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PLASU debunks killing of 20 students, says it's rumour

From DUMAH RANDONG, Bokkos

Authorities of the Plateau State University, PLASU, Bokkos, have debunked rumours making the rounds that more than 20 of

students were killed by suspected Fulani terrorists.

Instead, it said only two students lost their lives in the incident when the marauders attacked Chikiam, a community close to the institution Thursday night leading to

the death of Dating James Jordan, a 200 level Computer Science student and Armen Fompun, a 300 level Sociology undergraduate. Vice Chancellor of the University, Professor Shadrach Best, made the clarification while

speaking with **THE NIGERIA STANDARD** in his office, Monday, shortly after a management meeting to review the security situation around the university community. According to Best, "This problem did not begin

inside the university campus. It started outside. Suspected herders came to kill people in the surrounding community and they killed three people on that fateful night. One of them was a student of the university who was

reading his books preparing for his examination was gunned down by these marauders and merchants of death. So the following morning, students who had access to the dead body of their colleague took to the university and began to protest. That event of evacuating the corpse into the University that exported the problem into the University and sadly, it went violent," he explained.

Our correspondent reports that the angry students destroyed some property at the institution's Senate building.

Findings on the nexus between what took place outside the campus and the students' action showed that this might not be unconnected with the bad elements among them - students who wanted to stop the examination because they had not paid their fees.

The university had earlier announced a suspension of the first semester examination and closure of institution for 10 days with effect from April 19, 2024, to allow the security situation improve and lessen the human risk on

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President Tinubu and some African leaders at the African high-level meeting on Counter-Terrorism held in Abuja on Monday

EFCC: I'm afraid of arrest

THE former Governor of Kogi State, Yahaya Bello, stated his readiness to appear before the Federal High Court in Abuja to address the 19-count charge filed against him by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC).

Although Bello was not present for his arraignment, his legal team represented him in court yesterday.

Adeola Adedipe, SAN, a member of his legal team, informed the court that Bello would have attended the proceedings himself

but was apprehensive about a pending arrest order.

Adedipe, SAN, urged the court to revoke the earlier issued *ex parte* arrest order against the former governor.

He argued that when the arrest order was issued,

the charges had not been officially served to his client as required by law.

It was only during the yesterday session that the court approved the service of the charges to the defendant through his lawyer.

"The defendant wants to

-Bello

come to court but he is afraid that there is an order of arrest hanging on his head," Adedipe, SAN, submitted.

Consequently, he urged the court to set aside the

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the university community. The examination is to resume on Thursday May 2, 2024.

The VC further explained: "Overall, we have lost two students from that fracas, four were injured, one has been discharged and three are still being managed. We have decided to meet as management today to review what happened. The decision we took last week to close the university and suspend the examination was very necessary because we could not guarantee the safety of students."

He said that they would continue to engage in series of consultations and discussions with security agencies, staff and students as well as the neighbouring communities to rebuild confidence and make the campus comfortable for the students.

"It was neither the fault of the university nor the government as there was sufficient security provision but you know those marauders, when they come in the cloud of the night, you can never tell what they are planning. So, all of us are victims of a wicked intention of a people who take pride in killing other citizens like we witnessed," he said.

The VC said that there was a good number of security personnel on ground to patrol the university together with



Best

the one they had before the crisis as well as their internal security.

He disclosed that measures were being taken to address the issue of open grazing by herders within the university, which had been a recurring decimal.

The said the problem had been with PLASU since inception, adding that they were determined to address it by interfacing with their neighbours to discourage the Fulani herdsmen from grazing within the university after undermining some perimeter fences to enable them gain entry into the campus.

The Chief Security Officer of the University, Assistant Commissioner of Police, Danladi Mashat, (Rtd), who corroborated the Vice Chancellor, said that the university lost two students in the Fulani terrorists' attack on Chikiam.

ACP Mashat described as untrue the insinuations in some

quarters that more than two students were killed during the attack.

He assured that the institution would continue to put adequate security measures in place to protect lives of students and the entire university community.

Our correspondent gathered that the latest attack on Chikiam community was as a result of misunderstanding following the destruction of a pepper farm belonging to one Mr. Kuba Maren Mbwas, a resident of the community.

Speaking on condition of anonymity, a resident of the area said that since the 2023 Christmas Eve attack on Chikiam and Butura Kampani communities and that of January 17, 2024, the rampaging Fulani terrorists had been destroying their farms with impunity.

He disclosed the latest attack of Thursday, April 17, 2024, was launched at about 9 PM after their attack on Butura Kampani was foiled by a stiff resistance from the community, forcing the assailants to turn their attention on Chikiam where they killed three people, including a student.

Attempts to speak with the President of the Students' Union Government, Mr. Gomos Timothy, proved abortive as he neither picked his phone nor return calls up till the time of filing this report.

LACK of adequate manpower has been identified as one of the major challenges of the Plateau State Civil Service following batched retirement of its staff over the years.

The State Head of Civil Service, Barrister Rauta Dakok, disclosed this recently during the monthly ministerial press briefing organised by the Ministry for Information and Communication, held at the ministry's conference hall, JD Gomwalk Secretariat, Jos.

The other challenges, according to her, included "non-availability of copies of current Public Service Rules and other relevant Government Publications, lack of adherence to due process for training by Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs).

"Indiscriminate encroachment on lands adjoining to Government quarters by unscrupulous

Plateau HoS identifies main challenge

By EZEKIEL DONTINNA

persons and retired civil servants who are still holding unto government quarters by preventing the serving civil machinery in place for the actualization of the completion."

She disclosed that the government had placed advertisements for suitable young applicants to apply for employment opportunities into the Plateau State Civil Service to help fill existing vacancies.

Earlier, while delivering his opening remarks, the Plateau State Commissioner for Information and Communication, Hon. Musa Ibrahim Ashoms, commended Governor Mutfwang for reactivating the civil service for effective service delivery.

There were presentations

by the Commissioner for Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs, Hon. Ephraim Usman, Commissioner of Secondary Education, Hon. Nyelong Muhammad Salihu, and that of Women Affairs and Social Development, Hon. Caroline Dafur, respectively.



Dakok

Mutfwang seeks NAF support to end killings in Plateau

GOVERNOR Caleb Mutfwang of Plateau State has called for more collaboration with the Nigerian Air Force and other security agencies to end the cycle of killings in the state, promising more support to security agencies.

