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# THE Nigeria Standard



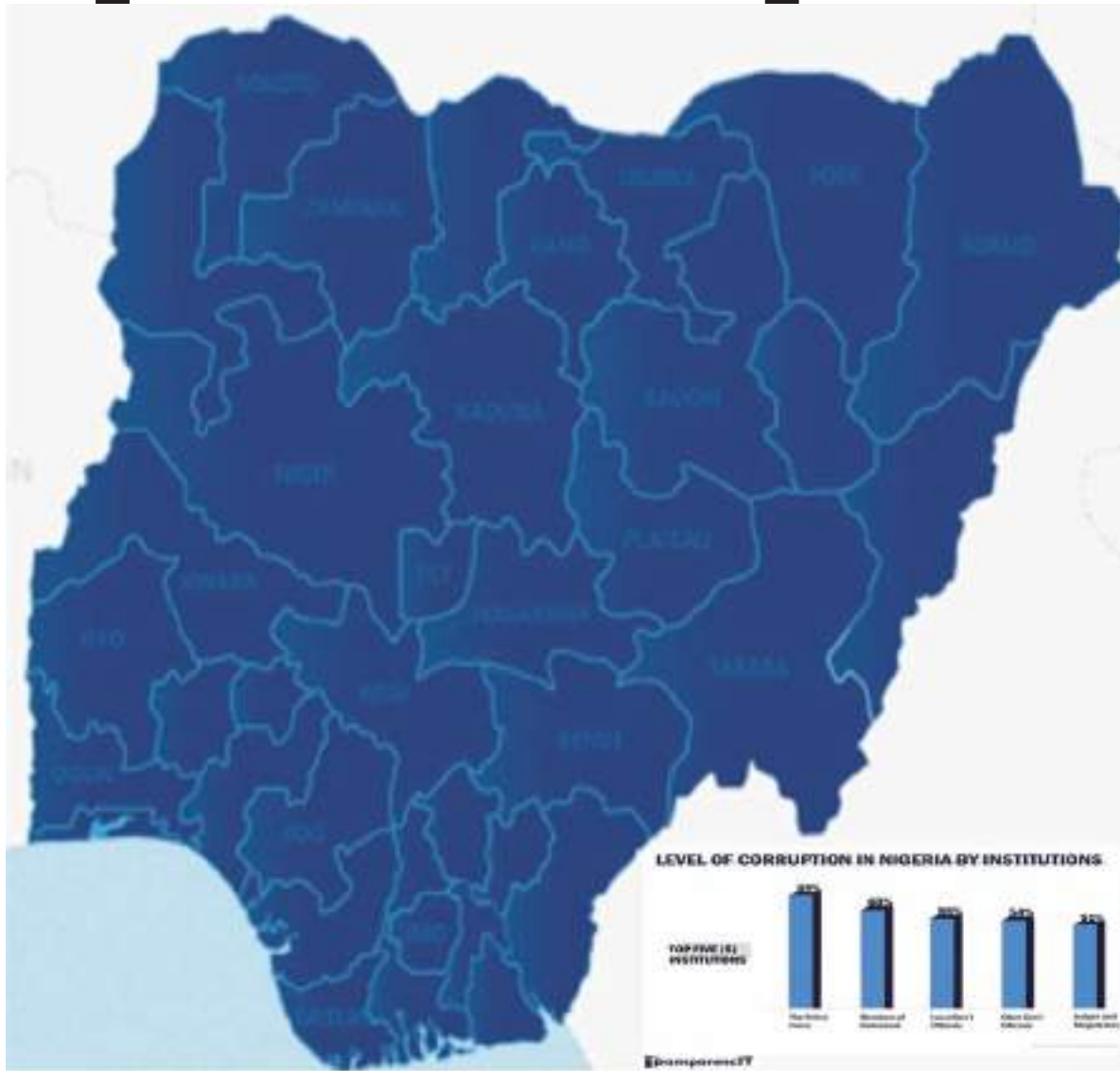
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# Nigeria moves five places up in corruption ranking



**Nigeria has recorded an improved ranking in the Corruption Perception Index (CPI) released yesterday by Transparency International (TI), moving five places up to rank 145 out of 180 countries assessed.**

its previous 24, ending up scoring 25 out of the 100 maximum points in the 2023 CPI results. The CPI, arguably the most widely used global corruption ranking in the world, measures how corrupt each country's public sector is perceived to be. It uses a scale of zero to 100, where zero means "highly corrupt", and 100 means very clean".

Apart from moving five places up from its 150th position, the country also gained one point added to

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## If Presidency shoes are too big, step aside -Atiku



Tinubu

Atiku

Atiku Abubakar, the presidential candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), has told President Bola Tinubu that if presidency shoes are too big for him, he can step aside as he has failed to

address insecurity in the country. He stated this in a post on his official X handle, yesterday, 30th January, 2023. Atiku said this in reaction to the recent surge in the kidnapping and killing of unsuspecting citizens across the nation, as Tinubu seems detached from the nation's woes.

## We can't run Nigeria's economy on palliatives -Sowunmi



Sowunmi

A chieftain of the People's Democratic Party (PDP), Segun Sowunmi, has tackled the Federal Government, saying Nigeria cannot be "running the nation's economy on palliatives," following the removal of the petrol subsidy some months ago. Sowunmi stated this in an interview on Channels Television's Politics on Monday. The PDP chieftain called

on President Bola Tinubu's administration to increase workers' salaries in earnest. According to reports, over 133 million Nigerians are multi-dimensionally poor; with 33.3% unemployment rate; Naira exchange rate at over N1400/US\$ in the parallel market; petrol at over N600 per litre; and 28.92% inflation rate, 33.93% food Inflation, 18.75% interest rate, among others.

Sowunmi lamented that the naira is going down and those saddled with fiscal responsibilities don't know how to stabilize the currency which he said is now "a joke" even to those spending Cefas in francophone West Africa. He argued that the Nigerian economy should not be built for impressive Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and stock exchange figures or for

the applause of global rating bodies like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The PDP chieftain said the Nigerian economy should be built for common Nigerians who are struggling to survive, many of whom don't know where their next meal would come from. He said, "On the economy, he (Tinubu) needs to let people

**Continued on page 2**

He stated that the Commander-in-Chief is on a private visit, leaving citizens to bear the brunt of kidnappings and tragic incidents. He recalled that recently, in Abuja, kidnapers took the lives of a nursing mother and grandmother because they couldn't pay a demanded N90 million ransom. In Ekiti, two

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## News

## Nigeria moves five places up in corruption ranking

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"Small fluctuations or changes in a country's CPI score are not usually significant," says the TI, a Berlin-based non-profit and non-governmental organisation concerned with ending corruption in the countries and territories of the world.

According to TI, Nigeria's slight improvement in points scored, places below the Sub-Saharan African average of 33 points.

Seychelles (CPI score: 71) remains the top scorer in the region, followed by Cabo Verde (64) and Botswana (59).

Equatorial Guinea (17), South Sudan (13) and Somalia (11) perform the lowest with no sign of improvement.

Nigeria shares its 145th position in the 2023 CPI with Liberia, Madagascar and Mozambique.

"Cases of corruption and related challenges in justice systems in the region range from reports of bribery to extortion and political interference in justice systems of countries like Nigeria (25), to the dismissal and imprisonment of

magistrates accused of corruption in Burundi (20), and all the way to the denial of justice for victims of human rights violations in the Democratic Republic of Congo (20).

"These examples underscore the justice system's crucial role in safeguarding basic human rights and social equity," wrote Paul Banoba, Robert Mwanumba and Samuel Kaninda, Regional Advisors for Africa, Transparency International.

The experts said the 2023 CPI shows that countries in **Sub-Saharan Africa** have a long way to go in their fight against corruption.

Nigeria had recorded an improvement in the previous 2022 CPI, moving up to 150th compared to its 154th position out of 180 countries assessed in the 2022 rankings.

The improved ranking was not accounted for by gaining additional points. It moved up four places despite maintaining its previous score of 24 out of 100 points in the 2021 assessment.

A Nigerian lawmaker burst into tears yesterday on the floor of the parliament while discussing the insecurity in his state.

Although the security situation across the country appears to have worsened with almost daily reports of killings and kidnappings, the lawmaker focused on the latest incident in his state.

At the plenary of the House of Representatives, Akin Rotimi, the spokesperson of the House, broke down in tears while reading a motion on the Monday murder of two monarchs in **Ekiti State**.

Mr Rotimi, who represents Oye/Ikole Federal Constituency, could not contain his emotion while reading the motion. In the motion, he called for a security intervention to stem the tide of criminality ravaging Ekiti State.

He said there has been an increase in criminal activities in Ekiti North 1 (Ikole/Oye) Federal Constituency in recent times resulting in the lost lives and properties.

Mr Rotimi informed his colleagues that the two monarchs were murdered by yet-to-be-identified criminals.

"On Monday, January 29, 2024, these criminals carried out a dastardly attack in the Oke-Ako area in Ikole Local Government Area resulting in the death of two traditional rulers: the Onimojo of Imojo Ekiti Oba Olatunji Samuel Olusola, and the Elesun of Esun Ekiti Oba David Babatunde Ogunsola and leaving a host of others with life-threatening injuries," he said.

While talking about the monarchs, Mr Rotimi was

ailing economy.

monarchs also fell victim to the growing insecurity.

Atiku further said that he should step aside if the current leader can't handle the responsibilities, as Nigeria doesn't need a leader who appears sporadically; the country needs someone committed 24/7 to address the security issues and the

Tinubu is playing fiddle while Nigeria is drowning in the ocean of insecurity. To imagine that the Commander-in-Chief is on a so-called private visit while kidnappers kill a nursing mother and grandmother in Abuja for failing to pay N90m ransom and two monarchs in Ekiti, among...

## We can't run Nigeria's economy on palliatives -Sowunmi



Sowunmi

Continued from page 1

understand, especially Wale Edun, (Yemi) Cardoso, and all of them, he (Tinubu) needs to let them understand that;

"...I am not trying to build an economy solely for GDP so that Bretton Woods organizations such

as the World Bank and IMF can be giving me pass marks. I am not interested; I am interested in building a resilient economy, serves the poor people of Nigerians and allows them to live the type of life that the Renewed

Hope is supposed to be.

"Let me tell you what would have happened if he had increased salaries of civil servants, they have been getting that increased salaries in a sustained manner, private sector would have followed up to keep their workforce, that money would have gone back into the market and you would have seen the economy growing.

You can't run a big economy on palliatives, especially when you are running the palliatives on wholesales and not retail."

Sowunmi, who said Tinubu might lose the economy though it is his strong point, urged the President to prioritize economic stability and country-wide prosperity beyond enriching a few corrupt persons.

## Lawmaker weeps in parliament while discussing insecurity

sobbing loudly and some of his colleagues had to console him with pats on the back.

Consequently, the House resolved to urge the Chief of Army Staff to deploy soldiers to the outpost along the Oke-Ako area to enhance security and forestall a repeat of these beastly acts.

The House directed the Inspector General of Police, the Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corp Commandant General, and heads of other security agencies to deploy more officials to Ekiti North 1 and ensure that those who carried out

dastardly acts are fished out and brought to justice.

They also compelled the Ministry of Works and FERMA to immediately rehabilitate the Ayedun, Irele road, and other roads in the Federal Constituency.

Apart from the two monarchs killed, six schoolchildren, three teachers and a bus driver were also kidnapped on Monday in the state.

The 10 people were kidnapped in the Emure part of Ekiti and it is not yet certain if they were kidnapped by the same gang that killed the

monarchs.

In its resolution, the House urged the security agencies to put all measures in place to rescue the school children, teachers and the bus driver.

The motion was adopted without debate and passed when Speaker Abbas Tajudeen put it to vote and a minute silence was observed.

Following the adoption of that motion, the House adjourned its sitting till next week Tuesday to allow lawmakers to participate in the bye-elections in some constituencies scheduled for the weekend.

## Mutfwang distributes vehicles to strengthen LGAs security

By PETER TITLE

In a strategic move to strengthen the security architecture in Plateau State, the Executive Governor, Barrister Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang, has officially commissioned 34 Hilux vehicles aimed at reinforcing community vigilance throughout the 17 local government areas of the state.

The vehicles were procured through the collaborative efforts of the 17 Local Government Transition Implementation Committee (TIC) Chairmen, as part of efforts to ensure a seamless deployment of security personnel across the Local Government Areas.

The commissioning ceremony was held on Monday at the Old Government House, Rayfield, Jos. Governor Mutfwang reiterated his administration's unwavering commitment to fortifying the security of lives and property, with a particular focus on rural communities within the state.

The governor emphasized the paramount importance of security as the foundation for any meaningful development.

## Naira continues free-fall despite CBN's backlog clearance

The naira has extended its slide against the United States dollar despite the clearing of about \$3.82 billion of foreign exchange backlog by the Yemi Cardoso-led Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN).

The CBN released additional \$500 million to various sectors on Monday, barely a week after it paid about \$2 billion to settle outstanding FX backlogs across manufacturing, aviation and petroleum sectors.

Hakama Sidi-Ali, CBN acting director of corporate communications, announced



Mutfwang

He said, "This marks the initiation of our commitment to reshape the security architecture on the Plateau. The State Government will soon introduce additional measures to support security agencies in effectively executing their duties statewide."

Assuring the citizens of Plateau State, Governor Mutfwang pledged, "Rest assured, we are actively working to fulfill our constitutional responsibility of safeguarding lives and property. Our determination knows no bounds, and we will continue striving to ensure

effective discharge of this duty."

He extended his gratitude to the Local Government Chairmen for pooling resources to enhance the well-being of the citizens and encouraged them to intensify their efforts in the best interest of the people.

Presenting the security vehicles to the governor, Mr Ephraim Usman, the Commissioner for Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs, said the gesture is aimed at assisting security personnel to respond promptly to security challenges within their respective Local Government Areas.

this in a statement without providing details about the sectors to which the money was released.

She reiterated the apex bank's commitment to settling all legitimate FX backlogs within a short time frame.

Early this month, the CBN announced the disbursement of about \$61.64 million to foreign airlines through various banks, demonstrating ongoing efforts to decrease remaining liabilities to airlines.

The apex bank began to

clear the backlog of foreign exchange forward contracts in November 2023, when it delivered on over 75 percent to 80 percent of outstanding matured FX forwards in some banks, including Citigroup (\$72 million), Stanbic (\$125 million) and Standard Chartered (\$63 million).

"They also cleared all outstanding from around 10 small banks with less than \$10 million each," a source said.

Four banking sources said the banks were paid varying amounts totaling about \$1 billion, adding that the payments would continue.





## Battling inflation, rescuing naira with orthodox tools

**The new leadership at the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) under Dr. Olayemi Cardoso as governor, has the burden of stemming high inflation and rescuing the naira from its worst devaluation in history. Cardoso, the new helmsman in the apex bank, has not hidden his preference for employing orthodox monetary tools in rejigging an almost comatose economy. This is seen as a more conventional monetary policy approach after many years of unorthodox policies pursued by his predecessor, Godwin Emefiele. BAMIDELE OGUNWUSI Writes.**

IN a keynote address at the 58th Annual Bankers' Dinner and Grand Finale of the 60th anniversary of the Chartered Institute of Bankers of Nigeria (CIBN), held at Eko Hotels & Suites, Victoria Island, Lagos in November 2023, the governor outlined the policy direction of the bank for 2024, with a pledge to prioritise price and exchange rate stability to promote sustainable economic growth, safeguarding the livelihoods of Nigerians.

While assessing the performance of the CBN in recent times, Cardoso informed the audience that the new leadership of the bank had critically reviewed the effectiveness of the Central Bank's monetary policy tools and had spent time fixing the transmission mechanism to ensure the decisions of Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meetings actually resulted in desired objectives.

According to him, there had been a dislocation of monetary transmission mechanism, for quite some time, which rendered the MPC meetings largely ineffective.

Therefore, to address this challenge, he said the CBN was committed to achieving monetary and price stability.

"This is not just a technical objective, but it has real-life implications for the well-being of our citizens. Through targeted policies, transparent market operations, and coordination between monetary and fiscal authorities, we can ensure a more stable exchange rate, control inflation, and create an enabling environment for businesses and individuals to thrive," he added.

Four months after coming into office, the new leadership of the bank said the priority is to ensure that inflation is brought under control while also ensuring that the naira regained its lost glory and value.

The new leadership aims for inflation to fall to about 21 per cent and will work to strengthen the country's undervalued naira.

Cardoso, since his appointment, has been facing pressure to raise interest rates when the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) holds a rate-setting meeting next month for the first time since he took office in September.

Inflation in December hit 28.92 per cent, its highest level in more than 27 years.

While speaking at the launch of the



**Cardoso**

2024 Economic outlook by the Nigeria Economic Summit Group (NESG), Cardoso said, Inflationary pressures are expected to decline in 2024 due to the CBN's inflation-targeting policy, which aims to rein in inflation to 21.4 per cent.

This will be aided by improved agricultural productivity and the easing of global supply chain pressures, benefiting businesses by boosting consumer confidence and purchasing power.

"The CBN's adoption of the inflation-targeting framework involves clear communication, use of monetary policy instruments, and collaboration with fiscal authorities to achieve price stability, fostering market confidence and positively influencing consumer behaviour.

"The outlook for decreasing inflation in 2024 will have a profound impact on businesses, providing a more predictable cost environment and potentially leading to lowered policy

rates, stimulating investment, fueling growth, and creating job opportunities.

Additionally, the bank has reverted to the conventional monetary policy approach with a focus on attaining price stability, which fosters sustainable economic growth for Nigeria".

"Inflationary pressures are expected to decline in 2024 due to the CBN's inflation-targeting policy, which aims to rein in inflation to 21.4%," Cardoso said in a speech, a copy of which the central bank shared by email.

He added that improved agricultural output and the easing of global supply chain pressures would boost consumer confidence and purchasing power.

In November, Cardoso announced the adoption of an inflation-targeting framework.

President Bola Tinubu made a series of reforms after becoming

head of state last year, including scrapping a petrol subsidy and easing currency trading restrictions.

But, the country still has a shortage of forex and suffers as a result of a wide gap between the official and parallel market exchange rates.

"We believe that the naira is currently undervalued and, coupled with coordinated measures on the fiscal side, we will expedite genuine price discovery in the near term," Cardoso said.

"This coordinated approach will contribute to a more balanced and stable exchange rate."

Cardoso said the CBN was trying to improve liquidity in the foreign exchange market, reiterating a pledge to clear outstanding FX obligations after paying at least \$2 billion of the estimated \$7 billion owed.

On the initiatives on foreign exchange, Cardoso said the bank's collaboration with the Ministry of Finance and the NNPC to ensure that all FX inflows are returned to the Central Bank is yielding results as the coordinated effort will greatly enhance the bank's FX flows and contribute to the accretion of reserves.

He said: "The expected stability in the foreign exchange market for 2024 can be attributed to the reduction in petroleum product imports and the recent implementation of a market-determined exchange rate policy by the CBN. This reform is designed to streamline and unify multiple exchange rates, fostering

transparency and reducing opportunities for arbitrage.

"The resulting consistent and stable exchange rate will not only boost investor confidence but also attract foreign investment, elevating Nigeria's appeal to global investors.

"We are implementing a comprehensive strategy to improve liquidity in our FX markets in the short, medium, and long term and our focus is on addressing fundamental issues that have hindered the effective operation of our markets over the years".

He said the projections for the nation's economy paint an optimistic trajectory as the Federal Government of Nigeria anticipates real GDP growth of 3.76 per cent in 2024, slightly surpassing the estimated 3.75 per cent for 2023.

"This optimism is underpinned by the implementation of key government reforms set to shape the economic landscape. Foremost among the factors contributing to this positive outlook is the expectation of improved crude oil prices and production, highlighting the crucial role the oil industry is expected to play in driving economic growth".

Last week, in its latest Nigeria Economic Outlook, leading professional services firm, PwC Nigeria, says "To succeed, the CBN must independently pursue inflation goals, emphasising inflation control, and maintaining a stable financial system as finding coherence and alignment between fiscal and monetary policy to stabilise prices may enable the achievement of statutory and policy targets in 2024".

It added that CBN's clarity of policy, transparency of market operations and consistent communication will enhance stability to exchange rate price discovery and market activities.

On investment, the report said investors will be cautiously optimistic as foreign portfolio investment flows to the capital market may remain cautious due to residual challenges.

It added that investors' outlook may be dampened by downgrades from FTSE Russell and MSCI, specifically due to delays in capital repatriation.

"Despite this, Moody's, Fitch, and S&P maintained a speculative credit rating due to drawbacks on reforms and several fiscal challenges that persist.

"Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flows are expected to improve in 2024 driven by notable expansion in the growing ICT and Manufacturing sectors.

Analysts at PwC believe the pathways to unlocking productivity in the economy may not be smooth as limited fiscal space for public investment and difficulty attracting private investments will constrain the ability to make essential infrastructure improvements.

**"The CBN's adoption of the inflation-targeting framework involves clear communication, use of monetary policy instruments, and collaboration with fiscal authorities to achieve price stability, fostering market confidence and positively influencing consumer behaviour. The outlook for decreasing inflation in 2024 will have a profound impact on businesses, providing a more predictable cost environment and potentially leading to lowered policy rates, stimulating investment, fueling growth, and creating job opportunities. Additionally, the bank has reverted to the conventional monetary policy approach with a focus on attaining price stability, which fosters sustainable economic growth for Nigeria".**





# Business & Economy

## Dangote refinery to receive crude oil from US

THE \$20 billion Dangote Refinery has concluded plans to import crude oil from the United States in the coming months.

Already, traders familiar with the matter disclosed that Trafigura Group has sold two million barrels of WTI Midland to the Dangote refinery for delivery by the end of February 2024.

According to Bloomberg, this marks the first time the refinery will be buying non-Nigerian crude, adding that the exponential growth in US oil supply over the past decade has reshaped the global market, extending its influence to regions like Asia.

Nigeria, whose economy heavily relies on petroleum exports, is particularly impacted by these transatlantic deliveries.

The new 650,000 barrel-a-day oil refinery commenced operations earlier this month. Initially targeting a processing rate of 350,000 barrels per day, the refinery aims to gradually escalate production towards its full capacity.

While the refinery primarily sources domestic crude through a supply agreement with the trading arm of the state-owned NNPC, it recently received its first shipment of Nigeria's Agbami crude, facilitated by a trading unit of Shell. Subsequent deliveries included Nigeria's Amenam, Bonny Light, and CJ Blend streams.

Recall that Dangote Refinery appeared set to



Dangote

commence production of refined petroleum products with the receipt of the sixth batch of barrels of crude supplied by the Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation Limited, NNPC, some weeks ago. The fresh one million Agbami barrels of crude via MT ALMI SUN was the last cargo to complete the initial scheduled six million barrels consignment to be delivered to the Dangote facility for commencement of operations by the world's largest single-train refinery.

About a month ago, Dangote Refinery received the first one million barrels of Agbami crude grade from Shell International Trading and Shipping Company Limited, STASCO, one of the largest trading companies in Nigeria as well as globally, trading in over 8 million

sector given that it holds the key to production and service activities that would boost the economic growth in Nigeria.

It will be recalled that the Managing Director of Dangote Ports Operations, Mr. Akin Omole had told newsmen at the Dangote Quay, Ibeju-Lekki, Lagos that the Refinery will be in good stead to commence operation, once the 6 million barrels of crude had been delivered.

## Pension funds raise stock investment by N588bn

THE pension sector injected N588.1 billion into the stock market in 2023.

Pension Fund Operators Association of Nigeria (PenOp) said pension fund administrators (PFAs) sustained their interest in stocks, after an 8.52 percent growth in the equities market at the end of the first quarter of 2023 compared to the last quarter of 2022.

In 2023, domestic investors traded equities worth N3.167 trillion, with retail investors accounting for over 35

The 59th President of ICAN, Innocent Okwuosa, said this lamenting that the lack of reliable power is a significant constraint for citizens and businesses, resulting on annual economic losses estimated at \$26.2 billion (10.1 trillion).

Okwuosa made the statement when the institute paid a courtesy visit to the Managing Director/ Chief Executive of Eko Electricity Distribution Company who is a fellow of the institute.

He said despite a recent position paper by ICAN which drew attention to a \$500 million World Bank loan meant for DISCOs large-scale metering to improve electricity distribution sector, the World Bank reported that 85

percent (N1.12 trillion) and institutional investors traded stocks valued at N2.05 trillion.

According to the National Pension Commission (PenCom), the equity market also provides opportunities for PFAs to take strategic positions in sound but undervalued stocks for long-term benefit. This is as total pension assets under management rose to N18.4 trillion in December 2023 from N15.27 trillion in January, with 10.19 million registered contributors 2023.

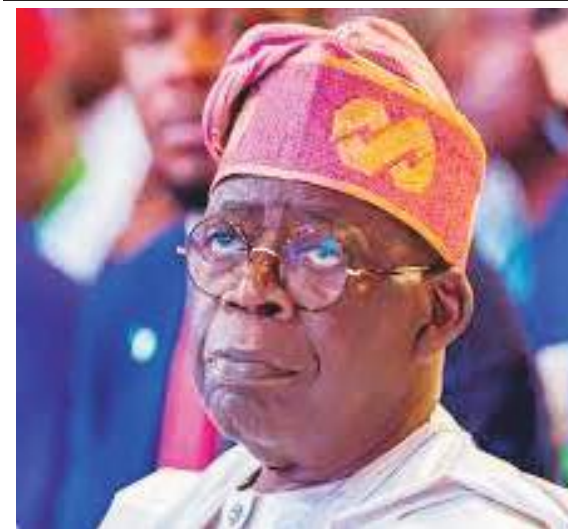
Speaking at the ENL head office, Akuta commended terminal operators for their huge investments in the maritime sector and the country's economy assuring that the government will continue to address all the challenging militating against the growth of the sector.

