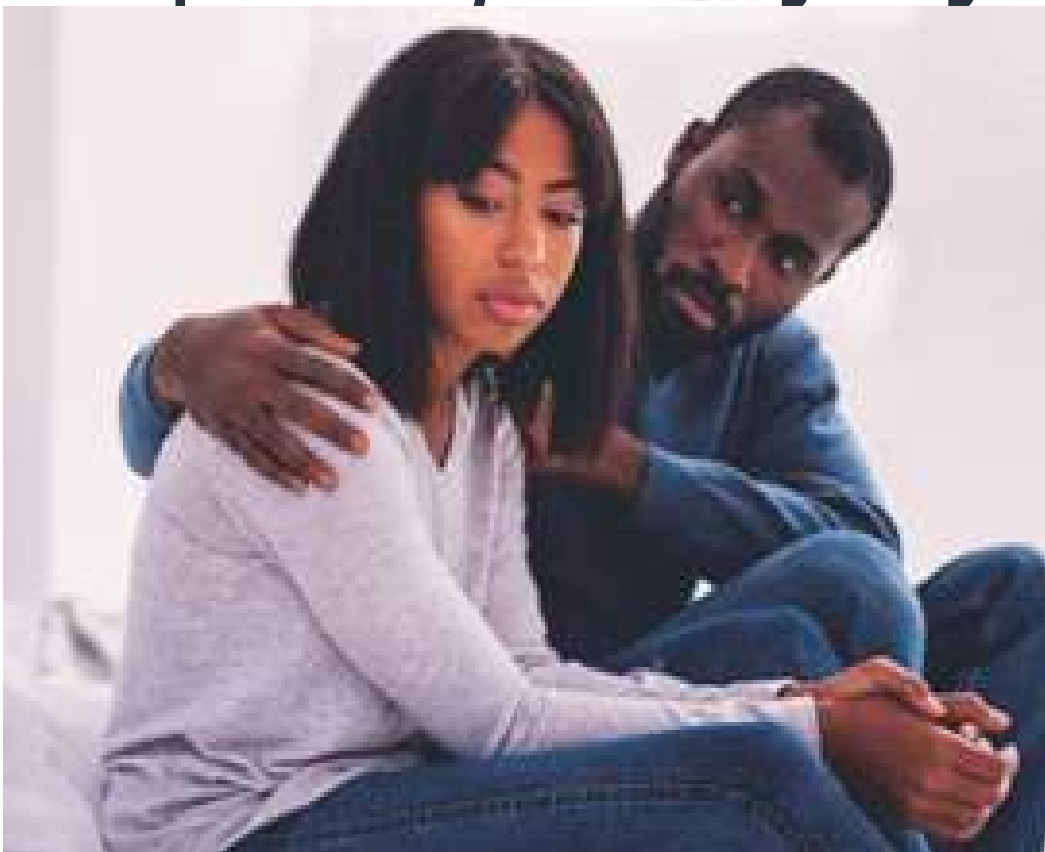
They may be common, but negative thoughts aren't harmless or to be taken lightly. Research shows that having them over and over, while you have depression and anxiety, can lead to serious emotional and physical problems. A bout of negative thinking now and then or a random negative thought here or there may not mean much. But having them over and over for a period of time can quickly overwhelm a person. Using words like never or always -- "It's always going to be like this," or "I'm never going to be any good" -- are a red flag.

Ruminating -- dwelling on negative thoughts -- can be dangerous.

"People often talk about thought loops and thought spirals, this sort of chaining of bad things," Dattilo says. "It does tend to snowball. And that's the part where it can become problematic."

"It's less about the content of the thought, and more about the process, and the inability to let it go, having it run through your mind over and over and over again," she says. "Those tend to be negative for people. People are rarely ruminating on other things." How can you tell that the way that you're thinking is doing more harm than good?

"Is it affecting your relationships? Is it affecting your work? Is it leading you to do things that are really harmful, like alcohol and drug use? Are the ways that you're coping with it getting you into



other methods to cope with negative ways of thinking: Distractions like exercise, reading, doing a puzzle, meeting with friends -- simply trying to clear your mind of the problems that affect it -- is certainly one way. Writing things down, a form of clarifying your thoughts, is another.

"Sometimes the answer is right there in front of you," Dattilo says. Friends and family members can help by staying engaged with, and not withdrawing from, those who are wrangling with unhealthy ways of thinking. Acknowledging their point of view, maybe offering a sympathetic ear -- "Well, sounds like you have a lot on your mind," or "Do you think it would help to think about it like this?" -- can be useful.

Certainly, professional help is always an option. The key to quelling harmful, negative thoughts may be more in how we think, rather than what we think.

trouble? If they are, you probably need to talk to somebody," Reinecke says. "If it's persistent, if it goes on for more than 2 weeks, if you just can't get out of this cycle, you probably need to talk to somebody."

"If you have suicidal thoughts, and particularly if you make any behavior -- you write a suicide note or pick up that bottle of pills in the medicine cabinet -- you need to talk to somebody," he says.

How to ease negative thinking

Reinecke suggests several ways to help break the grip of negative thinking. Many of the methods he suggests fall under the umbrella of cognitive Behavioral therapy (CBT), a treatment that focuses on ways to change unhealthy ways of thinking and behaving.

Essentially, it's thinking about the way we think. A psychologist or psychiatrist can help you with it. In the meantime, some ideas: Acknowledge the emotions. Feeling sad because of the death of a loved one? Laid off? Anyone would be sad. It's serious stuff. You have to realize that it's natural to have negative thoughts. Identify and clarify the thought. Pick apart the most distressing thought. Why is it bad to feel this way? Understand the implications of the way you're thinking. Treat the thought as an object. Evaluate the emotions. Sit

back and think it through. adversity builds character, What's the evidence for and resilience comes from loss, and against this way of thinking? By that good can come from pain. So what? "And by so what," you often come to a new insight. Reinecke says, "I mean 'so Set the thought aside, even for what?' " The idea is that just a moment: "Hmmm, that's whatever you're going through, interesting," or "Well, there you in the grandest scheme of have it." Taking the emotions out things, is not that big of a deal. of the equation can help you Death is part of life. People go a different perspective. on, and even thrive, after broken Come at it from a different relationships all the time. Keep angle. Is there another way to whatever is causing your look at this? Example: How negative thoughts in could this be of benefit to me? perspective, don't be reactive, Maybe you'll recognize that and take the longer-term view. Experts suggest a range of

think. "There's a lot of people who tend to see the world [as] glass half-empty but believe that they're fully justified in the way that they see it," Dattilo says. "My job isn't to necessarily argue with them about that, or to convince them to see the world differently. "My question to them would be, 'How does it make you feel to think that way?' And if your goal is to feel better, or have better relationships, or to have more fun, 'Does thinking like that help you?'"



EVERYBODY'S WORLD

With PALANG KASMI

Relationship

8 red flags in relationships

By ASHLEY LADERER

Red flags in a relationship include excessive jealousy and frequent lying.

You should also be wary of a partner who frequently criticizes you or puts you down.

Another major red flag is an unwillingness to compromise — relationships shouldn't be one-sided.

We're always told to steer clear of people who exhibit red flags in relationships, but exactly what common signs should we be looking out for?

Whether you're dating a new guy or girl, a long term boyfriend or girlfriend, or even in a marriage, you may not be aware of the warning signs. Red flags like constant put-downs can signal a kind of emotional abuse, which is relatively common. It can help to know which red flags to look out for so that you can proceed with caution or cut things off if necessary.

What are red flags in a relationship?

Relationship red flags are warning signs that there may be unhealthy patterns or behaviors between you and your partner. Oftentimes, especially in new relationships, lust and love can cloud your judgment, making it difficult to pick up on red flags.

More well-known red flags may be abusive behavior and aggression. However, some red flags in relationships are easy to miss. Toxic behaviors like manipulation, gaslighting, and narcissism, can slip under the radar.

We spoke with couples therapists to learn more about relationship red flags, why they're easy to miss, and what to do if you notice them.

1. Frequent lying

Constantly catching your partner being dishonest isn't a good sign.

"We are all guilty of telling white lies; however, if you notice that your partner is consistently deceiving or getting caught in lies, it is a red flag," says Samara Quintero, a licensed marriage and family therapist at Choosing Therapy. These can be small lies, like being dishonest about where they're going — or big lies, like not telling you how much debt they have.

Being lied to over and over again can make it difficult to build a solid foundation in the relationship or destroy one that you've already built, which can lead to a shaky future, Quintero says.

2. Constant put-downs

A partner frequently criticizing you or putting you down, even if it's in a subtle or passive-aggressive way, can affect your self-esteem. "This is a form of emotional abuse that can lead to feelings of anxiety and insecurity in the partnership," Quintero says.

She says some common examples might sound like: "You're lucky I'm still with you because you'll never do better than me.", "You sound so ridiculous when you try to be funny.". A 2013 study suggested that emotional abuse could be just as harmful as physical abuse, both contributing to depression and low self-esteem — so this red flag should certainly be taken seriously.

"Addressing this behavior with your



partner is imperative, and if they refuse to take responsibility or express a willingness to change, it might be time to reevaluate the relationship," Quintero says.

3. An unwillingness to compromise

If your partner isn't willing to compromise even when it comes to the little things, you should proceed with caution. "If you're in a relationship with someone who seems to make everything one-sided, you may end up over-compromising and wind up feeling resentful, hurt, misunderstood, and unsatisfied," says Emily Simonian, a licensed marriage and family therapist and the head of learning at Thriveworks.

In healthy relationships, it's crucial that you consider each other's needs and desires and that compromise isn't a one-way street.

4. A tendency to run away from difficult discussions

A partner who lacks the emotional or behavioral skills needed to cope with problems and runs away from them instead can harm your relationship.

Some examples are walking away from arguments without hearing you out, or ignoring you for days at a time when things get rough.

People who have trouble tolerating difficult emotions tend to lash out or flee when the going gets tough, Simonian says. Even healthy relationships will go through rough patches, so you want to be sure that your partner will communicate effectively with you instead of running away when things get hard.

5. Controlling behavior and excessive jealousy

If your partner is very jealous, this may lead to controlling behavior. For example, they might feel jealous when you have a social life outside of your relationship, Simonian says. A jealous partner may also suffocate you with excessive calls or texts and try to control what you do.

"Attempts to control usually start off subtly but eventually increase in intensity and can often leave you feeling as though nothing you do is 'good enough,'" Simonian says. "If you notice yourself feeling smothered or consistently altering your behavior in order to appease their jealousy, it could be a sign of bigger issues to come."

A 2010 meta-analysis found that as jealousy in a relationship increased, the relationship quality decreased, indicating that jealousy harms romantic relationships. Additionally, a 2014 study suggested that people in relationships where a partner acted too possessive in the early stages were more likely to have an unhealthy communication style later in the relationship.

6. A lack of healthy open communication

A partner who turns to passive-aggressiveness, blaming, or expressing emotions in an aggressive way is exhibiting ineffective communication, Quintero says.

Communication is a foundation of a relationship, so if you both can't communicate openly and healthily, you're going to run into problems.

"A healthy relationship provides a safe place for both partners to speak

openly on their emotions without fear of judgment or criticism," Quintero says.

A 2017 study suggested that communication early in a relationship might play a role in future relationship satisfaction and that satisfaction with communication in the beginning of a relationship might result in a more amicable partnership later on.

7. They don't have any friends

If your partner doesn't have any friends of their own, this can be a red flag for many reasons. They may be unable or unwilling to create and maintain friendships with others. This could mean that they lack social skills, have a difficult personality, or a negative view of other people.

Another issue with a partner who has no friends is that they may be clingy or demand too much, if not all of your time. They may not understand your desire or need to spend time with your friends, which could turn into resentment.

8. They don't show support for you or the relationship

According to a 2014 analysis of nine studies on the topic of couple relationships, commitment and support for your relationship and partner is needed to maintain stability.

It turns out that "wanting" the relationship to last isn't enough. Instead, people need to actively engage in behaviors that show support for their partner and the relationship as a whole. If your partner doesn't actively show support for you and the relationship, this could be a red flag. This lack of commitment could cause problems down the line.

Yellow flags are also warning signs of potential problems to come. However, they may not be as noticeable or as insidious as red flags. Yellow flags might be issues that can still be resolved, and don't have to turn into red flags with the right communication. However, you should be cautious of yellow flags, as they can lead to relationship problems in the future.

A few examples of relationship yellow flags include: Taking criticism poorly, talking to their ex, a lack of long-term relationship experience. They don't share their feelings often. Yellow flags can be annoying, but they have a difficult personality, or a negative view of other people.

What should you do when you notice red flags in your relationship? When it comes to relationship red flags, the best way to handle it is early, of your time. They may not understand your desire or need to dialogue with your partner, express your concerns and feelings, and let them do the same.

Keep your needs in mind, communicate clearly and often, and try to keep your emotions in check. In some cases, you may want to seek the help of a professional, like a marriage counselor or therapist.

It's always important to be honest with yourself throughout the process, and to lean on family and friends if you need to.

When you notice red flags early in a relationship, take note of them. Whether you're running into lies, experiencing possessiveness, or being put down, you should take the situation seriously and consider how it might affect your relationship not just in the near future but also down the line. Yellow flags vs. red flags: Yellow line.

Editorial

Armed Forces Remembrance Day: Walking the talk

As we commemorate Armed Forces Remembrance day this week. It is very important that we take time and reflect on the contributions by these men and women that stood firm to see that our country is secured and united as one nation.

THE day is observed on the 15 January every year in Nigeria to commemorate the service men and women. It also honours veterans of World War I and 11 as well as the Nigerian civil war.

FOR decades, our military men have put their lives on the line to defend our nation sovereignty, protect its citizens and enable peace and stability their selfless services and courage in the face of danger continue to inspire gratitude and respect across our nation.

HOWEVER we must remember and honour those who made the ultimate sacrifice in service to our country of recent, the dangers faced by our troop in fighting to see that this country remain a united one and how many of them lost their lives is something that deserved the honour from Nigeria and Nigerians.

OUR thought go out to the those who lost their loved one in the cause of defending this nation and those that are out there in the bush trying to see that our security challenges are minimize.

IT is very common on this occasion every year to hear government at various levels making promises of changing the fortunes of families of our fallen heroes and those that are still in the battlefield fighting insurgency that things will change in the area of their welfare but nothing meaningful has change: let the meaningful has change to encourage narrative be change to encourage those that want to take career in the military to be encourage to join.