Mutfwang stated this Tuesday when he received the Commandant, Air Force War College, Makurdi, AVM Adebayo Kehinde, at the Old Government House, Rayfield, Jos, who visited the governor in company of the participants of Course 10, 2024.

Represented by his deputy, Mrs. Josephine Piyo, Governor Mutfwang

reiterated his administration's commitment to provide the necessary support and enabling environment for the security agencies to effectively discharge their constitutional responsibilities of protecting the lives and property of citizens.

The governor described the Nigerian Air Force as one of the crucial and critical institutions in the fight against insurgency, banditry, kidnapping and other forms of insecurity in Nigeria.

Earlier, the Commandant stated that the 2024 Course 10 participants were in the state to undertake a

study on armed banditry and its effect on the people of the state.

Kehinde said that the War College had been closely following events in the state in the past few years and its security challenges, a situation which, he said, needed proper interrogation to find lasting solutions.

He added that all hands must be on deck to put an end to the current violent attacks on law abiding citizens.

The commandant was hopeful that at the end of the study, a solution would be proffered towards tackling the current challenges in Plateau State and Nigeria in general.

EFCC: I'm afraid of arrest-Bello



Bello

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exparte order of arrest it earlier issued against the former governor.

Adedipe, SAN, contended

that as at the time the order of arrest was made, the charge had not been served on his client as required by the law.

He noted that it was only at the resumed proceedings yesterday that the court okayed substituted service of the charge on the defendant, through his lawyer.

"As at the time the warrant was issued, the order for substituted service had not been made. That order was just made this morning.

"A warrant of arrest should not be hanging on his neck when we leave this court," counsel to the defendant added.

Auto-crash: 14 burnt to death, 13 injured

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

FOURTEEN persons have been burnt beyond recognition in an auto-crash on the Ejule-Otukpa Branch highway at Alloma, Ofu Local Government Area of Kogi State.

Kogi Sector Commander of the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC), Mr. Samuel Oyediji, confirmed the accident which occurred Sunday, precisely on a sharp bend at Government Day Science Secondary School, Alloma, involving two Toyota buses, a Hiace and a Sienna, in a head-on collision.

Oyediji, however, told our correspondent that he

was yet to be briefed by the Unit Commander about the details.

Our reporter gathered that the Toyota Hiace bus, which belonged to Apa Local Government Council of Benue State, was said to have a full load of 17 passengers from Abuja, while the Sienna bus was from Port-Harcourt, enroute to Abuja.

Imam Ibrahim, who was among sympathisers who rushed to the scene, told newsmen that one of the buses was trying to overtake at the bend, unaware that another vehicle was approaching from the opposite direction.

In the head-on collision that ensued, the Toyota

Hiace bus exploded and caught fire and only three passengers who were miraculously flung out of the vehicle escaped death by the whiskers as the rest were burnt to death beyond recognition.

The charred remains of the Hiace bus driver, who was burnt sitting on his seat and 13 others, could only be accessed on Sunday morning as efforts to put out the flames by the locals failed.

Imam said that passengers in the Sienna bus were, however, lucky as the vehicle was flung away from the Hiace after the powerful impact.

But the driver's legs were trapped by the squeezed engine parts of

the Sienna and it took three hours for the locals to dismantle the vehicle and release his mangled limbs.

The Sienna passengers were seriously injured and rushed to the hospital along with the driver who lost both limbs but there was no case of death.

He said, "None of the 10 occupants of the Sienna Bus died but were seriously injured and are receiving treatment in the hospital.

"We quickly rushed to the scene of the accident to rescue the victims but we could not go near the Hiace Bus because of the fire but were able to rescue the injured and tore the Sienna to remove the driver."



Do unto others....

Nigerians have several definitions for marriage. To most women, it is a 'must wear' crown. The ladies in this category do all they can to see that they marry. It is a matter of getting married by hook or crook. Some ladies in this category have sought the services of *Babalawos* (witch doctors) to ensure that they diabolically remote-control their boyfriends into marrying them.

I was privileged to be around a relative and her friends when they confessed about some of their adventures in that respect. They were students at the Kaduna Polytechnic (Kadpoly). Being children of low income earners, they had to devise means of taking care of themselves. Each of them made sure she had a filthy rich sugar-daddy. However, maintaining the first position in the hearts of these married men was very expensive. It involved a lot of sacrifices.

And what were the sacrifices? Of course, they were not the normal ways of doing things. Because they were already on the opposite side of God for putting asunder marriages, they went all the way with Satan who is always recruiting unsuspecting foot soldiers.

In line with this, their search for charms to bewitch their sugar-daddies had entailed crossing rivers and swimming against currents - which presented grave dangers to their lives most of the time. All of this trouble was just for them to see a *Babalawo*.

Sharing their experiences, one of them disclosed that on one of their visits, she was given one whole boiled chicken and asked to 'demolish' it before the *Babalawo* without breaking a bone. She strictly complied as if her life depended on it.

She was also instructed to sit cross-legged at 12 midnight, hold a horn-like contraption and whisper into it the name of the guy she wanted to charm 3 times. This was like child's play in comparison to swimming through a tempest and wandering through a wilderness.

But they confessed that all of their efforts were in vain. In their search for answers, they visited various witch doctors and herbalists. One of them recalled how one of the *Babalawos* was bitten by a snake when he went to a river to chant incantations to swerve the heart of her sugar-daddy towards her and forsake all other women. The witch doctor categorically warned her to leave the man alone because so many powers were fighting for him. But she left the hospital in anger, vowing to get a more powerful *Babalawo*.

It was such a vicious cycle of failure. Nothing they did gave them the required, permanent, results. The men remained with their wives. Finally, they had to move on or continue living in a fool's paradise.

Today, these ladies are married and do not want anything to mess with their homes. They didn't say if they had used charms to get their husbands or allowed God to have His way. All I know is that they guard their marriage with fear and trembling.

Worst of all was the confession of an ex-witch. It all began in an innocent way. This lady, a student in a Lagos public school, was introduced to the life of getting whatever she wanted through diabolical means by two girls who were her role models. Because they were reckoned with by the school authorities and students, they lived like queens. One day, her mentors introduced her to their source of power under the water. And so began her ascension to power.