The NSC boss said "The minister is looking at

dredging, that is one of the components of the 2024 budget, at least he plans to dredge about two thousand kilometres of the inland waterways and that will ease the transportation system not just the road network."

Mr. Akuta described investment at Nigeria's largest container terminal, APM Terminals Apapa as huge and commended the firm for its investment at the port and its working environment.

## FG to dredge 2000 km of inland waters



Tinubu

At ENL, Executive Vice Chairman, ENL and Chairman of Seaport Terminal Operators Association of Nigeria (STOAN), Princess Vicky Haastrup, expressed confidence in the ability of the Minister to turn the fortune of the maritime sector around just as she push for the provision of a level playfield for ports concessionaires in the country for their business to thrive.

Monthly data on pension funds industry portfolio for the period ended December 31, 2023 released by PenCom shows that investment in stocks moved from N983.09 billion in January 2023 to N1.57 trillion at the end of December.

This, market analysts say, shows increasing appetite of PFAs to invest in the country's stock market, which has rallied considerably since last year.

"From the commencement of the year until October 2023, ordinary shares witnessed a noteworthy increase of N588 billion, underscoring their robust performance, according to PenOp.

Simultaneously, Federal Government bonds exhibited substantial growth, marking an uptick of 1.94 trillion.

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

The association said there was a slight reduction of N19 billion in investments in the money market as of October. It said: "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, optimising the portfolio to capitalise on varying market conditions and opportunities."

From N983.85 billion investment in ordinary shares in January 2023 and N1.069 trillion in February, the PFAs have moved on with trillion-naira worth of stocks month-on-month closing the year at N1.571 trillion, PenCom said in its latest data.

However, Federal Government's securities remain safe haven for the PFAs who have prioritised safety of contributors' funds in choosing where to invest.

Investment in Federal Government securities also appreciated very substantially, moving from N9.48 trillion in January 2023 to N11.92 trillion in December.

Jerome Opadokun, an analyst with one of the PFAs, had said the stock market rally was driven by factors that may not be sustainable in the long term because FX pressure continued to rise, with inflationary trend and subsidy removal affecting spending in the economy.

He said there was a need for fund managers to change their liability structure to justify the high stock returns, noting that the industry is going through a change process and it is important to manage the process and expectations of contributors.



Okwuosa

## Unstable power supply causes \$26.2 billion economic loss - ICAN

## Unstable power supply causes \$26.2 billion economic loss - ICAN



# IMAGES

## GOVERNOR MUTFWANG RECEIVES DIRECTOR GENERAL NIPSS

*Plateau State Governor, Barr. Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang last week received on a visit the Director General of the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS) Kuru and his Management Staff at Governor's official residence, Rayfield, Jos*



*Governor Mutfwang (left) welcoming the DG NIPSS, Prof. Ayo Omotayo*



*NIPSS Director of Research, Prof. Dung Pam Sha (left) with the Director of Press and Public Affairs, Mr. Gyang Bere*



*From left are, Arc Samuel Nanchang Jatau, SGS, Chief Security Officer to the Governor, CSP Hassan Musa and Security Adviser, Brig. Gen. Shippi*



*Cross section of commissioners during the visit by the DG NIPSS*



*Director of Protocol, Jibrin Dakup Watle (right) putting heads together with some members of the State Executive Council*



*Chief of Staff Government House, Engr. Jeremiah Satmak (right) with the Head of Service, Barr. Rauta Dakok*



*Cross section of NIPSS Management Staff that accompanied the Director General*



*Plateau State Governor, Barr. Mutfwang in a group photograph with the DG NIPSS, Prof. Omotayo and his Management team*

PHOTOS: DANLADI DUK



Politics

Wamakko applauds judiciary, dedicates victory to God

From ANENE AIKE, Sokoto

SENATOR Aliyu Magatakarda Wamakko, the Leader of the All Progressive Congress (APC) in Sokoto State, has expressed appreciation to God, Sokoto people, the judiciary, and others who worked hard for his victory at the March 18, 2023, gubernatorial polls, which has been affirmed by the Nigerian Apex Court.

Sen. Wamakko, the state's APC Leader who was excited by the reaffirmation of Ahmed Aliyu's election as the governor of Sokoto State by the Supreme Court also showered praises to Allah for the victory.

Sen. Wamakko also commended President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, for his inclusive leadership and for being a father to all Nigerians.

The APC leader also used the occasion to express his sincere gratitude, most importantly to the people of Sokoto for standing by APC through thick and thin, standing by the party in the most difficult times.

He described the victory as an affirmation and vindication of the huge and unassailable mandate adding quickly and saying, "Let me thank the Nigerian Judiciary for the great and enduring work it has done to deepen and protect the guardrails of our democracy; the judiciary indeed remains the last hope of the common man. We will continue to have hope and trust in them," he promised.

"Let me once again

No ill moving FAAN, CBN depts to Lagos - Uzodimma

IMO State Governor, Hope Uzodimma, says there is no ill moving the headquarters of the Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN), and some departments of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) to Lagos for operational efficiency.

"I listened to Ali Ndume, I listened to the Northern Senators' Forum, I listened to the Emir of Kano. You can



Wamakko

dedicate this victory to Almighty Allah, the resourceful people of Sokoto, and all of our friends who have continued to work with us and assured us that God will not abandon us" he added.

"Once again, I call on our brothers who aspired to lead this great State with us, to come and join hands with us to continue the task of building this State and help bring more developments across

sectors, Sen. Wammakko announced.

He was also quoted as saying; "We hold no malice or grudge but love, even for those who did not support us; "In any political contest, a winner must emerge and it has pleased God to hand us the baton of leadership today. We promise to use this baton to work towards cementing the blocks of our continuous unity, shared dreams, development, and growth."

Ododo promises consolidation, inclusive governance

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

coexistence inherited from the immediate past Governor Yahaya Bello Ododo gave the assurance in his inaugural speech shortly after he was sworn in as the new Kogi State Governor. He urged the people of the



Ododo

State to stem the tide of greed and be prepared to make hard choices that would boost unity and cooperation in the state.

Ododo assured the people of the State that he would work towards meeting their yearnings and aspirations stressing that the era of politics of bitterness is over.

"There would no longer be politics of bitterness in the State as thought us by President Ahmed Bola Tinubu", the people of the State should endeavour to join hands with him in building a virile Kogi State.

"I will build on the Solid foundation of unity existing in the State. I will strive not to undermine the trust placed on me to lead the people of the State".

Bauchi Gov. to host Memorial Lecture, Merit Awards

From ABBAS GUNGURA, Bauchi

BAUCHI Government to host the 11th Annual Sir, Ahmadu Bello Memorial Lecture and Merit Awards.

The chairman, Board of Trustees of the foundation, Mu'azu Babangida Aliyu, made this known during the 10th Annual Sir, Ahmadu Bello Memorial Lecture and Merit Awards that took place at the Government House Maiduguri, Borno State, recently.

He explained that the lecture is aimed at exploring the role of good governance in fostering sustainable development and promoting peace in the nation.

Babangida Aliyu, appreciate and Commended the host Governor Prof. Babagana Zulum for the warm reception accorded to the gathering which makes it admirable and successful.

The Bauchi State Deputy Governor, Rt. Hon. Mohammed Auwal Jatau who represented Governor Bala Mohammed at the 10th Annual Sir Ahmadu Bello Memorial Lecture, believed that such occasion is an ample opportunity for the country to remember the great legacies of Sir, Ahmadu Bello, the first Premier of the Northern Region of Nigeria for his tireless and sleeplessness efforts towards regional development and national unity.

Jatau described the theme of this year's lecture, "Creating Pathways for



Mohammed

Peace: Tackling Banditry and Insurgency through Good Governance for Sustainable Development," as timely and relevant as it highlights the challenges facing the nation with the urgent need for effective governance to ensure peace and security, leading to sustainable development.

The Deputy Governor, appreciated the efforts of Sir, Ahmadu Bello Memorial Foundation for championing the legacies of Sir, Ahmadu Bello, adding that the Foundation has continuously worked towards preserving the ideals of unity, egalitarianism, and

socioeconomic development that he espoused.

According to him, "the Bauchi state Government under the good leadership of Governor Bala Mohammed, has prioritized inclusive governance, transparency, and accountability aimed at addressing security and other societal challenges.

Auwal Jatau then assured of the readiness of the Bauchi state government towards collaborating with relevant stakeholders including the Sir, Ahmadu Bello Memorial Foundation to overcome the challenges of insecurity and build a future filled with sustainable development and enduring peace in the

made flourishing. Our School will be filled. Teachers will smile. Youths will be enterprising. Women would be gainfully engaged".

"Let it be said that once upon a time when our will was tested, we strived for unity for the future generation of all Kogites", urged the people to join hands with him in delivering the gains of democracy.

"Our administration will strive to complete all ongoing projects, focus on solid Minerals, Steel Development, Marine and digital economy".

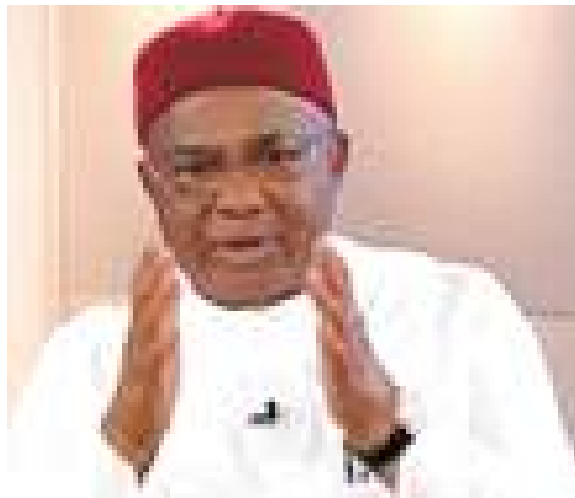
Meanwhile, Governor Ododo has announced the appointment of Dr. Mrs Folashade Ayoade Arike as Secretary to Kogi State Government.

Folashade Ayoade served as SSG under the administration of the immediate past Governor Yahaya Bello for eight years.

Ododo also retained six former commissioners who worked with the immediate past Governor Yahaya Bello for eight years.

They are; former commissioners for Information, Kingsley Fanwo, Finance, Idris Ashiru, Solid Minerals, Bashir Gegu, Education, Wemi Jones, and Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs, Salami Deedat Ozigi.

Ododo also appointed Ali Bello as his Chief of Staff, Suleiman Ibrahim, Director General, Protocol and Oladele Nihi as his Chief Press Secretary.



Uzodimma



**Politics**

**Election re-run: Appointees directed to adopt ward each**

By **EZEKIEL DONTINNA**

AHEAD of the Plateau North Senatorial and Jos-North/Bassa Constituency Re-run Elections, Governor Caleb Mutfwang, has directed all government appointees across the state to adopt a ward each and deliver victory for the two PDP candidates in the North Zone come February 3, 2024 at the polls.

He gave the directive Saturday, while addressing PDP faithfuls at the official flag off campaign of their senatorial candidate, Dr. Simon Mwatkon Fwet, and that of House of Representatives, Hon. Musa Agah at Langfield and Gardens, Rayfield, Jos, the Plateau State capital where hundreds of thousands supporters assembled.

The governor said, "My dear PDP members! I have come not to beg you. I have come to thank you. Thank you for your Loyalty. Thank you for your commitment. Thank you for your devotion and thank you for your determination not just for the PDP, but to the people of Plateau State.

"The people of Plateau State have a covenant with the PDP that is why they have always stood by us. Even in 2023 when we were denied source of cash to campaign, some of you did not get the money to campaign until after the elections, but you stood your grounds. I want to say, thank you!

"It is time again to show the people of Plateau State that we do not take this responsibility lightly. And therefore, we have a duty and a responsibility to go to nooks and crannies of the six local governments of Plateau North and of course, particularly for Jos-North/Bassa Constituency, to ensure that these responsible gentlemen return to the National Assembly", he appealed.

According to Mutfwang, "Anyone that is working to ensure that PDP does not go to the ballot come Saturday, let me inform you that, by the grace of God, you are just



**Mutfwang**

wasting your time. It is not only that the PDP will be on the ballot, but the PDP will sweep the ballots.

"Therefore, I urge all our members that within the next one week, we have from the 29th to Thursday to campaign. We will enter every house we can enter, we will knock every door we can knock and I think that Plateau is in the mood. All government appointees from the Southern and Central Zones should adopt a ward each.

"So you choose a ward that you think you can contribute to and make sure that ward is delivered to PDP. It is not a Plateau North or Jos-North/Bassa Elections, but it is a Plateau Election. I do not care whether we win it or not, I want us to win convincingly. Let us do it again! Let us do it again!" he encouraged.

The governor called on Plateau PDP faithful to work as a team and disgrace those who do not mean well for Plateau to destroy what we have built decades ago, hence the need for them to team up and come out en-masse more than the past to win these elections.

He however, called on the regulatory body (the INEC), to please remain impartial and uninterested and make sure that they do their job well. "For the security agencies, I am

sure you will continue with your cooperation with the government and people of Plateau State to ensure that peace reigns on the Plateau", he emphasized.

**Supreme Court victory: Inuwa gets hero's welcome**

From **WILLIE ATTAH, Gombe**

G O V E R N O R Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya, was on Sunday given a hero's welcome by party enthusiasts and well-wishers, as he returned back to the state after his Supreme Court victory declaration.

Since the declaration of his victory at the Supreme Court in Abuja, the governor had been taking care of official engagements in different parts of the country until last Sunday, when he returned to Gombe by road through Yobe State.

The over-joyed party enthusiasts and supporters lined the routes at Nafada, Funakaye, Kwami and Gombe LGAs,

From **JIDAUNA YANUNG Abuja**

A member of the House of Representatives from Plateau State, Hon. David Lalu has assured that he would stop at nothing in ensuring there's a turnaround in the development of the area he represents.

Hon. Lalu who represents Mangu/ Bokko Federal constituency in the House of Representative, gave the assurance in an exclusive interview with **THE NIGERIA STANDARD** in Abuja.

The lawmaker further assured that he would do everything possible to ensure that he attracts more projects as well as assured the youth of his constituency that great opportunities were ahead of them.

On the current attacks in some parts of his constituency, the legislator thanked

**Hon. Lalu assures of development in constituency**



**Lalu**

President Bola Tinubu, the Inspector General of Police and other security agencies, the Governor of Plateau State for their efforts to bring an end to the attacks. He tasked the people and residents of his constituency on unity and

peaceful coexistence for the growth and development of the constituency. Hon. Lalu said it is imperative to always use religion as a source of unity among all faiths in the interest of development.



**Inuwa**

eager to express their joy and solidarity with the governor, following his legal victory at the Supreme Court.

The governor, who was practically avoiding any big reception, it was learnt, found it challenging to contain the

overwhelming response of the people who couldn't hide their happiness over the Supreme Court's verdict which ended all litigations to his election.

He returned to the state from Maiduguri, Borno State, where he chaired the annual Sir Ahmadu Bello Memorial Lecture in his position as Chairman of the Northern States Governors' Forum.

It was also learnt that he chose to return by road, but his journey back to Gombe turned into a celebration of sorts as supporters, led by officials, party chieftains, and in some places, traditional rulers, enthusiastically welcomed him along the route while passing through their respective local government areas.

In Gombe, the Deputy Governor, Dr. Manassah Daniel Jatau, led other top government functionaries to receive Governor Inuwa Yahaya at his residence and to convey heartfelt congratulations to him and the APC on the triumph at the Supreme Court.

At all the places stopped, special prayers were offered for Allah's continued guidance for the governor and his administration.

**Sokoto celebrates governor's Supreme Court victory**

THOUSANDS of Nigerians welcomed Governor Aliyu Wamakko of Sokoto State who entered Sokoto triumphantly accompanied by Senator



**Aliyu**

Court victory. The large crowd lined all the routes to and from Sultan Abubakar III Road to welcome the governor and his party leader, Senator Wamakko from Abuja to Sokoto after being returned as the Governor - elect by the Supreme Court in its judgment held in Abuja.

They were received at Sultan Abubakar 111 International Airport by teeming supporters, politicians and well wishers of APC in the state.

Our Sokoto Zonal Bureau Chief also reports that the six kilometres journey from the Airport to Gawon Nama area, the residence of Dr. Senator

Aliyu Magatakarda Wamakko, the APC leader in the state, took them almost three hours. The elated crowd, comprising party enthusiasts and supporters, lined the routes eager to express their joy and solidarity with the governor, following his legal victory at the Supreme Court.

While at Gawon Nama, the governor assured the crowd of his readiness to transform their lives, metropolis and local councils through provision of their desired needs and fulfilling the promises made during his campaign for the post of

Sokoto Governor. He also promised that he would not in any way deviate from the nine point agenda stated during his campaign strategy, adding that health, agriculture, security, education are his topmost agenda.

In a related development, Senator Wamakko assured the crowd that the present administration will do all it can to fulfill the promises earlier made and even more. At all the places stopped, special prayers were offered for God's continued guidance for the governor and his administration/team.



# IMAGES

## GOVERNOR MUTFWANG COMMISSIONS VEHICLES FOR OPERATION RAINBOW

*The Executive Governor of Plateau State Barr. Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang on Monday commissioned Hilux vehicles for the State Security outfit, Operation Rainbow donated by ALGON at the old Government House Rayfield, Jos*



**Plateau State Governor, Barr. Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang (with mic) delivering his remarks, flanked by ALGON Chairman and members**



**Units of the Hilux vehicles commissioned by the Governor**



**ALGON Chairman, Hon. Hamisu Anani, Chairman, TIC of Wase LGC (2nd right) flanked by Bokkos LGC Chairman, Hon. Monday Kassah, Langtang North, Hon. Godwin Nanmwa Kumzhi, Shendam, Hon. Dr. Nicholas Kemi Nshe, Pankshin LGC, Hon. Samuel Go'ar and other chairmen**



**Governor Mutfwang test driving one of the vehicles**



**TIC Chairman, Jos south LGC, Hon. Peter Vwang Dung (right) with the Director of Press Affairs, Mr. Gyang Bere (left) and NTA Correspondent, Grace Akwe Gotip**



**L - R are, TIC Chairmen of Langtang North LGC, Hon. Godwin Nanmwa Kumzhi, Mangu, Hon. Markus Artu and Bokkos, Hon. Monday Kassah**



**Commissioner for Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs, Chief Ephraim Usman (right) with some TIC Chairmen at the brief but eventful ceremony**



**Commissioner for Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs, Chief Ephraim Usman making his remarks**

PHOTOS: DANLADI DUK



## Politics

# Taraba: Battle for the soul of JYZ seat

**Eleven candidates are vying for the House of Representatives seat for Jalingo/Yorro/Zing Federal Constituency in Taraba State, popularly known as the JYZ come February 3, 2024. Correspondent VICTOR GAI analyses the chances of the various political parties and candidates.**

THE February 3, 2024 National Assembly election re-run in Taraba State will once again trigger the traditional rivalry between the ruling PDP, the opposition APC and another fledgling opposition - the NNPP. According to the list released by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), 11 candidates will battle for the sole position. They are: Abdulrazaq Gidado (ADC), Geoffrey Edward (ADP), Aminu Malle (APC), Almajiri Leonard (APGA), Edison Solomon (APP), Kaigama Hosea (LP), Aminu Liman (NNPP), Sadiq Tafida (PDP), Babanyaya Mansur (PRP), Innocent Patrick (SDP) and Ahmed Habib (ZLP). The seat remained vacant since April 2023 following the untimely demise of Ismaila Yushau of the PDP before he was sworn into office.

With the conclusion of proceedings, the stage is now set for the exercise which would be keenly contested between at least four candidates. The frontline contenders are former federal lawmaker- Aminu Malle of the APC, a Jalingo Prince- Sadiq Tafida of the PDP, Innocent Patrick of the SDP, Almajiri Leonard of the APGA and Aminu Liman of the NNPP. Of these five contestants, Malle of the APC remains the most experienced while Tafida of the PDP is the rookie.

Tafida, an engineer and son to Emir of Jalingo, Abbas Tafida, won the PDP primary election by defeating nine other contestants who were more politically rooted than him. His emergence was also perceived as the result of a power play orchestrated by the ruling party. The fear however, among party supporters is that the party is into an expensive gamble ahead of the election by sacrificing experience which other contestants had.

The emergence of a former House of Representatives member, Aminu Malle, of the APC in the contest has even complicated the matter for the ruling PDP. Malle scored a total of 41 votes to beat four other contestants including Kasimu Maigari. APC's Maigari actually lost the 2023 National Assembly seat to the Late Yushau of the PDP. Malle, who was Chief of Staff of the immediate past Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives, Idris Wase, is widely tipped to succeed the Late Yushau due to his political sagacity,



Yahaya

experience, acceptability and the relative consensus within his party. Unlike the ruling PDP where the primary election was fraught with perceived animosities, there was some level of consensus by party stakeholders during the primary elections. In fact, after the primary election, the other APC aspirants pledged to work for the success of the party in the general election.

That gesture by the aspirants was unprecedented considering the controversial nature APC primary elections had been over

the years.

One of the aspirants, Engr. Mohammed Alkali said: "we are ready to team up behind him to make sure APC wins the election".

Another candidate, Bilyaminu Umar admitted: "This is the first time APC will conduct a free and fair election". Even Malle himself confessed to the fairness of the recently held primary election. He said: "for the sake of history, I want to tell the world that for the first time in the history of Taraba, we were able to get a free, fair and credible election they saw the dangers APC is facing in Taraba.

They saw the likelihood of extinction

of APC in Taraba. And this is the first litmus test. They stood their ground and ensured that the right thing was done". In fact, while speaking to the press on that victory night in his Jalingo home, Malle disclosed that he and the other aspirants would hit the ground running that night on how to ensure victory for the party. The New Nigeria Peoples Party (NNPP) candidate, Aminu Liman, is a Fulani politician from a popular Jalingo business aristocracy. He has been vigorously pursuing his political ambition over the years but without success. He has tasted the political waters like his counterparts in other political parties especially in his pursuit for the House of Representatives seat. Could this be his time? It remains to be seen.

Another prospect as far as the JYZ seat is concerned is Innocent Patrick of the Social Democratic Party (SDP). His ambition rather than popularity has stood for him. The young politician is from the Mumuye ethnic group in Zing LGA. He is well loved by his people, the Mumuye ethnic group, who though have the population but have always played second fiddle to the dominant Hausa/Fulani politics in the constituency.

The same goes for Almajiri Leonard of the All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA). He emerged third in the 2023 National Assembly elections and would want to give it another shot. He is also of the Mumuye ethnic group who are likely to stand by him this time around.

Now, as has always been the culture in Taraba, religion and ethnicity would play a significant role on who emerges as winner. These two factors would play a role over and above political party affiliation.

The JYZ federal constituency consists of Jalingo, Yorro and Zing Local Government Areas. The Mumuye ethnic group constitute the largest in population but the Hausa/Fulani have always dominated the politics. They always churn out bloc votes during elections especially in Jalingo-the state capital which is more populated than others. This usually gives any candidate from Jalingo the edge. More often than not, candidates of the Hausa/Fulani extraction always emerge from Jalingo while candidates from the Mumuye ethnic group always emerge from Zing or Yorro with a far lesser voting population.

Another factor that works against candidates from Zing and Yorro LGAs is the divided votes. When votes are cast on ethnic and religious lines, different party candidates from the same ethnic group are at disadvantage because the electorate would split their votes. That is the dilemma for some of the candidates who are from the same ethnic group. The two candidates from the same Mumuye ethnic group- Patrick of SDP and Leonard of APGA have refused to step down for each other until the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) intervened. Leonard of the APGA finally stepped down for Patrick of SDP earlier in the week to further boost his chance in the contest.

Meanwhile, although the APC has since denied the claim, there are speculations that the APC and NNPP would form an alliance in order to stop the ruling PDP. Coincidentally and unfortunately too, the three candidates- Tafida of the PDP, Malle of the APC and Liman of the NNPP are also faced with a similar ethnic dilemma as SDP's Patrick and APGA's Leonard. The trio are Fulani from Jalingo and should they go into the contest without any alliance, there is the fear that the Jalingo bloc vote might split among them giving way to the folks from Yorro and Zing LGAs who are not Fulani. Besides, there are other less popular candidates within Jalingo who have their strongholds. They could serve as spoilers unless efforts are made for them to drop for the more popular candidates. Finally, security is expected play a role during the fourth coming rerun elections. Jalingo and Yorro LGAs have never had it as bad as now in terms of insecurity. The level of kidnapping and banditry nowadays along the Jalingo/Yorro axis is a serious source of concern. Observers say the tide of insecurity might affect voter turnout and deployment of personnel and materials to the affected areas.

Traditionally, residents of Jalingo-the State capital do travel to their villages to vote during elections but the state of insecurity might deter them thereby putting some candidates at an advantage and others at a disadvantage.

**"They saw the likelihood of extinction of APC in Taraba. And this is the first litmus test. They stood their ground and ensured that the right thing was done". In fact, while speaking to the press on that victory night in his Jalingo home, Malle disclosed that he and the other aspirants would hit the ground running that night on how to ensure victory for the party. The New Nigeria Peoples Party (NNPP) candidate, Aminu Liman, is a Fulani politician from a popular Jalingo business aristocracy. He has been vigorously pursuing his political ambition over the years but without success. He has tasted the political waters like his counterparts in other political parties especially in his pursuit for the House of Representatives seat. Could this be his time? It remains to be seen."**



**NEWS**

**PLSG pledges to support Army**

By PETER TITLE

THE Executive Governor of Plateau State, Barrister Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang, has pledged his administration's commitment to enhancing collaboration between the Nigerian Army, the Plateau State Government, and community leaders to restore lasting peace in troubled areas of the state.

He stated this when he received the Chief of Army Staff, Lieutenant General Taoheed Lagbaja, in Jos, recently following the recent crisis in parts of Mangu Local Government Area of the state.

Mutfwang assured of his continuous support for security personnel, affirming the administration's dedication to boosting their morale and providing the necessary assistance for them to fulfill their constitutional mandate of maintaining law and order and restoring peace.