INDEED we must ensure that our troops have the resources, training, intelligence and the equipment needed overcome adversaries who often possess advanced weaponry and technology. Care must be taken to safeguard troop. Adequate welfare, health care and transition support, and attend to the need of their families.

BEYOND these veterans who have returned from services must have access to education, housing and employment opportunities? That will honor their contribution to the nation. Support should be given to their children especially, those that are reading to educate themselves.

IT is pertinent to called on the attention of military authority to some unholy act meted on widows of some military personnel who lost their lives in battle to save Nigeria from disintegrating. Attention be focus on that area especially when it come to the collection of the benefits of the late loved ones.

WE called on Nigerian to unite as citizens and leaders in appreciating the service and sacrifice of our troops and veterans we must take those that are wounded in spirit and bodies and support the families those killed in action.

As we work must work hard to build a just, prosperous and peaceful nation that honour those who gave their lives for Nigeria idea is.

IT is import we take the effort of their servicemen and women death or lieu as a debt on us to act responsible toward that making their lives and that of the families comfortable.

PLEASE allow me column in your esteemed newspaper to express my displeasure against the free flow of water and substances in the area.

The condition of the drainage in the area is deplorable. As most of the channels of water are full of dirt, waste tea cups, plates, bags which are not in condition to release huge waste from the locality. Most of the drain ages are in stagnant condition.

The nuisance of flies and mosquitoes is on the rise day by day. The foul smell spreading from the drain cause unhealthy atmosphere. Above all, the problem of water logging, the heavy down pours is a common phenomenon in the locality. The people of the ward are not at ease because of this poor drainage system.

The consequences of poor drainage are limited with pollutants and debris flowing into our rivers and causing long term damage to our ecosystem.

Due to the stagnant water in the area, one may find it difficult to walk freely in order not to fall down. Where water and other



The need to construct drainage in Tudun Wada

substances pass through normally smells bad as the water do not move freely to the drainage, which causes air pollution to the residents.

It is high time the government takes decisive action to address this pressing issue. We need comprehensive construction

plan for drainage system, regular maintenance and proper waste management to ensure that the area is better prepared to handle the wellbeing of the residents.

Dankuje Joy Asheson, Mass communication, Federal University Lafia.

Indecency, the new normal?

HUMANS are social beings that are considered dynamic, as a result of this, the question of what is considered decent has been debated upon for generations. In our contemporary society, these debates are only getting tense and crucial. Over the years indecency has become habitual act among Nigerian Youths who have accepted the trends and are promoting the act to prevalent levels causing indecency to spread its wings to places of worship.

The term decency and indecency have so much to do with morality if an individual person and not as judged by others. Indecency can be seen as lack of moral or societal unacceptable attitudes. Today, the act of indecency is easily identified through indecent dressing which is gradually becoming a norm.

Indecent dressing is the deliberate exposure of one's body to the public. It covers areas such as seductiveness and in some cases even the improper sitting posture of an individual which may be provocative or stimulates influence on almost all those who happen to view the user.

There are several factors believed to be the cause of the surge in level of indecency in our present society. Poor parenting; in the 21st century, parents now support their offsprings dressing indecently. They encourage buying revealing dresses, supporting indecent haircuts, encourage their children to attend parties believing it to be a form of civilization. Peer pressure has been a battle for youths. A girl child will want to be and feel among and accepted by her peers and as such results to indecent acts. Young men now consume hard drugs just to be amongst their peers. Most importantly the influence of internet on our young minds. The internet which has made the world a global village accommodates various cultures which influence the youth. The rise of social media and online platforms has made it easier for people to share images of themselves and many have resorted to using this medium as a channel to promote indecency which in turn affects the youths.

The effect of indecency can never be overemphasized.

Sexual harassment, arrest and detention, loss of job opportunities and in some cases rape, yet others believe that it is just relaxed attitude towards fashion and appearance. Many believe that the definition of decency vary from person to person therefore the need for every individual to do what works for them.

The debate about what constitutes decency is a complex one that is not likely to be resolved anytime soon. However, it is clear that our culture is changing, and that this is having an impact on our values and norms. While some people may believe that our standards for modesty should change to reflect the current times, others believe that modesty is an eternal value that should not be compromised. Gone are the days when older women called teenagers and youths to order in terms of decency, but the saying "Dress the way you want to be addressed" may never go extinct.

Hannah Kumadi Caleb, Department of Mass communication, University of Maiduguri.

Standard Cartoon



Opinion

Discovering the hidden gems of Nigerian Cuisine

By
EMMANUEL SAMUEL DANJUMA

NIGERIA, a country known for its diverse cultures, vibrant traditions, and breathtaking landscapes, is also home to a culinary scene that is as varied as the nation itself. With over 250 ethnic groups, Nigeria offers a vast array of flavors, spices, and cooking styles that have been influenced by generations of cultural exchange and regional diversity. In this feature, we delve into the hidden gems of Nigerian cuisine, exploring the richness of local flavors that often go unnoticed.

Unraveling the Essence of Nigerian Cuisine

Nigeria, often referred to as the "Giant of Africa," boasts a rich gastronomic heritage that reflects centuries of history and cultural heritage. Nigerian cuisine is characterized by the blending of fresh ingredients, aromatic spices, and an array of unique cooking techniques that have been passed down through generations. From the

northern regions known for hearty dishes like suya and tuwo shinkafa to the coastal areas famous for delicious seafood-based soups like efo riro and seafood okra, each region has its own distinct culinary traditions.

While popular Nigerian dishes like jollof rice and egusi soup have gained worldwide recognition, there are lesser-known delicacies that deserve attention. Explore the world of Nigerian cuisine beyond the classics and discover hidden gems such as isi ewu (spiced goat head), nkwobi (cow foot delicacy), and kilishi (Nigerian beef jerky). These dishes offer a unique blend of flavors, textures, and aromas that tantalize the taste buds and showcase the diversity of Nigerian culinary heritage.

In recent years, a new wave of Nigerian chefs and food enthusiasts have emerged, blending traditional flavors with innovative cooking techniques to create a modern twist on Nigerian cuisine. From upscale

restaurants in Lagos to trendy food stalls in Abuja, fusion dishes like plantain gnocchi with egusi sauce and yam poutine with suya spice have been delighting food lovers, locally and internationally.

This section will explore the intersection between tradition and innovation, showcasing how Nigerian cuisine continues to evolve while remaining rooted in its cultural heritage.

The Power of Street Food

No exploration of Nigerian cuisine would be complete without venturing into the

world of street food. Nigerian streets are alive with the tantalizing aromas of suya, akara, puff puff, and roasted plantains, all cooked by skilled vendors in makeshift stalls. Street food not only offers an affordable and convenient way to sample local delicacies but also provides a glimpse into the everyday lives of Nigerians. This section will celebrate the vibrancy of Nigeria's street food culture and highlight some of the must-try dishes found throughout the country.

Nigerian cuisine is a treasure

trove of flavors waiting to be discovered. From the traditional to the contemporary, the familiar to the exotic, the culinary landscape of Nigeria offers something for everyone. As we embark on this gastronomic journey, let us not forget to celebrate the talented chefs, passionate cooks, and street food vendors who bring the flavors of Nigeria to life every day. So, let your taste buds be your guide and embark on a culinary adventure through the hidden gems of Nigerian cuisine

"While popular Nigerian dishes like jollof rice and egusi soup have gained worldwide recognition, there are lesser-known delicacies that deserve attention. Explore the world of Nigerian cuisine beyond the classics and discover hidden gems such as isi ewu (spiced goat head), nkwobi (cow foot delicacy), and kilishi (Nigerian beef jerky). These dishes offer a unique blend of flavors, textures, and aromas that tantalize the taste buds and showcase the diversity of Nigerian culinary heritage"

Ways to measure success aside from wealth

By **OLAYINKA OPALEYE**

SUCCESS is more often than not measured in monetary terms simply due to the universal way of ascertaining its size, amount, or degree which makes it easy to compare to or compete with others. The power of money comes from the fact that it is the most common and generally acceptable way of determining the value of things. However, what would you say, if I told you that wealth or net worth is just one of the six yardsticks in measuring success? Let's look at a simple analogy here for better understanding. You need to pass six courses to succeed in a program. However, you keep beating yourself up for not doing very well in one, for example, Module F, simply because you can easily measure how well you are faring once compared to other people's scores. Even though you are doing great in the remaining five other modules, you are less bothered or even non-appreciative of them because you have nobody's scores to compare yours with on those subjects. That is what we do whenever we measure our success in financial terms only.

Although measuring success materially is not wrong, focusing on this yardstick alone is also not the best, because it may

make anyone who falls short complain incessantly, become ungrateful, and eventually become depressed. Hence, it is advisable to adopt a holistic approach as it's somewhat risky to live by measuring success in terms of wealth alone. Using this approach identifies your areas of success and recommends what you can do to improve things in the next twelve months so that you can record success in those areas you stopped short.

Success measurement begins by assessing alignment with personal values. Consistent actions reflecting these values, coupled with a clear understanding of life's purpose, are pivotal markers. Disruption in values or a lack of purpose can jeopardise inner peace. Equally essential is having a reliable source of comfort during challenging times. Reflecting on these aspects, contemplate your goals, and strategically plan the upcoming year to construct a foundation for a genuinely successful and fulfilling life.

The second area to measure success is your health. How physically and psychologically healthy have you been in the last twelve months? You deserve a pat on the back for a job well done if you maintained a healthy sleeping habit, ate healthy, exercised regularly, and kept all the doctors' appointments even when not

sick.

Success measurement begins by assessing alignment with personal values.

As we all know, health is not limited to the absence of diseases but includes a complete mental and emotional state. Therefore, one's abilities to withstand and recover quickly from difficult situations or conditions, to always look at the positive side of things, to understand oneself, and to know how well to manage one's emotions rather than being afraid to show or acknowledge them are a few ways to determine success in this regard.

The third success marker is your ability to easily connect with people, particularly those with similar mindsets. Success is indicated by developing and maintaining relationships, emphasising the "four-friends-life hack." This involves having at least four close friends for quick support. Societal success implies a strong sense of belonging and a reliable support system. Evaluate your success in this aspect over the last twelve months by considering the strength of your connections and support network.

The fourth success marker is your cognitive prowess. As much as some people believe it is genetic, anyone can develop this through deliberate efforts. Some ways to achieve this are being happy to learn new concepts to improve your skills and being open to new ideas and experiences. Also, constantly adding to your knowledge bank through reading, certifications, and skill acquisition can make you very productive at work, thereby having a thriving career to be proud of. It may also interest you that experiencing job fulfilment at no cost to other aspects of your life makes you enjoy work-life balance and effective workload management with enough time for yourself and your family.

Success transcends mere financial or

career achievements. A recent study highlights the positive impact of green spaces on an area's value, emphasising the interconnectedness of success markers. Relying on a single metric is unfair and harmful. This year, prioritise environmental responsibility by enjoying green spaces, cultivating gardens, and appreciating seasonal produce. Stay informed about global warming, reduce your carbon footprint, and foster a clean, healthy environment. Success encompasses holistic well-being and responsible living, urging a conscious, multi-faceted approach.

"No matter what hell we go through in life, I am still just madly in love with this life. Life feels really different for me now. I am happier because I don't stress over foolish little things that used to annoy me. And now, every single day that I breathe another breath, I can celebrate that I'm still here with you. I am here with my co-anchors, my colleagues, my family, and I can live and cry, and laugh, and hope. That, my dear friends, is enough!"

Those were some of the powerful words from CNN news anchor – Sara Sidner after breaking the news of having stage 3 breast cancer this week. She said she's never been sick a day in her life, doesn't smoke, rarely drinks, and has no family history of cancer. My prayers are with her as I believe she will pull through and overcome this.

However, considering this and how I've been able to suggest you measure your success aside from money. How successful do you think you are now? Kindly give this some deep thought while ensuring you don't leave things to chance this year.

Olayinka Opaleye is a Wellbeing Specialist and Corporate Wellness Strategist. She writes from Lagos. Tel: 09091131150 or follow her on www.linkedin.com/in/olayinkaopaleye

"No matter what hell we go through in life, I am still just madly in love with this life. Life feels really different for me now. I am happier because I don't stress over foolish little things that used to annoy me. And now, every single day that I breathe another breath, I can celebrate that I'm still here with you. I am here with my co-anchors, my colleagues, my family, and I can live and cry, and laugh, and hope. That, my dear friends, is enough!"