She dethroned her role models as she ruthlessly dealt with anyone who stood on her way. Soon, she was the envy of ambitious girls. The lady confessed that anything she wanted, she got. And any man she opened her mouth to demand anything from would move heaven and earth to satisfy her - including starving his family and, or, depriving his children of their school fees.

Going on like that, she remained in school for as long as she wanted because it was a means to an end. After graduation, she became filthy rich through doing the bidding of her master, Satan, wrecking homes and destroyed any woman who stood in her way.

This lady confessed that her quest to get a biological child after she got married pushed her into witchcraft. She discovered that all the promises the *Babalawos* made didn't come true, so she said why not. It was the first time she could not get what she wanted or needed. And she didn't like that.

Through all of these, her mother was her accomplice. As such, when she was asked to sacrifice the person she loved the most in the world, it was her mother she gave to gain more power as a witch.

This is the situation most people are battling with. To most of us, marriage is the ultimate, even our salvation is secondary. We will do anything humanly possible to get married, hoping to turn over a new leaf after marriage. This is a dangerous position and one can easily perish but for God's grace.

In the above story, the lady did everything to please her ego. And when things didn't go her way, she destroyed whatever was in her way. So many girls and their mothers are as bad as this. Their aim is to get married at all cost. It doesn't matter whose horse is gored in the process. They may not use charms but they slander the wife and make life unbearable for her just to give way to their own through death or by simply stepping aside.

For the lady in the above story, situation forced her to repent at a crusade where she shared her story, urging women to pray and cover their marriage for the enemy is working overtime. She also used the opportunity to be for forgiveness from the hundreds of homes she destroyed while on her wicked mission.

We should make the golden rule (Do unto others as you would have them do unto you) be our watch-word and our society would be the better for it.

News

Mutfwang congratulates new UN Resident Coordinator

By PETER TITLE

PLATEAU State Governor, Caleb Mutfwang, has congratulated Mr. James T. Bot on his appointment as the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Comoros, following the approval of the host government.

The governor, in a message, thanked the United Nations Secretary-General, António Guterres, for considering Mr. Bot, a Nigerian, for this well-deserved appointment.

Mutfwang, who made this known in a statement signed by Gyang Bere, the Director of Press and Public Affairs (DOPPA), noted with delight the appointee's proven track record of 20 years in humanitarian affairs and response, development, project management and business development, emphasizing that his new role was based on merit.

The statement recalled with joy the remarkable contributions of Mr. Bot who served as Head of Service of Civil Affairs in the UN Peacekeeping Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), (MONUSCO), before his appointment and urged him to remain a worthy ambassador in discharging his mandate.

He highlighted on Bot's alma



Mutfwang

mater, the prestigious University of Jos, from where he obtained his Law degree and Masters in Human Rights and Democratization from the European Inter-University Centre, Venice, Italy, expressing confidence that he would perform beyond expectations, based on his past track record.

The statement read in part, "Governor Mutfwang, on behalf of the government and

the peace-loving people of Plateau State, rejoiced with Mr. James T. Bot and prayed God to grant him the desired knowledge, wisdom, and strength to fulfil his duties."

He urged him to be more resilient, patriotic, committed and dedicated to his primary responsibility of achieving sustainable peace and development across the globe.

ECWA gets new president, others

By EZEKIEL DONTINNA

THE Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA), has elected Rev. Dr. Job Ayuba Bagat, as its new president, following the expiration of the tenure of Rev. (Dr.) Stephen Baba Panya.

This was disclosed in a communique signed by the outgoing president, Rev. (Dr.) Stephen Baba Panya, and General Secretary, Rev. Ayuba Asheshe, and made available to THE NIGERIA STANDARD at the end of the 71st General Church Council (GCC) meeting, held at the ECWA Headquarters, Jos, recently.

The communique stated, "The Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA), held her 71st General Church Council (GCC) meeting with emphasis on the 2024 theme for the church which is, "For the vision is yet for an appointed time", taken from the book of Habakkuk 2:3.

"Similarly, at the expiration of the tenure of some ECWA executive, elections were conducted for the offices of the ECWA President, Assistant General Secretary, Treasurer and the Trustee (Zone 5).

"Rev. Dr. Job Ayuba Bagat, was elected ECWA President and Rev. Dr. Sunday Congo, elected the ECWA Assistant General Secretary to serve for a first tenure of three years; while Elder Danjuma Haruna and Rev. Prof. Musa A. B. Gaiya, were returned as

Treasurer and Trustee Zone 5 to serve for another three and ten years respectively."

According to the statement, the General Church Council meeting was attended by members of the ECWA Executive, ECWA Board of Trustees, chairmen, secretaries and

delegates from the 94 District Church Councils, including the United States of America (USA).

He also listed those in attendance to include: heads of departments and institutions, chief executive officers of ECWA Strategic Business Units and ECWA leaders from the Republic of Chad, among others.

'Tariff hike saves Nigeria N3.2 trillion subsidy'

From JIDAUNA YANUNG, Abuja.

CHAIRMAN of the Nigeria Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC), Sanusi Garba, has disclosed that government would pay N3.2 trillion as subsidy on electricity this year if the recent increase in the tariff is to be reversed.

Disclosing this at a stakeholders meeting called by the House of Representatives Committee on Power, Garba said that current investment in the sector was not enough to guarantee steady power supply and pointed out that if nothing concrete was done to address issues in the sector, it would be heading for doom.

He added that prior to

the recent review in tariff, electricity distribution companies were only obligated to pay 10 percent of their energy invoice, emphasizing that the lack of cash backing for subsidy was creating a liquidity challenge in the sector.

The NERC boss blamed the nonpayment of subsidy on the continued dip in gas supply and power generation, adding that the continuous decline of generation and system collapse were largely linked to liquidity challenge.

He further explained that between January 2020 and January 2023, tariff increased from 55 percent of cost to 94 percent cost recovery.

News

Unijos VC commends APLORI for outstanding performance

By JIDAUNA DARING

VICE Chancellor of the University of Jos, Professor Ishaya Tanko, has commended AG Leventis Ornithological Research Institute (APLORI), University of Jos Biological Conservatory, for its outstanding performance in ornithological research.

Prof. Tanko gave this commendation in his capacity as the chairman during the 20th anniversary of APLORI held at the Aliyu Akwe Doma Indoor Theatre, University of Jos permanent site, recently.

He said that the university could not thank the institute enough for the tremendous work it had been doing since establishment in 2001.