The governor expressed confidence in Lieutenant General Taoheed Lagbaja's leadership capacity to address insecurity and criminal activities nationwide. He reiterated that security involves more than the mere presence of personnel and stressed the importance of collaboration among various stakeholders.

The governor stated, "Restoring peace in areas affected by violence requires collaboration between the Army, the government and other security agencies. It cannot be left to the men in boots alone; we must work in tandem. Boosting the troops' morale is one of the necessary actions we take from time to time."

Governor Mutfwang condemned the recent security breach as needless and encouraged ongoing dialogue among community leaders, religious figures, and key stakeholders in rural communities.

Lieutenant General Taoheed Lagbaja expressed deep sympathy over the unfortunate incident and extended condolences to the affected families, injured individuals, and the government and people of Plateau State.

He assured that the security personnel deployed to the state would impartially discharge their constitutional responsibility for the sake



Mutfwang

of peace and unity. An expressed the Army headquarters' readiness to address deployment gaps.

"The Army headquarters has mobilized special forces from across the country to Plateau overnight, and I am here to give marching orders to the troops. Their mission on the Plateau is a serious one," stated Lieutenant General Taoheed Lagbaja.

The Chief of Army Staff commended Governor Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang for the proactive measures in addressing the situation and thanked him for the support provided to the troops. He pledged his commitment to working harmoniously with all stakeholders for sustainable peace in the state.

**The role of media in promoting interreligious harmony**

By JIDAUNA DARING

FORMER Managing Editor of **THE NIGERIA STANDARD** newspaper, Jos, Mr. Katdapba Gobum has said that interreligious dialogue helps in promoting religious harmony amongst the adherents of different faiths in the society.

Mr. Gobum, in a paper titled; Galvanizing Media Support for Interreligious Dialogue in Plateau State," stated this at a one-day workshop organized by Wika Gofwen, PRTV 2023/2024 COFP Fellowship Programme, supported by Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace.

Our correspondent reports that the workshop took place at the conference hall of the Plateau State Community and Social Development Agency (PLCSDA), along Rayfield Road, Jos, recently.

Mr. Gobum pointed out that the media plays a vital role in promoting interreligious harmony through accurate and factual reportage. He added that the organ of religious dialogue was found in 1893.

He maintained that the adherents should on their part know what their religious stand for as followers, saying that religious harmony also makes diversity workable if people respect each

other's faith.

Mr. Gobum explained that interreligious dialogue has four levels, which include, knowledge, action, spirituality and morality. He urged the followers to shun religious disharmony and bigotry.

General Manager, Plateau Radio Television Corporation, Kachollom Pam who was represented by Directo, News and Current Affairs, Mr. Yakubu Taddy, cautioned the media against bias reports, particularly when it is religious in nature. He added that to achieve such desire, all hands must be on deck.

Pam also called on religious leaders to always give out messages that would further promote interreligious harmony at all times.

Chairman Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ), Plateau State Council, Mrs. Ayuku Pwaspo, commended the efforts of the organizers of the workshop and also appreciated them for the choice of journalists as participants looking at the topic of the workshop.

Mrs. Pwaspo urged journalists to always conduct themselves in a professional way as agenda setters of the society.

From JOHN FWAH Kaduna

CHRISTIAN Association of Nigeria, (CAN), Kaduna State Chapter, has elected Rev. Caleb Ma'aji of the TEKAN/ECWA bloc as chairman.

He takes over from Rev (Dr) John Joseph Hayab whom he also worked with as the Secretary of the state chapter.

Speaking on the election that produced Rev. Ma'aji as Chairman, Rev. Hayab disclosed that five others from the bloc, including Rev. Ma'aji applied to be chairman, after which the bloc leadership of TEKAN/ECWA where the chairmanship position had been zoned to in the principles of fairness, screened and recommended Rev. Ma'aji who eventually got elected unopposed.

Apostle Emmanuel Bako Eggo from the CPFN/PFN bloc emerged as vice Chairman while Superior Evangelist Emmanuel Okunola from the OAIC bloc is the new Secretary.

Others are Bro. Emmanuel Zwahu from the Catholic bloc as Assistant Secretary, Venerable Moses

**CAN Kaduna elects new chairman**



Caled

Opadokun from the CCN bloc is now the treasurer.

Rev. Hayab who expressed happiness with the smooth and peaceful conduct of the election and confidence that the new Chairman will build on the legacies in place, disclosed that the election was supervised by the CAN General Secretary, Apostle Professor Samson A. Fatokun and the Assistant Secretary, Rev. (Dr) Mrs Uzoaku Juliana Williams.

According to Rev. Hayab, the new chairman will serve a single term of five years as enshrined in the constitution, while expressing his readiness to always provide needed guidance in any way possible.

"CAN is a religious body for Christians and not a political party. So whether

you are in power or not, you are still a Christian. We will therefore continue to render our support for the success of the association" he stressed.

On his part, the new Chairman, Rev. Ma'aji commended the leadership of his bloc for the confidence reposed in him, assuring them that he would do his best. He prays God to help him to build on the legacies of past chairmen, particularly his immediate predecessor.

"I will run an open door policy and carry all along like it has always been in providing the needed voice for the Christians in Kaduna State and beyond. I however, solicit for your support and prayers.

"Above all, I give God all

**Anniversary: Alia directs officials to submit scorecards**

From TERESE TUHWA, Makurdi

AS part of activities to mark Governor Hyacinth Alia's one year anniversary in office, all commissioners, special advisers, heads of extra ministerial departments, parastatals and agencies have been directed to submit scorecards in their respective areas to the office of his Special Adviser on Research, Documentation and Strategy.



Alia

The governor said the directive became necessary in line with his administration's conscious efforts at ensuring transparency, accountability and public documentary awareness to people of the state on his key performance indicators.

In addition, the documentation, accountability briefing and transparency initiative was to further serve as springboard for accurate futuristic projections, performance and for effecting the correct balance of strategic planning and development process for the state going forward.

Governor Alia in a statement by his Special Adviser on Research, Documentation and Strategy, Dr. Aondona Mkor, directed all affected ministries and agencies to submit videos, pictures of activities and achievements of their organizations with dates and locations within the first year of the present administration.



News

# Bauchi to host Ahmadu Bello Memorial Lecture, awards

From **ABBAS GUNGURA, Bauchi**

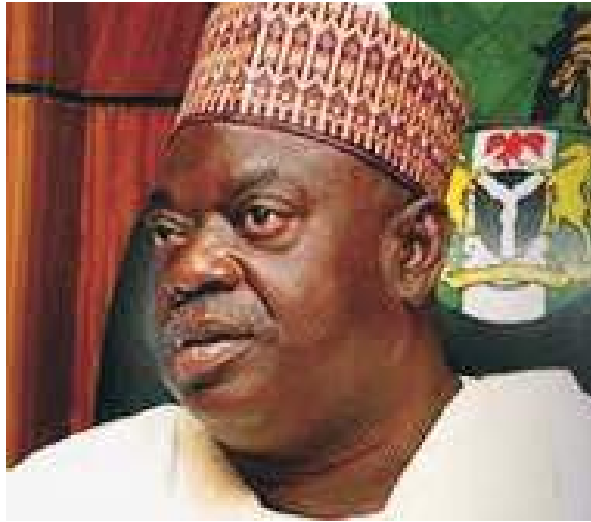
BAUCHI Government to host the 11th Annual Sir, Ahmadu Bello Memorial Lecture and Merit Awards.

The chairman, Board of Trustees of the foundation, Mu'azu Babangida Aliyu, made this known during the 10th Annual Sir, Ahmadu Bello Memorial Lecture and Merit Awards that took place at the Government House, Maiduguri, Borno State, recently.

He explained that the lecture is aimed at exploring the role of good governance in fostering sustainable development and promoting peace in the nation.

Babangida Aliyu, appreciated and commended the host governor, Prof. Babagana Zulum for the warm reception accorded to the gathering which he said made it admirable and successful.

The Bauchi State Deputy Governor, Rt. Hon. Mohammed Auwal Jatau, who was represented by Governor Bala Mohammed at the 10th Annual Sir Ahmadu Bello Memorial Lecture, believed that such occasion is an ample opportunity for the country to remember the great legacies of Sir Ahmadu Bello, the first Premier of the Northern Region of Nigeria for his tireless efforts towards regional development and national unity.



Mu'azu

Jatau described the theme of this year's lecture, "Creating Pathways for Peace: Tackling Banditry and Insurgency through Good Governance for Sustainable Development," as timely and relevant as it highlights the challenges facing the nation with the urgent need for effective governance to ensure peace and security, leading to sustainable development.

The Deputy Governor appreciated the efforts of Sir Ahmadu Bello Memorial Foundation for championing the legacies of Sir Ahmadu Bello. He added that the Foundation has continuously worked towards preserving the ideals of unity, egalitarianism, and enduring peace in the country.

and socioeconomic development that he espoused.

According to him, "the Bauchi State Government under the good leadership of Governor Bala Mohammed, has prioritized inclusive governance, transparency, and accountability aimed at addressing security and other societal challenges.

Auwal Jatau then assured of the readiness of the Bauchi State government towards collaborating with relevant stakeholders including the Sir Ahmadu Bello Memorial Foundation to overcome the challenges of insecurity and build a future filled with sustainable development and enduring peace in the country.

## FG partners Bauchi to promote development through mining

IN its continuous efforts to enhance economic growth and development in the mining sector, the Federal Government through the Ministry of Solid Minerals Development has expressed its willingness to collaborate and partner with Bauchi State, a mineral endowed state.

Minister for Solid Minerals Development, Dr Oladele Alake made this known during the visit by the Executive Governor of Bauchi State, HE. Bala Mohammed to the Ministry's headquarters in Abuja. On his entourage were Commissioners of different portfolios.

Dr Alake stated that the richness of Bauchi State in mineral endowment and the determination of its Executive Governor to develop the sector aligns with the agenda of

President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's administration to diversify the economy using the solid minerals sector as pivot to transform our economy, generate employment and increase revenue accruable to government coffers.

The minister emphasized that the overarching need for Nigeria to diversify the economy cannot be overstated in view of global shift from fossil fuel to green energy. He stressed the present evolution in manufacturing of electric cars as an instance of increase in global demand for cleaner energy. He said: "So, if we do not take conscious steps, our country could be in dire straits. For our economic survival, we must diversify".

Reeling the activities cum achievements of the ministry under his watch since assumption of office, Dr Alake said deliberate policies and proactive measures

had been taken by the ministry in line with presidential directive to sanitize the sector coupled with his advocacy visits to international fora on mining which included Perth, Australia; UNGA meeting (New York, USA) and Saudi Arabia to woo foreign investors.

The minister said: "All our activities in the last few months, generated a lot of global attention, interest and support from foreign investors. We are making headway in the sector."

Elaborating further, he stated that the ministry is making concerted efforts as well to promote and encourage local investment in the sector by way of creating a conducive environment. Adding, sustaining a robust engagement between federal and state governments that will reduce friction is paramount to this administration.

He said: "State can now apply for mining license and mine in their state, and pay necessary royalty and taxes to the Federal Government".

In his remarks, the Executive Governor of Bauchi State, Mallam Bala Abdulkadir Mohammed, said Bauchi State will partner with the Federal Government in its bid to maximize benefits of minerals like lithium, lead, tin, columbite, kaolin etc; that abound to enhance its economic prosperity.

While expressing his total support for the policies and proactive programmes of the ministry to sanitize the mining sector, the Executive Governor emphatically stated that with the shift of attention to solid minerals cum green energy, Bauchi State will key into the policies of the Ministry of Solid Minerals, especially promoting value addition to mineral processing in its state in addition to creating special purpose vehicle to develop the sector.



Alake



## 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 d e c e n c y a n d steadfastness and was never found on the wrong sides of the divide.

Sadly, these virtues have all been jettisoned and are replaced by alien a n d u n k n o w n 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

# Transparency: EITI rates NNPC Ltd high in compliance

From **DORCAS PANKYES, Abuja**

GLOBAL transparency body, Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), has scored the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited (NNPC Ltd) very high in its latest global assessment.

This was stated in a press statement by Chief Corporate Communications Officer, Olufemi O. Soneye and was issued to journalists.

EITI's Deputy Executive Director, Mr. Bady Baldé, revealed this information during a visit by an EITI delegation to Mr. Mele Kyari, the Group Chief Executive Officer of NNPC Ltd, in Abuja recently.

Baldé, who said the delegation's visit was to communicate the group's findings in its recent global assessment to the company, said NNPC Ltd fared very well among companies in the same category, adding that only Equinox of Norway fared better than NNPC Ltd in the assessment.

He however, said there was still room for NNPC Ltd to improve, stressing that compliance with global EITI standards will help boost the company's credibility.

The EITI boss also urged NNPC Ltd to remain engaged to play an active role in its Nigerian unit, the Nigeria Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (NEITI).

Earlier in his welcome remarks, Kyari highlighted some of the key changes in the operations of the NNPC Ltd since its transformation into a commercially focused limited liability company in 2021.

He acknowledged that the NNPC Ltd's partnership with EITI/NEITI has made it a much more reliable company.

He however, expressed disappointment with NEITI for going public with its report that NNPC Ltd failed to remit some monies into the Federation Account instead of seeking clarification on any perceived gap in its assessment.

He explained that NNPC Ltd was holding no public funds back and that what NEITI reported as non-remittance was what was due to the company as payment for taking the burden of fuel subsidy on behalf of the Federal Government.

He disclosed that NNPC Ltd would have released its Audited Financial Statement (AFS) for 2022 since June 2023 but could not do so because it had no substantive Board of Directors at that time. Adding that the AFS will be published on the company's



Balde

website in the next few days. On his part, the Executive Secretary of NEITI, Dr. Orji Ogbonnaya Orji, called for the reconstitution of the NNPC/NEITI Joint Committee on

Reconciliation, stressing that the committee could help in straightening out any gray areas.

# CAS visits families of victims of accidental airstrike

From **DORCAS PANKYES, Abuja**

THE Chief of Air Staff (CAS), Air Marshal Hasan Abubakar was in Lafia, capital of Nasarawa State recently, where he met with families and victims of the accidental air strikes that occurred on 24 January 2023 near Rukubi in Doma Local Government Area (LGA).

In a statement by the Nigerian Air Force spokesman, Air Vice Marshal Edward Gabkwet, recently, he explained that at the meeting, the CAS stated that having reviewed the incident reports concerning the airstrikes that were undertaken in January 2023 in pursuit of terrorists near Rukubi, innocent civilians may have

erroneously been killed or injured in the process.

In expressing regret over the incident, Air Marshal Abubakar noted that the unfortunate incident was not deliberate but had targeted suspected terrorists and cattle rustlers in view of the heightened level of insecurity in the area at the time.

He went on to state that the primary responsibility of the NAF remains safeguarding the lives and properties of all Nigerians and would therefore not deliberately engage in acts that put the lives of Nigerians at risk. Speaking further, Air Marshal Abubakar told the families and victims that the interface reflects NAF's commitment to conflict



Abubakar

From **ABBAS GUNGURA, Bauchi**

BAUCHI State Governor, Bala Mohammed, has reiterated his administration's continuous partnership with the members of National Union of Road Transport Workers NURTW Bauchi State Branch for rapid economic development of the state.

Governor Bala Mohammed, gave the assurance when speaking at the official swearing-in ceremony of the newly elected executives of the union held at Multi-purpose indoor Sports Hall, Bauchi recently.

The governor who was represented at the occasion by the Secretary to the State Government, Barrister Ibrahim Kashim, said "as done in the past, his administration has concluded arrangements to procure more vehicles for distribution to members of the Union in Bauchi State under the Umbrella of KAURA Economic Empowerment programme (KEEP)".

Governor Bala said in his administration's efforts to

# Bauchi partners NURTW for Economic Development.

address youth restiveness for the betterment of the state, he would find the NURTW very useful in its empowerment and job opportunities policies and programmes in order to achieve its objectives.

In his acceptance remarks, the newly elected

chairman, Alhaji Isma'il Abubakar Babawo, expressed the unions gratitude to His Excellency Bala Mohammed for his untiring support to the members and assured of total support, togetherness and loyalty throughout his journey in the years ahead.



Bala

and want a closure on this matter is the peak of professionalism worthy of emulation and commendation."

At the meeting between the CAS, victims and the Emir of Lafia, His Royal Highness, Justice Sidi Bage Muhammed I, the Emir praised the CAS for the initiative to make amends saying, "That you have come here to meet with us and accept responsibility for what happened a year ago is exemplary and something our leaders must imbibe. We have wholeheartedly accepted your apology."

On 24 January 2023, airstrikes by NAF aircraft

were undertaken after intelligence revealed the sighting of suspected terrorists on 10 motorcycles transiting through Utagudu, near Rukubi in Doma LGA. It is important to note that the general area was well known for its heightened insecurity occasioned by killings, kidnappings and terrorism as perpetrated by terrorists' elements in the state. Within the period, 6 primary school pupils were also kidnapped in Doma LGA. Unfortunately, the strikes accidentally killed some innocent civilians at the location, which necessitated the visit of the CAS to Nasarawa State.

# Support all government policies, outgoing PS tells incoming

From **ABBAS GUNGURA, Bauchi**

THE newly posted Permanent Secretary, Bauchi State Government House, Alhaji Yakubu Jibrin Abdullahi, has assumed office with a call on him to support all the policies and programmes of Governor Bala Mohammed led administration.

He replaced Alhaji Jibrin Mohammed Panti who was redeployed to the State Ministry of Budget, Economic Planning and Multilateral Coordination.

Presenting the handing over note to the new Permanent Secretary, the redeployed Permanent Secretary, Alhaji Jibrin Mohammed Panti, who

charged him to use his wealth of experience in handling the affairs of the new office to enable him succeed.

Jibrin Panti who also advised him on the need for hard work and dedication, called on staff from different units to extend the support given him to his successor.

Responding, the newly posted Permanent Secretary, Yakubu Jibrin Abdullahi, who appreciated Governor Bala Mohammed for giving him the opportunity to work directly under him, promised to justify the confidence reposed in him.

He however, solicited for similar support and cooperation accorded to his predecessor.



Feature

# Preserving Nigeria's cultural heritage for national identity

By JANADA JOSHUA FALI

NIGERIA is a country that is rich in cultural heritage, boasting a diverse range of ethnic groups, languages, traditions, and arts. However, this valuable heritage often faces the risk of being forgotten or lost due to modernization, globalization, and changing societal norms. It is imperative that Nigeria takes active steps towards preserving and promoting its cultural heritage, as it is an integral part of its national identity and can greatly contribute to its development.

One of the main reasons for preserving Nigeria's cultural heritage is to strengthen the sense of national identity among its citizens. Cultural heritage acts as a link between the past, present, and future, providing a sense of continuity and belonging. By preserving and celebrating their cultural heritage, Nigerians can foster a stronger sense of unity and pride in their diverse heritage, fostering a stronger national identity that transcends ethnic, religious, and regional differences.

Preserving the cultural heritage of Nigeria also plays a crucial role in the development of the country's tourism sector. Nigeria has immense tourism potential, with its rich cultural heritage being a major attraction for both domestic and international visitors. Tourists often seek authentic cultural experiences, such as traditional festivals, arts and crafts, and historical landmarks. By preserving and highlighting its cultural heritage, Nigeria can tap into this potential and generate revenue, creating employment opportunities and contributing to the overall economic growth of the nation.

Furthermore, this will allow for the transmission of traditional knowledge and skills to future generations. Many traditional practices and craftsmanship are passed down through generations, carrying within them centuries of wisdom, creativity, and ingenuity. By preserving these traditions, Nigeria ensures that the younger generation has access to this invaluable knowledge, allowing them to learn and appreciate their roots. This is especially



important as Nigeria faces the challenges of globalization and the erosion of traditional practices in the face of modernity.

To preserve Nigeria's cultural heritage, there are a number of measures to consider. Firstly, there needs to be increased awareness and education about the value and significance of cultural heritage across all levels of society. This is through school curricula, community outreach programs, and public

campaigns that emphasize the importance of cultural heritage.

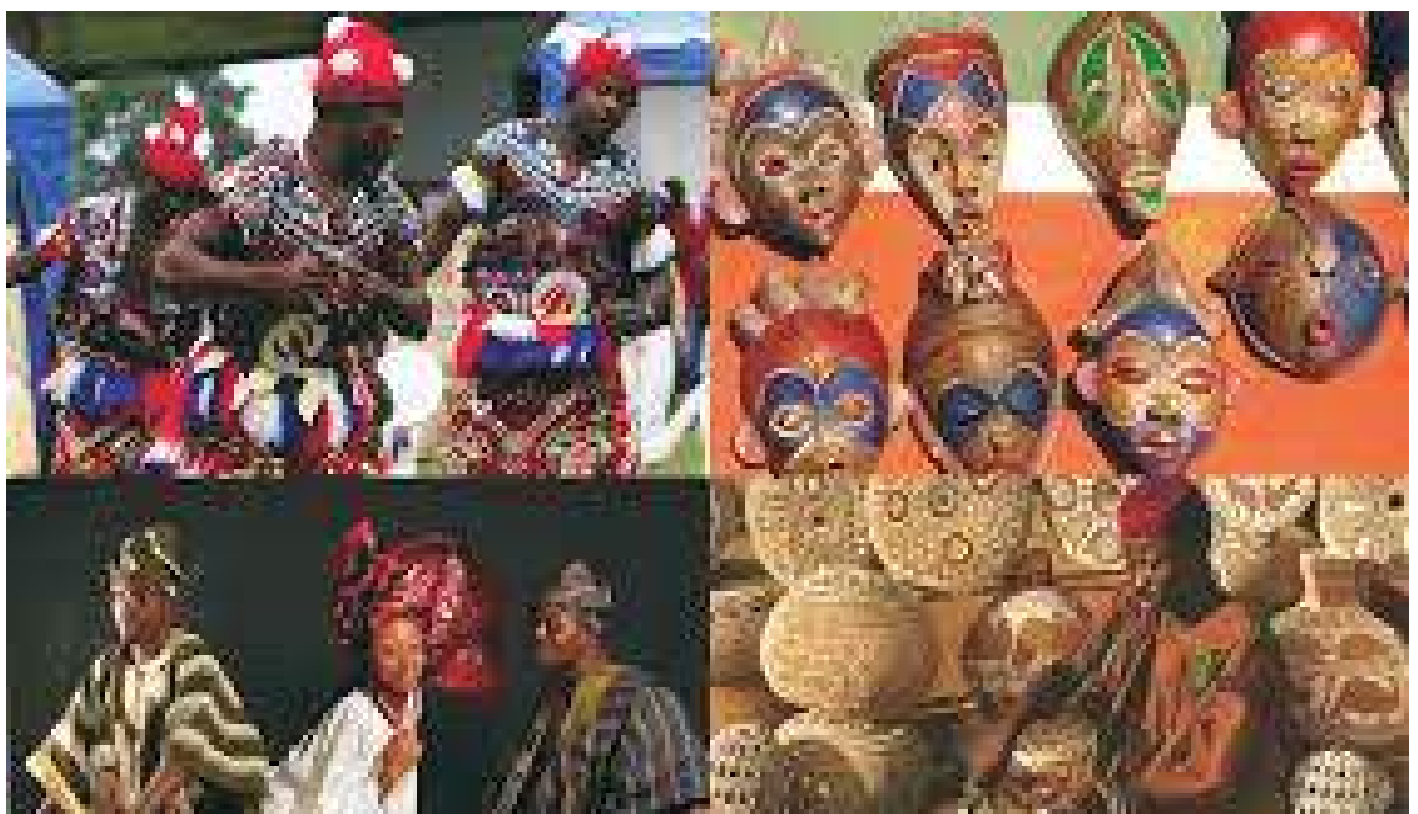
Secondly, there should be efforts to financially support and empower cultural institutions, such as museums, art galleries, and cultural centers. These institutions play a vital role in preserving and promoting Nigeria's cultural heritage, safeguarding artifacts, hosting exhibitions, and conducting research. Also making adequate funding and resources available to

enhance their capacities and ensure their sustainability.

Thirdly, collaboration and partnership between government agencies, community organizations, and cultural practitioners are essential in preserving Nigeria's cultural heritage. This involves fostering dialogue, sharing resources and expertise, and involving local communities in decision-making processes regarding cultural preservation and promotion.

In conclusion, preserving Nigeria's cultural heritage is not only a matter of identity and pride but also a catalyst for development and tourism. By taking proactive measures to safeguard its cultural heritage, Nigeria can reap the benefits of cultural tourism, strengthen national unity, and ensure the transmission of traditional knowledge to future generations.

**Fali is of National Museum, Jos.**





### Foreign News

## US reimposes some sanctions after Venezuela bans

VENEZUELAN opposition presidential candidate Maria Corina Machado looks on as she addresses the media, after a court upheld a ban preventing her from holding office, in Caracas, Venezuela,

Any US companies doing business with Venezuela's state-owned mining concern Minerven have until February 13 to complete a "wind down of transactions" with the company, the US Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control said on Monday.

The US warned Venezuela at the weekend that it could end some sanctions relief granted last year when Caracas agreed to a deal for elections in 2024, including setting up a process for would-be candidates to challenge their disqualification.

On Friday, Venezuela's Supreme Court, loyal to President Nicolas Maduro's government, upheld a 15-year ban on opposition leader Maria Corina Machado and also confirmed the ineligibility of her possible replacement, two-time presidential candidate Henrique Capriles.

Machado on Monday called the court ruling blocking her presidential candidacy last week "judicial criminality" and vowed to stay in the race, declaring that the decision embodies the ruling party's fear of having to face her at the polls.

Maduro's government had raised hopes with Washington and others when it reached a deal last year in Barbados with the Venezuelan opposition to hold a free and fair vote in 2024, with international observers present.

That agreement saw Washington ease sanctions,



Machado

allowing US-based Chevron to resume limited oil extraction and leading the way to a prisoner swap.