Change of Name

<p>ADAMS</p> <p>I, formerly known as ZIPPORAH M. ADAMS, ZIPPORAH MESENG ADAMS, ADAMS ZIPPORAH JOSIAH, JUMMAI LUKA SHUT, ZIPPORAH ADAMS MESENG, now wish to be known and addressed as ADAMS ZIPPORAH MESENG. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>ROBERT</p> <p>I, formerly known as ROBERT FUNKE, ROBERT FUNKE ABOSEDE, now wish to be known and addressed as ROBERT FUNKE MALGWI. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>DAYIL</p> <p>I, formerly known as MANDIK TIMOTHY DAYIL, now wish to be known and addressed as DAYIL TIMOTHY. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>PAUL</p> <p>I, formerly known as PAUL LAPMWA, now wish to be known and addressed as PAUL LAPMWA YILBISA. All former documents remain valid. First Bank. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>PAUL</p> <p>I, formerly known as PAUL TOGNAN AMANGAM PLASVIREC, now wish to be known and addressed as PAUL TOGNAN STEPHANNA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>MESHAK</p> <p>I, formerly known as TONGDYEN MESHAK, now wish to be known and addressed as MESHAK TONGDYEN DALONG. All former documents remain valid. Correct date of birth 5/8/1996 not 1/1/1996. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>
<p>TIJJANI</p> <p>I, formerly known as TIJJANI AHAMAD IBRAHIM, now wish to be known and addressed as TIJJANI AHMAD IBRAHIM. Correct date of birth is 1/1/1999 Not 1/1/1997. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>PAUL</p> <p>I, formerly known as PAUL CHUMUIFAT PHOEBE, now wish to be known and addressed as PAUL PRINCESSER PHOEBE. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public please take note.</p>	<p>MUSA</p> <p>I, formerly known as MUSA MARTHA STANLEY, now wish to be known and addressed as MARTHA REX MUSA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>DANBOYI</p> <p>I, formerly known as MARGARET DANBOYI CHOJI, now wish to be known and addressed as DANBOYI MARGARET LYOP. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>IFEOMA</p> <p>I, formerly known as OJUKWU IFEOMA CHIMALUME FAITH, now wish to be known and addressed as IFEOMA EJIKE UCHEGBU. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>MESHAK</p> <p>I, formerly known as MESHACK BEN, now wish to be known and addressed as MESHAK UNEKWUJOJO BEN. Correct date of birth 17/10/2005 not 17/10/2006. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>
<p>VICTOR</p> <p>I, formerly known as OWOLABI GLORY DAMILOLA, now wish to be known and addressed as VICTOR GLORY DAMILOLA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>MATHEW</p> <p>I, formerly known as NIRI NYAM MATHEW, now wish to be known and addressed as MATHEW NIRI MARTHA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>MATHIAS</p> <p>I, formerly known as MATHIAS MOSES, now wish to be known and addressed as NLONG MATHIAS MOSES. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>MUSA</p> <p>I, formerly known as MUSA LYOP CHRISTOPHER, MUSA LYOIP CHRISTOPHER, now wish to be known and addressed as MUSA YOP CHRISTOPHER. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>JOSEPH</p> <p>I, formerly known as JOSEH RIFKATU DAVOU, now wish to be known and addressed as JOSEPH RIFKATU PWOL. All former documents remain valid. NIN, all concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>GRACE</p> <p>I, formerly known as GRACE TIMOTHY SARKI, now wish to be known and addressed as GRACE RAYMOND LONGDIEM. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>
<p>ISAMAIL</p> <p>I, formerly known as ISMAIL ABDULRAHMAN, now wish to be known and addressed as ISAMAIL ABDULRAHMAN. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>ISMAILA</p> <p>I, formerly known as YAMTA MARY, now wish to be known and addressed as ISMAILA MARY YAMTA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>EZEKIEL</p> <p>I, formerly known as JIBRIN GRACE AYIABO, now wish to be known and addressed as EZEKIEL GRACE AYIABO YOHANNA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>RHINOS</p> <p>I, formerly known as RAINOS ILIYASU, now wish to be known and addressed as RHINOS ILIYASU NUHU. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>DABOELOEP</p> <p>I, formerly known as FIDELIS NOEL DABOELOEP, now wish to be known and addressed as DABOELOEP NOEL. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>ORJI</p> <p>I, formerly known as NWAMARA IMMACULATA, now wish to be known and addressed as ORJI EBERE EMMACULATA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>
<p>AFINIKI</p> <p>I, formerly known as AFINIKI SULEIMAN, now wish to be known and addressed as AFINIKI MICHEAL GOBIN GONAP. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>GIDEON</p> <p>I, formerly known as DAMAR ZUMUNCHI PAUL, now wish to be known and addressed as GIDEON ZUMUNCHI DAZE. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>MWANRET</p> <p>I, formerly known as ANTHONY HELEN, now wish to be known and addressed as MWANRET ANTHONY DADEM. Correct B.O.B. 09/09/2000 Not 09/09/1998. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>NANJI</p> <p>I, formerly known as NANCY DASHE, now wish to be known and addressed as NANJI KURDOR. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>NANFA</p> <p>I, formerly known as MUSA KAMMAYU ALHERI, now wish to be known and addressed as NANFA ALHERI MUSA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>WUYEP</p> <p>I, formerly known as SILVIA DINDAM FAMAK, now wish to be known and addressed as WUYEP REJOICE FAMAK. Correct date of birth is 20/2/1998. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>
<p>NANIM</p> <p>I, formerly known as MARFE DAMPUT, now wish to be known and addressed as NANNIM MARFE BOLI. Correct date of birth is 5/5/1984. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>NIMJUL</p> <p>I, formerly known as NANJUL BINKAP WALA, now wish to be known and addressed as NIMJUL BINKAP WALA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>CHANGCIT</p> <p>I, formerly known as CHANGCIT NANTIM, now wish to be known and addressed as CHANGCIT BARRY PENTAM. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>SORI</p> <p>I, formerly known as SORI NANSHAM MAKAN, now wish to be known and addressed as SORI NANSHAM RONALD. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>CHOJI</p> <p>I, formerly known as HABILA KANENG, now wish to be known and addressed as CHOJI KANENG HABILA. Correct date of birth is 25/4/1966 Not 1/1/1940 and 25/7/1966. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>DUNG</p> <p>I, formerly known as BOTSHA CHUNDUNG YAKUBU, now wish to be known and addressed as DUNG CHUNDUNG SHUT. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>
<p>TINA</p> <p>I, formerly known as TINA ROBERT DACOP, TINA MOMOH, now wish to be known and addressed as TINA MUSA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>PANBISH</p> <p>I, formerly known as ISAH ESTHER KASSAM, now wish to be known and addressed as PANBISH ESTHER PETER-PANSHAK. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>AARON</p> <p>I, formerly known as ARON, JEREMIAH, now wish to be known and addressed as AARON, JEREMIAH. Correct date of birth is 1/11/2007. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>LUKA</p> <p>I, formerly known as LUKA NA'ANTAGAM DANLADI, now wish to be known and addressed as LUKA NA'ANTAKAM TAKA'AM. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>DAGROK</p> <p>I, formerly known as NANDI DAMI, now wish to be known and addressed as DAGROK NANDI DAMI. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>DASOK</p> <p>I, formerly known as DASOK NANRIBET DANSURA, now wish to be known and addressed as DASOK MASOYI NANRIBET. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>
<p>NLEM</p> <p>I, formerly known as NLEM KENECHUKWU, now wish to be known and addressed as NLEM KENECHUKWU OLUCHUKWU. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>NLEM</p> <p>I, formerly known as NLEM CHIJOKE AND NNEKA, now wish to be known and addressed as NLEM CHIJOKE OLUCHUKWU AND NLEM NNEKA EDITH. 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 MISS CHUWANG CYNTHIA KACHOLLOM, now wish to be known and addressed as MRS. JOSEPH CYNTHIA CHOJI. 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 MISS OWOLABI GLORY DAMILOLA, now wish to be known and addressed as MRS VICTOR GLORY DAMILOLA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>ABUBAKAR</p> <p>I, formerly known as ABDULLAH MUJAHED, now wish to be known and addressed as ABUBAKAR MUJAHIDEEN ABDULLAHI. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>EZE</p> <p>I, formerly known as ONAH CHIGOZE BENEDETH, now wish to be known and addressed as EZE CHIGOZE BENEDICT. Correct date of birth 5/12/1989 NOT 22/12/1982. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>
<p>PIOR</p> <p>I, formerly known as PIOR ALEXANDER TARPAV, now wish to be known and addressed as PIOR ALEXANDER. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>KUMSEN</p> <p>I, formerly known as DANIEL SHINMOHOR DAMULAK, now wish to be known and addressed as KUMSEN MERCY SHINMOHOR. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>MUSA</p> <p>I, formerly known as JOSEPH ENDURANCE, now wish to be known and addressed as MUSA ENDURANCE JOSEPH. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>SANA</p> <p>I, formerly known as ZAKKA RECTCHIN GIDEON, now wish to be known and addressed as SANA RECTCHIN BENEDICT. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>USENI</p> <p>I, formerly known as USAINI MUHAMMAD, now wish to be known and addressed as USENI MOHAMMED. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>CHRISTIANA</p> <p>I, formerly known as CHRISTIANA CHRISTOPHER MABUR, now wish to be known and addressed as CHRISTIANA SUNDAY MABUR. Correct date of birth is 25/12/1995. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>
<p>ADAJI</p> <p>I, formerly known as ZAINAB IBRAHIM YAHAYA, now wish to be known and addressed as JENNIFER ZAINAB ADAJI. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>MANYA</p> <p>I, formerly known as GURUMYEN HENRIATA HENNIKAK, now wish to be known and addressed as MANYA HENRIATA HENNIKAK. 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 MISS SULEIMAN MAIMUNA JIBRIN, now wish to be known and addressed as MRS SULEIMAN-OZOMARISI MAIMUNA JIBRIN. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>LIYADI</p> <p>I, formerly known as HADI MUBARAK ABDULLAZEES, now wish to be known and addressed as LIYADI MUBARAK ABDULAZEEZ. Correct date of birth 05/05/1995 not 17/09/1992. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>TAIWO</p> <p>I, formerly known as TAIWO FUMMILAYO ALLI, now wish to be known and addressed as TAIWO FUMMILAYO ADEOSUN. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>MARY</p> <p>I, formerly known as MARY SAMSON BARDG, now wish to be known and addressed as MARY JOSEPH. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>
<p>SOLOMON</p> <p>I, formerly known as AZI AZI SOLOMON, now wish to be known and addressed as SOLOMON ATSEN AZI. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>MANYA</p> <p>I, formerly known as GURUMYEN HENRIATA HENNIKAK, now wish to be known and addressed as MANYA HENRIATA HENNIKAK. 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 MISS SULEIMAN MAIMUNA JIBRIN, now wish to be known and addressed as MRS SULEIMAN-OZOMARISI MAIMUNA JIBRIN. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>LIYADI</p> <p>I, formerly known as HADI MUBARAK ABDULLAZEES, now wish to be known and addressed as LIYADI MUBARAK ABDULAZEEZ. Correct date of birth 05/05/1995 not 17/09/1992. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>TAIWO</p> <p>I, formerly known as TAIWO FUMMILAYO ALLI, now wish to be known and addressed as TAIWO FUMMILAYO ADEOSUN. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>MARY</p> <p>I, formerly known as MARY SAMSON BARDG, now wish to be known and addressed as MARY JOSEPH. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>

News

NPC to commence Demographic Health Survey

By HOSEA NYAMLONG

NATIONAL Population Commission(NPC), is set to commence the 2023/2024 Nigeria Demographic Health Survey(NDHS) in the 17 Local Governments of Plateau State.

This was conveyed in a press briefing by the State Director, Mrs. Felicia James Mwolpun in Jos, recently at the state headquarters of the commission.

She added that the National Survey Programme was launched last year December 2023 and the programme commenced December 11,2023 to end April 11,2024.

While in Plateau State, the survey would be conducted in 39 selected clusters (Household in each of the selected clusters) across the 17 LGAs through a questionnaire by a survey team, consisting of 13 persons who are already on the field working.

Mwolpun maintained that the NDHS is a key project aimed at advancing the field of knowledge, policy formulation and the health sector of our nation.

According to her, findings from the survey would provide an insight on the current status of demographic and health indicators across states, regional and national levels, upon which informed plans and policies could be designed to address demographic, health and social challenges facing Nigeria.

She pointed out that for over three decades, the commission has spearheaded the implementation of the NDHS in a close collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Health.

Mwolpun in her assertion stated that among objectives of the 2023/2024 NDHS is to collect high-quality data on fertility levels, awareness



Felicia

and the use of family planning method, maternal and child health, childhood mortality, child immunization, breastfeeding and young child feeding practices, nutritional status of women and children.

However, the survey would also gather information on women empowerment, domestic violence, female genital mutilation, fistula, prevalence of malaria, awareness and behavior regarding HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including other health related issues such as disability, tobacco use, tuberculosis.

"The survey has been instrumental in providing invaluable insight that informs evidence-based policies, public intervention and contributes to the broader development agenda of the country.

The survey has also been elevated from research initiative to a cornerstone of a dependable demographic and health metrics".

The state director while in a chat with journalists has assured citizens that the data collected would be in strict confidentiality and would be more than mere figures and letters, but a

true reflection of our demographic and health status.

She called on citizens to cooperate with their field staff as the commission works towards a successful project in Plateau State.

Kogi govt pays WAEC fees for 15,033 students

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

KOGI State Government is to pay WAEC fees for 15,033 students that had already been captured to benefit from the gesture in 2024.

The Commissioner for Education, Science and Technology, Mr Wemi Jones, made this known during the verification of government-sponsored 2024 WAEC candidates at Bishop Delisles College, Lokoja.

Governor Yahaya Bello had in November 2023, approved disbursement of N497 million for payment of WAEC fees for students enrolled in the state's public schools.

He stressed the need for the principals to be truthful in making available the original registers that contained the accurate number of 15,033 students who were already in the ministry's database.

He warned principals of public secondary schools in the state against sabotaging its efforts in the payment of

By JIDAUNA YANUNG, Abuja

THE Minister of Youth Development, Dr Jamila Bio-Ibrahim has vowed to support any capacity building effort that will promote the potentials of young women and girls in order to empower them to play their part in shaping the future of Nigeria.

Dr Bio_Ibrahim made the pledge recently in her office during a courtesy visit by some executive members of the the Progressive Young Women Forum. According to the minister, young women and girls need mentorship to enable them realize their full economic and political potentials.

The minister stated that young women would be gradually repositioned through mentorship and empowerment to enable them positively impact their families and communities.

Minister promises support for women, girl's capacity building



Jamila

Earlier, the National President of Progressive Young Women Forum, Hon. Patience Kwace had disclosed that their visit was to brief the minister on the forum's activities and to

explore potential areas of collaboration with the ministry.

Kwace commended the minister for her dedication to duty which earned her the appointment as minister.



Bello

West Africa Examination Council (WAEC) fees for final-year students.

The commissioner urged the principals to cooperate with the government to

achieve its aims of payment of WAEC fees for SSS3 students in the state.

He stated that principals and school heads were important for the successful implementation of the

government's payment of internal and external examinations programmes.

He lamented the non-submission of accurate figures of students by some principals, describing the action as not only a disservice to the state but jeopardizing the future of the students and the state.

He stressed that Gov. Yahaya Bello had ensured that the Ministry of Education remained alive and very active in its responsibilities by kick-start ING the payment of WAEC fees for students in the midst of politics in 2023.

"We will not only pay for WAEC but we will also pay for JAMB and other internal examination fees.

"But the principals and heads of schools have made it extremely difficult for the government to progress with WAEC payment because people are not just sincere.

"We called for the register of students from JSS1 to SS3 because we needed it to update the Annual School Census (ASC). We want everything to be done electronically.

"In addition, we also want to know who we are paying examinations fees for in order to ensure effective planning ahead of time.

"But some of the principals have refused to give us the accurate figures, and embarking on all manner of blackmailing," Jones said.

He said the erring principals should know that the lives kept under their care are the future of the state and everything must be done to ensure that the programme succeeds.

The Permanent Secretary of the ministry, Alhaji Yakubu Musa, while speaking also implored the principals to complement government's efforts by doing the right thing to ensure the successful implementation of the programme.