The Vice Chancellor assured APLORI of the institution's continued support and commitment towards the upliftment of the institute.

Prof. Tanko maintained that they would also ensure that they shared in the vision and action of the institute so as to enable it continue to excel.

He noted that the epoch-making event had further demonstrated to the world that APLORI had matured.

The VC said that the



Tanko

Senate of the University of Jos had approved the upgrading of APLORI from an institute to a Centre for Excellence, Institute for Research and Training, University of Jos.

Prof. Tanko also announced that the university's senate had equally approved the immediate commencement of programmes that would lead to the award of PHD, adding that it would draw supervisors from across the globe.

He affirmed that the gesture was aimed at bringing more impactful research to the people.

Earlier in his remarks, Director of APLORI, Dr. Adams Chaskda, expressed joy and thanked God for the feat and the huge successes recorded by the institute and the institution as a whole.

Dr. Chaskda pointed out that many APLORI graduates were doing amazing work across the world, adding that the institute was adjudged a major hub when it comes to Ornithological research across the world.

Our correspondent reports that the event featured paper presentations and an award ceremony.

Accountant General organises capacity building for staff

By PETER TITLE

THE Office of the Accountant General, Plateau State, has organised a four-day capacity building workshop titled, "Understanding Public Finance Management in a Modern Economy," for staff of the office.

Declaring it open at the Crest Hotel, Jos, recently, Governor Caleb Mutwang commended the office of the Accountant General for organising the workshop,

describing it as "bearer of public trust."

According to him, it was the bid to avoid incompetence that necessitated the workshop, believing that at the end of it, he would be proud to see them competing with their colleagues globally.

Governor Mutwang challenged all staff to acquire ANAN or ICAN to further strengthen their capacities, saying that anything short of that would not be tolerated in the next two years.

He posited that money spent must be reflected on

the quality of services rendered to Plateau citizens and urged them to ensure accountability and transparency in the utilisation of public funds.

Commissioner of Finance, Mrs. Grace Donkum, explained that the workshop would enhance the knowledge of staff of the office of the Accountant General and urged them to reciprocate the gesture by putting in their best in the service.

The Head of Civil Service, Barrister Rauta Dakok, said that the Mutwang administration had developmental plans for civil servants and assured the people of the state that they would continue getting value from government services.

Mrs. Nanret Mangset, the Accountant General, assured the governor that the workshop would trigger transformation in the civil service of the state.

Topics lined up for discussion according to our correspondent include: Professional Ethics and Standard in Public Sector Accounting; Monthly Returns as a Feedback and Control Mechanism in Public Finance Management; Taxes and Tax Administration; and Double Entry Principles in Public Sector Accounting, amongst others.



Social media, morals and us

SINCE its emergence, the new or social media has provided an alternative to the traditional media. It has placed information at the finger-tips of all and sundry. And it is threatening to put traditional media out of business. With just a click on an android phone, one can access a whole load of information. There is what is called an information overload as a result of the availability of so much information in the media space.

Unfortunately, there is the serious challenge of the misuse of world or civil wars information. What is most annoying is the fact that most people do not filter or are not interested in doing due diligence and take whatever they see on the social media as the truth and nothing but the truth. People forget that anyone can stay in their room and create content.

This, unfortunately removes the gatekeeper role that is found in the traditional media. And because there are no checks, trash and garbage are daily churned out to the gullible public who help in spreading some of these outright falsehoods and mischief.

Even though there are tools to help the citizenry verify some of these claims, they are too lazy to take advantage of them. In fact, most people hardly read what they share on the social media. Fact checking tools abound today yet very few individuals use them. And this has done a lot of harm to relationships between individuals and between communities.

You find young people on social media insulting people who are old enough to be their parents on issues that they know next to nothing about. The anonymity provided by the new media is clearly being abused and our societal morals are being destroyed gradually.

People post things that are not true and feel no qualms about it. They destroy other people's hard-earned reputation and go to sleep feeling okay. I sincerely feel that there is a need for filters to be built by owners of these media to reduce some of these unfortunate happenings. If soft wares could be built to help in the spread and dissemination of information, other soft wares could as well be built to help filter truth from lies.

If this is not done quickly enough, there is the tendency that the next world or civil wars between countries or communities will be caused by the new media. And it would come with such a devastating effect that will consume all and sundry. The earlier the

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Out there, beggars litter the streets masquerading as journalists. As soon as they hear that there is an event, they mill around harassing people, collecting money and not writing anything at all. Giving those who go out on daily basis to genuinely do their jobs a bad name. Some even claim they are publishers yet attend assignments with their reporters. They collect adverts from unsuspecting clients and do not produce copies but do Direct Imaging (DI) and take them to the unsuspecting clients.

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society starts taking responsibility the better for us all. We must take responsibility for our actions and inactions. We must caution ourselves each time we reach out to hit the share button on our gadgets. We do not need anyone to tell us what is right or wrong. We know them and must make a decision not to be mischievous, and in the course destroy our fellow brothers.

Journalists and journalism code of ethics

Each day I read, listen to or watch the news, I wonder if journalism still has a code of conduct. I feel sad that this code which was hitherto the Bible or Koran of the media practitioner has become useless and it is no longer adhered to. Journalism has become an all-comers affair. Anyone who can write becomes a journalist. That is even not the issue. It is the conduct of this lot that has become a source of concern.

Out there, beggars litter the streets masquerading as journalists. As soon as they hear that there is an event, they mill around harassing people, collecting money and not writing anything at all. Giving those who go out on daily basis to genuinely do their jobs a bad name. Some even claim they are publishers yet attend assignments with their reporters. They collect adverts from unsuspecting clients and do not produce copies but do Direct Imaging (DI) and take them to the unsuspecting clients.

The public should be wary of such wolves in sheep skins. They must endeavor to deal with genuine members of the profession through the professional union who know and keep genuine records of its membership. Also, the professional union must make it a responsibility to always insist and remind its members about its code of conduct.

Politics

The media in a political dispensation

By KENNETH DARENG

TYPICAL of Nigerian politicians, when they are seeking the people's mandate during an election, just like the renowned African public speaker, Prof. Patrice Lumumba, would say, "They would hold babies, drink from dirty cups, snap pictures with the poor masses and walk on foot for long distances. They even dismiss their security details. They show uncommon humility and speak the language of the poor with a barrage of promises that may never be fulfilled."