On Monday, White House spokesperson John Kirby said members of the Maduro government "have not taken those actions" promised in Barbados.

"So we have options available to us," he said. "We certainly have options with respect to sanctions and that kind of thing."

Jorge Rodriguez, a lawmaker who heads Maduro's team in negotiations with the opposition, said prior to the US Treasury decision that if Washington took "any aggressive action", Venezuela's response would be "serene, reciprocal and energetic".

Machado, a 56-year-old former lawmaker, won the opposition's independently-run presidential primary with more

than 90 percent of the votes in October.

Her victory came despite the government announcing a 15-year ban on her running for office just days after she formally entered the race in June.

The longtime government foe was able to participate because the primary was organised by a commission independent of Venezuela's electoral authorities. Machado insisted throughout the campaign that she never received official notification of the ban.

In December, Machado filed a claim with the court arguing the ban was null and void and seeking an injunction to protect her political rights.

Instead, the court upheld the ban, claiming fraud and tax violations and accused her of seeking the economic sanctions the US imposed on Venezuela in the last decade.

## US, Britain announce sanctions on Iran

THE United States and the United Kingdom have imposed sanctions on a network of people who targeted Iranian opposition activists for assassination under Iran's orders, the US Treasury Department has said.

The US Treasury said the network was directed by Iran's Ministry of Intelligence and Security and put sanctions on 11 people connected to it, including Iranian narcotics trafficker Naji Ibrahim Sharifi-Zindashti.

"The Iranian regime's

continued efforts to target dissidents and activists demonstrate the regime's deep insecurity and attempt to expand Iran's domestic repression internationally," said Brian Nelson, Treasury's undersecretary for terrorism and financial intelligence.

There was no immediate comment from Iran.

The Treasury said that the network, led by Sharifi-Zindashti, had carried out assassinations and kidnappings across several jurisdictions to silence perceived critics of Tehran.

The Treasury action freezes any US assets of those targeted and generally bans Americans from dealing with them.

The Treasury said that in 2021 the network had recruited a Canadian national and British Columbia-based Hells Angels Outlaw Motorcycle Group member, Damion Patrick John Ryan, to assassinate individuals in the US who fled Iran.

Ryan also allegedly recruited Canadian national and Hells Angels affiliate Adam Richard Pearson to carry out the murders, the

Treasury said. Both are currently imprisoned abroad on unrelated charges.

The sanctions come amid soaring tensions in the Middle East. The US and UK accused Iran-backed groups earlier on Monday of a drone attack in Jordan near the border with Syria that killed three US military personnel.

Britain imposed sanctions on Iranian officials it said were involved in threats to kill journalists on British soil and others it said were part of international criminal gangs linked to Tehran.

The UK Foreign Office said it would "sanction seven individuals and one organisation, including senior Iranian officials and members of organised criminal gangs who collaborate with the regime."

"The Iranian regime and the criminal gangs who operate on its behalf pose an unacceptable threat to the UK's security," British Foreign Secretary David Cameron said in a statement.

"The UK and US have sent a clear message - we will not tolerate this threat," he added.



Cameron

FORMER South African President Jacob Zuma speaks to supporters after appearing at the High Court in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa. "Zuma and others whose conduct is in conflict with our values and principles will find themselves outside the African National Congress," ANC Secretary-General Fikile Mbalula said on Monday.

The decision, which was widely expected, will be seen as a further sign of disunity in the movement ahead of the general election, in which the long-dominant ANC is expected to lose ground.

Zuma was the fourth president of democratic South Africa, serving from 2009 to 2018, but was forced from office under a cloud of corruption allegations, and he has become estranged from the party he once led.

In December, he declared he would campaign for a new party, uMkhonto We Sizwe (MK) or Spear of the Nation, named after the ANC's former armed wing during the anti-apartheid struggle.

Mbalula said that in addition to suspending Zuma, the ANC could complain to the electoral court to get the new party deregistered and mount a trademark challenge to recapture the name.

"The formation of MK party is not an accident," Mbalula declared after a meeting with

## South Africa's ANC suspends former President Jacob Zuma

the party's National Executive Committee, attended by President Cyril Ramaphosa.

"It is a deliberate attempt to use the proud history of the armed struggle against the apartheid regime to lend credibility to what is a blatantly counterrevolutionary agenda."

According to a South African Broadcasting Corporation news report, Zuma has 48 hours to respond to the suspension.



Zuma

## N/Korea fires 'several' cruise missiles in third test

North Korea has carried out a third test of its cruise missiles in less than a week, firing the weapons into the waters off its west coast.

South Korea's military "detected several unknown cruise missiles launched into the West Sea of North Korea around 07:00 [22:00 GMT]", the Joint Chiefs of Staff said in a statement.

The South Korean and US intelligence agencies were analysing the data, it added.

North Korea is not banned from testing cruise missiles under longstanding United Nations sanctions imposed over its nuclear programme and has already carried out two tests over the past week.

On Monday, state media said leader Kim Jong Un had "guided" the launch of submarine-launched strategic cruise missiles, known as the Pulhwasal-3-31, over the weekend, a few days after South Korea detected several cruise missiles being launched from the country's west coast.

Pyeongyang has forged ahead with weapons testing amid rising tensions on the peninsula as Kim modernises the country's military and develops more sophisticated weaponry.

Since the start of the year, it has also launched what it said was a solid-fuelled hypersonic ballistic missile as well as a nuclear-capable underwater attack drone.

**IN THE FEDERAL HIGH COURT OF NIGERIA  
IN THE JOS JUDICIAL DIVISION  
HOLDEN AT JOS  
ON MONDAY THE 22<sup>ND</sup> DAY OF JANUARY, 2024  
BEFORE HIS LORDSHIP  
HONOURABLE JUSTICE D. V. AGISHI  
JUDGE**

**SUIT NO: FHC/J/PT/1/2023**

**IN THE MATTER OF YAKUBU GOWON FOUNDATION AND IN  
THE MATTER OF COMPANIES AND ALLIED MATTERS ACT,  
2020**

**YAKUBU GOWON FOUNDATION.....PETITIONER**

**ORDER**

**UPON THIS WINDING UP APPLICATION**  
dated the 29<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2023 wherein the  
petitioner prays the Court for the following:

1. That the Foundation, Yakubu Gowon Foundation be wound up by the Court under the Provisions of the Companies and Allied Matters Act, 2020, same being just and equitable in the circumstances.
2. And such other Order(s) as this Honourable Court may deem fit to make in the circumstance.

**IT IS HEREBY ORDERED AS FOLLOWS:**

1. THAT the Petitioner's Application for Winding Up is hereby granted as prayed.
2. THAT AN ORDER is hereby made Winding Up Yakubu Gowon Foundation under the Provisions of the Companies and Allied Matters Act, 2020, same being just and equitable.

ISSUED AT JOS under the Seal of the Court  
and the Hand of the Presiding Judge dated this  
22<sup>nd</sup> day of January, 2024.

**JOHNSON SUNDAY GOSELLE  
(FOR: REGISTRAR).**



## Feature

## Your Excellency, Plateau State Governor, Caleb Mutfwang sir...

By BULUS GAMBO

Continued from last week

TO help meet-up with contemporary work standards, modern techniques of doing things must be introduced into the system. Amid these changes sir, you should ensure that civil servants' salaries are paid as and when due just as you have rightly started and perhaps promised.

Your Excellency, regular salary payments as you have said severally is not an achievement, it goes a long way in contributing positively to the economic growth of the state. Interestingly, many families, relations, and dependents' of our workers so much rely on these salaries for the sustenance of their souls and bodies.

Sir, as you settle down to govern Plateau State, you should not be unmindful of sycophants and unpatriotic politicians who for their personal interest will always not tell you the truth. Therefore, if you desire to create a niche for yourself, you must constantly think outside the box. This equally means that you will have to step on several toes in the course of governance in the state.

In the area of physical projects execution, I must commend you for starting quite well. This is because, even before your mandate was affirmed by the Supreme Court, work was ongoing in most parts of the state. However, I think you must really ensure consistent monitoring of all physical projects if you desire to leave behind a legacy in the state. I wouldn't mind if you sneak out at odd hours to visit places where your projects have been executed to ensure that the right things have been done. Sir, no matter what, do not lose touch with the common man on the street because they are your joker.

During the immediate past administration's tenure, one of the problems which left much to be desired was the issue of wrongful appointments into offices of governance. Sir, please don't get me wrong as certainly, people who worked to ensure your victory at the polls should be rewarded, but the issue of political patronage and reward has not prognosticated well in contemporary times. This is more so because; if these appointments are wrongfully done without considering the capacity of an appointed officer, it will always spell doom for the state. In this case, many government agencies in the past have been crippled and rendered inefficient thus hindering the general expectations of the common man due to incapable officials appointed into such offices. In some cases, some of these officers once appointed usually padlock their doors by refusing to pick up calls and or come down to the level of the electorates who in the first place fought for the emergence of a Governor and other elected representatives.

Sir, time past, we have heard several unpleasant stories about how some shoddy deals have overwhelmed some critical projects that were not executed to the detriment of the entire citizens of the state. There was this particular case where contractors and government officials connived and hired beddings and other equipment for the official commissioning of a clinic only for the equipment to be returned after the Governor had left. Indeed, there were several other cases recorded where though monies were released for project executions; nothing was physically done and the resources ended up in private pockets.

Therefore, one of the fundamental problems which has hindered good governance in this country has been the

issue of corruption within the hierarchy of the civil service. Not once or twice, for instance, I have heard cashiers in local government councils here on the Plateau bribed their ways to remain in lucrative positions for decades to continue siphoning state's resources for themselves. Thus, many of such officers have rejected promotions and refused going back to school or tender higher certificates so that they will be removed from these lucrative or juicy offices. These acts of personal aggrandizement have reached a pitiful phenomenon where a cashier in junior Cadre has several houses and cars which ordinarily his salary till his retirement cannot afford him get these things. Many such junior staff and or officers are constantly seen in beer parlors and other social centers squandering ill-gotten state resources through nefarious engagements with impunity. It is also true that many heads of government agencies and or parastatals lack innovations to propel their respective organizations to greater heights and or cannot justify government's huge investments where they supervise. Today, many of such heads of government agencies and or parastatals are not innovative to the extent that they are completely computer illiterates. That is the more reason why government documents are typed and printed in market places or kiosks on the streets, the implications not better imagined.

But of course, the issue of corruption has become a cankerworm in the Nigerian system due to the philosophy of "it is our turn to chop" mentality which has enveloped the entire system today. Sir, there is also massive poverty in the land. The last time I checked, the statistics of poverty level in the states tremendously unpalatable.

According to the State of the States' Report 2022 edition, which is intended to facilitate Subnational Governance Reforms for a New Era, Plateau State is one of the states that reduced its FAAC dependence while increasing its total revenue. FAAC dependence dropped from 77 percent in 2020 to 55 percent in 2022. At the same time, total revenue increased by 21 percent from 69 billion in 2020 to 71 billion in 2022. Though IGR increased by 12 percent from 19 billion in 2020 to 21 billion in 2022, the rise in IGR did not totally account for the over 1 billion addition in total revenue. Rather surprising also is that despite the seemingly impressive performance in revenue, the state's fiscal performance among the 36 states, fell from 18 in 2020 to 29 in 2022.

Again, Plateau had the highest personnel costs to revenue ratio amongst the 36 states. The personnel-to-revenue ratio was 48 percent. Total personnel cost amounted to 34 billion in 2022. The state's IGR was neither sufficient to cover the cost of salaries and wages of 27 billion nor able to meet overheads which amounted to 20.71 billion. Basically without federal transfers, the state lacked the finances required to adequately fund its own civil service let alone invest in human capital development or social protection.

At 24th position, Plateau State ranked in the 3rd quartile of the total health spending per capita while ranking in 1st place amongst 36 states in total education spending per Capita. The state attracted no foreign investment that year. With an estimated GDP of 150 billions, Plateau State at 33rd position ranked amongst the states with the smallest economy size." For me, Your Excellency, this report has



Mutfwang

holistically captured our predicament knowing too well how deprived the state has been in the past decades.

Efforts must therefore be made to reduce the cost of governance in the state. No doubt, Plateau is amongst states which are struggling to overcome poverty with little effort so far recorded. This excruciating poverty level has led to many parents unable to feed and or pay their children's school fees.

I was however pleased after I heard sometimes back; to help cushion difficulties faced by the students of the University of Jos, you provided buses for transportation to the students to reduce their sufferings as a result of the fuel price increase in the country. Sir, how I wish you would continue with this magnificent intervention considering the situation we have all found ourselves in this country right now. If I may advise you, sir, I think such buses should be made available to our students permanently and also extended to our other state-owned tertiary institutions. Your Excellency sir, if I should have my way, all top government officials must send their children to public schools and universities under your watch. This would perhaps generate the passion in them to concentrate on rebuilding our dilapidated schools in the state.

To speak the truth, most youths on the Plateau are not getting it right. Many of them have indulged themselves in acts of drunkenness, drug usage, and or

criminality. Many say an empty mind is the devil's workshop, but I think, we have not engaged our youths seriously enough. The most vulnerable ones are located in the slums which are easy targets for criminally minded elements and some of our nasty politicians whose desire is to create havoc in our communities and society. Sir, you must restore smiles on the faces of our youth and their parents.

Thus, your administration must take away these distractions and re-orientate our youths on better ways of reviving themselves for the sake of their future. In line with this, sustainable efforts must be made towards reducing the cost of education significantly as we move forward. Some of our bright but economically vulnerable students should be offered special scholarships to pursue their educational careers at ease.

Sir, most of our hospitals and government-owned clinics have become a shadow of themselves. That is the more reason why, this government must find lasting solutions to overcome the problems bedeviling our healthcare sector. Special attention should be given to the health sector considering its relevance to the development of the state. In fact, more hospitals must be built even as many more medical personnel should be employed to bring the system back to life. To further help solve this problem, unnecessary medical tourism by top government officials must be discouraged.

To be continued



# EVERYONE'S WORLD

With PALANG KASMI

## Living

### Skills to successfully resolve workplace conflicts

EVERYONE experiences some kind of conflict in the workplace at some point. Something which Covid has added a realm of complexity to, to not only detect, but also resolve. Conflict can arise in many situations, but disagreements with coworkers commonly cause interpersonal strife.

In fact, in an 18-month research study, nearly 100 percent of respondents cited interactions with coworkers as the primary cause of conflict at work. Conflict in the workplace also impacts employee productivity. According to one study, a single employee spends nearly three hours every workweek trying to resolve some kind of conflict. Even worse, unresolved conflicts can impact employee engagement and have negative implications for company culture.

When the possibility for conflict exists just about everywhere in the workplace—and the cost of leaving it unresolved is high—employees need to know how to resolve conflict and be equipped with the skills to do so. Here are 5 skills that can help them do that.

**Here are 5 Conflict Resolution Skills (CRS):**

**1. Communication**

Employees need to know how to talk to each other in order to understand the source of conflict, as well as alternate points of view—but communicating well involves more than talking and getting your point across to others. Strong communication also includes listening. When employees know how to use active listening techniques, like asking questions, restating, and using analogies to rephrase statements, the chances of resolving the conflict become greater. Remote working has placed a greater need for strong interpersonal communication skills. Other communication behaviors that support effective conflict resolution include: Reading nonverbal cues

Knowing when to interrupt and



when to stay quiet. Being clear and concise when explaining a concept or opinion

**2. Teamwork** Individual personalities and disagreements can often give rise to conflict within a team. However, when

individuals understand the behaviors that lead to successful team functioning, they can avoid and reduce the occurrence of conflict in the workplace. Some of the behaviors that demonstrate strong teamwork skills and help

resolve workplace conflict include: Focusing on shared goals instead of disagreements. Ensuring each member of the team has a clearly defined role, which can help reduce disagreements over areas of responsibility. Periodically suppressing personal ego and desires, and instead considering the needs of other members of the team

**3. Problem-Solving**

Problem-solving skills aid conflict resolution by helping individuals objectively approach a challenge and consider the many possible solutions to it. When individuals know how to tackle a problem rather than avoid or deny it, they can prevent or even reduce the chance of a conflict emerging. There are some specific problem-solving actions that individuals can take to resolve conflict in the workplace successfully. Once a conflict has been identified, it's helpful to attempt to fully understand the source or cause of the conflict before attempting to resolve it. Effective problem-solving also includes evaluating various solutions and taking care

to consider multiple interests and points of view. And as anyone who has ever experienced conflict can attest, sometimes the chosen solution is unsuccessful. Individuals can use problem-solving skills by demonstrating a willingness to revisit unresolved issues and try another solution.

**4. Stress Management**

Sometimes, stress can kindle the fires of workplace conflict, and at other times, the conflict itself creates a stressful situation for employees. Whichever comes first, employees need the necessary tools to manage their emotions, as well as the ability to cope with the frustrations of workplace conflict. When employees have learned the strategies for preventing and reducing stress, they're more able to calmly express themselves and work with others to resolve disagreements or discord. Some of the stress management behaviors that help with conflict management include:

Where appropriate, injecting a dose of humor to dilute the anger and frustration that often accompany conflict

Taking well-timed breaks that can bring calm in the midst of flared tempers

Talking to others as a means of releasing bottled-up emotions

**5. Emotional agility**

Conflict in the workplace can trigger strong emotions, especially when the conflict causes an employee to feel their position or employment is threatened. Therefore, emotional agility is a key conflict resolution skill as it allows one to understand the emotions of all individuals engaged in a conflict, including their own. Being emotionally aware also includes the ability to put oneself in another's shoes and practice empathy and compassion. Leadership development can help cultivate emotional agility and provide useful strategies for resolving conflict successfully. For example, it can teach individuals to master influencing techniques and learn how to leverage relationships for successful outcomes.

**Improving conflict resolution skills can make a real difference.**

Most people need help improving their ability to approach conflicts with confidence and calm, rather than avoiding them or just trying to smooth things over. Many useful behaviors support effective conflict resolution, including taking steps to understand and listen to multiple viewpoints and keeping emotions in check. Thankfully, a combination of leadership development and conflict resolution skills training can help individuals learn how to resolve conflict, specifically in the areas of communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and more.

Source: graycyan.com





# THE NIGERIA STANDARD

With PALANG KASMI

## Nutrition

# Amazing benefits of cucumber for skin

WHEN you think of a cucumber, the first thing that often comes to mind is that it leaves you with a cooling, refreshing, and soothing feeling. Whether it's present in your salad, your water, or on your eyes, cucumber has so many health benefits—which inadvertently makes it a favourite for many.

But, did you know that there are many benefits of cucumber for skin too? That's why cucumber plays a key role in a lot of skincare routines. Loaded with vitamins, minerals, and many other nutrients, this kitchen staple is the perfect go-to for many skincare needs, and therefore makes for a great addition to your routine (other than having it in your diet). From de-puffing eyes to treating acne, scroll down to see the many benefits of cucumber for your skin—we even list out the different uses of cucumber for face, so stay tuned till the end.

What are the benefits of cucumber for the skin? Did you know that cucumber contains a whopping amount of water? 96% of this salad staple contains water, which makes it a great hydrator for your system. And this extends to your skin too. As you know, hydration is one of the key elements to keeping your skin healthy and happy, and applying cucumber on your face is one way to do it. The fruit cools your skin, calms inflammation, and even helps detox your skin cells, leaving you with a far more nourished glow. Read on to find out more about the benefits of cucumber for skin.

It is a natural hydrator. As mentioned before, cucumber contains 96% of water, which means that it is an excellent hydrator for your skin. Dehydrated skin is one of the major causes of many common skin woes, including premature ageing and acne, therefore having your skin hydrated helps keep it healthy internally and also prevents these issues from occurring. Cucumber is said to moisturise the skin, soothe them, while flushing out any toxins. Plus, it leaves you with a plump and youthful complexion.

It naturally tones the skin. If you wonder how to reduce redness on face? One of the major benefits of cucumber for skin is that thanks to its antioxidant properties, it helps tone



the skin, calms redness while soothing it. This helps improve the overall texture and appearance of your skin.

Prevents signs of premature ageing because of its high antioxidant content, cucumbers help fight free radical damage and protect your skin from it. This paired with its hydrating properties, help keep your skin healthy from within, reducing the chances of premature skin ageing. This benefit of cucumber for your skin aids in keeping the fine lines, wrinkles, and other signs of ageing at bay. Plus, since cucumbers also help with cell renewal, your skin appears a lot healthier than before. Depuffs under eyes. Using cucumber for your under eyes is an age-old technique to help treat puffiness. The flavonoids and tannins present in the fruit removes the excess fluid present under the eyes and helps depuff the bags, whenever they appear swollen. That is why you've spotted this ingredient as a natural eye mask in many of those 'spa' campaigns—it's there for a very functional reason.

Treats tired eyes. Other than depuffing your undereyes, using cucumber for your skin especially

around the eye area helps soothe and calm inflammation. The cooling effect helps treat tired and fatigued eyes, while its hydrating properties help moisturise it too. Fights free radical damage. The same antioxidant content in cucumbers helps tackle free radical damage caused by environmental factors. The folic acid combined with vitamin C, fights free radical damage triggered by pollution and UV exposure, and even boosts skin cell renewal. Out with the old and in with the new—this vitamin C for skin benefit even protects it from any further damage!

Treats acne. Did you know that one of the major benefits of cucumber for skin is that it helps treat acne and keeps the breakouts at bay? The moisturisation properties found in cucumber aid in nourishing the skin and balancing out our skin's oil levels. This prevents excess oil from clogging the pores and causing blemishes. Other than that, the toning benefits mentioned above help cleanse the skin and treat those breakouts, without stripping the skin off of its natural oils. It's a win-win.

### How to use cucumber on skin

Cucumber is such a common household kitchen staple, that it's very hard to not use it in your daily skincare routine. While obviously eating cucumbers benefit the skin, applying it too can have several positive effects on that glow. As a matter of fact it contains all the minerals and vitamins for glowing skin.

Check out how to use cucumber on your face with these simple home remedies to treat some of the most common skin woes out there.

### Cucumber for dark circles

Benefits of Cucumber for Skin – helps to reduce dark circles: Using cucumbers as part of your daily routine is one of the best home remedies for dark circles! Its soothing properties, combined with toning abilities help treat and reduce the appearance of those panda eyes. Cut two slices of cucumber and place it in some water—leave it in the fridge for about an hour. Now, remove those slices and apply it to your eyes for about 10 to 15 minutes. Repeat this process daily, to help combat dark circles. This is also a great home remedy for puffy eyes!

### Cucumber for acne



### Cucumber face pack benefits

One of the best home remedies for pimples, cucumber plays an important role in treating those pesky breakouts. Take half a cucumber, scrape off the skin, and add it to a blender along with 1 tablespoon of curd. Blend away! Now, apply the mixture on your face and neck and let it sit for about 15 to 20 minutes. Rinse it off with lukewarm water—you can even finish the rinse with some cool water too. This homemade face mask for acne moisturises the skin, while treating acne breakouts present.

### Cucumber for dryness cucumber juice benefits for skin

Experiencing dry and dehydrated skin? This overnight cucumber face mask will do wonders for that glow. Grate a cucumber without the skin and squeeze the juice from it. Using a cotton ball or a cotton pad, gently apply the juice on your face just before you head to bed. Leave it on overnight and rinse off the next morning. This makes it an effective glowing face pack at home. The cucumber helps hydrate your skin, while you get your beauty sleep. Alternatively, you can pour the juice in a spray bottle and use it as a face mist, just before you apply your moisturiser. This will also help increase the efficacy of your moisturiser, by allowing it to penetrate deeper into the layers of your skin.

### Cucumber for fine lines and wrinkles

Dealing with fine lines and wrinkles? Mix half a peeled and mashed cucumber with a half a mashed ripe avocado—mix it into a fine, thick paste. Apply the mixture on your face and neck and let it sit for about 15 -20 minutes. Rinse off with lukewarm water. The hydrating properties of cucumber and avocado aid in reducing the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles.

### Cucumber for Sunburn

Cucumber ice cubes for face benefits

Spent too much time at the beach? This home remedy for sunburn is an excellent way to soothe that inflamed skin. There are multiple ways to use cucumber to cool the skin down. You can cut a few slices and apply it on the affected area. You can also grate a cucumber and

extract the juice, and then apply it on the sunburnt part of your body. Or you can add the cucumber juice in an ice tray and use the cucumber ice cubes to cool the affected area down. Besides sunburn and inflamed skin treatment, you can use cucumber as a tan removal face pack as well.

Can we apply cucumber on our face daily? Cucumber is mild and gentle on the skin and therefore can be applied on the face daily. Is cucumber good for skin whitening? Cucumber contains vitamins and minerals that helps brighten the skin, removing any sort of tan and dullness.

Can cucumber clear pimples? Cucumber is an excellent source of vitamins, minerals, and other essential nutrients that help treat pimples, manage oil levels, while keeping future breakouts at bay. Can cucumbers remove dark circles? Cucumbers contain antioxidants that can help reduce the appearance of dark circles and also aids in depuffing puffy under eyes too.

Can I rub cucumber on my face overnight? Yes it's perfectly alright to rub a cool cucumber on your face overnight! Keep cucumber slices in the fridge before use to help soothe and cool down the skin. Can I spray cucumber water on my face? Cucumber water acts like a great toner for your skin and can be sprayed as a face mist too.

### Is cucumber good for OILY skin?

Cucumber isn't just good for oily skin, it also helps balance out the sebum production in the layers of your skin. This helps keep the extra oil at bay. Should I wash my face after using cucumber? It depends entirely on you! You can either rinse off the cucumber juice after use, apply a moisturiser over it, or even leave it overnight. Either way, cucumber is a very gentle ingredient to use on your skin and therefore doesn't need to be washed off right away. Everyone loves cucumber in their salads and drinks, but clearly it is a winner thanks to all the properties it has for your skin. The benefits of cucumber for skin aren't just limited to a certain skin type or condition—the fact that it is mild, gentle, and an excellent source of all skin-loving properties, makes it a great choice for overall skin health too.