Plateau agog as Mutfwang's election is affirmed

By JIDAUNA DARING & HOSEA NYAMLONG

REACTIONS have continued to trail the last Friday Supreme Court Judgement that affirmed Governor Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang's election.

Citizens of Plateau State have described the judgment as an affirmation of respect and justice for democracy in Nigeria.

Our correspondents who went round town and sampled the opinions of the people, reported that people were happy with the outcome of the judgment. The general opinion was that the judgment had finally put all litigations to rest as far as the victory was concerned.

The citizens commended the Supreme Court Judges for promoting transparency and

accountability in the judiciary. It was the common opinion that the judgment has restored the confidence of the common man in the judiciary.

They also urged the judges to sustain such tempo when it comes to delivering judgment in the judiciary as an industry at all times.

President Bola Ahmed Tinubu was also commended for his non-interference in all the 8 judgments passed last Friday by the apex court. They equally described him as a true lover of democracy.

Majority of the people maintained that President Tinubu has demonstrated good leadership style, particularly over his refusal to interfere in the judgments.

Plateau citizens also called on Governor Mutfwang to continue with the good work he has started before the

Supreme Court judgment which affirmed the election. Most people interviewed said that the expectations of the people are very high considering the marmoth crowd that came out to receive him in Jos after his victory at the court.

Also speaking with THE NIGERIA STANDARD, Hon. Jerry Tetkum Gama said that the Appeal Court judgment which had earlier sacked Governor Mutfwang, was a misleading one.

Gama called on the leadership of the Appeal Court in the interest of ensuring equity, justice and fairness, to revisit all the judgments that were reversed by the Appeal Court.

He pointed out that the recent apex court judgments that affirmed 8 governor's,

have proved that the judiciary still remains the hope of the common man in the country.

Gama called on Governor Mutfwang to unite Plateau across political, ethnic, and religious lines, emphasizing that without such attributes, there would be no meaningful development in the state.

In separate opinions, Mrs. Sarah Adelade and Mr. Joshua Nengak, both commended Dr. Nentawe Goshwe Yilwatda, the candidate of the All Progressive Congress (APC), who has done his best to ensure he saw the end of the judgment at the apex court.

He should note that the legal struggle is part of the democratic processes to strengthen the system of democracy in Nigeria, they advised.

In their assertion, they said that the slogan of the governor 'The time is now' administration', should work to improve the security of the state, especially the crisis affected areas and to return all Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), to their ancestral homes.

"Citizens would want the governor to complete projects that were not completed by the last administration. Governor Mutfwang should settle down to work for the progress of the state and to bring the expected dividends of democracy to the citizens of Plateau," they emphasized.

They pointed out that "While unity is important, Mutfwang cannot succeed alone, he needs to embrace everybody to enable him to run an inclusive government."

He said the erring principals should know that the lives kept under their care are the future of the state and everything must be done to ensure that the programme succeeds.

Change of Name

JOHN I, formerly known as JOHN JOSEPH , now wish to be known and addressed as JOHN GANA JOSEPH . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.	PAM I, formerly known as VICTORIA PAM , now wish to be known and addressed as PAM VICTORIA VOJUNG . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.	INUWA I, formerly known as NYEN NSHE , now wish to be known and addressed as INUWA LINUS NSHE . All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.	MWANAR I, formerly known as MWAWAR TERAR ILIYA , now wish to be known and addressed as MWANAR TERAR ILIYA . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.	LAWRENCE I, formerly known as LAWRENCE LIVINUS SUNDAY , now wish to be known and addressed as LAWRENCE LIVINUS GOYIKUT . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.	MESHAK I, formerly known as MESHAK PRECIOUS , now wish to be known and addressed as MESHAK PRECIOUS YUSUF . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.
DASPIEL I, formerly known as PATRICK NANDI , now wish to be known and addressed as DASPIEL-PAUL NANDI . Correct date of birth is 1/10/1988 not 1/10/1983. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.	SHARU I, formerly known as SHARU VEITAT BENEDICTA , now wish to be known and addressed as SHARU VEIRAT GYANG . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public please take note.	ORUMAH I, formerly known as SHEDRACK ENENCHE ORUMA , now wish to be known and addressed as ORUMAH SHEDRACH ENENCHE . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.	MUSA I, formerly known as JAMES MUSA GARBA , now wish to be known and addressed as MUSA JAMES NYAM . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.	DADI I, formerly known as DADI MANKO TALI , now wish to be known and addressed as DADI MANKO PATIENCE . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.	MASHAT I, formerly known as DAVID RACHAEL PALANG , now wish to be known and addressed as MASHAT RACHAEL DAVID . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.
ALEXANDER I, formerly known as OBANIAH ALEXANDER , now wish to be known and addressed as ALEXANDER OBADIAH MAHAN . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.	FILBE I, formerly known as AGYAK REBECCA BECKY , now wish to be known and addressed as FILBE BECKY BAWUN . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.	VINCENT I, formerly known as VINCENT FAITH LYOP , now wish to be known and addressed as FAITH PAM . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.	SOMORIN I, formerly known as ONUAH CHIOMA MAUREEN , now wish to be known and addressed as SOMORIN CHIOMA MAUREEN . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.	MAIMUNA I, formerly known as MOHAMMED MAIMUNA GARBA , now wish to be known and addressed as MAIMUNA EPHRAIM DALONG . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.	SARAH I, formerly known as SERAH MUSA , now wish to be known and addressed as SARAH GOTOM YILBE GOKIR . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.
KINBEN I, formerly known as KOKTEN MONDAY , now wish to be known and addressed KINBEN MONDAY KOKTEN . My correct date of birth is 18-12-2000 not 18-12-1992. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.	ABDULGANIYU I, formerly known as ABDUL JAMILA , now wish to be known and addressed as ABDULGANIYU JAMILA . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.	JAPHET I, formerly known as JAPHETH MONDAY HASSAN , now wish to be known and addressed as JAPHET MONDAY . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.	KATE I, formerly known as ONUOHA KATE IFEYINWA , now wish to be known and addressed KATE IFEYINWA EGBOSIMBA . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.	ISAAC I, formerly known as ISHAKU AMABU SALAMI , now wish to be known and addressed as ISAAC AMBU SALAMI . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.	CHORTUWE I, formerly known as HOPE SHINDEN , now wish to be known and addressed as CHORTUWE SHINDEN ISHAKU . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.
WAZIRI I, formerly known as WAZIRI ISA , now wish to be known and addressed as WAZIRI ISA NADADU . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.	AYUBA I, formerly known as SAMUEL AYUBA TONGS , now wish to be known and addressed as AYUBA TONGS . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.	SHANGLE I, formerly known as GAMBAR ASABE ALI , now wish to be known and addressed as SHANGLE ASABE ALI . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.	ADDITION OF NAME I, formerly known as JONAH JETHRO , now wish to be known and addressed as JONAH JETHRO ALI . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.	UMAR I, formerly known as UMAR UMAR NYAM , now wish to be known and addressed as UMAR BEATRICE NYAM . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.	SABO I, formerly known as THEOPHILIUS TANKO , now wish to be known and addressed as SABO THEOPHILIUS TANKO . My correct date of birth is 12/2/2007 not 12/2/2010. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.
JETHRO I, formerly known as LINDA BEGADIMA , now wish to be known and addressed as JETHRO LINDA ALI . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.	JOHNMARJ I, formerly known as PEACE AJOKI JOHN , now wish to be known and addressed as JOHNMARJ PEACE YOUNMI . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.	MAKUT I, formerly known as REJOICE KENNETH , now wish to be known and addressed as MRS. MAKUT REJOICE KENNETH . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.	CORRECTION OF DATE I, SILAS REBECCA ASHANYI wish to state that my correct date of birth is 6/3/1996. All former documents remain valid. Concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.	MARGARET I, formerly known as MARGARET ISAAC YUSUF , now wish to be known and addressed as MRS. MARGARET NDAM . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.	TSOK I, formerly known as TSOK MARGRET ONAH SALAS , now wish to be known and addressed as TSOK MARGRET YOHANNA . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.
DAMAP I, formerly known as DAMAP N. PAULINE , now wish to be known and addressed as DAMAP N. PAULINE . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.	DADUWO I, formerly known as TALATU DADUWO , now wish to be known and addressed as DADUWO TALATU PLANGNAN . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.	RIMFA I, formerly known as RIMFA DENIS BOBI , now wish to be known and addressed as RIMFA DANIS NANSOH . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.	NAANBAN I, formerly known as NAANBAN STALEY S. , now wish to be known and addressed as NAANBAN STANLEY SHEPVEL . All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.	PUBLIC NOTICE	

RISE AND SHINE KINGDOM NETWORK

The general public is hereby notified that the above named organization has applied to the Corporate Affairs Commission, Abuja for registration under the Companies and Allied Matters Act, 2020.

THE TRUSTEES ARE:

1. Gideon Nandom Gambo	-	Member
2. Raymond Wulime Soja	-	Secretary
3. Yenjap Martins Manomi	-	Member
4. Tokkitda Daniel Dauda	-	Chairman

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- Teach kids, teenagers and young people the word of God.
- Providing training on capacity building and equipping kids, teenagers and young adults with valuable life skills to thrive in an ever changing world through intensive long-term support.

Any objection to the registration should be forwarded to the Registrar-General Corporate Affairs Commission Plot 420, Tigris Crescent, Off Aguiyi Ironsi Street, Maitama Abuja within 28 days of this publication.

Signed: Secretary

PROBATE

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 Ismaila Mohammed Mabo late of Plateau State. Died on the 13th March, 2023. At Jos Plateau State.	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT Anas Ismaila Mabo of AN6B Nasarawa Gwong Jos North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased	NAME OF DECEASED PERSON M o h a m m e d Ahmadu late of Plateau State died on the 1st April, 2013. At Mista Ali, Bassa LGA. Plateau State.	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT Teh Rejoice Ahmadu of Opp. ECWA Unity Church utan Jos on the 1st April, 2013. Lawful daughter of the said deceased.	NAME OF DECEASED PERSON Wamzuk Longkat Emmanuel late of Plateau State died on the 9th May, 2023. At Pwaskop, Pushit Mangu LGA Plateau State.	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT Tongriyang Longkat Emmnuel of Pwaskop Pushit District Mangu LGA, Plateau State. Lawful widow of the said deceased.
NAME OF DECEASED PERSON Sule Audu late of Mmaokpu Kogi State died on the 20th Nov. 2023. At Ibadan..	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT Cornelius Maxwell Khobe Cantonment, Bassa LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.	NAME OF DECEASED PERSON Ali Haladu late of Plateau State. Died on the 15th October, 2023 at Mangu LGA, Plateau State.	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT Haladu Muhammed Ali of Angwan Madaki Mangu LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.	NAME OF DECEASED PERSON Sani Muazu late of Plateau State. Died on the 15th November, 2022 at Jos, Plateau State.	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT Muhammadu Muazu Muhammad of Emir's Palace Dengi Kanam LGA, Plateau State. Lawful brother of the said deceased.

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

VACANCY

The Management of a reputable organisation has a vacancy for a Hotel Manager in the organization located in Jos.

Intrested person with OND or HND in Hotel Management with a minimum of 3 to 5 years experience should apply to cedarkelng@gmail.com not later than Friday 26th January 2024.

Signed: Management

Nigeria and the scarcity of naira



By VICTOR ALI

LAST year, 2023, has come and gone with all its multi-colored memories to remember. One of the fondest of such memories was the fact that virtually all Nigerians, perhaps, with the exception of the "big men" and of course "big women", used their national currency, the naira to buy again their national currency.

Did you say magic wonderland? But that was the heinous delicacy we were despicably savored with!

In a purported bid to change the national currency, the naira, Nigerians under the watch of the Almighty Godwin Emefiele, subjected Nigerians to pains, agony and unwarranted yet infuriating hardship. No debate about whether the certain denominations of the naira should be changed or not it happens in other civilized climes. With the dead of Queen Elizabeth (11), Queen of England, it is speculated, and rightly so, that the pound sterling will be redesigned and rebranded.

Yes, logic dictates this. Afterall, the pounds carry the portrait of the late Queen Elizabeth and there is a new Sherriff in town-King Charles. History has shown that it was done before in the same England and the exercise went seamlessly without anybody passing through the harrowing experience that Nigerians passed through. It is definitely a huge lesson of history.

Back to the Nigerian scenario when Lord Emefiele held court.

Later revelation(s) of Emefiele's rebranding and redesign of the naira was purely political. Little wonder, the emergence of Asiwaju Ahmed BolaTinubu as the president of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, prompt to, the Governor of Nigeria's Apex bank was arrested. Interestingly, many Nigerians were happy with the development and Emefiele's predicament. Though Emefiele regains his freedom after thirty four (34) days in kuje prison, he seems to have a bit of lesson, because the other day, yours sincerely saw him in the front page of a national newspaper holding a very big Bible. Ha,ha,ha... welcome pastor Emefiele!

Now, welcome to the part two of the Nigeria naira film-show-cash crunch of naira scarcity? Anyone can serve! With the appointment of Olayemi Cardoso as the new Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) another lexicon has been added on its stable. Call it cash crunch or naira scarcity, Nigerians are again agonizing, courtesy of their national currency-the naira.

It is terribly disheartening that,



someone has money in his bank active connivance of "Fifth account but cannot access it. Columnist" somewhere. Even when he or she marginally It is high-time the government succeeds in getting something, of Nigeria treats its citizenry with only the bank decides what the the utmost respect and dignity it customer gets. Interestingly, the deserves nothing more, nothing POS carbal always have the naira less. The hardship in the land is in abundance! Do they have unimaginable and the resilience printing money machines? Or is of the people is most there a cabal from the apex bank, commendable. However, there the central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) is limit to tolerance because, and the commercial banks? everybody is human-blood and Suspiciously, there must be the flesh. Something must give.

It is high-time the government of Nigeria treats its citizenry with the utmost respect and dignity it deserves nothing more, nothing less. The hardship in the land is "unimaginable and the resilience of the people is most commendable. However, there is limit to tolerance because, everybody is human-blood and flesh. Something must give.