But as soon as they are voted into power, they no longer pick the telephone calls of these same people who voted them into power. If you are lucky and they pick your call, it may be the Personal Assistant (PA) or any other aide that you will have to contend with. They continue to torment the people with noisy sirens and the unfriendly security personnel around them do not allow you to even get close to the very leaders you have elected. At last, the poor masses become like the poor woman who has played into the hands of a wicked suitor who has finally revealed his true character.

The way politicians behave shows the varying degrees of their character - whether they have a conscience or not. Therefore, here is the fundamental question we should ask: Who should hold these politicians responsible for their actions and make them accountable?

According to Section 21 of the 1979 Nigerian Constitution, it is the duty of the mass media to uphold the responsibility and accountability of the government to the people. This is also found in Section 23 of the 1999 Constitution (as amended).

Because those who drafted the constitution had on their minds the need for good governance, they gave the media the task of serving as a check on the entire democratic system. Perhaps this also means that, while ensuring that there is accountability and the rule of law is protected, the media must also take up the responsibility of informing, educating and entertaining the citizens in order to have a sane democratic system.

The country has witnessed uninterrupted democratic rule from 1999 to date. Yet, the main political actors have deliberately refused to learn any tangible lessons. As a result, the culture of impunity is at its highest and corruption in all tiers of government remain very high. This cancerous ailment has created huge tumours in all segments of the Nigerian society which has reached advanced stage. The country appears to be waiting for doomsday.

But as in the case of any diagnosed disease, healing is



Idris

still possible if those handling the patient can do the needful through the application of the right medication. The late Chinua Achebe declared: "There is nothing wrong with the water we drink nor the air we breathe. Our problem lays with bad leadership." This means that the media, which is saddled with the task of conscientizing the nation, must demand accountability from leaders, some of whom have abdicated their responsibilities and gone to sleep.

Therefore, the media should wake up to its civic duties so as to ensure that elected leaders account for what they do with the resources voted for projects and programs. Because accountability is one of the bed rocks of democracy, the people have the right to know how they are governed, and that is why there are implications when the media shy away from highlighting certain flaws in the system.

Although the media have been able to beam their search lights on elections, the economy, governance, budget implementation, the rule of law as well as fulfilling campaign promises, yet a lot seems to have gone wrong, a lot more still needs to be done.

This is because the media has not completely lived up to its constitutional responsibility as enshrined in Section 22 which requires the media to do a deep critique of annual budgets of all

tiers of government as they affect implementation of projects and finding out whether funds were judiciously spent or not.

Also, because the media has failed to play its constitutional role, the country appears to be running on auto-pilot with no one in charge. The uncertainty it has created has brought more confusion than hope to citizens. Examples are the floating of the naira and the removal of petroleum subsidy which have brought the nation's economy to its knees and made life for the average Nigerian a living hell while the country's leaders remain aloof.

Unfortunately, no one seems to have been able to question these actions of government. Therefore, it behooves on the media to start asking questions about the roles of the president, governors, members of the National Assembly and other political appointees. The media must also interrogate them on whether they are in sync with promoting good governance, the rule of law and meeting the collective aspirations of Nigerians.

Failure of the media to act will further worsen the conditions of an already over-stretched 200 million people with a large army of unemployed youth and a

huge contingent of bread winners who cannot bear the brunt of meeting their families' daily obligations. These are the time bombs waiting to explode.

And with the added challenge of insecurity, the political class must be reminded that when the very people they have ignored and even played for fools are pushed to the wall, their reaction would not be palatable.

Therefore, as watch dogs of the society, it is incumbent on the media to closely scrutinize the way our political parties are run. This is because it is through the instrumentalities of political parties that leaders are elected to govern the country.

The electoral umpire must also be put under the spot light. And as custodians of the electoral process, the Independent Electoral Commission (INEC) must be constantly reminded of the need to weed out undesirable elements that seek to pervert the laws guiding its operations.

There is also the need for a paradigm shift aimed at promoting the culture of electing the right people into leadership positions. Transparency must also be injected into anti-graft agencies such as the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, and the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission, ICPC, to ensure effectiveness in the fight against corruption.

The National Financial Intelligence Unit (NFIU), must be made to broaden its scope and operate without any interference from outside forces while the nation's judiciary should serve as a beacon of hope for the common man.

Above all, the Nigerian media must set a new template for both the political leaders and the led which should be based on the rule of law, accountability, equity, fairness and justice. This is because Nigerians deserve a better deal from their leaders, and the media should lead the way.

"Although the media have been able to beam their search lights on elections, the economy, governance, budget implementation, the rule of law as well as fulfilling campaign promises, yet a lot seems to have gone wrong, a lot more still needs to be done. This is because the media has not completely lived up to its constitutional responsibility as enshrined in Section 22 which requires the media to do a deep critique of annual budgets of all tiers of government as they affect implementation of projects and finding out whether funds were judiciously spent or not."

Editorial

Against electricity tariff hike

ON May 29, 2023, when the mantle of leadership was handed over to President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, he announced, through a presidential fiat, that fuel subsidy was gone. And, without much consultations, it has come to pass. And today Premium Motor Spirit, PMS, sells for between N617, N730 and N800 per litre.

THAT was not all. The Naira was also floated. As a result, it depreciated and fell to an all-time low causing serious inflation and the consequent pauperization of the citizenry.

IN the same manner, the Nigeria Electricity Regulatory Management Commission, NERC, jacked up tariff rate for consumers of electricity on band "A" who, according to the Commission, make up only 15% of Nigeria's total population yet consume about 40% of the electricity distributed by the Distribution Companies, DISCOs, in the country.

HOWEVER, it should be noted that in the last eight years, electricity tariffs have increased by over 168%. This has led Nigerians to pay between N16 and N31 kilowatt per hour (kWh) in 2015 to between N55 kWh to N71 kWh and in 2024 N225kWh, depending on the tariff class.

YET, these increases have not solved the challenges bedeviling the sector. The supply gaps remain so huge that the country's homes and commercial and industrial sectors rely on self-generated power. Small-scale businesses, such as boutiques, cyber cafes, salons, tailoring and grocery shops, which are mostly serviced by small-scale petrol generators, are some of the most affected.

SADLY, the DISCOs, whose responsibility it is to supply the consumers, have hardly lived up to expectations. For the most part, they have reneged on some of the provisions in the agreement they entered into with government on the sale of various distribution networks in the country.