**Editorial**

**The uncertainty over the Plateau North rerun**

THE Court of Appeal's ordered rerun in Plateau North Senatorial District comes up on Saturday, February 3, 2024. The exercise is coming after the Appeal Court sitting in Abuja had in October last year set aside the victory of all the National Assembly members elected on the platform of the People's Democratic Party [PDP], for lack of structures to sponsor candidates in that particular election.

HOWEVER, just less than three days to the rerun, claims and counter claims have been flying round in the media space concerning the fate of the PDP in the Saturday exercise.

MEANWHILE, the election management body, the Independent National Electoral Commission, [INEC], in the state is yet to make any pronouncement on the matter which might be generating an atmosphere of anxiety and confusion within the political parties and their supporters.

ANOTHER DIMENSION to the gamut of uncertainty was the recent Supreme Court judgment which ruled in favour of Governor Caleb Mutwang whose election was earlier nullified by the same Appeal court in Abuja. The pronouncement of the apex court berated the Appeal Court for entertaining the case in the first instance.

UNFORTUNATELY, the PDP suffered a lot of casualties from the outcome of the judgments of the lower courts while the beneficiaries of such are political parties such as the All Progressives Congress [APC], Labour Party [LP], and the People's Redemption Party [PRP] who are in contestation of the Plateau North Senatorial seat and that of Jos North -Bassa Federal Constituency seat.

WHATEVER THE OUTCOME, elections should be seen as the only option for choosing the people's representatives through a democratic process. It is the only way our democratic values can be nurtured and harnessed.

WORTHY OF NOTE is the fact that this is an opportunity for the electorates to come out en masse to exercise their franchise devoid of any rancor or misgivings. The implication of voter apathy may well be a chance for the emergence of the wrong candidates to win.

FURTHERMORE, the nation cannot be entrusted in the hands of unserious and inexperienced politicians who may just find their ways through leadership positions without meeting the threshold of the electioneering process as enshrined by the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

WORRISOME, is the case where the election process is compromised while as witnessed in the past, elections are seen by some political gladiators as a do or die affair which culminates into being marred in most cases with irregularities perpetuated by election officials in collaboration with security agencies.

UNFORTUNATELY, when elections are not credible, there are possibilities of cases ending with litigations and the consequence may be that the courts become the decider which may be against the wishes of the vast majority that voted.

OUR STAND IS, our political parties must avoid those pitfalls that usually prevent the smooth conduct of elections by playing according to the dictates guiding the process. It is incumbent on them to avoid use of thugs to snatch election materials.

WE do not condone the attitude of some courts who have given conflicting judgments as in the case with some courts with equal or above jurisdiction which has led to so many lacunas in applying remedies to injustices afflicted on some election outcomes.

SUCH, is the resultant effects that has characterized our elections and just as the one we are about to witness on Saturday in Plateau North Senatorial District.

PLATEAU state is the 12 largest state in our country Nigeria, with 17 local governments areas and over 40 ethnic groups. The state is located at the north central, it is surrounded by hills and also known for its cold weather, the rocks, hills, and its heterogenous ethnic groups in "the state which inspired its slogan, the" home of peace and tourism".

On September 7, 2001, Jos the capital of plateau state recorded its first mass killings and destructions of properties for the first time. In recent history hundreds of people were killed and thousands were injured and displaced, according to H.R.W RESEARCHER.

The September 2001 crisis marked the beginning of plateau state crisis 23 years from now. Plateau state was inflicted with crisis, between farmers and herdsmen, which is yet to be resolved from 2001 till date. The people of plateau state sleep all night with pains and cried all day with hot tears over their land and the lost of

lives of their loved ones.

I write this letter to you with tears rolling from my eyes. Dear MR PRESIDENT, MR GOVERNOR, PASTORS, IMAMS, and to you reading this letter, to take responsibility and bring back peace in Plateau state, help and stop the killings of innocent souls, Plateau cries out, help the state to maintain pride of place a home of peace and tourism.

Recently about 200 people

**Who will save Plateau State?**

were killed in Bokokos, Mangu and Barkin Ladi local governments areas, at the eve of Christma. celebration. The entire state mourned with grief in their hearts, oh Plateau who will come with your aid?

The inhabitants of these affected areas had suffered to till the ground in order to provide food for their families and loved ones, but could no longer access their farms for harvest. People had built



houses but could no longer sleep comfortable in their rooms, as some of them were burnt down to ashes. Children no longer go to schools, business men and women could no longer trade.

Plateau cries for someone to come and save it, this can be you reading this letter, plateau cries out for hope, faith with expectations, that it will be brought back to its feet, and stop the killings of its daughters, sons, men and

women of the, Plateau. The land needs someone to say enough is enough for the spillage of innocent blood.

I hope this letter will ignite the fire of patriotism in you., to stand as supportive pillar for plateau state, to be on its feet to say yes I am, home of peace and tourism.

**BARNABAS DANLADI UNIVERSITY OF MAIDUGURI MASS COMMUNICATION.**

**Nigerian youth must shun political violence**

POLITICAL violence is becoming a global phenomenon which many nations try to contend with within their political system. This can be in form of crises in the society particularly during elections where most politically related violence are always attributed to the teeming youths that are supposed to be the backbone of every society. Due to idleness, lack of education, unemployment, poor orientation and greed of the political class our youth are becoming vulnerable in our society.

Another factor which reinforces violence in African political system is the desperate attitude of African politicians, the desperation to win election and occupy political offices by all means is a major cause of political violence..

In some cases, it is the contestants who in their quest for political powers organize some youths and provide arms that will be use to enforce fear during election and it is said that" when two elephants fight only the grass suffer". It is simply the youths who are at the middle of those desperate fellows aspiring that are being

use against each other and even to the civilians who are peacefully exercising their rights to vote for a representative with pure intention and hoping to choose a credible candidate that will protect their interests.

During campaigns, the money and offer of some materials to the voters have become the order of the day across African nations. It is also a factor responsible for continued spread of political violence. The level of poverty on the continent is such an intimidation where the innocent youths may be recruited for violence which is

done just to survive. The politician use of huge amount of money during electoral campaigns in form of gift to the poor especially those in the rural areas just to win peoples votes is not good for the people and democracy. Who would then be on ground during election to snatch ballot boxes and cause confusion, specifically, the youths are targeted as instruments of perpetuating violence and their hearts are poisoned with money and other items which can make them participate and not be concerned of the danger involved in executing such acts.

For this phenomenon to discontinue, there must be a favourable, peaceful atmosphere for citizens to participate in the country's democracy and be able to elect their representatives peacefully without any molestation. The youths should therefore be cautioned on accepting any gift from politicians or be used as violent instruments to disrupt any peaceful election process in the country.

*Gloria Jared is an IT student from Kwaraara University, Wukari.*

**Barracks road bridges need urgent attention**

BARRACKS road Bridges need urgent attention

RECENTLY, the two bridges linking the Police Barracks road from West of Mines up to the one along St. Theresa's Church are fast becoming death traps with holes taking over.

Permit me therefore to appeal to the Plateau State Ministry of Works to urgently carry out repair works on the two bridges which are fast giving way to pot holes and now on the verge of collapse.

However, these bridges which are within the city centre constitute an embarrassment to the state which prides itself as Home of Peace and Tourism.

These bridges, apart from linking other major roads within the metropolis serve as alternative routes for motorists who try to avoid the usual hustle and bustle at the busy Ahmadu Bello Way.

Therefore, by repairing the road and the bridges, it could add to the beauty of the city centre as well as reduce traffic

congestion that is associated with the Terminus area of the metropolis.

The risk of allowing these bridges to collapse would mean causing more hardship for those plying the West of Mines area to Ahmadu Bello Way therefore causing a major blow to an already congested metropolis.

Prevention they say is better and cheaper than cure.

*Abdulazeez Abubkar is an IT student from Federal Polytechnic, Bauchi.*

**Standard Cartoon**





## Opinion

## Kidnappings in Nigeria: Is ransom payment new norm?

By AISHAT M. ABISOLA

RECENTLY, there is an alarming surge in kidnapping incidents across the country, and the tragic story of Nabeeha Al-Kadriyar and her sisters stands as a chilling testament to the escalating crisis. The recent plight of the Al-Kadriyar family has unveiled not only the increasing boldness of criminal elements, but also the ethical dilemma surrounding ransom payments.

Nabeeha Al-Kadriyar's kidnapping resulted in heartbreak as she fell victim to the ruthless criminals who have been terrorizing Nigerian families. Her sisters, who hitherto remained in captivity, had faced an uncertain fate, highlighting the grim reality many families endure. The surge in kidnapping cases across Nigeria underscores a systemic issue that demands urgent attention and comprehensive solutions.

The payment of ransom has become a contentious issue in the fight against kidnappings. Although, it seems like a desperate measure to secure the release of loved ones, critics argue that it can exacerbate the problem by providing financial incentives for criminals. Despite his public stance against ransom payments, Prof Isa Pantami, the Former Minister of Communications and Digital

Economy, stepped forward with a generous donation of N50 million by his friend, to secure the release of the remaining Al-Kadriyar sisters after Nabeeha's murder by terrorists.

Talking on his X handle (formerly Twitter), Prof Isa stated, "Alhamdu lil Laah! I am personally not in support of paying ransom to criminals. However, since it becomes clear, we lost our daughter Nabeeha yesterday, and the 5 remaining daughters have been threatened, as I spoke with the father on the matter yesterday and today.

"Furthermore, I spoke with a friend and a brother who offered to pay the remaining 50 million Naira of the 60m immediately. I conveyed the account number of the father of our daughters, Mansoor Al-Kadriyar, to the friend and brother to send the money directly. Any additional amount earlier generated from yesterday, the father can use to treat the daughters and other family members in sha Allah."

The ethical dilemma surrounding ransom payments is complex. On one hand, the immediate safety of the abducted individuals is paramount; on the other, succumbing to the demands of criminals may perpetuate the cycle of kidnappings. This begs the question: Will paying ransom cause more harm than good in the long run?

The payment of ransoms is a short-term solution to a long-term problem. It may save lives temporarily, but it does not tackle the underlying issues that contribute to the rise in kidnappings. Poverty, lack of job opportunities, and weak law enforcement were identified as key factors that need addressing to effectively combat the kidnapping crisis.

The involvement of Prof Pantami's friend adds a layer of complexity to the situation. The generous donation, albeit made with the intention of securing the release of the Al-Kadriyar sisters, contradicts Pantami's public stance against ransom payments. This dissonance within the government raises questions about the coherence and effectiveness of Nigeria's anti-kidnapping efforts.

The Al-Kadriyar parents had found themselves caught in a nightmarish situation, torn between the desire to ensure the safety of their daughters and the potential consequences of paying a hefty ransom. The emotional toll on families facing such dilemmas is immeasurable, and their perspective sheds light on the desperation and vulnerability that many Nigerians experience in the face of rampant kidnappings.

In an emotional plea, the Al-Kadriyar parents had first expressed their willingness to pay any ransom to secure the release of their daughters. Their heart-wrenching decision reflects the agonizing choices that families are forced to make when confronted with the harsh reality of kidnappings. Their

desperate plea also highlights the need for immediate and effective government intervention to ensure the safety and security of Nigerian citizens.

To conclude, the kidnapping of Nabeeha Al-Kadriyar and her sisters provided a chilling insight towards the grim reality of the escalating crisis in Nigeria. The ethical debate surrounding ransom payments, the involvement of government officials, and the harrowing decisions faced by families emphasizes the need for a comprehensive and coordinated approach. Only by addressing the root causes and implementing effective strategies can Nigeria hope to curb the rising tide of kidnappings and secure the safety of its citizens.

**"Furthermore, I spoke with a friend and a brother who offered to pay the remaining 50 million Naira of the 60m immediately. I conveyed the account number of the father of our daughters, Mansoor Al-Kadriyar, to the friend and brother to send the money directly. Any additional amount earlier generated from yesterday, the father can use to treat the daughters and other family members in sha Allah."**

"EACH one of us, and indeed all those who aspire to national leadership must bring their own visions, views and styles to the business of reforming Nigeria, and the search for solutions"—Gen. Ibrahim Babangida

Years ago, psychologist discovered that there are two routes to achievements: conformity and originality. Conformity means following the crowd down conventional paths and maintaining the status quo.

Originality is taking the road less traveled championing a set of novel ideas that goes against the grain but ultimately makes things better. If we immersed the Nigeria national psyche into Grant's non-conformist approach of changing the world, we will come out without bruises and apologia to the fate guiding our compassionate commitment towards the search and reconfirmation of our true national identity.

Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau has amplified our ideological familiarity with what has become the social contract narrative, which in simple terms, says, government exists only by the consent of the people in order to protect basic rights and promote the common good of society. The premise and genre of this philosophy is fashioned into a unified accent that will properly fit into the culture and political civilization of any social

## Why Nigeria will not fall

By SAIDU AHMED

establishment.

Nigeria shouldn't be governed under fear and ethic trepidations. Government policies shouldn't stir feelings or perceptions of marginalisation, political party formation shouldn't be borne out of religious and tribal affiliation, federalism should be seen as a platter where the construction of an inclusive development takes place. Our National and State Assemblies should reflect our indivisibility as a democratic republic binded by faith, our schools should be Hallmark of responsible leadership, because our progress as a nation cannot be far away from our progress in education.

Our foreign policy should reflect the strength of our political economy and ability to define our national interest in a world that is irrefutably wearing the fez hat of globalisation.

Very soon, President Tinubu will be launching the National Value Charter (NVC). A document that states out clearly, what should be the role and responsibilities of the Nigerian citizen to his/her country.

The Honorable Minister of Information

National Orientation, Alh. Mohammed Idris has championed this onerous course in order to reset the DNA of our national identity- as a true federal republic. The National Values Charter according to the Minister, also takes into full account the fact that we are a youth-centric and technology-driven world.

On account of these, we are determined to ensure that the young people of Nigeria own this social contract, and are allowed to take the lead in using it to build, in concert with older generations, a better country, and a better world. The Charter goes both ways, expectations of the nation to the citizen and expectations of the citizen to the nation.

Nigeria will not fail under President Tinubu and beyond, because the people have seen and agreed almost totally with the wealth, power and resilience Nigeria commands as a nation. \$33.23 Billion external reserve in Q3 of 2023. \$1.275 trillion GDP by Purchasing Power Parity (PPP), \$489.80 Billion by Nominal GDP. One of the world's largest oil producers and the true giant leader of Africa.

During the 2023 Nigeria Economic Summit Group (NESG) event, President Ahmed Bola Tinubu said this to private and public sector leaders present, "Distinguished audience, a one trillion dollar Nigerian economy is possible by 2026, and a three trillion dollar economy is possible within this decade, "I am confident that by working closely with all of you in the private sector, financing our three trillion dollar national infrastructure stock can be achieved in 10 years and not in 300 years...Building megacities in every geopolitical zone of the size and scale of Lagos must not take us another six decades. We can do it in one decade. A fully networked and connected Nigeria by rail, gas, fiber optics and road network can be constructed in less than 20 years."

The Tinubu Renewed Hope Agenda is very

aware of the challenges before us as a nation. Insecurity, unemployment, hike in prices of commodities and services from food, petrol, energy bills. Another price volatility that recently took the center stage of socio-economic discourse include; school fees, transport fares, and the inability of salaries and wages to cater and sustain living at the basic level.

These socio-economic tough times are as a result of the ongoing progressive economic reconstruction by the apex government.

The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) Governor, Mr. Olayemi Cardoso, during his remark at the launching of NESG January 2024 Macro-economic Outlook, gave some huge hope. He said, "I want to assure you that we are now at a turning point, and the bold reforms being undertaken across different segments of the economy, while initially challenging, are ultimately directed towards addressing these challenges in a sustainable manner. The economic stabilisation or reduction in fuel cost is poised to have far-reaching implications across various sectors contributing significantly to overall economic efficiency and resilience."

As we successfully move towards stabilisation of our exchange rate, boost our foreign reserves and cut significantly the price of petrol, finance inclusive development across the six geopolitical zones, I want to join the Minister of Information & National Orientation by saying:

Welcome to a new Nigeria ...!!!

Saidu Ahmed is a Special Assistant, Research & Strategy to the Honorable Minister of Information & National Orientation.

**"Nigeria shouldn't be governed under fear and ethic trepidations. Government policies shouldn't stir feelings or perceptions of marginalisation, political party formation shouldn't be borne out of religious and tribal affiliation, federalism should be seen as a platter where the construction of an inclusive development takes place. Our National and State Assemblies should reflect our indivisibility as a democratic republic binded by faith, our schools should be Hallmark of responsible leadership, because our progress as a nation cannot be far away from our progress in education."**







News

# Duncan Fertilizer Plant, respite to farmers - Haruna

BY EZEKIEL DONTINNA

PLATEAU State Commissioner for Commerce and Industry, Hon. Sule Musa Haruna, has described the establishment of a multi-billion naira Duncan Fertilizer Blending Plant in Larwin-Heipan of Barkin-Ladi, as a great respite to farmers in not only Plateau State, but Nigeria as a whole.

He stated this recently, while delivering his goodwill message at the official commissioning of the Plateau Fertilizer Company Heipang, where thousands of people trooped in to celebrate the new baby.

The commissioner said, "I am highly delighted to welcome you all to the official commissioning of this Multi-Billion Naira Fertilizer Blending Plant being next to none in our state. I congratulate our duly elected Executive Governor, Barr. Caleb M. Mutfwang and his entourage, the Minister for Agriculture and Food Security, Minister for Commerce, Trade and Investment and the Plateau State legislators on this great achievement.

"Ladies and gentlemen, the strategic location of Plateau State in the geographical centre of Nigeria, her favourable weather and climate as well as the available labour, confirms her a leader in food production when all that is required of her to attain this position is harnessed and put in place.

"It is indisputable that varied crops to include food crops, cash crops, horticultural crops, tree/root crops etc, strive very well on the Plateau. But all these years, our hard working farmers have been relying on other states of the federation for supply of fertilizer which has always been insufficient and expensive.

"By this commissioning, we are confident and hopeful that all problems associated with supply of this commodity will be no more and in this era of lack of food security, I stand boldly to add to the voice of our Governor: THE TIME IS NOW FOR PLATEAU TO GO GREEN", he enthused.

According to Haruna, "Our dynamic and result oriented governor has given us a matching order to see to the reactivation of the industries that have been in partnership with the government, but have been non-functional by doing the needful. And by that, yes, Plateau will rise again!

However, an elder



Sule

statesman, Ambassador Yahaya Kwande, commended Dr. Godfrey Bawa, for the great achievement saying, "We are so proud that Duncan is placing this mighty industry on the Plateau. Ladies and gentlemen, this man that used to run through my legs, I never expected that I was playing with an Industrious man. He is a man that is so selfless.

"We did not know this child would grow up to that extent to be known in the whole of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. So we

are grateful to the community that allowed you this piece of land to help Nigerians, because this is what we now need. Thank you very much!", he commended.

On his part, the Gwom Rei and District Head of Heipang, Da Paul D.Tok, appealed to Duncan Fertilizer Blending Plant management to, as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility, help in electrifying the host community and also employ their youths who are serious.

## Kogi Poly Rector warns matriculating students against cultism, violence

THE Rector of Kogi State Polytechnic, Lokoja, Dr. Salisu Usman Ogbo has warned matriculating students for 2023/2024 session against involvement in cultism and other related social vices. The Rector gave the warning while speaking at the matriculation ceremony held at the main campus of the institution in Lokoja, on Tuesday.

He declared that the Polytechnic has zero tolerance for all forms of social vices such as cultism, gun-running, examination malpractice, drug abuse, alcoholic addiction, unhealthy social gathering, cybercrimes, incitement to violence, gangsterism, destruction of public property, stealing and indecent dressing among others. "My simple warning is for you to stay away from these vices to avoid running afoul of the law. Any breach will attract appropriate penalty, including outright expulsion and prosecution. The Students' Information Handbook that will be distributed to you through your respective departments will guide you on the dos and don'ts of the polytechnic. Ignorance of the law has no place in the institution and will

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

not be condoned. "Let me particularly emphasize on cultism, which is completely forbidden on our campus. You are therefore warned to desist from any form of cultist luring related activities. It may interest you to know that we have specifically put in place all visible and invisible security architectures in strategic places to deal with cultists, their sympathisers and sponsors. You are also advised to report any move intended to intimidate and lure you into or enlist you into cultism. "We encourage you to be sterling examples of what moral discipline is. You are advised to dress modestly and in accordance with the acceptable standards. Undue exposure of body parts is considered provocative to the sensibilities of others, and will be severely dealt with. You can always access further information on how to dress on this campus on our posters, bill boards and

GOMBE State Deputy Governor, Manasseh Daniel Jatau has expressed satisfaction over the way and manner the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has been monitoring activities that concern budget implementation in the state.

According to the Deputy Governor, monitoring the implementation of assistance by donor agencies is the right thing to do to avoid misplacement of priority and diversion of funds.

He acknowledged the assistance rendered to the state by UNICEF. "It is only right that you monitor the implementation", he said.

According to him, "We are aware of the sharp practices associated with donor services. If not checked, it will result in donor doubts, donor fatigue and donor withdrawal.

"In the course of your assessment, while on your visit to Gombe State, whatever gray and sharp areas you discover, do not hesitate to tell us. We are open to advice, observations and even criticisms, so that we can sit up even as we meet the yearnings and aspirations of the people", said Dr. Jatau.

He explained further that, "In Gombe, we monitor our activities to ensure they are done according to specifications. As students of system theory that believes everybody is important, we believe in involving everybody in every process.

"We involve the traditional rulers, community and religious leaders, women and youths. Traditional rulers are the ones that can break the cultural barriers among the difficult-to-reach-out to social groups. That is why we are succeeding", he emphasized.

He then appealed with the United Nations donor agencies such as UNICEF, WHO and others to give more attention

## Gombe govt ok with UNICEF monitoring their budget - Dep Gov

From WILLIE ATTAH, Gombe



Jatau

towards assisting developing countries in the area of pharmaceutical and production of drugs by use of local herbs or plants within its environment, instead of depending on the importation of drugs thereby jeopardising the lives of sick people who are most times unattended to because they cannot afford the high cost of imported drugs.

"If research is conducted on local herbs which are abundantly available and being wasted in our environment, it will ensure the surplus of drugs that can crash down the high prices of such products to enable the developing countries to begin to export", he pointed out.

Earlier, Dr Tushar Rane, had expressed UNICEF's satisfaction on the implementation of the budget

by the administration of Governor Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya of Gombe

State.

Dr. Rane who was in Gombe State on a validation of Gombe public expenditure tracking survey, together with officers of the Bauchi Field Office, commended the Gombe State Government on the way budget provisions are being implemented.

He also congratulated the State Government for being first in the ease of doing business for two consecutive years in the country.

He explained that implementation of the budget according to specification, is a testament of financial discipline and shows the commitment to the welfare and needs of the people.

The Chief of UNICEF Bauchi Field Office was accompanied on the visit by the Planning, Monitoring and Report Specialist, Dr. Stanley Garba, Social Policy Specialist, Yusuf Auta, and Health Officer, Oluseyi Olusunde.

hand bills" matriculating students He disclosed that a total of 4,349 students were admitted to run for both National Diploma and Higher National Diploma. According to the Rector, the National Diploma Programme has 3,124 matriculating students while the Higher National Diploma Programme has 1,225

## Governor denies creating office for past governor

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

KOGI State Government has denied a mischievous report that the Governor of Kogi State, Alhaji Ahmed Usman Ododo, has approved the establishment of the "Office of the Immediate Past Governor" to be domiciled in the Government House. The fake news, according to a statement by the Chief Press Secretary to the Governor, Oladele Nihi, should be disregarded. He described the purported report as the handiwork of psychotic mischief makers,

who have been thrown into confusion by the



Ododo

Environmental Technology and Management Studies" He urged the matriculating students to see their admission into the institution as a rare opportunity which they must endeavour to make judicious use of and congratulated them for the favour bestowed upon them.

unprecedented achievements of our former Governor, His Excellency, Alhaji Yahaya Bello, CON, and the realisation that the good people of Kogi State sincerely appreciate this. "The laughable report was concocted to create disaffection and mislead the public but the authors failed woefully to confuse intelligent Nigerians. "We thank the media for exercising restraint and detecting, on their own, that the report was fake. "We, however, urge the general public to always fact-check before spreading fake news".