Justice for Plateau Christmas eve massacre



By DUMAH RANDONG

PLATEAU State North central Nigeria on the 24th December, 2023 came under attack by heavily armed Fulani militia. In what has been described as a well-coordinated assault orchestrated by Fulani terrorists whose activities have become a nightmare to all lovers of peace in Nigeria and has been designated by the Global Terrorism Index, GTI in 2015 as the fourth most deadly terror group in the world after Alqaeda, Alshabab and Hisbolla. The endangered specie joined forces with the sedentary Fulani and immediately gained international recognition for the simple fact that they are vicious in nature. The wicked and hardly unforgettable and unforgiving group could hold a grudge for decades. With all sense of responsibility, I dare to say that this terror group would have been designated as a terrorist organization by the Buhari administration since 2015 and be treated as such but prefer to address them as bandits. The group could rightly be said to have the same ideology with the Boko Haram because their style of operation is almost similar. What the human rights group wanted the Former President Buhari to do was to pronounce them a terror

group, but the body language of the President was what no one could explain. Concerns have been raised as to why he was not yielding to this demand.

The way and manner the Buhari administration kept pampering them lend credence to the fact that he has a sinister motive. Before the Christmas Eve attack, the rate of crime in Bokkos had surged especially with the attack on Mangu Local Government Area. Some of them that were dislodged from Mangu, illegally occupied the abandoned building belonging to the Bokkos Farm Project, BFP. Their presence constituted a serious security breach as the hoodlums caused a lot of havoc to farms and also engaged in all forms of crimes such as stealing of food crops, kidnapping and even rape.

For instance, Bot, Mbar, Daffo-Josho, Mangor, Manguna, NTV and Maikatako had suffered frequent attacks since the rampage by the Fulani Jihadists began some eight years ago. The Middle-Belt region is considered to be good for grazing giving the clement weather which is suitable for cattle rearing hence the persistent clashes.

Against the notion that these crises are precipitated by the quest to have control over mineral deposits, the reason is unambiguously not far from this assertion. The cause of this crisis is purely the issue of land grabbing. A case in point is that, places like Josho in Daffo District of Bokkos, NTV in Barkin Ladi LGA and Mahanga of Riyom LGA have been under the control of these enemies of humanity, and this could not be as a result of mineral deposits. Mahanga for instance, is a stretch of land located in Jol, Riyom Local Government Area of Plateau State blessed with resources and its natural beauty, has been taken over by the herdsmen. It is indisputable to say that the illegal occupants are

operating independently (government within government) since they determine the way they want to live their life.

On the issue of Barkin Ladi, and NTV in particular which belongs to the Berom people and inhabited by them and some Mwaghavul people as well who came in search of land for farming. But surprisingly, a drive from Barkin Ladi to Bokkos approaching the mountain foot, will surprise you to know if a settlement ever existed in that place. What you can see is sparse settlements of Fulani who have forcefully evicted the real owners and taken over. As if that is not enough, their presence in that location has also constituted a major security threat to the people.

This is because they sometimes rob, kidnap passersby as well as commit murder along the road in the wee hours. Similarly, in Josho area of Daffo in Bokkos LGA is another Fulani settlement whose activities have been a nightmare to the natives as they graze with impunity and the natives cannot dare to talk to them whenever their farms are destroyed. In most cases they allow their cattle to graze on the farms and anyone who attempts to dare them is at his own peril. The illegal occupation of the abandoned Bokkos Farm Project, BFP, established by the Solomon Daushep Lar regime is another sad commentary in the wake of the Mangu crisis, the bandits took over the building having been dislodged from their locations.

Their presence fueled the already tensed situation in the area. This was evidently shown in the rising cases of kidnapping activities, destruction of farm lands and stealing of food crops belonging to the natives. What the Bokkos people are asking is would the Fulani they have accommodated for years connived with their brothers elsewhere to carry out such an

attack against them and want them to leave describing the attack as unimaginable and an attempt to wipe them from the face of the earth. The Christmas Eve attack on the People of Bokkos, Mangu and Barkin Ladi LGAs was unprecedent occurring simultaneously could also be termed as a well-coordinated attack by the marauders. Places that came under attack by the terrorists in Bokkos include Mbong, Kamluk, Farah, Mavuu, Yalwa nono, Fatamba, Mangar, Bitawil, Fashar, Mawuri, Fitton' all in Mbar District of Bokkos.

Others included Murfet, Mushu, Ndu, Ngyong, Bodel, Tangur District of Bokkos, Mushere, in Mushere Chiefdom of Bokkos. Butura Kampani, Maiyanga, Maijankai, Mandar District and Gwarzarza, Tamiso, Tahore, Chirang, Lunghai, in Mangor District as well as Hurum in Manguna District. Also in Barkin Ladi, a number of villages were touched. These include NTV, Gashish while in Mangu some villages like Kwahaslalek and Kawarpele were also attacked. Some of the attacks according to the natives were perpetrated by the same fulani living with them. This according to reports, the invaders sent notice of the attack to the villagers who also alerted the security about the impending attack but that no attention was given to it. Even on the fateful day, some of the Falanis were sighted moving to safe locations in the evening of the deadly attack. But no one could do something to save the situation as they were said to be in a festive mood. Some villages of Mbong, Chirang, Tahore and Maiyanga are said to be the worst hit as 11 people were hacked to death including the wife of a Pastor and her five children were burnt beyond recognition by the assailants in Mbong while in Tahore Chirang and Maiyanga,

over a hundred and Fifty (150) were also killed. The way and manner in which the assailants carried out the assault was quite unfortunate. The over five hundred terrorists who invaded the villages simultaneously, started shooting sporadically with heavy guns while also setting every house ablaze. Available data from this act of terrorism has shown that no fewer than 200 people lost their lives, 1290 houses burnt with 81 cars also burnt while 19,995 people are currently in Internally Displaced Persons' Camps (IDPs). What the people of Plateau State and victims of the heinous crime are demanding from President Bola Tinubu is justice as this will only differentiate him from the immediate past government, thereby marking a departure from the usual assurances that never produced results in the last eight years of the Buhari administration. What is not yet clear is whether the Tinubu government will live up to its constitutional responsibility of protecting lives and property of its citizens which he swore to do so is what nobody can tell for now. But be that as it may, the Plateau massacre is one too many and going forward, it is not farfetched looking at what the security particularly the military drafted to maintain peace has not done enough with the public outcry regarding their alleged complicity. Also interesting is the fact that some arrest have been made in connection with the attacks, what is expected is for the government and security agencies to ensure that perpetrators and sponsors of this violence are apprehended, tried and prosecuted to serve as deterrence. This will not only give the people confidence in the government but will also mark an end to the protracted killings in the country.

By EZEKIEL DONTINNA

IT was a day like no other to the Rigwe people of Plateau State when this exceptional ethnic nationality painted the sky blue in a beam of great satisfaction with what could best be described as a special reminiscence of the old time ancestral festival.

Truly, the celebration of the popular Otu Rigwe, was quite unique and thrilling as they displayed how rich Rigwe culture and values are at the Jos Rwang Pam Township Stadium, the venue of this event recently. The venue was filled to the brim with people trooping from within and outside Plateau to witness the occasion.

In fact, the roads leading to the venue were tight in heavy traffic especially, along JD Gomwalk road, Goodluck Jonathan road Ahmadu Bello way, where motorists struggled with how to take an alternative routes that could ease their movement to the neighbouring state.

"The Polo Roundabout was completely unaccessible because both the Rigwe Traditional Soldiers and Warriors were seen waiting for the arrival of Braa Nggwe Rigwe, HRH Rev. Ronku Aka (Rtd) to flagoff the year's occasion open.

It was fantastically colourful when sons and daughters of Rigwe Nation dressed in their cultural attires matched alongside the traditional soldiers and warriors to the venue, escorting their Royal Father amidst dances and display of their rich different cultural dances to the admiration of Plateau people.

What glaringly depicted itself was the exposure of the peaceful nature the Irigwe people are known for, because, as they matched-pass other tribes dancing, the entire environment turned out to be an all inclusive festival.

This no doubt demonstrated their ardent love for peaceful coexistence with other tribes on the Plateau. You need to see how citizens from different divides-ethnic and religious came as far as Bauchi, Gombe, Kaduna, Benue, Nasarawa etc, to witness this special occasion.

It will interest you to know that, the Rigwe culture was the first acknowledged by the Westerners in Nigeria, where through their artistic and magnificent dance steps and skills. No wonder, the celebration attracted such unprecedented interest as the Berom, Izere, Ganawuri, Anaguta, Mangu, Mupun, Ngas, Taroh, Gamai, and other Plateau ethnic nationalities were not left out.

According to the National President of the Irigwe Development Association (IDA), Prince Robert Ashi

Dodo, "little wonder, Rigwe should not let ourselves be people through their aesthetic and magnificent dance steps and skills, represented Nigeria at a cultural carnival in Germany in the early 60s.

"Today, we are gathered here to remind ourselves that culture includes how we relate to one another, what we hold dear and how we go about living our daily lives. It also includes all of our attitudes and values, manners and practices, spoken and written words as well as ways of living and

prisoners of any retrogressive culture", he encountered.

Dodo, however, called on sons and daughters of Irigwe land to use their talents, contributions, ideas and knowledge they all have to shape the future of Rigwe cultural landscape and promote their rich cultural heritage knowing how endowed their land was.

On his part, the Guest Speaker at the occasion, Dr.



OTU RIGWE: Cultural festival with a difference



working. "Cultural Festivals like this bring people together in shared experiences at the regional and national levels. Under no circumstance, should a person abandon his or her culture. I want to call on us all to try all our best to appreciate and feel proud of our culture.

"This is because, it is believed that you will not know the importance of something unless it is taken away from you. It is also important to appreciate that culture is not static, it changes as human beings develop. We, therefore,

Joshua Riti, MNES, who spoke on the topic: "Irigwe Youth And Education in a Challenging World: The Role of Stakeholders", said, "the Irigwe youths are blessings and important resource to the Irigwe Nation. They have defended the Nation from external aggression.

"Providing them with the right skills, formally and informally, will go a long way to help them to achieve their full potential and to realise it. I urge all Stakeholders to be involved in this course. Parents also have a very important role to play in

addressing the educational challenges of the Irigwe Nation", he advised.

Meanwhile, former House of Representatives Member, Jos-North/Bassa Federal Constituency, Hon. Musa Agah Avia, thanked his people for supporting him during election.

However, the Braa Nggwe Rigwe, Rev. Ronku Aka (Rtd), used the opportunity to commend the security on the Plateau especially, the GOC 3Div, for inaugurating a peace committee to foster peace processes, but appealed that

government should work hastily in returning people back to their homes.

Dignitaries in attendance were the Executive Governor of Plateau State, represented by the Secretary to the Government of the State, Arch. Samuel Jatau, Bauchi State Governor, Sen. Bala Mohammed, Gbong Gwom Jos, His Majesty, Da Jacob Gyang Buba, Mrs. Lizzy Davidson, who was the Chairlady at the occasion among other personalities respectively, amidst dances and display of rich cultural artifacts.

Congratulatory Message from

Plateau State Christian Pilgrims Welfare Board

The Executive Secretary, Plateau State Christian Pilgrims Welfare Board, **Rev. Wanson Yusufu Bagu** on behalf of Management and the entire Staff, join the good people of Plateau State to heartily congratulate **H.E Barr. Caleb M. Mutfwang**, the executive Governor of Plateau State and his Deputy, **H.E Ngo Josephine Piyo** on their resounding victory at the Supreme Court.

Now that the coast is clear, I call upon the entire citizens of Plateau State to put all the political distractions behind them, and to support and pray for **Governor Caleb Mutfwang** lead administration. Together we can lead Plateau State to a greater heights.

To our amiable Governor, indeed, "The Land is Green", and now is the time to blaze the trail on the sands of time. We have no doubt that your stewardship will be distinguished by the fear of God, justice and selfless service to humanity and to the glory of God.

The Christian Pilgrims Welfare Board wishes to reiterate her unwavering support, loyalty and commitment to the government even as we remain steadfast in carrying out our statutory responsibilities through provision of advisory services, support and coordination of all Christians pilgrims program in Plateau State.

Once again, Congratulations, Your Excellency, on this well-deserved triumph.

Signed:
Rev. Wanson Yusufu Bagu
Executive Secretary



Rev. Wanson Yusufu Bagu

Congratulatory Message From Civil Service Commission



The Chairman, Commissioners, Management and indeed the entire staff of the Civil Service Commission heartily congratulate the Executive Governor of Plateau State, **His Excellency, Barr. Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang** on his well-deserved victory at the Supreme Court to secure the mandate of the people of the State as freely given at the polls.

The Commission identifies with this victory and pray that the Almighty God will grant you the wisdom, good health and enablement to meet the yearnings and expectations of the people of the State.

Congratulations once more to our dear Governor and your Deputy, **Ngo Josephine Piyo** on this resounding victory at the Supreme Court.

Chief Luka C. Fwengyil,
Chairman.



Plateau Publishing Corporation Congratulates Governor Mutfwang on his victory at the Supreme Court

The Management and entire staff of Plateau Publishing Corporation (PPC), Jos heartily congratulate the captain of the "Time is Now" Mantra and the Executive Governor of Plateau State, **Barr. Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang**, his Deputy, **Hon. Josephine Piyo** over your victory at the Supreme Court.

This Landmark Judgment has reaffirmed the valid mandate given to you by the people of Plateau State. Your steadfast dedication to the welfare and progress of the state has been evident throughout your journey, and this affirmation confirm the trust and confidence of the people.

As you embark on this new phase of your leadership Journey. We pray the Almighty God to grant you the wisdom, strength, and guidance to lead with integrity and compassion.

Once again, congratulation sir.

Signed
Paul Jatau
Ag.GM



Are Nigerians enduring democracy?

WHEN Nigeria, the most populous black nation in the world found its way through military dictatorship and eventually returned to civilian administration in 1999, many citizens of the nation had a sight of reprieve. Considering the traumatic experience which enveloped the nation as a result of the catastrophic draconian degrees and laws put in place by these unapologetic despots, the country was at the bleak of total collapse.

As a result of these administrative ingenuity and perilous irregularities, the citizens were left at the mercy of these cruel leaders and their cronies. Thus, the prolonged military dictatorship in itself did not help the then nasty situation. Beside these anomalies, many infrastructural deficits were recorded including human rights violations which became systematically unimaginably traumatizing.

After tremendous sacrifice by pro-democracy activists including the mass media, Nigeria eventually emerged as a promising democratic nation in 1999 bringing to an abrupt end several decades of bitterness, pains and sorrow necessitated by unprecedented years of misrule. The long decades of military tyranny which consequently led to the deaths of many innocent Nigerians eventually ended.