AS part of the agreement, they were required to retool the power distribution equipment and facilities in their jurisdictions in order to improve service delivery to customers. But cases abound where it is the customers that often purchase transformers, poles and undertake other repairs like wiring the distribution networks with little or no input from the DISCOs.

SECONDLY, the DISCOs are required by law to provide meters to every consumer in order to justify the supply of power and billing system. But even with the resolution of the National Assembly compelling them to implement this provision in their operating agreement, they have hardly complied.

BESIDES, the frequent collapse of the national grid has become a source of worry to consumers. According to ESI Africa, the continent's leading power and energy journal, in the last nine years, Nigeria's national electricity grid has collapsed more than 200 times, resulting in widespread blackouts. In 2022, the national electricity grid collapsed 17 times. It collapsed three consecutive times - September 14, 19 and December 11 - in 2023. In 2024, 6 collapses have so far been recorded.

THESE, indeed, are dire and incredibly frustrating situations that need to be addressed by the government so as to curb the already bad environment for a people who are struggling to make ends meet. What with the infrastructural decay without concrete commitment on the part of government to address them? As a matter of fact, the high cost of food and the general cost of living does not warrant the sudden rise in electricity tariff which is a very important component in the manufacturing sector.

ON their part, the people need to organize themselves in such a manner that government would be forced to take measures to mitigate their pains. Government must build institutions that would stand the test of time in the fight against corruption and other vices. The media should also be effectively utilized to bring to the fore activities of those saddled with the responsibilities of running the affairs of the state.

AND now that electricity generation has been decentralized, state governments and other non-state players should capitalize on the other abundant sources of power that nature has endowed our country.

THESE sources, such as wind and the sun, also have the advantage of being clean and environmentally friendly. Abia State has blazed the trail through the establishment of the Geometric Power Plant, Osioma.

THE recent unabated attacks by Fulani marauders have continued to generate global comments. Indeed, if not for anything else, the number of killings of innocent lives has continued to make me shed tears. For some of us who grew up the 1970s, when there was peace and tranquility all over the country, such despicable acts of man's inhumanity to man is something one never imagined.

Many commentators have opined that these sad incidents can be attributed to the effects of climate change which has continued to ravage most nations of the world. However, I do not believe that the effects of climate change have been solely responsible for these dastardly acts in contemporary Nigeria.

Come to think of it, since these nasty experiences reared their ugly heads in some northern states of the country, not much success has been recorded in terms of bringing the perpetrators of these heinous crimes to justice. As a result, many more indigenous communities have continued to lose their lands to land-grabbers whose intention is to seize all arable lands on the Plateau and, by extension, the entire Middle Belt region. Also linked to this is the indoctrination of some vulnerable minds into believing that they must achieve their agenda of a fruitless jihad started by their mentor, Uthman Dan Fodio, from 1804 and 1808.

Even though hundreds of innocent people have been killed on the Plateau, not many citizens have come to terms with the intrigues behind these acts of genocide. In the midst of

these challenges, our leaders who are saddled with the responsibility of protecting us appear to be overwhelmed by the realities on ground.

Sometime back, some leaders of thought had suggested that the only panacea to these endless killings at the grassroots levels is for the Federal Government to

These unabated killing should be stopped

decentralize the Nigeria Police Force which, for now, is receiving stiff resistance from segments of the country and the political class.

I have read the arguments, that should state police be established, some state governors would use them to silence and, or, torment their political opponents. Though nothing is quite impossible in our country, I don't think that this should be enough reasons for major stakeholders to delay the establishment of such a body in the interest of the majority of citizens.

While we anticipate the manifestation of this desire, it's high time adequate steps are taken to protect our vulnerable rural populace. This is quite imperative if we must deal with the problem of food insecurity in the country - caused by the state of insecurity in the country. Suffice it to note that the various attacks in some local government areas of Plateau State will certainly affect the next farming season. As it is at the moment, though the rains have started, farmers are reluctant to go to their farms because of the fear of being attacked by these marauders.

While many farmers have abandoned their ancestral homes for fear of the unknown, others whose lands have been grabbed



by these Fulani marauders are presently stranded with no other place to go. Thus, the high rate of poverty and its implications on the polity are better imagined.

To help deal with this unpleasant situation, both the state and the federal governments must strategize in conformity with contemporary security practices to ensure public safety. For too long, the Federal Government has dealt with apprehending perpetrators of violent conflict in our country with levity.

The situation has become so embarrassing that since the resurgence of some of these sporadic attacks on the Plateau, the identity of these unknown gunmen has not been unmasked. But the few ones that have been identified were given VIP protection and never questioned over their roles in taking up arms against innocent citizens.

Our security agencies have also failed in the area of intelligence gathering. They are not proactive enough. The proliferation of light arms by these merchants of death has continued to hurt our country which is heavily bleeding at the moment. Consequently, citizens have lost hope in our security agencies who have been accused of

taking sides in the course of their operational responsibilities.

Not once or twice, fingers have been pointed at many security personnel involved in shoddy activities that undermine every effort aimed at bringing peace. Thus, there is an urgent need for proper investigations to determine their degree of involvement.

In some cases, identification cards of military personnel have been recovered in areas that have been attacked without anything done to ascertain their culpability or otherwise. All these anomalies have contributed to bringing us to where we find ourselves today as a country.