# 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 (21) 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
<b>ADEYEMO OLUSEGUN ADEDAPO</b> late of Plateau State. Died on the 21st June, 2022 at Ogbomosh, Oyo State.	<b>ADENIYI VICTOR ADEYEMO</b> of No. 34 Iroyin-Ayo Estate Okebab, Ogbomosh, Oyo State. Lawful son of the said deceased.	<b>JOSEPH ZAMFARA BULUS</b> late of Plateau State. Died on the 1st March, 2023 at JUTH, Plateau State.	<b>JOSEPH JULIANA AWIKI</b> of Kampala Rukuba Road Jos, North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful widow of the said deceased.	<b>OBUBA NNANNA EMEA FRANKLIN</b> , late of Plateau State. Died on the 22nd December, 2023 at Apa Benue State.	<b>NKECHI UGENYI NJOKU KALU</b> of SS. Staff Quarter Zaria Road Jos North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful widow of the said deceased.
<b>YAKUBU MUSA NIMDAM</b> late of Plateau State. Died on the 10th December, 2023 at General Hospital, Langtang North LGA, Plateau State.	<b>MANYA MOSES</b> of COCIN LCC 3 Kwanpe Langtang North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful daughter of the said deceased.	<b>LYDIA BOTMANG</b> late of Plateau State. Died on the 4th November, 2022 at Rayfield Medical Centre Jos south LGA, Plateau State.	<b>PAM BOTMANG &amp; KANENG JOANNA FAMELART</b> of Zawan and Rayfield Jos South LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son/daughter of the said deceased.	<b>MURAINOH AKANNI LAWAL</b> late of Lagos State. Died on the 19th August, 2019 at Lagos State.	<b>KAFAYAT OLUWATOYIN LAWAL &amp; KHADIJA ABDURRAHEEM ISPPC</b> Est, BLR 4, flat 5 Odongunya Ikoror, Lagos State. Lawful widow/daughter of the said deceased.
<b>GODWIN DANJUMA MAFULUL</b> late of Plateau State. Died on the 24th December, 2023 at Tahore Bokkos LGA, Plateau State.	<b>GLORIA BULUS &amp; BWEHSUN DANJUMA</b> . All of Mado Tudun Wada Jos North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful anty/brother	<b>IGNATIUS MANGAI ALI MATHIAS</b> late of Plateau State. Died on the 3rd December, 2023 at Pankshin LGA, Plateau State.	<b>SARAYA KASSEM MATHIAS</b> of GRA Pankshin LGA, Plateau State. Lawful widow of the said deceased.	<b>MUSA DAFFO</b> late of Plateau State. Died on the 2nd November, 2021 at Kerang, Mangu LGA, Plateau State.	<b>HAILA MUSA DAFO</b> OF OPP COCIN Munchopyeng Jos South LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.
<b>MONDAY LOM</b> late of Plateau State. Died on the 16th January, 2024 at Butura Kampani, Bokkos LGA, Plateau.	<b>MAHAN MONDAY LOMS</b> of Rantya Jos South LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.	<b>MARK DALYOP VWI</b> late of Rivers State. Died on the 28th April, 2023 at Port-Harcourt.	<b>MARK TERYEI VWI</b> of COCIN Church Riyom LGA, Plateau State. Lawful daughter of the said deceased.	<b>NANDANG TIMLOH</b> ( Also known as) <b>NANDAM TIMLOH</b> late of Plateau State. Died on the 21st April, 2023 at General Hospital Langtang LGA, Plateau	<b>LOHYA TIMLOH</b> of Lamingo Road Jos North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful daughter of the said deceased.
<b>FRANCIS ALUHU</b> late of Plateau State. Died on the 18th June, 2023 at Lafia, Nasarawa State.	<b>DAVID FRANCIS ALUHU</b> of Angwan Mupun Gindiri, Mangu LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.	<b>BAKO YUSUF GUKAS</b> late of Plateau State. Died on the 16th May, 2021 at Kwahas Panyam, Mangu LGA, Plateau State.	<b>BAKO MICHAEL YUSUF</b> of Kwahas Panyam, Mangu LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.	<b>INUSA DALONG</b> late of Plateau State. Died on the 20th April, 2020 at Jos, Plateau state.	<b>FIDELIA INUSA DALONG</b> of Kombun Mangu LGA, Plateau state. Lawful widow of the said deceased.
<b>IBRAHIM GODI</b> late of Plateau State. Died on the 28th May, 2022 at Jos, Plateau State.	<b>AUWAL IBRAHIM</b> No 7/7 Butcher Line Jos North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.	<b>SAMUEL A. TIMOTHY</b> late of Plateau State. Died on the 22nd August, 2012 at S.D.A Hospital, Jengre.	<b>ALICE SOLOMON OBDIAH</b> of behind Police Training School, Zaria Road Jos North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful daughter of the said deceased.	<b>SHIKAM LUKA HARUNA</b> late of Plateau State. Died on the 10th April, 2023 at Cottage Hospital, Bokkos LGA, Plateau State.	<b>HARUNA LUKA</b> of Mushere Bokkos, Bokkos LGA, Plateau state. State. Lawful son of the said deceased.
<b>SALIHU DAMA</b> late of Plateau State. Died on the 5th April, 2023 at JUTH, Plateau State.	<b>MATHEW SALIHU DAMAP</b> of Derdep Mangu LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.	<b>ISAQ MARYAM BAKO</b> late of Plateau State. Died on the 12th August, 2023 at Rayfield Medical Hospital, Jos South LGA, Plateau State.	<b>ISAQ AMINA BAKO</b> of No. 45 Avenue Federal Low-Cost Jos South LGA, Plateau State. Lawful sister of the said deceased.	<b>ORAGBAKOSI NDU ALEXANDER</b> late of Plateau State. Died on 4th August, 2023 at Hospital OLA.	<b>ORAH CHUKWUKA EMMANUEL ALEX</b> No. 53A Busa Buji Street Jos, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.
<b>SANI PRINGKWAP</b> late of Plateau, died on the 23rd July, 2023 at Shimankar, Shendam LGA Plateau State.	<b>EUGENE PRINGKWAP SANI</b> of Shimankar Shendam LGA, Plateau State. The lawful son of the said deceased.	<b>AYANTOYE JOSHUA AYANKULE</b> late of Plateau State, died on the 22nd Oct, 2023. At Jos, Plateau State.	<b>ANYANTOYE MICHAEL ANYANLABI</b> of Jos North Layout, Lamingo Road Jos Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.	<b>DAWAM YENTONAN CHRISTOPHER</b> late of Plateau State died on the 23rd Oct, 2023. At Cott. Hosp, Kwall Quaanpan LGA, Plateau State.	<b>DAWAM PANGZOEM VICTORIA</b> of Pang Tumu Shendam LGA, Plateau State. Lawful widow of the said deceased.
<b>SARKI ALEXANDER YAKI</b> late of Plateau State, died on the 9th Nov, 2023. At Ola Hosp. Jos North LGA, Plateau State.	<b>SARKI LYDIA AYUBA</b> of Rukuba Road Barrack Jos North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful widow of the said deceased	<b>MATHIAS YAWA</b> late of Plateau State, died on the 2nd Feb, 2023. At Tunkus Mikang, LGA. Plateau State.	<b>ROSELINE PETER MATHIAS &amp; KEMNAAN GODWIN YAWA</b> of Gyel Bukuru Jos South LGA, Plateau State. Lawful widow/son of the said	<b>MALAN UFAI</b> late of Plateau State, died on the 25th Dec, 2023. At Dares Mandar-Bokkos LGA Plateau State.	<b>MALAN MAJU GUSHE</b> of Dares Mandar Bokkos LGA, Plateau State. Lawful Husband of the said deceased.
<b>TANI BITRUS KILSON</b> late of Plateau State died on the 5th Sept, 2015. At Mangu, LGA Plateau State.	<b>KILSON BITRUS BORNO</b> of COCIN RCC Heaquaters Bungha Mangu LGA, Plateau State. Lawful husband of the said deceased.	<b>DANJUMA GRACE</b> late of Plateau State died on the 15th May, 2023. At Jos, Plateau State.	<b>RINJI PHILIP GOKWAT &amp; MARY SUNDAY NENDIRMWA</b> of Lamingo Road Jos North LGA. Plateau State. Lawful daughter/son of the said	<b>JOSEPH LADAN NA'ANBAM</b> late of Plateau State died on the 22nd July, 2023. at Jos, Plateau State.	<b>JONATHAN NAANSEL NAANBAM, CECILIA NAANBAM &amp; JONATHAN FRIDAY MARKUS</b> all of Gofwan Lamingo Jos North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful widow/son of the said deceased.
<b>DANBAUCHI SAIDU HARUNA</b> late of Plateau State died on the 18th Aug, 2022. At GEN. Hosp. Barkin Ladi LGA, Plateau State.	<b>HARUNA VICTORIA MANJI</b> of Angwan Sarki Mangu LGA, Plateau State. Lawful widow of the said	<b>BAWA STEPHEN ADAMU</b> late of Plateau State died on the 17th Aug, 2022. At Jos, Plateau State.	<b>DANIEL AYHOK STEPEH &amp; IWUL MARGARET BAWA</b> of Angwan Chiroma Rukuba Road Jos North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful widon/son of the said	<b>DEBORAH ILIYA MAKAMA</b> late of Plateau State died on the 25th Sept. 2022. At Jos, Plateau State.	<b>BYERJALA ILIYA MAKAMA</b> B/46 State Low-Cost Layout Rantya Jos South LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.
<b>DANIEL NENTAWE GOCHUK</b> late of Plateau State died on the 1st Aug, 2023. At Jos, Plateau State.	<b>NENTAWE PEDI DANIEL &amp; NENTAWE ALPHA DANIEL</b> of Agwan Miango Tudun Wada Jos North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful widow/son of the said	<b>DABONG DAVID DAWAR</b> late of Plateau State died on the 8th Sept, 2023. At Quaanpan, LGA Plateau State.	<b>DABONG MOSES</b> Of Plot J3 Rock Haven Jos North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.	<b>GWOM TSOK</b> late of Plateau State died on the 9th oct, 2023. At Jos, Plateau State.	<b>SAMUEL GWOM</b> of Behind Fototek Abattoir Jos South LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.
<b>ABUBAKAR USMAN</b> (also known as) <b>BUBA USMAN</b> late of Plateau State died on the 8th August, 2023. At Godiya Hosp. Bassa LGA Plateau State.	<b>UMAR USMAN</b> of Dutse Kura Bassa LGA Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.				

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



## Plateau attacks: Military to rebuild people's confidence



By Palang Kasmi

It is no longer news that since last year, reoccurring attacks and killings in communities of Mangu, Bokkos, Barkin Ladi and Riyom has left devastation in the the lives of Plateau citizens.

The state has become famous for becoming a killing field with mass burials after facing attacks from terrorists. The military said the Mangu recent killings which left over 30 dead, scores injured and properties destroyed while a 24-hour curfew was in place was metted by Fulani militia. This still leaves a lot of questions to be answered as to why this kind of

scenario keeps reoccurring. How many more innocent people especially women and children will be killed if arrests are not made?

Since 2001, Plateau has become a human slaughter house. Apart from casualties recorded from previous years, last year, over 200 persons were killed in coordinated attacks on the Christmas Eve of December 2023 as gunmen launched night attacks on the residents of Bokkos and Mangu LGA's.

Many residents, stakeholders, media commentaries and reports blamed the military for slow response, non-arrest of perpetrators, attack and arrest of community vigilantes who come out to defend themselves, and other injustices instead of spearheading relief and protection for the people.

The same accusations and scenario played when such incessant attacks occurred in many communities in Bassa Local Government Area the past two years where despite the proximity of the Maxwell Khobe Rukuba Barracks to the LGA, scores were killed in Miango, unabated for days, before military intervention came.

Apparantly tired of the pattern

of killings where the communities are always the casualties, with hardly no arrests. And the ineffectiveness of the military in handling the conflict, the people, bodies, groups, individuals said they are not feeling protected and have apparently lost confidence in the Military's ability to protect them, especially with alleged record of more civilian casualties by their men. Among such groups: The Coalition of Plateau State Indigenous Youths Ethnic Nationalities, Coalition of Civil Societies Organisations in Plateau state, Mangu Development Association, Plateau Youth Council, community, religious leaders, and other stakeholders in the state have at various forums recently come out to task their people to resort to self defence in the face of such assault.

Such display of lack of confidence in commitment of the military to handle the killings has led to recent calls for the replacement of the military with other security outfits like the NSCDC or MOPOL.

It is sad that with the temporary relocation of the base of Operation Safe Haven to Mangu, and the launch of a special operation to tackle insecurity in



the state, "Hakorin Damisa IV" which means Tigers teeth in Mangu on July 22, communities were still attacked simultaneously in a highly coordinated manner.

With all the deployment of special military operation, presidential order, early warning signals networks by CSOs and other stakeholders, the attacks and killings have persisted in the state defying all odds.

The Nigerian President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, Plateau Governor, Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang, Security Chiefs, concerned stakeholders at both the state, national and international levels have tasked the military to save the country from the increasing insecurity challenges and arrest such men of the underworld to secure Nigeria's territorial boundaries.

The latest Bokkos and Mangu incidents is worrisome especially on why such casualties can be recorded with curfews, and military personnel on ground. Nigeria's population is depleting with the rising insecurity and coordinated killings.

Media news and commentaries, across the country and the world are calling for more proactiveness on the part of the military

operatives. In the wake of the Plateau Killings, Rev. Fr. Matthew Hassan Kukah said Nigerians are losing hope in the government's ability to protect them but this must not be so.

They need to rebuild trust in the public eye and ask why are there so many calls and accusations against us? It is actually a case of one too many. If possible an investigation panel should be set by the Military to fish out bad eggs and review its operational strategies and modus operandi. In the 21st Century, a nation like Nigeria and giant of Africa should be seen advancing in technology and other AI feats not dealing with such a high level of insecurity.

The security forces should play the role they are expected to play. Apart from protecting the lives and properties of citizens and guaranteeing their safety, they should strive to build the lost confidence in them, by the people, stakeholders and the world. They should be seen to keep to their words of being "on top of the situation" as they always promise in their speeches to assure residents that they are the savior people are waiting for.

**"Since 2001, Plateau has become a human slaughter house. Apart from casualties recorded from previous years, last year, over 200 persons were killed in coordinated attacks on the Christmas Eve of December 2023 as gunmen launched night attacks on the residents of Bokkos and Mangu LGA's"**

## The case of western education in democracy?



BY EZEKIEL DANTINNA

...It probably may sound seamless to have no perceptible effect on our internal selves, but our day-to-day open disposition exposes how confused we are as a people. We so much celebrated our explore to adopting what we called formal education and failed to see it as what should humble us.

The advent of western education became fashionable and was a replacing thought from the old where signs and culture were instructive and having fifty as the new forty. People who were "fortunate" to walk their ways off those days, saw themselves as special human species.

To some, the new was like how childhood impression lingers, waking up in a strange

bed that is not comfortable like sitting on your father's desk. It became truly quite strange and was like visiting the heavens where angels lived.

In fact, we earlier received with great nostalgia like the arrival of a new born baby believing that, the dark old clouds that have denied us the chance to freely explore our stone age hidden talents and cultural believes had come and so, everybody delved into it.

Every community craved so hard to see their younger ones being enrolled in the new system that comes with freedom to association, freedom of speech and the right to existence in any other human society.

Although, it was at first received with mixed feelings, because it sounded alien and somehow confusing to compare with the old having been used to our ways of life as Africans. Yes, it was in record that our ancestors fought in defense of their tradition, but were tactically subdued to accept westernization reluctantly.

However, as we began to wear the white man shoes and adopted their culture, most parts of our mental attitudes

tend to be in conflict with what was main to humble us. We ignorantly combined the two and it destroyed us instead of helping us.

The essence and the initial prayers of our Founding Fathers was to see us fly competing with other nations, but it later became a trap that succeeded in clapping our feathers. Instead of progressing, we are retrogressing and it has cooked us into unnecessary modern slavery at the mercy of countries we did assisted then.

Sadly, the situation has become terribly hot and we now feeling some strange and alien things we never bargained for happening to

our onces progressive sharp men, as they called country. We now use our celebrated Knowledge in a negative way and we do not need an Angel to tell us that we are truly suffering.

Instead of bringing home awareness that can liberate our people from the dungeon of darkness, the educated ones are using their knowledge in manipulating their people. This is not only ascribed to politicians alone as always said, but the entire system.

Sincerity has become an offense in so many climbs! Hardwork has been bastardized to self-rewarding! Prudence is now tagged naivity, leaving successful-looters as the most intelligent-

enemies of our development. The big question craving for an answer is: What is the crime of western education in democracy? It is high time we talked sense to our individual self and embrace sincerity, hardwork and prudence as patriotic Nigerians and make a redress.

Let us support the good ones among us and stop initiating into this mud that corrupts them. We have no other country to run to because this show of "intellectual mediocrity" will destroy us now that we are divided based on religion, state, region, ethnicity and tribes. May God help us!

**"The advent of western education became fashionable and was a replacing thought from the old where signs and culture were instructive and having fifty as the new forty. People who were "fortunate" to walk their ways off those days, saw themselves as special human species."**



**By HOSEA NYAMLONG**

THE Interfaith dialogue is an increasingly popular response to religious conflict and religious crisis in Nigeria, journalists and media professionals usually employ variety of approaches, to the underlying purpose of all interfaith dialogue is to enhance tolerance and promote peaceful coexistence.

It is on this pedestal that the Wika Gofwen, 2023/24 COFP Fellowship Program organized a one day workshop for media professionals and Journalists in Plateau State at the Plateau State Community and Social Development Agency Conference Hall (PLSCSDA), recently in Jos.

The theme of the programme "Galvanizing Media Support for Interreligious Dialogue in Plateau State" stands as the hallmark in "adding value to the peace process". The event is being supported by Cardinal Onaiyekan Foundation for Peace.

The programme was attended by guests and participants across media organizations and religious leaders to brainstorm and fashion out possible ways to promote peaceful coexistence in our society.

Executive Governor of Plateau State, Barr, Caleb Mutfwang while declaring the workshop opened stated that the role of the media cannot be over emphasize as Journalists have played critical roles in promoting peace through their reportage.

He added that Journalists have gone through several challenges over the years reporting conflicts in Plateau State.

Mutfwang who was ably represented by his Press Secretary Mr. Gyang Bere, urged Journalists and media professionals not to relent in the profession, but to put in their best in line with the ethics of the profession in promoting peace and harmony.

Bere called on Journalists to use the opportunity of the workshop to change the narrative for citizens to understand the true story and situations happening in the state, adding that the social media today has taken the space with fake news without applying the ethics of the profession in reporting

He assured citizens of Government's commitment in ensuring a peaceful environment that the lives and properties of citizens are protected

He pointed out that the cardinal point of the Executive Governor of Plateau State is to unite the people and build a prosperous Plateau State.

In a separate Goodwill message from the invited guests, The chairman of Jama'atu Nasril Islam (JNI), Plateau State. The Emir of Wase Dr. Haruna Sambo, Sarkin Duste, represented by Justice Adamu Musa, Walin Kanem, Rev. Fr. Polycap Lubo, Chairman Christian Association of Nigeria(CAN),Plateau State, State Council Chairman of the Nigeria Union of Journalists(NUJ),Plateau State, Mrs. Ayuku Pwaspo, Ms. Shitna'an Parlong representing the Director of Plateau Peace Building Agency(PPBA), Mrs. Rita Kachollom Gyang, General Manager of PRTVC, represented

by Yakubu Tardy, Director News and current affairs and Mr. Dauda Dinju Director of PLSCSDA.

They alluded to the fact that Workshop was apt considering the situation of the State at the moment, that most times, society normally blame Journalists and the media professionals for reporting wrong information to the public.

That they called on stakeholders to also be part of the peace

religious leaders around the world met in Chicago for the world's Parliament of religion. Many scholars and faith-based leaders recognized it as the origin of formal interreligious dialogue.

Similarly, the interreligious dialogue, is a conversation between two or more people with different religions and traditions in order to express their opinions freely and to

# Imbibing interreligious dialogue for societal growth



process, including interreligious faith to carry the media so they can both help in promoting the peace process in the state.

To achieve peace, all hands must be on deck, we must own and drive the process to peace. Journalists should always be on the right side in disseminating information to the general public at all times.

The convener of the programme, Wika Gofwen was applauded for his efforts to ensure that Journalists and Media professionals find a common ground with the interreligious groups to dialogue and bring out possible ways in promoting peace in the state.

The resource person, Mr. Katdapba Gobum, former Managing Editor with THE NIGERIA STANDARD Newspaper, presented a paper with the topic "Origin of Religious Dialogue".

The paper was aimed at re-jigging Journalists and the media professionals in Plateau State on how to balance their reportage, mostly in religious dialogue, disputes etc.

Gobum introduced the paper with a brief introduction of the human history of misunderstanding and mistrust over the centuries. This could be traced as far in 1893, when

listen to each other respectfully.

Importantly, in both religion, there must be expression of opinions of those involved, otherwise understanding cannot be possible

He highlighted the wikipedia definition of "interfaith dialogue" as the cooperative, constructive and positive interaction between people of different religious traditions, spiritual, humanistic belief at both the individual and institutional levels'.

In addition, the primary purpose of dialogue is for each participant to learn from one another, recognized why some people hold a particular religious opinions different from others. And interreligious dialogue has four levels which are knowledge, actions, spirituality and morality that are key to promote peace.

By extension, dialogue on religious by participants who acknowledge one another of different religious traditions and groups tend to have a meaningful discussion at the end of the day.

Looking at the present security challenges of the state, the resources person asked a question. What is the story of Plateau?

He believes that the difference between Christians and Muslims should raise level of dialogue to the effect of our co-exist in

peace, suspicious make us common enemies, and religious harmony makes our diversity workable.

The fact still remain that the Plateau's initiative arose from the background of misunderstanding between adherents of religions, to how many Journalists are aware of the activities of the interreligious council. When do the council's meet, and what efforts have they made to bring the media nearer or has any reporter written anything on its activities.

He task both the media professionals and the interreligious council to look into possible ways to proffer solutions. Journalists and the media professionals can prioritize promoting national unity and peaceful co-existence in their reportage, while the interreligious council can also enhance continuous dialogue to foster peaceful co-existence through tolerance of each other faith and believes.

To a large extent, media serves as a mirror to the society and government to which government appraised its performance, taking of right decision and media also an integral components of every Democratic society.

Moreover, media can hold the

government accountable through its objectives and constructive criticism, because it is saddled with crucial responsibility of making credible and dependable information to both the led and their leaders.

The technical session was another interesting segment during the workshop. Participants were divided into four groups to brainstorm on solutions that would foster unity and promote coexistence, and each group presented their solutions.

In conclusion, he urged participants to know that they shouldn't be used as tools by the rich men who are behind the scene. They should not destroy the profession by lying, truth must be told.

To galvanized media in Plateau, media has the responsibility to arouse interest of all interreligious dialogue, making all appreciate religions dialogue as essential to humanity to understand and coexist with one another.

Lastly, let's consider what contributions the media in Plateau would make to bring communities, warring factions, religious groups to the dialogue table for peaceful and amicable settlement.



# JOIN OUR TEAM WE ARE HIRING



## METRO ACCOUNTANT

**POSITION:** ACCOUNTANT  
**COMPANY:** TIN CITY METRO SERVICES  
**LOCATION:** JOS, NIGERIA  
**JOB TYPE:** FULL-TIME

### DESCRIPTION:

As an Accountant at Tin City Metro Services, you will be responsible for managing the financial transactions and records of the company. This role involves maintaining accurate financial data, preparing reports, and ensuring compliance with accounting standards and regulatory requirements.

### QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS:

- Bachelor's degree in Accounting, Finance, or a related field.
- Professional certification (e.g., ANAN, ICANG) is a plus.
- Proven experience as an accountant, preferably in the transportation or logistics industry.
- Strong knowledge of accounting principles and practices.
- Proficiency in accounting software and Microsoft Excel.
- Attention to detail and accuracy in financial reporting.

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NOTE: Only shortlisted candidates will be invited for the interview.

Application closes on: February 05, 2024.



# JOIN OUR TEAM WE ARE HIRING



## METRO MANAGER

**POSITION:** MANAGER, METRO SERVICES  
**COMPANY:** TIN CITY METRO SERVICES  
**LOCATION:** JOS, NIGERIA  
**JOB TYPE:** FULL-TIME

### DESCRIPTION:

As a Manager of Tin City Metro Services, you will be responsible for overseeing and optimizing the day-to-day operations of our transportation services. This role involves strategic planning, coordination of resources, and ensuring that services are delivered with the highest level of efficiency, safety, and customer satisfaction.

### QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS:

- Bachelor's degree in Business Administration, Logistics, or a related field.
- Proven experience in operations management, preferably in the transportation industry.
- Strong leadership and decision-making skills.
- Excellent analytical and problem-solving abilities.
- Knowledge of transportation regulations and industry best practices.
- Effective communication and interpersonal skills.
- Good work ethic.

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NOTE: Only shortlisted candidates will be invited for the interview.

Application closes on: February 05, 2024.



# JOIN OUR TEAM WE ARE HIRING



## AD HOC STAFF

**POSITION:** AD HOC STAFF  
**COMPANY:** TIN CITY METRO SERVICES  
**LOCATION:** JOS, NIGERIA  
**JOB TYPE:** FULL-TIME

### DESCRIPTION:

As an Adhoc Staff member at Tin City Metro, you will play a crucial role in providing flexible support to different departments based on operational needs. This position is well-suited for individuals who thrive in diverse work environments and are eager to contribute to the overall success of the company.

### QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS:

- Minimum of Secondary school certificate or equivalent.
- Ability to adapt to different roles and responsibilities.
- Strong problem-solving and interpersonal skills.
- Willingness to learn and take on new challenges.
- Effective communication and teamwork abilities.

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NOTE: Only shortlisted candidates will be invited for the interview.

Application closes on: February 05, 2024.



# JOIN OUR TEAM WE ARE HIRING



## METRO WORKSHOP STAFF

**POSITION:** WORKSHOP STAFF  
**COMPANY:** TIN CITY METRO SERVICES  
**LOCATION:** JOS, NIGERIA  
**JOB TYPE:** FULL-TIME

### DESCRIPTION:

As a Workshop Staff member at Tin City Metro Services, you will play a crucial role in maintaining the operational efficiency and safety of our fleet. This position requires a hands-on approach, technical expertise, and a commitment to quality.

### QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS:

- Valid drivers license.
- High School Diploma or equivalent.
- Proven experience in vehicle maintenance and repair.
- Strong diagnostic and problem-solving skills.
- Familiarity with maintenance software and tools.
- Ability to work independently and collaboratively in a team environment.
- Excellent attention to detail and commitment to quality workmanship.

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NOTE: Only shortlisted candidates will be invited for the interview.

Application closes on: February 05, 2024.



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## METRO DRIVER

**POSITION:** DRIVER  
**COMPANY:** TIN CITY METRO SERVICES  
**LOCATION:** JOS, NIGERIA  
**JOB TYPE:** FULL-TIME

### DESCRIPTION:

As a Driver of Tin City Metro Services, you will play a crucial role in the success of our transportation services. Your primary responsibility will be to safely and punctually transport passengers and goods to their destinations, adhering to all traffic laws and company policies.

### QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS:

1. Valid driver's license and a clean driving record.
2. Proven experience as a professional driver.
3. Knowledge of local traffic laws and routes.
4. Excellent communication and customer service skills.
5. Ability to handle stressful situations calmly and effectively.
6. Physical fitness to perform tasks such as loading/unloading goods.

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NOTE: Only shortlisted candidates will be invited for the interview.

Application closes on: February 05, 2024.



# JOIN OUR TEAM WE ARE HIRING



## METRO BUS ATTENDANT

**POSITION:** BUS ATTENDANT  
**COMPANY:** TIN CITY METRO SERVICES  
**LOCATION:** JOS, NIGERIA  
**JOB TYPE:** FULL-TIME

### DESCRIPTION:

As a Conductor of Tin City Metro Services, you will be a vital part of our transportation operations, responsible for assisting in the smooth and orderly boarding and disembarking of passengers, as well as ensuring the safe and secure transport of goods. Your role will involve customer interaction, ticketing, and maintaining a safe and pleasant travel environment.

### QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS:

- High School Diploma or equivalent.
- Proven experience as a conductor or in a customer service role.
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills.
- Ability to handle cash transactions accurately and responsibly.
- Knowledge of local traffic laws and transportation regulations.
- Ability to work flexible hours, including weekends and holidays.

APPLY NOW <https://bit.ly/peelrecruitment>

NOTE: Only shortlisted candidates will be invited for the interview.

Application closes on: February 05, 2024.



# JOIN OUR TEAM WE ARE HIRING



## BOOKING SUPERVISOR

**POSITION:** BOOKING SUPERVISOR  
**COMPANY:** TIN CITY METRO SERVICES  
**LOCATION:** JOS, NIGERIA  
**JOB TYPE:** FULL-TIME

### DESCRIPTION:

As a Booking Supervisor at Tin City Metro Services, you will be responsible for overseeing the booking and reservation processes, ensuring efficiency, accuracy, and exceptional customer service. You will manage a team of booking agents, coordinate reservations, and contribute to the smooth operation of the company's transportation services.

### QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS:

- Bachelor's degree in Business Administration, Hospitality, or a related field.
- Proven experience in a supervisory or managerial role within the transportation or hospitality industry.
- Strong organizational and multitasking skills.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills.
- Familiarity with booking systems and customer relationship management (CRM).
- Customer-focused mindset and commitment to delivering exceptional service.

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NOTE: Only shortlisted candidates will be invited for the interview.

Application closes on: February 05, 2024.



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Application closes on: February 05, 2024.



FOLLOW US



**Odd World**

**'My granddad kept his real family hidden'**

A woman has taken to Reddit to share how she discovered her granddad's deepest, darkest secret when taking an at-home DNA test - and says the truth has destroyed her entire family

Every family has its quirks - but they're usually harmless and nothing to worry about. However, one woman has revealed she uncovered her granddad's deepest, darkest secret when taking an at-home DNA test for fun.

She explained how she ordered testing kits for her household after they became popular - but instantly regretted it after the results came in. The woman said: "I did a home DNA testing kit. I then got kits for my siblings and my parents - and encouraged my cousins other family to do it. The test connected us with a couple of relatives that we didn't know we had."

But it turns out her 67-year-old grandad has an entire other family, who he has been keeping secret for at least 45 years.

"He is legally married to another woman and not my grandmother," she added. "They had a wedding but they are not legally married."

"He has a wife and a bunch of kids and grandkids with his other family. I don't know how he hid this for all this time."

She went on to explain how her grandad travels a lot for work - but they never would have thought he'd be the type of person to live a secret double life.

The woman added: "My grandmother is devastated. They have been 'married' for 45 years but when we

investigated the marriage was not real.

"None of us had a clue and now it's like our family was destroyed and so is his other family. I wish I could go back in time and not take that stupid test."

Destroyed by the truth, the woman has taken to Reddit to urge others against taking DNA kits, saying "some things are better left hidden".

Commenting on her post, one user said: "It's actually good that you found out now. The DNA test is a blessing in disguise."

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"Your grandmother would have been blind sided from losing everything she thought belonged to her and your family that his legal family could inherit and take should your grandfather pass."

"Your grandma has time to protect herself and get a lawyer. Sorry your grandfather is a snake."

Another user added: "The truth usually comes out in one way or another. I wouldn't beat yourself up about doing the DNA tests."

"This allows your grandmother the opportunity to plan as she could have been left with nothing if grandfather died."

"You aren't responsible for the damage from other people's lies. This is a huge lie."

A third user said: "You are the other family. Granny needs to be protected legally now. She will be entitled to nothing."

**Source: The Mirror**



**Her granddad has been living a secret double life for at least 45 years**



**As Mangu LGA pick up its pieces**

EVEN after multiple assurances that the security operatives were on top of the situation in Mangu Local Government Area of Plateau State and its surrounding environments following the Christmas Eve massacre, the area still went up in flames again last week. This time around, what started like an attack by the Fulani marauders eventually snowballed into multifaceted precarious conflicts with devastating consequences ever imagined. Reports subsequently indicated that blood brothers eventually took up arms against each other as a result of a total misconception of the ideology behind these attacks against the natives. Though the immediate reasons for this most recent violence still remains sketchy, the obvious it seems is that the security were again caught napping. It also suggest the obvious that religious coloration was brought to play into the conflict as far as this most recent mayhem on innocent natives is concerned.

When the Vice President of Nigeria, Kashim Shettima visited the area after the unexpected killing of 200 innocent natives on Christmas Eve, the heads of the various security organisations assured citizens that the attack would be the last. The Police hierarchy thereafter deployed a DIG to ensure that the security enforcement by the Nigeria Police is armed to the teeth. Many other security personnel were drafted to the area to protect lives and property.

Despite these security arrangements however, mass casualties were eventually recorded during this most recent violence even as more vulnerable residents of these communities were killed.

This second round of violence agitated the Chairman of Christian Association of Nigeria, Mangu Local Government Area to accuse the military of serious complexities while handing the unfortunate breach of peace. In a video released by the clergy, he alleged the point blank shooting of his members by security agents who are shouldered with the responsibility of protecting lives and property. Many other trending videos have also alleged that some security personnel also killed some Muslim faithful during the incident. In a complex situation as such after tempers run high, such comments are always bound to happen. Though I may not stand in defence of the Mangu CAN chairman's reactions, I think this is not the first time such remarks are offered in public domain without anything done about it. In fact, in the aftermath of the Christmas Eve genocide, many radicalised clergies have vowed fire and brimstone without these agencies openly rebuking them.

For me, it is quite ridiculous for the military to openly invite the CAN Chairman over these remarks after more than 200 innocent members of his community have been killed for no fault of theirs living out these who have been fanning ambers of hatred and anarchy since the Christmas took place. Before this most recent CAN chairman's remarks, many other clergies of other faith have threatened the peace of Plateau with impunity. Several others have directly instigated

unending brutality without any invitation extended them for explanation by any arm of our security agencies; one then wonder why the security agency invited the CAN Chairman immediately after he released such a video indicting them of not doing enough to protect human lives in this volatile area.

I feel that our security organisations need to do more if this unending killings must stop particularly in our vulnerable rural settlements. Rather than going after relations and or affiliates of these victims who react after these heinous acts of brutality are committed, our security must do all it takes to prevent these unspeakable brutalities from happening.

In the aftermath of the 2023 Christmas Eve massacre, one would have expected our entire security organizations to have re-jiked their structural commands and or neutralise any other threat to peace. One would have also expected a military and civilian engagement so as to help halt some of these possible reprisals and or further breach of peace.

Astonishingly however, member representing Wase/Kaman at the House of Representatives, Idris Majei during a plenary recently alleged that those killing innocent lives on the Plateau were marauders trained in Israel by only God knows who. According to the Lawmaker, he has various solid evidences to justify his claims that the political class are responsible for the unending killings on the Plateau. This allegation has really opened my eyes to another in-depth understanding of the dimension of the unending conflicts on the Plateau. I therefore think that the security must give him all listening ears since he claims to unmask those killing the people of Plateau State. While some of us appreciate these efforts, the only concern is; why did the lawmaker found it necessary only this time around to voice these weighty allegations in public domain. In any case, since the political class has been fingered on the matter, its high time, searchlights are beamed to ensure that the needful is done to prevent further loss of lives on the Plateau. Considering the significant number of arrests so far made by the Police, pertaining to the Christmas Eve killings, security agencies must work hard to arrest as many as possible and bring them to face the full wrath of the law.

As the law abiding people of Mangu Local Government Area pick up their pieces to face their future, the Nigerian leadership must acknowledge the fact that these vulnerable people have been cheated for life. This is because, it is realistic that their loved ones will never come back and only when justice is ensured that these people would possibly be comforted.

As unpromising as the situation looks, hope is however not lost knowing too well that dry bones shall rise again. Many Plateau citizens and the natives are more than ever confident that with time, these challenges shall pass away to the glory of God.

Our communities must also understand the intrigues at play against Plateau and guard their loins before they are wiped away. Now that the devil, the accuser of the faithful has declared his battle against God's chosen, citizens must not wait until they become slaves in their ancestral lands before they think of what to do. Enough of these killings on the Plateau, enough is enough please.



## View Point

# Nigeria and retrogressing democracy

By **LUKA MUSA JR.**

ABRAHAM Lincoln popularly known as the father of Democracy, one of America's famous presidents that defined Democracy as the Government of the people by the people for the people. This definition, undoubtedly projected the true concept of the term "Democracy" that is why the definition is popular and widely accepted among scholars. It is a system whose practice is people inclined, through acting and participation. And it's also a Government on behalf of all the people which should be inclusive and reflective of people's wishes, as affirmed by Jesse Jackson on the 18th July 1984 at Francisco Democratic National Convention, where he said "Democracy guarantees right to participate not a license for either majority or minority to dominate" which means it is aimed to find common ground in decision making in order to find common point of interest, where the decisions of the majority should not always surpassed the decisions of the minority, despite the intuitive appeal of Democracy as a process where majority always have the say.

This goes to tell that, Democracy being viewed as a system that offers equal opportunity for people to decide on common rules and policies that affects them 'in their various communities. Again, Democracy as a means of establishing Government ought to provide process of succession of rulers through elections which is done peaceful and constitutional and within this very context, fundamental human rights set the base of its tenets. Over time, we have seen and witnessed how Democracy stirred changes and brought great reforms, that made life and human existence became lovely and attractive, the most reason why almost all the Nations of the world now delved into practice of Democracy as the best option of Governance. Because it is only in Democracy that people can demand for basic infrastructure, better healthcare, improve education system, Food, Job, Security, freedom of expression and association.

Instead of autocratic or doctorship kind of Governance where a small segment of the society rule. By Democratic tenets, Abraham Lincoln on January 1st 1863 issued and signed the Emancipation Proclamation which declared "All person's held as slaves to be free" which gave rise for the participation of the blacks in various fields of endeavour in America, through Democracy on November 4th 2008 Senator Barak Obama emerged as the first Afro-American elected as the President of the United States, we have again seen how the quest for Democracy sprang Nationalism acrossed Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Carribean which brought great men in the like of Marcus Garvey, WEB Dubois, Mahatma Ghandi, Kwame Nkurma and Nelson Mandela.



It is a common knowledge that Democracy has its pros and cons, but it is said "The worst Democracy is better than a military regime" Therefore, what are instinctive in Democracy are equal representation and equal distribution of power and resources to reflect the needs and interest of the broader community. It also provide a system that deals with differences and disagreements in having a say in the future of a Nation, it again shapes a country and the government towards collective will of the citizens, also it prevent monopoly and abuse of power and improves social cohesion by bringing people from divers ground together to discuss and work towards a common goal. It again supports development and ensures stability that reduces, tension, conflict, crises and distrust among citizens.

According to a survey conducted by PEW RESEARCH CENTER on Nigerian Adults between June 25th to July 30th, 2018, it captured the mood of the Nigerian public about the state of the Nation, which showed that about 60% of Nigerian adults are not satisfied with how Nigerian Democracy works while 39% are satisfied and 1% don't know what is going on. The survey further showed that 59% feels that the elected officials don't care about what ordinary people think, while 38% feels the elected officials care about what ordinary people think. Then 54% feels the court system don't treat everyone fairly while 48% feels the court treats everyone fairly, with regards to whoever wins election it's the same nothing change, 57% agreed that whoever wins is the same thing while 41% disagreed with that. And again 72% believed politicians are corrupt while 24% disagreed that politicians are not

corrupt, in the context of religion between the Christian's and the Muslim's. The survey gathered that Christian's in Nigeria are less satisfied with Democracy than Muslim's, only 16% of Christian's are satisfied and 62% of Muslim's are satisfied too, and on the other hand, 83% of Christian's are not satisfied with the Country's Democracy as well 38% of Muslim's are not also satisfied.

This survey has indicated the epistocratic challenges faced by Democracy in Nigeria, which are totally untenable and has unearth how disenchant Nigerian's are with the elected officials, the court system and the way Democracy itself works. Which negates the presumptions of a sustainable Democracy, having it's attributes mired in distrust within the minds of Nigerians across the socio-economic class divide, which informs how far Nigeria is from perfecting a sustainable Democracy like other nations of the world. Though it's difficult to find a perfect Democracy but you can get an improved one which Nigeria is nowhere close to that. Because Democracy in Nigeria is characterized by impunity, systemic violence, denial of justice, abuse of Power, God fatherism, inequality, election rigging, high cost of governance, poor healthcare, fallen standard of education, low infrastructure, high unemployment rate, cross carpeting, religious bigotry, insecurity, hunger and public malfeasance. Which are indexes and indicators that showed the long way remaining for Nigeria to attaining a true Democracy, and remains element's that are shaking the corporate existence of Nigeria as a Nation.

It's only in Nigeria's Democracy that elected officials hold unto elective offices as their inheritance or personal property,

having people's mandate as their representative, instead of improving their well-being. They aim to only steal and amassed wealth for themselves, with which they employ thugs to intimidate and crush opponents, bribe security operatives and the court, bribe traditional leaders and stakeholders, who could help rig election to favour them and again help them promote their selfish agendas that's against the popular needs of the people they're representing, which is one big factor that made corruption, thuggery and violence to be popular and pronounced in Nigeria. Global Financial Integrity (GFI) a Washington based research and advocacy organisation, ranked Nigeria 7th nation out of 143 with the highest level of illicit financial flow, according to the report Nigerian leaders laundered about \$19 billion within a decade (2000-2010) in addition to several billions of Naira stolen by Public and civil servants.

Again, it's only in Nigeria that Democracy is seen as money making venture, instead of it being an institution that ought to discourage wastages and profligacy to ensure judicious use of resources, rather it's seen in Nigeria as an institution that offer jumbo pay, expensive cars and immunity. It's again pertinent to note that, it's only Nigeria's Democracy that does not provide a level playing ground for the participation of the youths and the women, instead it's dominated by oldmen and the drain brains who cannot offer any initiative or policy that could advance Democracy, for instance Emmanuel Macron on 26th August 2014 was appointed Minister of Economics and Industry and later on 7th May 2017 he was elected as President of France at the age of 39 a situation you can't find in Nigeria

with our leaders edging their weak stage of 80 years with abnormal brain functioning. Another thing that is recently common in our retrogressing Democracy is the flagrant cross carpeting by politicians, where politicians change political party as it pleases them, it's in Nigeria that you'll find a politician changing of over 3 political parties in less 6 months. Against this backdrop, lack of freedom of speech is another issue that's becoming alarming, with records of arrest, assault and brutalization of News men and individuals who raised opinions and criticized government officials over misconduct, mismanagement and other things. For instance, the arrest of Aminu Adamu of Federal University Dutse by the secret police SSS, for tweeting a photo of the former first lady, Aisha Buhari with a caption in Hausa which translates "Mama is feeding fat on poor people's money" was believed to be an arrest ordered by the former first lady herself, an indication that there still exist limitations to freedom of speech which contradicts the true practice of Democracy.

Most prevalent of these, is the handling of the electoral process by Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) who since 1999 have been marked and marred by distraction and irregularities, which characterized palpable fears, intimidation, corruption, pre and post-election violence. It is pathetic that, even appointment and deployment of electoral officers to certain areas. Is influenced by some big names in order to pave the way for smooth flow of their corrupt tendencies perpetuated at the polls, ranging from stealing and snatching of ballot boxes, falsification of results figures, by passing of card readers or Bvas are issues that continues to resurface in every election. Example of this, is the usurpation of the power of the returning officer in Adamawa state by Residential Electoral Commissioner (REC) Mr. Hudu Ari by purported declaration of Hajiya Binani on 16th April 2023 Governorship election in Adamawa in an inconclusive electoral process. Most recently among those issues, is the truncation of people's mandate by the judgement of the court of Appeal in which Gov Abba Kabir of Kano, Governor Caleo Mutfwann of Plateau state and Gov Dauda Lawal of Zamfara State were all sacked, these issues and many more discussed earlier are reasons why Nigerian's democracy kept retrogressing and is far from attaining half perfection of thus we're seeing in the U.S, France, Germany etc.

**Luka Musa Jr, is from Bogoro Local Government Area, Bauchi State.**



## News

### FG to inaugurate Tripartite committee on minimum wage

FG Set For Inauguration Of 37-Member Tripartite Committee On Minimum Wage

The Federal Government is set for the inauguration of the 37-man Tripartite Committee on National Minimum Wage.

THE committee is to recommend a new National Minimum Wage for the country.

Expected to perform the inauguration ceremony on behalf of President Bola Tinubu at the Council Chamber of the Presidential Villa Abuja, is the Vice President, Senator Kashim Shettima

Membership of the committee cuts across the Federal Government, state government, private sector, and organised labour.

Present for the inauguration are some state governors, including Bala Mohammed of Bauchi State; Mohammed Bago of Niger State; Ademola Adeleke of Osun State, and Bassey Otu of Cross River State.

Members of the committee from the Federal Government, the members include Nkeiruka Onyejeocha, Hon. Minister of State, Labour and Employment (Representing Hon. Minister of Labour and Employment); Mr. Wale Edun; Minister of Finance & Coordinating Minister of the Economy; Alhaji Atiku Bagudu, Hon. Minister of Budget Economic Planning;



**Tinubu**

Dr. (Mrs) Yemi Esan, Head of the Civil Service of the Federation; Dr. Nnamdi Maurice Mbaeri, Permanent Secretary, GSO. OSGF and Ekpo Nta, Esq, Chairman/CEO, NSIWC - Member/Secretary.

From the states, Alh. Mohammed Umar Bago, Governor, Niger State- representative from North Central; Sen. Bala Mohammed, Governor Bauchi State- representative from North East; Alh. Umar Dikko Radda, Governor Katsina State- representative from North West; Prof. Charles Soludo, Governor, Anambra State- representative from the South East; Sen. Ademola Adeleke, Governor, Osun

State- representative from South West; Mr. Otu Bassey Edet, Governor, Cross River State- representative from South West are part of the committee.

From the Nigeria Employers' Consultative Association (NECA) - Adewale-Smatt Oyerinde, Director-General, NECA; Mr. Chuma Nwankwo; Mr. Thompson Akpabio with also members from the Nigeria Association of Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture (NACCIMA) include Asiwaju (Dr) Michael Olawale-Cole, National President; Hon. (Dr) Ahmed Rabiu, National Vice President and Chief Humphrey Ngonadi (NPO), National Life President.

### Shettima seeks support for FG's job creation, agriculture

THE Vice President support for the Kashim Shettima has administration of implored development President Bola Ahmed Tinubu to deliver on the



**Shettima**

Renewed Hope Agenda, especially in priority areas such as e-mobility, job creation, agriculture, food security and power sector, among others.

The Vice President said this Monday when he received the Global Managing Director of the Tony Blair Institute, Mr Michael McNair, at the Presidential Villa in Abuja.

He said delivering on the priority areas would help in addressing some of the challenges bedevilling the country, particularly the issue of insecurity occasioned by terrorism, kidnapping and banditry.

"It is easy to talk but how to walk the talk is the most important component of leadership," he said.

On more support to the Tinubu administration's drive to deepen the deployment and use of e-vehicles for public transportation, the Vice President urged the TBI to make available its expertise in enhancing the adoption of the technology

NASARAWA State Independent Electoral Commission (NASIEC) has announced an indefinite postponement of the local government election earlier slated for August 31, 2024.

NASIEC chairman, Barrister Ayuba Usman Wandai, said the postponement was as a result of the litigation challenging the exercise.

He made the announcement during a meeting with members of the Inter Party Advisory Council (IPAC) on Monday in Lafia.

According to him, the decision to postpone the polls was taken after the commission was served with a court summons by the Federal High Court sitting in Lafia, in a matter filed by one Paul A. John and 12 others against the Nasarawa State House of Assembly and NASIEC.

He said the affected persons are challenging section 8 (e) of the Nasarawa State Local Government Election Law 2018 and sections 3j, 3k and 9 of the Local Government Councils Elections Guidelines 2024.

He noted that the commission having studied and analyzed the originating

### Nasarawa postpones LG election indefinitely



**Ayuba**

summons and issues contained therein, as well as its implication on the successful conduct of the 2024 local government elections, decided to postpone the exercise indefinitely.

Wandai said the commission has therefore instructed its lawyers to

apply for an accelerated hearing of the matter to enable it resume its normal election activities.

"Pursuant to the above, the Commission has decided to postpone indefinitely, all scheduled activities leading to the conduct of the 31st August, 2024 Local Government Councils Elections," he said.

### Terrorists killed as troops rescue 35 kidnap victims

TWO terrorists have been killed in Katsina State with 35 kidnap victims rescued in military operations in the North-Western state.

The rescue which happened on January 27

was made possible by the troops of the Joint Task Force North West Operation HADARIN DAJI (OPHD) in Katsina.

Spokesman of Operation Hadarin Daji, Captain Yahaya Ibrahim, disclosed this in a statement on Tuesday. He stated that several other terrorists escaped with gunshot injuries.

"During the operation troops had an encounter with the armed terrorists, neutralizing two of the terrorists while others escaped with severe gunshot wounds," the statement read.

"In continuation with the series of simultaneous well-coordinated clearance operations in its Areas of Operational Responsibilities in the North-West which has continued to yield tremendous successes. Troops of the Joint Task Force North-West Operation HADARIN DAJI (OPHD) operating in Katsina state have rescued 35 kidnapped victims and neutralized two terrorists in Katsina state in a search and rescue operation.

Noting that the rescued victims include 19 males, 12 females as well as four children, he said they were immediately handed over to the Katsina State Government by the Commander 17 Brigade Nigerian Army/Sector 2 Operation HADARIN DAJI,

Brigadier General Oluremi Fadairo.

TROOPS OF OPERATION HADARIN AGAIN RESCUE 35 KIDNAP VICTIMS, NEUTRALIZE 2 TERRORISTS IN KATSINA STATE

In continuation with the series of simultaneous well coordinated clearance operations in its Areas of Operational Responsibilities in the North West which has continued to yield... pic.

Fadairo on his part pledged that the military would continue the attack on the terrorist enclaves.

Katsina is one of the north-western states that is affected by banditry. Others include Kaduna, Zamfara, Kebbi, and Sokoto.

Despite efforts of the state governments and security agencies, the bandits have continued to kill people at will, kidnap many for ransom as well as wreak havoc on helpless communities.

Heavily armed gangs known locally as bandits raid villages, especially in the northwest states, looting and kidnapping for ransom.

Rural villages often form self-defence vigilante groups to protect themselves from raids.

President Bola Tinubu says improving security is a priority as he seeks to attract more foreign investment in Africa's most populous country and largest economy.



## Sports



Klopp

# Is replacing Klopp at Liverpool a done deal?

**Xabi Alonso has emerged as hot favourite to become the next Liverpool manager following Jurgen Klopp's shock decision to leave the club at the end of the season. Guillem Balague writes**

A former Anfield favourite - he scored in their Champions League final win in 2005 - Alonso has enjoyed spectacular success at Bayer Leverkusen, who sit two points clear of Bayern Munich at the top of the Bundesliga and are in the knockout stages of the Europa League after an unblemished group-stage campaign.

When he joined the club in October 2022 they were second from bottom after eight Bundesliga games. Just 26 games later they finished in sixth place and in Europe.

But Liverpool are not the only club casting an avaricious eye over the man who is currently one of the hottest managerial properties. Real Madrid, Bayern Munich (both of whom he also played for with great distinction) and even Manchester City where Pep Guardiola might not extend his stay past the end of next season, will also be looking closely at the situation.

And despite bookmakers offering miserly odds which make it look like it is a done deal, it is anything but and the only certainty is that, ultimately, the decision will be Alonso's alone.

'I could see him at Liverpool' - Is Alonso the next super coach?

The former Spain international, who has recently turned 42, has two and a half years left on his Bayer Leverkusen contract.

Leverkusen have always told Alonso, both privately and publicly, they would not stand in his way if a chance to join one of the elite clubs in Europe came his way. There is no buy-out clause in his contract.

Nothing has changed. His plan

has always been the same. The idea has always been that if things went well then the likes of Real Madrid and Liverpool would be a possible next step, while if things went less well then there would always be the chance of returning to his hometown of San Sebastian and Real Sociedad.

In fact, after taking his apprenticeship with Real Sociedad B side Sanse, Alonso might well have graduated to the job as first-team coach had it not been for the excellent job current incumbent Imanol Alguacil had done, and continues to do.

Circumstances have now also brought Bayern Munich into the picture as well as Manchester City, although it is way off the mark to suggest that all any of the top clubs have to do is knock on his door and he will come running.

His long-term managerial plan goes even further back to when he was still playing.

Alonso was very much a coach and fan favourite at Real Madrid when he decided to leave them to join Bayern Munich in 2014, and where he would play his last three seasons before retiring as a player.

It was a decision that surprised many, although it was one he took so he could learn more about coaching under the tutelage of Pep Guardiola as well as become fluent in German, something which is standing him in good stead these days.

Within four months of his arrival at the club he was giving his first interview in German. Focus and dedication to the task in hand, whatever that might be,

has characterised wherever he has been, both as a player and a coach.