Basically one is still agonised by the untimely deaths of many significant Nigerians in the likes of MKO Abiola, his wife Kudirat. Ken Saro wiwa, Dele Giwa and Bagauda Kalto which subsequently dented the reputation of the country before the comity of nations. I still can remember with great nostalgia that the death of these prominent citizens forced the Common wealth of Nations including other multi-international organizations to sanction the country. It was as a result of these series of sanctions that eventually stopped Nigeria from participating in the Africa Nations Cup in 1994.

Therefore, the coming of democratic governance in 1999 was regarded as a great relief to its citizens. This return to democratic administration was considered by many stakeholders and social commentators as very beneficial due to the obvious fact that the citizens would be liberated from all problems necessitated by the military regime.

During the handing over ceremony after he won the presidential polls in 1999, President Olusegun Obasanjo was quick to acknowledge the benefits inherent in any democratic nation of the world to include freedom and soci-economic and political advancement. While assuring Nigerians that democracy would in no distance time integrate the entire nation into the commity of nations, Obasanjo also admonished Nigerians to be more focused and strategic in selflessly serving the nation with all their might and wisdom. This aside, social commentators also gave out their thoughts on the substantial benefits the country stand to gain if all goes well and as anticipated to including, ending disunity and sharing of power only by the snooty society.

Since 1999 however, it seems that what the citizens of the country are experiencing is beyond that which they bargained for. In fact, aside the regime of President Umaru YarAdua which tried to stabilise the nation but with some hiccups, the present nasty situation experienced in this country is completely getting out of hand. Sad enough, the problem of insecurity is becoming insurmountable even as our security agents are becoming overwhelmed as a result of the frequent reoccurrence of this tragic and nasty scenarios. It is on

record that since 1999 after the present democratic government emerged, hundreds of thousands of the citizens of this nation have been killed with impunity. In fact, insecurity according to statistics has caused the death of over 70,000 innocent lives between 2012 and 2020. Since 2011, Boko Harram insurgency has led to 37,500 deaths, 2.5 million displacements and 244,000 refugees.

In just two years, the farmer-herder clashes have claimed more than 10,000 lives and displacement of over 300,000 people. Just recently, these senseless marauders stormed Bokkos, Mangu and Barkin Ladi Local Government Areas where they killed more than two hundred people with impunity. As it is, Nigeria has one of the world's kidnap-for ransom record with 685 kidnaps reported in the first quarter of 2019 alone. Between June 2011 and March 2020, Nigerians paid about 18.34 million dollars as ransom.

But again, one can also imagine the calamity many citizens of this nation are facing as a result of inflation, lack of employment and unstable economic fabric. Just recently, economists had cause to complain that in no distance time, many Nigerians will be unable to secure three square meals a day.

As at 2023, Nigeria's inflation rate increased to about 28 percent in November 2023, the highest since August 2005 and above market expectations of 27.9 percent from 27.3 percent in the previous month. According to the National Bureau of Statistics in it Executive Summary, in January 2023, the headline inflation rate rose to 21.82 percent compared to December 2022 headline inflation which was 21.34 percent. Looking at the trend, the Bureau further acknowledged that the January 2023 inflation rate showed an increase of 0.47 points when compared with that of December 2022.

This statistics is coming on the heels of the complaint by the World Bank including other global financial institutions that Nigeria needs to trek on the path of caution.

This is because, more than ever before, the country is in self-inflicted excruciating pains and anguish ever imagined in the annals of the country's history. While many parents and their children are dying in hunger, an average Nigerian cannot afford the best education for their children. A few weeks ago, statistics indicated that the number of out of school children was seriously becoming very alarming in the country. This development is further compounded by the menace of Almajiri syndrome that is hitting most northern states of the federation. Some of these vulnerable children have been dogmatized and become hardened criminals giving the entire nation headache through their nefarious acts of unabated criminality.

One other issue which has continued to affect the anticipated progress of the country is the unending cases of broad daylight stealing and corruption of the highest order by top government officials. While more than half of our country's population wallow in abject poverty, the political class seems unperturbed about this. In fact, for them, not even the issue of high cost of governance is worthy of deliberations in our National Assemblies. Though the president recently

Just recently a can of worms was opened in one of the federal government parastatals after over 500 million naira was misappropriated in that same agency. These were monies allocated to help ensure the survival and comfortability of the people of this country.

View Point

Mutfwang's triumphant return: The excitement, expectations

Before enrolment into primary school, in between our farm in the village, a plane always flew past to my admiration, about 3 times a week back then. The destination of the plane to me could only be imagined and obviously wrong. At that age, I knew no big towns or countries from which this plane came and where it was headed. I knew it was not a bird but a flying machine. So many questions in my mind remained un-answered as there was no one around to ask and get answers. PROF JOSIAH MUTHIR write.

AS luck would have it, I was enrolled into primary school in 1961 and graduated in 1967 with first school leaving certificate. The graduation had to go along with it, an educational visit to Jos, the capital of plateau state. One of the places visited was the Jos airport, then at the old airport now the Airforce Military School. I was able to witness an aeroplane land, the distinguished passengers disembark the plane from a distance but never allowed us onto the tarmac or let alone touch the body of the plane or any part of it for that matter.

Years later, as I grew up, got to the university, graduated and begun to work, I had the opportunity to visit London by air. Note that London could be, and still can be visited by sea. I had to get to Kano, and then fly to the United Kingdom. At the Kano airport, all preliminaries were concluded and at last, the plane arrived and I came face to face with this giant aircraft of the then Nigeria Airways. As we were shepherded to get to the plane for boarding, my excitement grew within me. Now I could see a huge plane at close range, touch it and even board it for a trip and fly. The excitement became a reality when at the door of the aircraft, I could finally touch this 'thing'. I excitedly reached out my hand to touch the door as I boarded to confirm this reality; then into the plane looking bewildered, surprised, but for sure for real. I am sure the more experienced co-passengers noticed my bizarre behaviour but no one uttered a word. May be only stories to tell when they got to their destinations!

The next inquisition in my mind was how could this massive object or machine take to the air to fly to its destination. Curiosity they say killed the cat! But for now, the discussion on this topic will be left for another day!

This time around, thousands of individuals who have definitely seen a flying plane in the air over their heads came face to face with this flying object while on ground, called the aeroplane (air-plane). They could now see it live



and for real. They could now see the front, the sides, the body, the wings, the engines, the tails and oh, even the tyres (landing gear).

But what led up to this scenario is the issue. Happiness, joy and excitement to welcome the arrival of the now affirmed Plateau State Governor. The Supreme Court of the land had affirmed his election following months of uncertainty, sleepless nights, lack of appetite and apprehension as to the outcome of the apex court's decision. Now it had been affirmed and voters and non-voters alike were now excited to see their Governor. The joy and happiness of the declaration had no bounds, but the expression of their joy was curtailed in the absence of their Governor. He was yet to arrive the state from Abuja. Though there were moderate solidarity street demonstrations in Jos in

particular, and across the 17 local governments' areas of the state, a mega reception was in the offing. The delay in return now paved a way to prepare for a tumultuous reception. The people knew he would arrive by air. The right place to receive him therefore, was at the only airport in Jos, the Yakubu Gowon Airport. The simple decision to make was therefore to get to the airport on time.

The population that tramped to the airport was mainly non-partisan as it cut across party, religious, ethnic and other lines. The rich, the poor, the tall, the short, the fat and the slender, farmers, traders, unemployed, the far and near were all at the airport. How majority of them got to the airport is still a mystery. Some might have trekked for kilometres to get there. The fuel scarcity, cost and lack of easy and affordable transportation to the airport was definitely another

constraint.

The main goal of getting to the airport was to welcome the Governor, have a glimpse of him and assure him of their continued support while the court trials lasted. `Now it was all over.

At the airport, the crowd gathered as individuals, in droves and became a mammoth crowd. Within hours of arrival of the 'august' guest, an unprecedented crowd had gathered all excited and expectant to see the now approved people's Governor. As the plane conveying the Governor touched down on the runway, the spectators inched closer to the fence warding off the runway and tarmac. With the landing of the plane, the crowd went into a frenzy of singing, dancing and chanting champion's songs. As the plane taxied to a halt, the spirit of excitement, joy and happiness possessed the spectators / crowd, who put aside the fear for whips, bullets of the security operatives, overwhelmed them rushed onto the tarmac and headed for the plane. The plane was surrounded on all sides, all aiming at catching a glimpse of the Governor. Some of the spectators had no idea where the exit door of the plane was and were therefore pacing up and down waiting for it to be opened.

For a number of members of the crowd, this was now a moment to see a plane at a very close range, and also an opportunity to get as close to it as possible and even to touch it; a lifetime achievement, a fait accompli. Questions probably

posed and answered at the same time would have been: so a plane is this big (notice this was not at all a big one), so the plane has tyres as a car? And many other questions some of which answers could not be provided for at the time. For many therefore the dividends for the visit were many. A visit to the airport for the first time, a glimpse of the Governor, a close view of a plane, and a touch of this special plane that had brought home their governor.

As I conclude, the writer imagines how powerful the power of extreme excitement, joy and happiness could be. Human beings putting aside fear of anything including the possibility of being whipped with specially designed whips to inflict maximum pain, or shot to death, to achieve their primary aim and objectives. Thank God this gathering ended well without any eventualities but a word of caution may be sounded here. A high-handed security operative may fire a shot, (or accidental discharge) costing a life or more - a tragedy. God forbid. This never happened!

Welcome Mr Governor, Welcome Barrister Caleb Mutfwang. Before I drop my pen, or the ink gets dry, may I mention that this is a clarion call to the Governor to also give all it takes within his power and resources to serve the people even with his life as his people demonstrated sacrificing their lives for him on his success at the Supreme Court and his safe return to Jos, the capital of Plateau State, the true home of peace and tourism.

As I conclude, the writer imagines how powerful the power of extreme excitement, joy and happiness could be. Human beings putting aside fear of anything including the possibility of being whipped with specially designed whips to inflict maximum pain, or shot to death, to achieve their primary aim and objectives. Thank God this gathering ended well without any eventualities but a word of caution may be sounded here. A high-handed security operative may fire a shot, (or accidental discharge) costing a life or more - a tragedy. God forbid. This never happened!

News

Beware of 'side chicks' moving around with HIV

By WILLIE ATTAH, Gombe

THE Gombe State Commandant of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defense Corps (NSCDC), has warned that a large number of young girls confirmed to be HIV positive are roaming the streets of Gombe.

He said the revelation followed the arrest of an 85 year old man who was said to have lured uncountable numbers of young girls into sex and after examination, he was confirmed to be HIV positive including his four wives.

Briefing newsmen over the Command's activities for 2023, the State Commandant, Mohammed Bello Mu'azu, warned members of the public against illicit sexual relationships. He advised them to ensure they confirm the status of their sex mates before engaging in any sexual relationship.

He said, HIV is like a time bomb in Gombe because the prevalence rate is alarmingly high. Many unsuspecting carriers are in their window period, as such, MB Mu'azu particularly warned men to watch out and confirm the HIV status of their 'side chicks'.

Earlier, he revealed that the Command faced serious challenges with some NGOs who are backing same sex relationships and marriage, a situation that had been



Audi

prevalent in the state and involving many youths below 25 years.

The State Government had ordered the closure of all nightclubs in the state popularly known as 'Gala Houses' where these activities were taking place without any hindrance.

He stated however that throughout the huddles with the pro same sex NGOs, the Command was on the same page with the Human Rights Commission of Nigeria which

resulted in the successes achieved by the Command in its operations against immoral activities involving youths in the state.

He said the Command had done its best under the purview of its mandate to meet the demands and needs of the public in seeking justice and settling disputes.

The Gombe State Government had set up a committee over the issue of same sex relationships and marriage.

NEMA give succour to Bokkos victims of attack

By CHRISTY TAMAI

A medical team supported by UNICEF, Red Cross, UN in company of Nigerian medical personnel, led by the Commissioner of Health, Plateau State, Dr Cletus Shurkur Bako and Professor Christopher Yilgwan paid an assessment visit to Bokkos LGC, one of the LGCs affected by the Christmas eve attack on the Plateau.

The Commissioner of Health, said the medical team had the primary task of carrying on with initial assessment of medical needs, disclosing that the team had some medical consumables for those that needed them.

He explained that that would be a continuous process depending on the assessment. Explaining further, he said that the team had a lot of experts in various fields of health who would be attending to the people based on their needs.

He said the team was being supported by partners from the W.H.O, UNICEF, Red Cross, NEMA, National Development Primary Board, and Doctors Without Borders, among others. He pointed out that all of them were working together to ensure that all medical needs of those in camp, hospitals and outside were totally attended to.

Dr. Shurkur said the government appreciated all the contributions made by the camp manager, local government, alongside the

partners.

He also said the team was willing to provide support for the three local government areas, which include Bokkos, Mangu and Barkin-Ladi, affected in terms of medications and that it would utilize other personnel of the medical team in the camp for easy assessment.

Speaking earlier was the CMD, Plateau State Specialist Hospital, Prof. Christopher Yilgwan, who explained the mission of the team which is to care for those who needed medical observation. He stated that the medical team includes mental specialists who can assist where necessary.

Prof. Yilgwan said there were also experts on child health, women, pregnant women and that anyone who was on medication and needed assistance, should avail themselves.

The CMD said the team came with some drugs for diabetics, multi-vitamins, among many. He explained that this was the team's first visit and that what it was doing was to help the team to evaluate the potential needs of the people.

According to him, the team was also setting up mobile clinics in all the camps to help attend to the needs of the people and possibly, the host communities, because the available health resources around would be stretched.

He assured them that the team was also trying to allay the fears of the victims who might feel abandoned.

Also speaking was Dr Mie

Okamura, the Clusters Lead for Emergency W.H.O, who said that because of the situation, they were requested to represent the U.N system and not only W.H.O, in order to support the coordination for humanitarian response and also the health sector.

She explained that they were saddled with two responsibilities which include supporting the whole U.N system in terms of coordination and for the humanitarian crises as well as the health sector. She added that they were doing different assessments while others were supporting the different assessments based on the clusters.

Dr. Mie said the partners were working on different assessments which made the work multi-clustered in order to collect the key information and needs in order to attend to the suffering population.