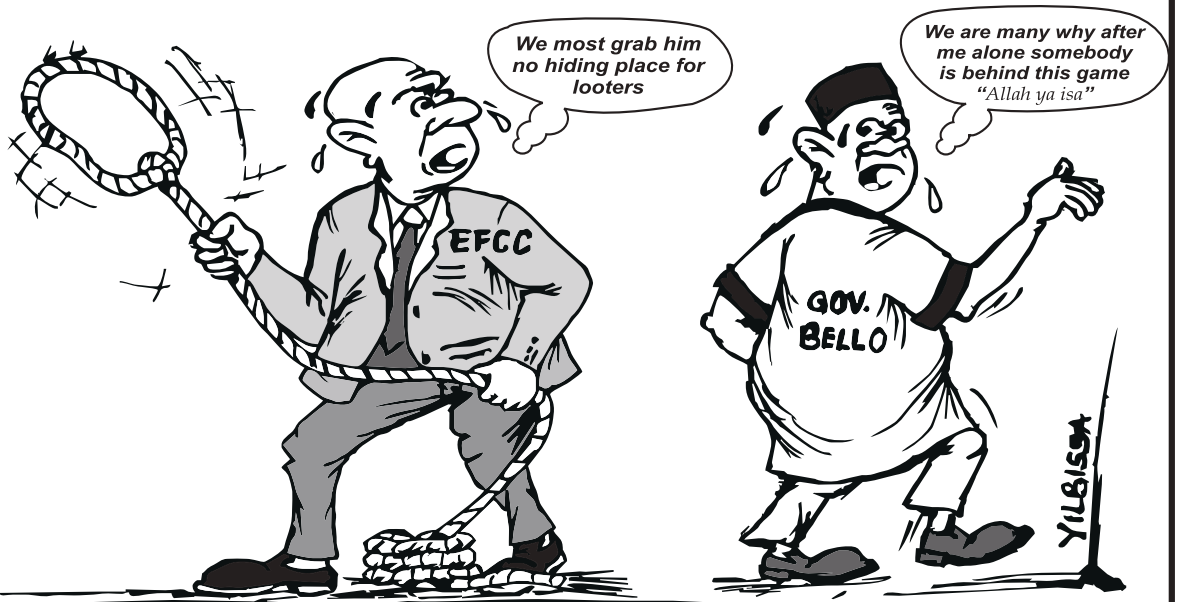
Therefore, I am using this medium to call on both the state and federal governments to do everything necessary to stop these killings. It's high time we as a nation come to the reality of the implications of what is before us right now. If the needful is not done and in time, Nigerians will soon lose confidence in their governments.

And many citizens may resort to self-help. If this happens, this country will certainly be on the path to chaos and, perhaps, total disintegration. God forbid.