As a player, as well as learning from Guardiola, Alonso soaked up from the very best including Jose Mourinho, Carlo Ancelotti and Rafael Benitez, and knows how to put his ideas across to players. He is very much an interventionist, a hands-on coach rather than a manager.

His style as a coach leads him to look to dominate through possession, though he isn't an evangelical fundamentalist to the idea in the same way that he isn't joined at the hip to always playing 4-3-3, the favoured line-up of those who see it as the crux of the game.

At Leverkusen he swiftly

realised it was poor defending that was hurting them most, and his decision to turn to a back three with two players playing just in front of them helped shore things up.

It is a system Alonso still uses and now he has a much stronger midfield, capable of playing through into the opposition box.

His constant corrections in training mean just about every player has improved both individually and as part of the collective - everyone knows his methodology and what is expected of them.

In his relationship with the players he has shades of Ancelotti - friendly, courteous and cordial, though not to the extent where anyone would wonder who was in

charge, while much of his defensive strategies have probably been learned from his time with Mourinho.

All the players - including stars like Granit Xhaka and Alex Grimaldo - speak very highly of him. These are players that are impressed not just by his CV but by the fact that he has made them better, both individually and also as a part of the team, because they can all see that they are working to a structure, and one that works.

Alonso will know that while things are not going particularly well for Bayern coach Thomas Tuchel at the moment, there is still everything to play for in the Bundesliga this season. He will also be aware that Real Madrid have renewed Ancelotti's deal until June 2026, and that Guardiola is committed to Manchester City until the end of next season.

However, the news coming swiftly after Klopp's announcement that he along with assistant coach Peter Krawietz and elite development coach Vitor Matos would also be leaving in the summer, coupled with sporting director Jorg Schmidtke exiting at the end of January, suggests there will be a complete changing of the guard at Anfield this summer.

But there is still a lot to be discussed and the only certainties are that despite all the talk and speculation, Alonso and Bayer Leverkusen have unfinished business this season - and he will not be affected by the noise.

Alonso, and nobody else, will decide when it is time to leave Bayer Leverkusen.



Alonso



# Sports

## AFCON 2023



Lookman switched allegiance to the Nigeria national football team in 2022 after rejecting the country on three occasions.

### Lookman heaps praise on Eagles ahead of Angola clash

SUPER Eagles and Atalanta winger, Ademola Olajade Lookman, has praised the Nigerian football team ahead of their AFCON 2023 quarter-final clash against Angola, Soccer.net.ng reports.

Lookman, 26, was given the man of the match award after scoring a brace to help Nigeria sweep their neighbours, Cameroon aside at the Stade Félix-Houphouët-Boigny.

The former Leicester man was fed by Victor Osimhen and Fulham's Calvin Bassey and has praised the team for

the togetherness which has brought them into the quarter-finals.

"Wow, we're so happy to qualify for the quarter-finals. The more we play together, the more fluid we become. I'm standing here now but this award reflects the whole team's performance. I love this atmosphere, it's incredible. Tonight our fans pushed us to the end because this was Cameroon, and when you wear the Super Eagles shirt, some games resonate more than others," the former RB Leipzig man told CAF Online in his post-

match interview.

With the Super Eagles set to face the Palancas Negras of Angola, Lookman recognizes that they're a good side, but reinstated that Jose Peseiro's men will prepare equally.

"Angola are a good team. We'll analyze them and prepare. The further you go, the tougher it gets so we'll take it game by game," he added.

Angola have scored nine goals in four games at the AFCON 2023 tournament, meanwhile, Nigeria have kept three clean sheets.

### Angola receive massive reward ahead of clash

THE Angola national football team finds itself basking in the glory of well-deserved rewards after securing a spot in the quarterfinals of the 2023 Africa Cup of Nations, Soccer.net.ng reports.

The Palancas Negras, fresh off a commanding 3-0 victory over Namibia in the Round-of-16, are set to face Nigeria in a highly anticipated clash on Friday with hopes of sealing an unprecedented semifinal berth at the premier African competition.

According to Angop, Banco Angolano de Investimento (BAI) has announced a substantial reward of five million Kwanzas (approximately 5.41 million naira) for each Angola player and coaching staff in recognition of their quarterfinal qualification.

This financial boost is a testament to the team's outstanding performance on the pitch.

Adding to the fervour, Aginaldo Jaime, the President of the Board of Directors of UNITEL, has gone above and beyond, gifting each member of the Angolan delegation in Cote d'Ivoire an iPhone 15, complete with complimentary calls, SMS, and free internet for a year.

This gesture not only underscores the team's achievement but also reflects the widespread enthusiasm

surrounding their journey in the competition.

AS the anticipation builds, SODIAM EP has thrown down the gauntlet, promising a substantial US\$250,000 (equivalent to 225 million naira) to the national team and technical staff should Angola triumph over Nigeria and advance to the final of this 34th edition of the Nations Cup.

However, the road ahead is fraught with challenges,

especially when facing three-time AFCON winners Nigeria.

Ranked as the 40th best footballing nation globally, Nigeria hold a considerable advantage, sitting 77 places ahead of Angola.

Both teams enter this match unbeaten in the tournament, with Nigeria's noteworthy victories against Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau and a remarkable triumph over four-time winners Cameroon in the last eight.



The Super Eagles completely dominated Cameroon in Abidjan on Saturday on the road to securing a place in the quarterfinals at the AFCON

AS Nigerians continue to applaud the Super Eagles of Nigeria for beating the Indomitable Lions of Cameroon to qualify for the quarter finals of the ongoing Total Energies CAF African Cup of Nations, Senate President Godswill Akpabio has said the victory signals a bigger achievement for the Nigerian team in the competition.

SPORTING TRIBUNE said that, in a congratulatory message to the Nigerian team signed by his Special Adviser on Media and Publicity, Honourable Esemey Eyiboh, the Senate President said with the Saturday's triumph over Cameroon, the Super Eagles have proven they have the wherewithal to beat any team in Africa.

He said the resourcefulness and industry of the Super Eagles from Godswill Akpabio International Stadium (Nest of Champions) in Uyo to Felix Houphouët Boigny Stadium in Abidjan is never in doubt.

While praising the Super Eagles for their resilient, tactical discipline, and team work, the Senate President said, "I felt proud watching the Super Eagles demobilize the lions."

"Apart from dominating the Indomitable Lions, the Super

### Beating Cameroon shows Eagles can win AFCON

-Akpabio

Eagles tamed the Lions and made them look ordinary. That is the Nigerian spirit. I congratulate you for making million of Nigerians proud", he stated.

The Senate President noted that the Super Eagles opponents in the quarter finals, the Palancas Negras of Angola is not a pushover but expressed optimism that Nigeria will triumph over them.

"Your opponents in the quarter finals are also a strong

side. But I strongly believe that with determination, right tactics and team work, you will subdue them.

"While I congratulate you for advancing to this stage of the competition, I urge you not to be complacent but continue to be focused and resilient. We are behind you and all Nigerians are supporting you.

"Do not look back but go on and bring home the trophy", he charged the Eagles.



Akpabio

### Bayo nets dramatic winner

MOHAMED Bayo headed a 98th-minute winner as Guinea reached the quarter-finals of the Africa Cup of Nations with victory over 10-man Equatorial Guinea, who had earlier missed a penalty.

BBC SPORT said that, Equatorial Guinea midfielder

Federico Bikoro was dismissed 10 minutes after the break for catching Bayo in the ribs with his studs.

The National Thunder were awarded a spot-kick midway through the second half after Sekou Sylla caught Iban Salvador, but captain Emilio Nsue hit the base of the right-hand upright.

And, with the game set to head to extra time, striker Bayo stooped to guide Ibrahim Diakite's cross from the right flank just inside the near post in the final minute of added time.

The West Africans have made the last eight for the first time since 2015 and will take on DR Congo in Abidjan on Friday (20:00 GMT) after the Leopards beat record seven-time champions Egypt 8-7 on penalties following a 1-1 draw.

Guinea had barely made their one-man advantage count in the final 35 minutes, although goalkeeper Jesus Owono was forced to tip a header from striker Serhou Guirassy over the bar in the closing stages.

Yet Bayo's dramatic late goal broke the resistance of the Equatoguineans and gave the Syli National their first triumph in seven knock-out stage appearances at the finals.

The Le Havre striker's header, clocked at 97 minutes and 38 seconds, is the latest winning goal in a knockout match in the history of the Africa Cup of Nations.

Equatorial Guinea had been the surprise package of the group stage, winning Group A ahead of Nigeria and hosts Ivory Coast as Nsue netted five goals to top the scoring charts.

In the first half, there was scant action in the final third, with Bayo sending an effort

into the side-netting early on and Guinea team-mate Morgan Guilavogli firing over from long range.

Nsue blasted a volley over the bar from 12 yards two minutes after the restart, but the complexion of the game changed when Bikoro was shown a straight red after following through with a clearance in midfield and catching Bayo with some force.

Equatorial Guinea were handed a glorious chance to take the lead when the video assistant referee sent Omar Artan to his touchline screen, and the referee awarded a penalty, deciding Sylla had caught Iban Salvador on the back of the leg after the midfielder had controlled a pass.

But veteran striker Nsue, who plays in the third tier in Spain, could not add to his tally at the finals despite sending Guinea keeper Ibrahim Kone the wrong way.

Aside from substitute Guirassy's header, a tame effort from right-back Diakite was all Guinea could muster before the board for eight minutes of added time went up and Bayo won it at the death.

Equatorial Guinea had reached at least the quarter-finals on their previous three appearances at Afcon, but Juan Micha's side could not repeat that achievement as 34-year-old Nsue was left to rue his costly miss while Guinea celebrated at the final whistle.

The West Africans, managed by one-time Arsenal striker Kaba Diawara, had finished behind holders Senegal and Cameroon but progressed to the knockout stages as one of four best-ranked third-placed sides.



## Sports

### Gombe U17 cricket teams secure spots in championship

From WILLIE ATTAH, Gombe

THE male and female under seventeen Cricket teams of Gombe State have picked a slot each in the Nigeria Cricket Federation PwC Championship.

The two teams picked the slots after emerging victorious in the Northeast Zonal Elimination held at the Pantami Stadium, Gombe, recently.

For the male team, it was their third zonal representation for Gombe State after a determined effort enabled them to have a repeat of their past achievements.

In their opening match against the Borno State team, they dominated the game with a commanding 112-run chase, winning by 88 runs.

This victory propelled them to the final against Taraba State who previously defeated Bauchi with a decisive 7-wicket margin.

In the final game, Gombe once again asserted their dominance, posting an impressive 140 runs within their 20 overs.

Taraba State faltered in response, falling short of the



Yahaya

chase, and Gombe secured the zonal championship crown.

In the female category, the Gombe U-17 girls faced a less competitive scenario, as only Taraba State presented themselves in that category.

Nevertheless, the Gombe girls demonstrated their skills, claiming victory with a confident 46-run chase in 16.1 overs.

The third-place match saw

Bauchi edge out Borno in a nail-biting encounter.

After posting 147 runs, Bauchi barely held their breath as Borno threatened with 144 runs, ultimately securing a 3-run victory.

With their zonal triumphs, both Gombe State U-17 teams earned the right to represent the Northeast in the upcoming National U17 Championship.

FORMER world indoor champion Dwain Chambers is set to race in the 60m at the UK Indoor Championships at the age of 45.

BBC SPORT said that, Chambers qualified for February's event by running 6.81 seconds at a meet in Lee Valley earlier this year.

He was banned for doping in 2004 but returned to the sport in 2006 and won the 60m world indoor title in 2010.

The qualifying time for the World Indoor Championships, which take place in Glasgow in March, is 6.58s.

Chambers, who last ran for Great Britain in 2014, attempted to break into American football twice - during his two-year doping ban and again in 2007 - before an

### Chambers to race at UK indoors championships



Chambers

unsuccessful trial spell at rugby league club Castleford Tigers in 2008.

He took gold at the World Indoors in Doha in 2010 and bronze two years later in

Istanbul.

He officially retired in July 2017 but also ran in the British Indoors 60m Championships in 2019 only to be disqualified for a false start in semi-finals.

### Murray beaten in Montpellier but Boulter wins

ANDY Murray suffered a first-round exit at the Open Sud de France in Montpellier, but Katie Boulter won to reach the Linz Open second round.

BBC SPORT said that, Murray was beaten 2-6, 7-6 (7-5), 6-3 by France's Benoit Paire.

The 36-year-old, who was also beaten in the first round at the Australian Open, has now won only one of his last eight matches.

British number one Boulter cruised past Italian sixth seed

Jasmine Paolini in straight sets in Austria.

Murray looked to be rediscovering his form when he took the first set in just 38 minutes, but Paire hit back to take a much closer set on a tie-break.

Paire then had the better of the decider, eventually taking it 6-3 despite Murray saving four match points.

Three-time Grand Slam champion Murray has now lost all three of his matches in 2024 and slipped to 49th in the



Murray

then win one set at a time, one game at a time."

So many players with the experience of a Grand Slam final have talked about how different the occasion can be, particularly if it is the first time, and potentially overwhelming.

Medvedev, whose sole major triumph came at the 2021 US Open, hoped his greater experience in these situations would tell against Sinner.

While Sinner did not appear to be hampered by nerves, Medvedev simply suffocated him with an attacking approach in the opening two sets which proved to be a smart strategy.

world rankings.

The Scot has previously hinted he would think about retiring if he did not enjoy playing this year, having struggled for form in the closing stages of the 2023 season.

Meanwhile, Boulter needed just 76 minutes to wrap up a 6-2 6-2 victory against Paolini, saving all five break points she faced.

The 27-year-old will play Russian world number 42 Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova in the last 16 in Austria.

British number two Jodie Burrage qualified for the main draw with a win over Germany's Anna-Lena Friedsam.

Burrage lost the first set but recovered to secure a 5-7 6-3 6-2 win in two hours 27 minutes.

### Sinner beats Medvedev in Melbourne final

JANNIK Sinner landed the Grand Slam title he has long promised with an extraordinary fightback to beat Daniil Medvedev in the Australian Open final.

BBC SPORT said that, Italy's Sinner, 22, trailed by two sets before recovering to win 3-6 3-6 6-4 6-4 6-3 in his first major final.

Fourth seed Sinner initially could not cope with the Russian's pace but imposed himself as the contest wore on.

It was another bitter experience for Medvedev, who also blew a two-set lead against Rafael Nadal in the 2022 final.

A first-time champion in Melbourne was guaranteed after Sinner knocked out 10-time winner Novak Djokovic in the semi-finals.

Sinner ensured his name goes on the trophy - fulfilling the talent that many had predicted would lead to a Grand Slam triumph - after a courageous comeback in a match lasting almost four hours.

"It feels great. I just have to process it, I guess, how it feels the first time," Sinner told Australia's Channel Nine.

"It has been a hell of a journey even if I'm still only 22."

Third seed Medvedev, 27, has lost five of his six major finals, including ones against Djokovic in 2021 and Nadal in 2022 at Melbourne Park.

Sinner clinched victory with a forehand winner

down the line, falling to his back on the baseline in celebration.

Medvedev trudged around the net to offer his congratulations before Sinner thumped his heart on his way to celebrate with his team.

Looking disconsolate as he tried to process the loss while sitting on his chair, Medvedev managed to give a thumbs-up to the crowd when they applauded his efforts.

"It hurts to lose in the final but probably being in the final is better than losing before," said Medvedev, who set a record for the most time spent on court at a Grand Slam tournament with 24 hours and 17 minutes.

"I always want to win and I guess I have to try harder next time."

Sinner was brought to the forefront of conversation when discussing Grand Slam champions in 2024 following

a stunning end to last season.

A ceiling-breaking ATP 1000 title in Toronto, significant wins over the very best players and inspiring Italy to Davis Cup victory all increased the belief he would go on to greater things this season.

Sinner has managed to do exactly that in the first major tournament of the year.

Throughout this fortnight Sinner has shown an added confidence that this could be his time and did not drop a set until facing Djokovic.

By taking out Djokovic, the Italian answered the question which had long been posed: why could the younger generation not topple the Serb in Melbourne?

Once he managed that, Sinner's next challenge was backing up a memorable victory with another against Medvedev.

Sinner had insisted he knew the job was not

finished by beating Djokovic.

He demonstrated his mental fortitude by refusing to accept he was beaten - even in such a perilous position - and continued to trust in his powerful groundstrokes.

With Medvedev's stamina fading, Sinner picked up the pace and accuracy of his returns, cracking 28 winners in the final two sets.

"The match was going so fast in the first two sets," said Sinner, who was backed by a large Italian contingent on Rod Laver Arena.

"I had zero chance to play at this level but I was looking for just the small chances. I managed to break him and

### Pavon first French player to win on PGA tour

MATTHIEU Pavon won the Farmers Insurance Open to become the first French player to win on the PGA Tour since Arnaud Massy in 1907.

BBC SPORT said that, the 31-year-old PGA Tour rookie

was playing in his 11th Tour event and shot a three-under-par round of 69 to win by one shot at Torrey Pines in San Diego.

He sealed victory with a birdie on the 18th to finish on 13 under, a stroke ahead of Denmark's Nicolai Hojgaard.

"I still can't believe it. It is big for our country," Pavon said.

"I hope it will inspire a lot of people because coming from an amateur player which is 800 in the world to a PGA Tour winner is pretty big."

Pavon recovered from a bogey at the first hole to pick up five birdies in the remainder of his round at the Torrey Pines South Course.

After his eight-foot birdie putt at the 18th, he roared in

celebration and then hugged caddie Mark Sherwood.

Pavon, who won on the DP World Tour at the Spanish Open in October, said: "I can't thank the PGA Tour enough to give us the opportunity to come from Europe and compete here in America against the best players in the world."

"That's always been the dream for me. I got finally a shot and I took it."

"I think it is historic for French golf. We have Celine Boutier, the French LPGA player who won Evian last year, which is an even bigger performance."

Hojgaard finished in second after a 70 while Germany's Stephan Jaeger and American duo Nate Lashley and Jake Knapp tied for third place on 11 under.



Sinner





**Quest**



**writer**

DR. SHAAPER UGBIDYE

FRAGMENT

**"The low pH of some orange farmland soils may be attributable to the presence of hydrogen cyanide from the perennial crops. It may also be attributed to the high rainfall common in some of those areas which could leach out basic cations from the farmland soils."**

DR. SHAAPER UGBIDYE

# Mercury levels in agricultural soils

**T**HE need for Nigeria to key into minamata convention on mercury in line with United Nations Environmental Programme precipitated the motive of this research. Orange (*Citrus sinensis*) fruits play an essential role in human nutrition as they are good sources of antioxidants such as ascorbic acid, carotenoids; tocopherol and phenolic compounds. It also contains some other nutrients such as proteins, carbohydrate, fibre and minerals. Vitamin C (ascorbic acid) is the most dominant nutrient in orange fruits, it is essential for the synthesis of collagen and its deficiency leads to scurvy which causes loss of teeth. Globally, Nigeria ranks 9th position among the world top 10 producers of *citrus sinensis* with Benue state giving the highest annual production of the commodity. Oranges are very important protective foods and useful for the maintenance of good health, prevention and treatment of various diseases. Frequent consumption of fruit is associated with reduced risk of cancer, cardiovascular diseases, stroke, Alzheimer disease, cataracts, and some of the functional declines associated with aging. The large input of mercury (Hg) into the arable lands has resulted in the widespread occurrence of mercury contamination in the entire food chain. Hg is a unique metal due to its existence in different forms e.g., HgS, Hg<sup>2+</sup>, Hg<sup>0</sup> and methyl-Hg. However, in agricultural soil, ionic form (Hg<sup>2+</sup>) is predominant. The persistence nature of heavy metals in the environment and subsequent accumulation in fruits is discouraging the intake of this commodity. Dietary exposure to mercury has been identified as a risk to human health through the consumption of vegetable crops. Food safety is important for the survival of all living organisms involved in the food chain. In most developing countries like Nigeria, the quest for rapid economic growth through industrialization and modern agriculture have resulted in a concomitant inflow of several contaminants like heavy metals into the environment. Despite the benefits of fruit consumption on human health, heavy metal contents in fruits can be toxic when they exceed the recommended health levels or when they bio-accumulate in the body over a long period. This



study aims at determining the level of mercury in three orange fruits juice (Washington, Ibadan sweet and Valencia), soil and some physico-chemical properties of the soil.

## Materials and Methods

### Sample Collection

Benue State lies within the lower River Benue trough in the middle belt region of Nigeria with Landmass of 34,059 square kilometers and a population of 4,253,641 in 2006 census. Agriculture is the mainstay of the economy engaging over 75% of the working population and its geographic coordinates are longitude 7° 47' and 10° 0' East, Latitude 6° 25' and 8° 8' North and it is characterized by an annual rainfall of 1250 -1500 mm. Orange (citrus) and soil samples were collected from seven (7) Local Government Areas between January - April, 2018, because of the dominance in orange production. Orange farms were located from three (3) council wards of each Local Government where the *citrus sinensis* (sweet orange) fruits (Washington, Ibandan Sweet and Valencia) samples were plugged into a polyethene container hanged on a stick and bulked based on varieties, placed into appropriately labeled sacks and transported to the Departments of Crop Production and Biology, Federal University of Agriculture Makurdi, where the plant parts (orange fruits) were taxonomically identified and

### Results

Authenticated by professionals, also, the soil samples were taken using auger at the depth of 0 - 20

cm after which the samples were conveyed to the laboratory of Chemistry Department Federal University of Agriculture Makurdi for storage and pretreatment.

### Sample Preparation and Digestion

The orange fruits were washed with tap water and then with distilled water after which the juice was squeezed manually into separate beakers. About 200 mL of juice was obtained from each sample. The juice was filtered, mixed well and exactly 1.0 g of the homogenized orange sample was weighed into 100 mL volumetric digestion flask and a mixture of 2 mL H<sub>2</sub>O, 4 mL HNO<sub>3</sub>-HClO<sub>4</sub> (1:1) and 10 mL H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> were added. The mixture was then heated at a temperature between 150 and 250°C until the solution was clear. The sample solution was then cooled and diluted to 100 mL with distilled water. Also, exactly 1.0 g of the homogenized soil sample was weighed into 100 mL volumetric digestion flask and the same digestion procedure applied. A blank and standard solution digests using Hg solutions were subjected to the same treatment and the contents analyzed for mercury using cold vapour atomic absorption spectrophotometer.

### Discussion

In this work, a total of 161 parameters (pH, sand, silt, clay, organic carbon, CEC, organic matter and mercury) were examined in the studied area.

### Physico-Chemical Parameters of the Soil

#### pH

The pH of the agricultural soils

in 0.01M CaCl<sub>2</sub> solution and distilled water in the range of 5.20 - 6.10 and 6.10 - 7.10, respectively. The lowest pH value was recorded in Konshisha and the highest in Kwande and Vandeikya in 0.01 M CaCl<sub>2</sub>. This may be due to the ionization of more hydrogen ions in the soil solution of Konshisha than that of Kwande and Vandeikya. Similarly, the mean pH value in Ukum and Ushongo are low and the highest value is recorded in Katsina-Ala in distilled water, probably due to the same reason. The pH range of 4.56 - 7.71 in roadside soil from Wurukum, Gboko road, Federal lowcost and Federal medical centre was reported. The pH of agricultural soils in selected farms in Abraka, Delta State revealed a pH range of 4.20 - 5.45. The low pH of some orange farmland soils may be attributable to the presence of hydrogen cyanide from the perennial crops. It may also be attributed to the high rainfall common in some of those areas which could leach out basic cations from the farmland soils.

#### Sand

The result of the soil particles is presented; the mean particle size is in the range of 72.2 - 81.2%. The lowest value was recorded in Vandeikya and the highest value in Ushongo. A preliminary assessment of top soils around Wurukum Abattoir in Makurdi Benue State, Nigeria revealed the particle size distribution in sand soil to be in the range of 23 - 62%. The sand particles in soils around mechanic workshops in Makurdi were reported in the range of

73.4 - 83.3%. The assessment of the physicochemical properties of soil around Benue Cement Company revealed sand particle size in the range of 70.70 - 74.70%.

#### Silt

The mean silt particles are in the range of 7.18 - 8.52%. The lowest value was recorded in Kwande and the highest value in Ushongo. The analysis of irrigation water in river Katsina - Ala reported silt in the range of 17.0 - 20.0%. Silt content in the range of 10.70 - 17.70% in soils around Benue Cement Company was reported. The investigation of soils in mechanic workshops in Makurdi revealed a silt range of 8.5 - 23.1%. The preliminary assessment of top soils in Wurukum abattoir reported silt content in the range of 17 - 23%. The literature values reported when compared are more than the value recorded in this work and could be as a result of the engine oil used which makes the soil compact.

#### Clay

The mean result ranges from 11.0 - 19.9% with the lowest value recorded in Ukum and the highest value in Vandeikya as represented. The clay content of soil in the range of 10.2 - 16.6% was reported. The clay content of top soil in Wurukum revealed a range of 21 - 57% which is higher than the values recorded in this work. The clay content of soil was also reported in the range of 8.0 - 15%. The clay contents of surrounding soils in ceramic and Pharmaceutical industrial areas gave a range of 7.6 -13.2% and 8.40 - 11.6% respectively.

#### Cation Exchange Capacity

The mean result of CEC ranges from 10.5 - 12.9 cmolkg<sup>-1</sup> with the lowest CEC value recorded in Konshisha and the highest in Kwande as presented. A study carried out on agricultural farmland soils in Abraka, Delta State, Southern, Nigeria reported Cation Exchange Capacity ranging from 1.04-7.96 cmolkg<sup>-1</sup>. A CEC of 13.0 and 91.1cmolkg<sup>-1</sup> in dumpsite waste in Yenagoa, Nigeria was reported.

#### Organic Carbon

The mean values of organic carbon ranges from 2.35 - 3.39% with the lowest value in Ukum and the highest value in Ushongo as shown.

To be continued