She explained that despite the fact that they were different partners, agencies, they were all working together to support the government to assist the population in need. And pointed out that the most important thing was to look at what was critical, what was most urgent and organize some things like building back better in terms of the state resilience, like building the health system to be strong enough, resilient enough to continue the care of the population in Plateau.

On the other hand, the Executive Secretary, Plateau State Emergency Management Agency, Hon. Sunday Abdu, appreciated the

By PETER TITLE

Suswam frowns at Plateau attacks

FORMER Governor of Benue State,, Senator Gabriel Suswam has commiserated with the government and people of Plateau State over the attacks meted on the people where hundreds of people were killed.

According to him, the attacks were senseless, callous and uncalled for. He has called for thorough investigations and those found involved in any way be punished accordingly.

Senator Suswam who said anything that touches Plateau affects Benue , called on the federal government to fish out the perpetrators of the callous killings meted on the eve of 2023 Christmas on the people of Bokkos, Mangu and Barkin-Ladi Local Government Areas of the state.

He lamented the spate of crime being committed across the country by unscrupulous elements, saying it was saddening seeing innocent people being sent to their graves untimely.

He congratulated Governor Mutfwang over his victory at the Supreme Court and said that it was a victory for all. Suswam urged him to leave a mark on the sands of time where he would be remembered for a long time.

While receiving Senator Suswam at his residence on Monday, Governor Caleb Mutfwang thanked him for the

show of love. He said the unprovoked attack on the people of Bokkos was callous and promised that the perpetrators and sponsors would be fished out and punished.

According to him, the people of the state were peaceful and wondered why such an act would be meted on them. He expressed his desire to leave a better and prosperous state.

Gov . Mutfwang also commended President Ahmed Bola Tinubu for standing with him in the trying moments. And promised to do his best to ensure that no similar incident occurs again as well as to ensure that the perpetrators were brought to justice.



Suswam

Kogi NUJ felicitates with turbanned veteran

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

KOGI State Council Of the Nigeria Union Of Journalists, (NUJ), has felicitated with

Corporate Communication Guru, Media Consultant, Publisher and veteran journalist, Dr Oyeyemi Kolapo on her turbaning as the new Iyalode Musulumi of Egbaland, A statement signed by the Chairman and Secretary of the Council, Alhaji Seidu Ademu and Comrade Olusegun Ayindero-Oyenibi, said Dr. Oyeyemi Kolapo deserves the honour in view of her commitment to the work of God and humanity at large.

According to the statement, her impact is felt beyond Egbaland as she has been a source of inspiration and blessings to working journalists in Kogi State.

The Council urged Dr Oyeyemi

Kolapo to see the honour as an opportunity to do more to advance the course of humanity, devoid of ethnic, political and religious inclination.

It prayed that the Almighty God would grant her more grace to continue to affect the course of humanity and remain a blessing to all.

The Council assured of its support to her course and also pledged its commitment to be partners in progress at all times.

"Once again, we say congratulations to a woman of honour, passion, dedication and unwavering commitment to the work of the Almighty God and humanity", the statement concludes.



Kolapo

Sports

AFCON 2023: How Senegal came to dominate African football

Morocco may have made history in 2022 by becoming the first African team to reach the Fifa World Cup semi-finals, but the continent's dominant footballing force lies further down the coast in Senegal. **ROB STEVENS AND YUSUF AKINPELU** writes.

THE Teranga Lions are defending their Africa Cup of Nations (Afcon) title in Ivory Coast this month, but that is just the tip of the iceberg.

Senegal are also reigning continental champions at Under-17 and Under-20 level, and even won the African Nations Championship (CHAN), the competition for domestic-based players for the first time last year.

Aliou Cisse's men began their Group C campaign with a **3-0 win** over The Gambia on Monday as they look to become the first side to register back-to-back Afcon triumphs since Egypt won their third in a row in 2010.

"We have just the one star," the 47-year-old, referring to having lifted the trophy just once, said.

"We are keen to win again, to continue winning it."

Cisse himself was part of Senegal's original golden generation, which finished as runners-up at the 2002 Afcon before reaching the quarter-finals of the World Cup later that year on the country's debut at the finals.

Former international teammate El Hadji Diouf believes Senegal's recent success is the result of both a strong partnership between the government and the country's football federation (FSF) and critical investment in facilities.

"Everywhere you go in Senegal, all the cities have academies," Diouf told BBC Sport Africa.

"They start young, at Under-10, and have tournaments every year. We want to improve that and have the same organisation like in England and France.

"I have to say congratulations and thanks for our government because that's a policy and they give the money. And the president of the FSF, Augustin Senghor, is working so well."

Senegal's hold over the African game even stretches to beach soccer, with the country winning the past four continental titles and finishing fourth at the last Beach Soccer World Cup in Russia in 2021.

Aliou Cisse captained Senegal at the Africa Cup of Nations and World Cup in 2002, and has been national team coach since 2015.

Alongside the establishment of local academies and infrastructure, Souleymane Diallo, a part-time coach of national age groups and a research professor at the Cheikh Anta Diop University in Dakar, says a pathway has been created to move talent from youth international level to the senior side.

"Senegal has an extraordinary potential of players and we're being patient with the generations," Diallo told BBC Sport Africa.

"At grassroots level, we have a very broad base and we're



Senegal followed up their 2021 Africa Cup of Nations title (centre) with successes at the Under-17 Afcon and CHAN finals last year

creating channels through which these players can reach the first team.

"The federation asks us to put players who have played in the lower categories on the radar, so that each generation can move on from a lower level to a higher one. "If they finish their category at U17, they go to U20. If they finish at U20 they go on to the U23s, the CHAN team and the first team."

Another big factor in Senegal's long-term strategy has been to ensure stability in the dugout. Cisse has been in charge of the Teranga Lions **since March 2015**, and has slowly built towards success.

A quarter-final exit in the 2017 Afcon (on penalties) was followed by a defeat in the 2019 final, before Senegal returned to triumph in Cameroon in February 2022.

During that time the West Africans were the continent's top-ranked side for over four years before being **replaced by Morocco** following their historic World Cup run.

Senegal exited in the last 16 in Qatar, beaten 3-0 by England, but there were no questions over Cisse's future.

"Senegal's policy is to insist that coaches stay on the national bench for as long as possible," Diallo said.

"A roadmap has been put in place which ensures all national coaches have the same requirements in terms of training content and information, and created channels for liaison."

Participating in continental and global tournaments at youth level more frequently has helped boost the nation's fortunes.

"The process of reaching the top

level is a gradual one," Diallo said.

"In the past, we didn't win in Africa because we didn't regularly take part in African competitions.

"If you want to win, you have to be there first. The first step is to solve the problem of being present at these competitions, and that's what Senegal has done."

"We need to be present all the time, and it's now that we're going to lay the foundations for winning the World Cup in the future."

As for their Afcon title defence, concerns have been raised about the fact that some of Senegal's key players now ply their trade in Saudi Arabia, with goalkeeper Edouard Mendy, captain Kalidou Koulibaly and talisman Sadio

Mane all drawn there.

Previously Cisse had refused to select players from the Saudi Pro League because of its low quality in comparison to Europe's top flights.

"We showed we were capable of winning the title when we had players in the major European championships," Cisse said.

"Now we also must show we can win it with players who play in Saudi Arabia."

Diouf is bullish about Senegal's chances of retaining the trophy, and says former Liverpool and Bayern Munich forward Mane "wants to show everyone he is far from finished".

"We are the best team in Africa and we don't have to fear anything," the 42-year-old added.

"We have so much quality and I

see the players are still hungry. The mix we have between the leaders of this team and the young boys is unbelievable.

"The only way we cannot win this Africa Cup of Nations is [by] not thinking we are the best."

And Mane, who netted the winning spot-kick in the final against Egypt in Cameroon just under two years ago, knows the effect taking the trophy back to Dakar once more could have.

"Winning the Afcon was the best trophy I have ever won in my life and coming to do it again will be special and a big achievement," he told Caf Online.

"Winning the Afcon will [have] a big impact for our football because we have won all the other categories, which is great for the country."



Senegal beat five-time world champions Brazil 4-2 in a friendly in June last year, with Sadio Mane scoring twice

Sports

Mourinho sacked as Roma manager

Jose Mourinho has been sacked as Roma manager with the club ninth in Serie A.

The Portuguese, 60, took over in May 2021 and led Roma to the Europa Conference League title a year later and the Europa League final in 2023.

But they are five points off Serie A's final Champions League qualifying spot and last week were knocked out of the Coppa Italia by city rivals Lazio.

Owners Dan and Ryan Friedkin thanked Mourinho "for the passion and commitment he has shown" as boss.

"We will always have great memories of his stewardship, but we believe that, in the best interests of the club, immediate change is necessary," they added in a statement.

Mourinho received a second successive red card in the Lazio loss and afterwards compared himself to Harry Potter, suggesting his profile was "raising expectations" for what Roma could achieve.

That result was followed by a 3-1 league defeat by AC Milan on Sunday, which left Roma five points adrift of fourth-placed Fiorentina and led to his dismissal.

Victory in the 2022



Jose Mourinho took over at Roma following his departure from Tottenham

Conference League secured Roma's first major European title and earned Mourinho huge support among the club's fanbase.

But after they were beaten on penalties by Sevilla in last season's Europa League final the Italian club took just five points from their first six Serie

A matches in a poor start to the current campaign.

With Roma 16th in the table, the former Manchester United, Chelsea, Real Madrid and Tottenham boss said he had rejected the "craziest offer" to leave last summer.

Mourinho's contract was due to expire at the end of the current season.

ARGENTINA forward Lionel Messi has won men's player of the year at the Fifa Best Awards, with Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola claiming the men's coach prize in London.

Inter Miami's Messi edged out City striker Erling Haaland with Paris St-Germain attacker Kylian Mbappe third.

City's Ederson collected the goalkeeper award ahead of Real Madrid's Thibaut Courtois and Al Hilal's Yassine Bounou.

City won the Treble of Premier League, Champions League and FA Cup in 2022-23. Messi wins by tightest margin

Messi, 36, began 2023 at Paris St-Germain, before moving to Major League Soccer (MLS) club Inter Miami in June.

He picked up the best men's player award for the third time since this format of the awards began in 2016, after doing so in 2019 and 2022.

He scored nine goals for PSG as they won the French Ligue 1 title and 10 goals in seven games as Inter Miami won the inaugural Leagues Cup in the United States.

Haaland grabbed a record 36 Premier League goals last

Fifa Best Awards: Lionel Messi wins best male player



Lionel Messi (front row) helped Inter Miami beat Nashville SC to win the Leagues Cup in the United States

season. In all competitions in 2022-23, he scored a club-record 52 goals - with 28 of them coming after the World Cup, plus another two goals this season before 20 August.

France's Mbappe, like Messi, won the Ligue 1 title with PSG - and clinched a fifth consecutive Golden Boot.

The 25-year-old netted 18 goals for his French club during the window of 19 December 2022 to 20 August 2023 - the period the awards were based on.

A mix of votes from national team managers and captains, journalists and fans

on Fifa's website - with each counting for 25% - were used to decide the winners.

Messi and Haaland finished on the same amount of points, with Messi getting the award as he had more first-place nominations from national team captains.

Among the national team captains who voted for Messi were Harry Kane, Mbappe, Mohamed Salah, Andy Robertson, Aaron Ramsey and Luka Modric, while Ilkay Gundogan and Casemiro voted for Haaland, as did Messi himself.

England boss Gareth Southgate gave his vote to Haaland, while Wales' Robert Page and Scotland's Steve Clarke voted for Messi.

Montserrat skipper Lyle Taylor opted for Arsenal midfielder Declan Rice, Russia skipper Georgi Dzhikiya voted for Georgia and Napoli winger Khvicha Kvaratskhelia and Portugal boss Roberto Martinez voted for ex-Inter Milan midfielder Marcelo Brozovic, now at Al Nassr in Saudi Arabia.

Australian Open: Raducanu beats Rogers in Melbourne

EMMA Raducanu marked her Grand Slam comeback in style with a confident straight-set win over Shelby Rogers in the Australian Open first round.

BBC SPORT said that, the Britain's Raducanu, 21, had not played at a major since last year's event in Melbourne, having missed nearly eight months after wrist and ankle surgeries.

The 2021 US Open champion served superbly and hit her groundstrokes smoothly in a 6-3 6-2 win.

Raducanu will play China's Wang Yafan in the second round on Thursday.

The former British number one, now ranked 296th in the world after her lay-off, joins compatriots Katie Boulter, Jack Draper and Cameron Norrie in winning first-round matches on Tuesday.

Raducanu and Boulter - who has taken over as Britain's highest-ranked woman -

remain on course to meet each other in what would be an appetising third-round encounter.

Focus on Raducanu has been intense since she announced her arrival to the world with that remarkable US Open triumph.

The road has been rockier since the teenage qualifier won one of the biggest prizes in the sport.

There have been a series of injuries and illness, taking its toll mentally as well as physically, before the long break enforced by the surgeries in May.

But interest in her story has never waned and, on a packed outside court at Melbourne Park, Raducanu reminded us of her talent.

There will be tougher tests ahead, of course.

Rogers, who Raducanu beat on her way to her defining title in New York, is also on the comeback trail after missing the second half of

last season with an abdominal injury.

Playing under a protected ranking of 51, 31-year-old Rogers showed signs of rustiness and fatigue in a match where she made 35 unforced winners compared to 15 winners.

Nevertheless, Raducanu will

take a lot of confidence from a performance where she did not face a break point and won 91% of points behind her first serve.

Raducanu clinched victory on her first match point with a forehand drive volley and immediately turned to her team with a raised clenched

fist. After shaking hands with Rogers, she smiled as she waved to the crowd and then excitedly ran around the perimeter to thank the fans leaning over.

The sheer joy - and relief - indicated how much she has missed the elation of winning matches.

Swiatek beats Sofia Kenin

WORLD number one Iga Swiatek says she has to be "ready for everyone" after overcoming 2020 champion Sofia Kenin in the Australian Open first round.

Poland's Swiatek, who has never reached the final, won 7-6 (7-2) 6-2.

The top seed faces another tough test in the next round, where 2022 runner-up Danielle Collins

awaits after she beat two-time champion Angelique Kerber.

"You never know who it is going to be and you have to be ready no matter what," Swiatek said about the draw.

"Tennis is a sport where the draw means you can play a former champion, a former world number one or someone with lots of experience.

"I try not to focus on who is going to be on the other side of the net, I want to play my game and I know if I am going to win this tournament I have to beat most of the girls."

Swiatek, who has won three French Open titles and the 2022 US Open, is playing well and beat 41st-ranked Kenin to earn a 17th successive win.

"It is not easy to play in the first Grand Slam of the season and it wasn't easy at the beginning to find my rhythm," Swiatek added.

"I was a little bit off and Sofia did everything to keep it that way. She's won here so knows what it takes. Huge respect to her."



Swiatek has won four Grand Slam titles but has never been beyond the Australian Open semi-finals

American Collins beat Swiatek in the semi-finals on her way to the 2022 final in Melbourne and overcame Kerber's experience with a 6-2 3-6 6-1 victory.

Kerber, a three-time Grand Slam champion, returned to action just two weeks ago as part of the German team at the United Cup, having spent 17 months off the tour to have a baby.

Elsewhere in Tuesday's first-round matches, Belarusian 18th seed

Victoria Azarenka beat Italian Camila Giorgi 6-1 4-6 6-3 and will meet Danish world number 10 Clara Tauson in the second round.

Russian 14th seed Daria Kasatkina also successfully navigated her way through a tricky opening test, winning 6-2 3-6 6-2 against powerful American Peyton Stearns.

Former US Open champion Sloane Stephens won 6-3 6-1 against Australian wildcard Olivia Gadecki.



Raducanu has won in the first round of the Australian Open on all three of her appearances at Melbourne Park

Sports

AFCON 2023: Camara scores twice as holders make winning start

Holders Senegal began their 2023 Africa Cup of Nations campaign with victory over 10-man underdogs The Gambia.

BBC SPORT said that, Pape Gueye gave the Teranga Lions the ideal start, collecting Sadio Mane's pass to fire in a fourth-minute opener from inside the penalty area.

Cardiff City midfielder Ebou Adams was dismissed for The Gambia for an off-the-ball challenge just before half-time.

Lamine Camara doubled Senegal's lead with a low finish after the break and curled in a classy third from distance.

With **Cameroon held by 10-man Guinea** in the other Group C match on Monday, Senegal's fourth win of a five-match unbeaten run gave Aliou Cisse's side early control of the group as they kept a fifth successive clean sheet.

The Gambia, whose Fifa ranking of 126th is the lowest of any team involved in the tournament in the Ivory Coast, threatened first



Senegal

when Edouard Mendy beat away Alasana Manneh's fierce left-footed attempt from distance.

After Gueye's opener, Habib Diallo also went close for Senegal, while Musa Barrow and Ali Sowe sent first-half efforts wide for The Gambia.

Despite Adams' dismissal, via the video assistant referee, in first-half stoppage time, the underdogs almost equalised early in the second period but for a flying Mendy save to deny Barrow.

After Camara doubled Senegal's advantage, Gambia goalkeeper Baboucarr Gaye produced a fine stop to prevent Chelsea striker

Nicolas Jackson from scoring off the bench, and Ismail Jakobs also fired wide from a tight angle.

Camara's second owed much to a flourish of trickery from Iliman Ndiaye on the right, as he demonstrated masterful control to toy with his markers and angle a low pass back to the Metz midfielder, whose right-footed strike from outside the box arced over Gaye and into the far corner of the net.

Senegal will return to Yamoussoukro's Charles Konan Banny Stadium to meet Cameroon in their second group-stage match on Friday (17:00 GMT).

THE Nigerian national football team, known as the Super Eagles, has resumed training with some striking changes in its lineup. Notably, key strikers Victor Osimhen and Alhassan Yusuf were sidelined during the latest session, sparking a flurry of speculation. While the reasons for their absence remain unspecified, it has set the stage for a possible tactical shift or could be attributed to fitness concerns or strategic planning by the coaching staff.

Newsnow said that, Osimhen and Yusuf were conspicuously absent from Monday's training session following the Super Eagles' 1-1 draw against Equatorial Guinea. Despite being present, both players were kept from participating, with Osimhen reportedly complaining of an undisclosed issue. The exact nature and severity of Osimhen's concern remain unknown, raising questions about his availability for upcoming matches.

Simultaneously, Terem Moffi from OC Nice and Kelechi Iheanacho of Leicester City actively participated in a demanding

Eagles training resumes with lineup changes



Eagles

training session. Their involvement provides coach Jose Peseiro with alternative attacking options, hinting at a potential shift in the team's strategic approach. Should Osimhen and Yusuf's absence persist, these players could be expected to step up to the challenge.

The team's Media Officer, Babafemi Raji, assured reporters that Osimhen and Yusuf's withdrawal on Monday was a precautionary measure.

He emphasized the Super Eagles' commitment to player welfare, indicating that the decision to bench the strikers was taken with their best interests in mind. Nevertheless, these developments have stirred interest and curiosity among fans and analysts, keen to see how these changes will affect the team's performance in upcoming matches or tournaments.

Salman Khan is BNN's esteemed International Sports Correspondent, capitalizing on his expertise and ICC certification to deliver comprehensive reports in the sports sector. He has notable experience covering significant events including the 2019 World Cup and the 2022 Asia Cup. His exemplary work has been recognized with awards such as the 2021 Emerging Star Award, reflecting his commitment to sports journalism. Leveraging his widespread understanding of and passion for sports, Salman offers a unique and engaging perspective in his reports, making him an integral part of BNN's sports

NFF clarifies controversy over Umar injury

THE Nigeria Football Federation (NFF) has shed more light on the controversy surrounding the injury to Real Sociedad striker, Sadiq Umar. The Guardian said that, Umar withdrew from the Super Eagles' squad for the 2023 Africa Cup of Nations in Ivory Coast after he picked up an injury and was ruled out of action for at least three weeks.

A video showing the striker training individually on Monday, having returned to Spain, however, went viral on Social media which led to Nigerians criticising the NFF. The NFF communications department, in a statement on Tuesday, said its medical team approached Umar's case with every sense of professionalism.

"The camp of Nigeria's senior men football team, Super Eagles has decried reports in sections of the media that

have continued to garnish the medical case of Spain-based forward Sadiq Umar with conspiracy theories, incorrect assumptions and unbecoming insinuations," the statement read.

"The camp has released a statement with regards to how the player was withdrawn from Nigeria's squad for the 34th Africa Cup of Nations finals ongoing in Cote d'Ivoire.

"We are surprised at the news trending on social media concerning Sadiq Umar and how he was withdrawn from the team camp.

"The fact is that our medical team meticulously abided by the best medical procedures and were diligent in their processes and conclusions before advising Head Coach José Peseiro that the player be withdrawn from the squad."

The NFF said Umar was okay when he arrived in camp, as he had to undergo the standard pre-competition medical

assessment and he was good. He started to train with the team.

Unfortunately, he sustained an injury to the back of his left knee during the Super Eagles' friendly match against Guinea in Abu Dhabi on January 8 that led to a penalty against their opponents.

The NFF added that the medical team advised that he should be substituted, as a cautionary measure, but he said he was fine and could continue the game.

At half time, Nigeria's football governing body said he reiterated that he was good to continue playing, and he played the entire 90 minutes of the friendly match, which the Super Eagles lost 2-0.

However, the following day, he woke up to see the knee swelling, and the medical team had to apply ice which is the normal thing.

The same day, the Nigerian contingent had to travel to

Lagos and on January 10, they flew to Abidjan. Then, the swelling became worse.

"Most of the reports we have seen are not a true representation of what actually happened," the NFF stated.

"We have a very competent medical team who are well-trained in sport and exercise medicine and highly experienced and exposed to the most modern techniques and practices.

"They followed all due processes and protocol in tandem with the consultant knee surgeon that Umar himself contacted in Spain,

SUPER Eagles goalkeeper Stanley Nwabali insists on a must-win approach for their upcoming 2023 Africa Cup of Nations clash against Cote d'Ivoire, as reported by Soccer.net.ng.

With the Super Eagles facing concerns about their recent performances and having won just one of their last four games, Nwabali, who made his debut in the 1-1 draw against Equatorial Guinea, expressed disappointment about conceding in his first appearance.

In an interview witnessed by Soccer.net.ng, Nwabali emphasized the importance of winning the anticipated tie against Cote d'Ivoire, stating, "[The game against Equatorial Guinea] is not really good for me today. I know what I can do. To be honest, I know what I can do. But despite [that, the] 1-1 draw [is] not really good for me."

d'Ivoire currently leads Group A with three points after defeating Guinea-Bissau in the opening game of the

before the decision was made in the interest of the nation and the career of the player.

"As much as the medical team has refused to join issues with anyone due to their professional patience and privacy policy, we will not allow anyone to rubbish our collective responsibility as Team Nigeria to this Africa Cup of Nations championship."

The NFF has also reiterated that Umar was in fact carried along throughout the process. It added that the 26-year-old started his rehabilitation with the Super Eagles' physiotherapist before he returned to his club in Spain.

'We must win' –Nwabali



Stanley Nwabali made his debut for the Super Eagles in their 2023 Africa Cup of Nations clash against Equatorial Guinea

AFCON 2023 tournament.

Nwabali acknowledged that the upcoming match against the AFCON host would be challenging but stressed that winning is imperative.

"We must win, definitely we must win. I know the next game will be tough, but we must win," he added.

The Super Eagles, guided by the "Let's do it again" mantra, are determined to replicate their AFCON 2013 victory and

secure their fourth AFCON trophy.

When asked if the team can still "do it again" after the disappointing 1-1 draw against Equatorial Guinea, Nwabali confidently responded, "Definitely."

Nigeria is set to face Côte d'Ivoire on Thursday, January 18, with the aim of securing all three points in the crucial AFCON clash.





Quest



writer

FRAGMENT

"Do these supposed 'winners' truly reflect the wishes of the voters? Certainly not. That negates the very essence of democracy which gives the voter the primacy of place in the electoral process and the democratic space as a whole. That is why there is an urgent need for our electoral laws to be further rejigged. This will save us from the potential danger of making losing an election the rule rather than the exception."

CHRIS GYANG

CHRIS GYANG

A supreme verdict: A vindication, of sorts

Scenes of jubilation have been reported across Plateau State.

Waves of elated crowds flowed onto the streets, nooks and crannies to celebrate today's (January 12, 2024) judgement of the Supreme Court upholding the election of Governor Caleb Mutfwang in the March 18, 2023, gubernatorial election.

At last, the Supreme Court has upset the applecart.

By insisting that, indeed, pre-election matters do not have a place in elections litigations, the apex court has put an official stamp of illegality, illegitimacy, on all of those members of the state and national parliaments from Plateau State who now occupy those positions as a result of the Appeal Court's egregious verdict to the contrary.

Governor Mutfwang's victory at the Supreme Court is widely seen as a much-needed relief that would rekindle the hope of a people who had almost completely lost confidence in the country's judiciary and the democratic process.

This judgement also serves as a redemption, a vindication of sorts, for Nigeria's judiciary.

A judiciary whose reputation had been battered and dragged in the mud during the process of the litigations arising from the 2023 general elections.

And Plateau people were the greatest victims of this turpitude because, unlike many other Nigerians, they witnessed conflicting judgements by the same tribunals regarding the same matters of law.

Worst of all, politically exposed individuals openly boasted that they had the political and financial wherewithal to influence the courts. For them, that oppressive and agonizing dystopia was real.

These inordinately protracted litigations have taken a huge toll on the state. As we have pointed out elsewhere, long-standing family and individual ties have soured; some communities and tribes now look at each other with great suspicion and hatred; and even



Mutfwang

believers of the same religions now worship with mutual feelings of burning bitterness and resentment in their spirits.

Indeed, the state is deeply fractured and in dire need of true healing and reconciliation.

The general well-being and development of the state has taken the greatest bashing. While other governors that were inaugurated on the same day with Mutfwang have made relatively considerable strides in meeting the yearnings of their people, Plateau State has been encumbered and slowed down by the bad blood, enmity and disunity

that have of necessity wafted from the elections petitions.

Being dragged to the elections tribunal, then to the appellate court from where he was compelled to proceed to the Supreme Court to challenge the lower court for quashing his mandate, Governor Mutfwang must be super human not to be bogged down by these distractions.

Moreover, observers say that most of these cases were mere sabre-rattling by losers as the outcome the elections had already been sufficiently determined at the polls.

However, now that this particular battle has been

won, the governor must put behind him the obvious animosities of the past eight months, embrace all citizens and members of the opposition party and carry on with the incredible developmental projects he was able to initiate (some of which have been completed) even under the great stress and tension he had to operate.

Analysts suggest that the governor should also look inwards - into his own PDP. They contend that discontent is very rife among some members which outsiders have consistently capitalized on to cause the avoidable misunderstandings within party ranks that have continued to simmer.

Neglecting this profound truth will further widen the cracks. This will constitute sinister hurdles for the Mutfwang administration which has so far exhibited a profound determination at taking a quantum jump.

But even as Plateau citizens savour this victory, it must be pointed out that giving the judiciary so much leverage in determining the winners or losers of elections is fraught with great dangers for our emerging democracy.

Even in the world's greatest liberal democracy, the United States of America, the two states that have so far removed former President Trump from their primaries ballots and the other court cases seeking to bar him from November's presidential vote are facing a lot of backlash from Americans.

Even Trump's fellow Republican contenders for the party's presidential ticket believe that he should be

allowed to partake in the GOP's primaries so that the voters can decide whether or not they want him to be their presidential candidate. Allowing the courts usurp that sacrosanct right and privilege of voters in a true democracy is unacceptable.

As we have seen in the Plateau verdicts so far, senators and House of Representatives and House of Assembly members of the opposition political parties who were officially declared losers by INEC in their various elections have now been imposed by the appellate court on the electorate.

Do these supposed 'winners' truly reflect the wishes of the voters? Certainly not. That negates the very essence of democracy which gives the voter the primacy of place in the electoral process and the democratic space as a whole.

That is why there is an urgent need for our electoral laws to be further rejigged. This will save us from the potential danger of making losing an election the rule rather than the exception.

Sadly, the prospects of being outrightly rejected by the electorate is gradually being made out to be more lucrative and rewarding, even fashionable, than winning an election square and fair.

That said, the Supreme Court has restored, even if slightly, the confidence of the common man in the judiciary and in the process removed itself from the cesspit of disrepute into which it had sank in the last eight months.

But a lot more needs to be done to cleanse, uplift and place it upon the pedestal it is constitutionally required to stand as an unbiased and reputable arbiter and interpreter in our country's hallowed temple of justice.

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