Bulus Gambo, Karl Kumm University, Vom

Standard Cartoon

EFCC vs YAHAYA BELLO



Change of Name

<p>MAKUT</p> <p>I, formerly known as IBRAHIM MAKUT, now wish to be known and addressed as MAKUT IBRAHIM ADAMS. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>JOSEPH</p> <p>I, formerly known as DEBORAH PATARALLA STEPHEN, now wish to be known and addressed as JOSEPH DEBORAH AZI. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>JULIANA</p> <p>I, formerly known as JULBYEN NANCWAT, now wish to be known and addressed as JULIANA NANCWHAT. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>AZI</p> <p>I, formerly known as EZEKIEL CHRISTIANA, now wish to be known and addressed as AZI CHRISTIANA EZEKIEL. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>DAUDA</p> <p>I, formerly known as DAWUDA SALIHU MARI, now wish to be known and addressed as DAUDA SALIHU MARI. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>DANIEL</p> <p>I, formerly known as DABOK JANET TANI, now wish to be known and addressed as DANIEL JANET ENENCHE. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>
<p>VERONICA</p> <p>I, formerly known as VERONICA PAUL MAJIMI, now wish to be known and addressed as VERONICA NANPON SAMBO. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>ODUYEMI</p> <p>I, formerly known as BABALOLA OYEBOLA SHADIA, now wish to be known and addressed as ODUYEMI OYEBOLA SHADIA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public please take note.</p>	<p>AYIM</p> <p>I, formerly known as AYIM THOMPSON MAWUNG, now wish to be known and addressed as AYIM THOMPSON MOWUNG. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>INUWA</p> <p>I, formerly known as MISS INUWA FATIMA SABO, now wish to be known and addressed as MRS. INUWA FATIMA SABO. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>ESTHER</p> <p>I, formerly known as ESTHER SAMUEL HURUNG, now wish to be known and addressed as ESTHER SAMUEL GYANG. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>PATRICK</p> <p>I, formerly known as DUNG CHUNDUNG PAM, now wish to be known and addressed as PATRICK CHUNDUNG PAM. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>
<p>IZANG</p> <p>I, formerly known as IZANG IZANG IBRAHIM, now wish to be known and addressed as IZANG EMMANUEL IBRAHIM. Correct date of birth is 2/12/2000 not 2/8/1999. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>AONDO</p> <p>I, formerly known as AKULA PHILIP NAJIME, now wish to be known and addressed as AONDO AKULA PHILIP NAJIME. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>GLORIA</p> <p>I, formerly known as GLORIA SHIMENENGE ACHEN, now wish to be known and addressed as GLORIA SHIMENENGE ADUGU. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>AMAECHE</p> <p>I, formerly known as AMECHI PEACE, now wish to be known and addressed as AMAECHE PEACE. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>GUNGUNA</p> <p>I, formerly known as GUNGUNA PETER, now wish to be known and addressed as GUNGUNA DOIKVEL DASHI. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>ABUBAKAR</p> <p>I, formerly known as ABUBAKAR ZAKARIYYA YAU, now wish to be known and addressed as ABUBAKAR YAU. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>
<p>PAM</p> <p>I, formerly known as VICTORIA PAM, now wish to be known and addressed as PAM VICTORIA KANENG. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>JOSEPH</p> <p>I, formerly known as JOSEPH DZARMA JOHN, now wish to be known and addressed as JOSEPH JOHN DZARMA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>MASAUDA</p> <p>I, formerly known as MASAUDA ABDULLAHI, now wish to be known and addressed as MASAUDA AHMAD. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>COMFORT</p> <p>I, formerly known as MURJANATU SANI, now wish to be known and addressed as COMFORT EMMANUEL SUNDAY. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>MUSA</p> <p>I, formerly known as IBRAHIM JAMALU, now wish to be known and addressed as MUSA JAMALU IBRAHIM. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>EUCHARIA</p> <p>I, formerly known as ANYAEGBU EUCHARIA NKOLI, now wish to be known and addressed as EUCHARIA OBI NKOLI. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>
<p>OBI</p> <p>I, OBI CHELSEA MUNACHI NICOLE, wish to affirm that my correct and authentic date of birth is 01/11/2006 not 03/11/2007 as wrongly captured on my International Passport. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>AMINU</p> <p>I, formerly known as MISS AMINU ZAITUN UMMI, now wish to be known and addressed as MRS AMINU ZAITUN UMMI. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>BASHIR</p> <p>I, formerly known as BASHIR ABDULSALAM ABUBAKAR, now wish to be known and addressed as BASHIR ABDULSALAM ABDULLAHI. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>KASLONG</p> <p>I, formerly known as OGORRY DEBORAH SMART, now wish to be known and addressed as KASLONG DEBORAH OGORRY. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>AJANE</p> <p>I, formerly known as MILLCENT STEPHEN AJANE, now wish to be known and addressed as AJANE MILLCENT WENG. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>RAPHAEL</p> <p>I, formerly known as NWAOKA GLORY CHIZOBA, now wish to be known and addressed as RAPHAEL GLORY YERIMA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>
<p>ADAM</p> <p>I, formerly known as YAHAYA ADAMU, now wish to be known and addressed as ADAM YAHAYA MUHAMMAD. Correct date of birth is 14-4-2002 not 22-12-1987. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>TOCHUKWU</p> <p>I, formerly known as CHIBIKE KINGSLEY ONAH, now wish to be known and addressed as TOCHUKWU INNOCENT ONAH. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>NANCY</p> <p>I, formerly known as NANCY N. TAUPYEN, MANDAN NANRE NANCY, now wish to be known and addressed as NANCY NANRE TAUPYEN. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>SELBYEN</p> <p>I, formerly known as DORIS VONGJEN, now wish to be known and addressed as SELBYEN VONGJEN. Correct date of birth is 1/7/1995 not 1/7/1989. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>ELIZABETH</p> <p>I, formerly known as MISS HELEN DANIEL, now wish to be known and addressed as MRS ELIZABETH CALISTUS POLOK. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>ZUMNAN</p> <p>I, formerly known as MOSAT SARE DAKUN, now wish to be known and addressed as ZUMNAN SARE DAKUN. Correct date of birth is May 14, 1990. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>
<p>EWUZIE</p> <p>I, formerly known as EWUZIE JACINTA, now wish to be known and addressed as EWUZIE JACINTA UJUNWA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>EWUZIE</p> <p>I, formerly known as EWUZIE BARTHOLOMEW, now wish to be known and addressed as EWUZIE BARTHOLOMEW MADUABUCHI. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>MANGAI</p> <p>I, formerly known as MANGAI LYDIA, now wish to be known and addressed as MANGAI LYDIA CALEB. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>GRACE</p> <p>I, formerly known as GRACE SHWARTA DAWULUNG, now wish to be known and addressed as MRS GRACE SHWARTA DONGKUM. All former documents remain valid. Institute of Chartered accountants of Nigeria (ICAN), Plateau State Government, concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>AUTHENTICATION OF MTN NO.</p> <p>This is to notified the general public that I, HAUWA ZAKARI SANI, the lawful owner of the MTN Sim No. 07039788823 which was registered in the name of my late son MUHAMMAD KABIR SULAIMAN, who died on the 13/7/2021. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>MARIYA</p> <p>I, formerly known as MARIYA ABDULLAHI, now wish to be known and addressed as MARIYA AHMADU. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>
<p>SENLONG</p> <p>I, formerly known as SENLONG BALLE MANSHAK, WINIFRED SENLONG MANSHAK BALLE, now wish to be known and addressed as FOM SENLONG MANSHAK. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>RHAANZAL</p> <p>I, formerly known as RHAANZAL JOEL, now wish to be known and addressed as RHAANZAL JOEL GEOFFREY. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>NAANKWAT</p> <p>I, formerly known as TSENGAP FELICIA NAANKWAT, now wish to be known and addressed as NAANKWAT FELICIA SENLAT. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>ABDULLAHI</p> <p>I, formerly known as UMAR MUSA, now wish to be known and addressed as ABDULLAHI MUSA UMAR. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>NANKAR</p> <p>I, formerly known as NANKER GRACE TSENSU, now wish to be known and addressed as NANKAR GRACE TSENSU. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>ALI</p> <p>I, formerly known as ALI MOHAMMED IBRAHIM, now wish to be known and addressed as ALI MOHAMMED. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>
<p>VICTOR</p> <p>I, formerly known as EMMANUEL KANENG ESTHER, now wish to be known and addressed as VICTOR, HELEN CHUNDUNG. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>BENJAMIN</p> <p>I, formerly known as JENIPHER ZACHARIAH, now wish to be known and addressed as BENJAMIN RUTH DALYOP. Correct date of birth is 14/04/1988. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>SUNDAY</p> <p>I, formerly known as SUNDAY AMALI DEBORAH, now wish to be known and addressed as SUNDAY DEBORAH. All former documents remain valid. Zenith Bank, concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>OBOT</p> <p>I, formerly known as OBOT DIVINE-MERCY DAMILOLA, now wish to be known and addressed as OBOT DIVINE-MERCY SUNDAY. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>IDRIS</p> <p>I, formerly known as IDRIS ZAINAB HASSAN, now wish to be known and addressed as IDRIS ZAINAB BAKO. Correct date of birth is 11/11/2000 not 11/11/1994. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>MAKBWUKAR</p> <p>I, formerly known as MAKBWUKAR DORCAS SIMON, now wish to be known and addressed as MAKBWUKAR DORCAS BRAIN. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>
<p>RUEBEN</p> <p>I, formerly known as TIMOTHY RUEBEN JOSEPH, now wish to be known and addressed as RUEBEN TIMOTHY WUBAL. Correct date of birth is 2/4/1998 not 2/2/1998. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>YAKUB</p> <p>I, formerly known as LANTANA MOHAMMAD LAMNTANA, now wish to be known and addressed as YAKUB LANTANA RIDWAN. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>YAHAYA</p> <p>I, formerly known as YAHAYA MARYAM, now wish to be known and addressed as YAHAYA MARYAM ABDULLAHI. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>YAKUBU</p> <p>I, formerly known as YAKUBU, ISHAKU, now wish to be known and addressed as YAKUBU, ISHAKU, TUMBA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>EMMANUEL</p> <p>I, formerly known as ISHAYA UFULUL AUGUSTINE, now wish to be known and addressed as EMMANUEL UFULUL. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>NAYEN</p> <p>I, formerly known as NAYEN MARCELINUS, now wish to be known and addressed as NAYEN MARCELLINUS. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>



Barkin Ladi Local Government Council, Plateau State

INVITATION TO TENDER

Tenders are invited from reputable and registered contractors with the Council for the execution of the following projects:-

1. Proposed Construction of a new Council Chamber.
2. Production of working drawings and Bill of quantities for the New Chamber.
3. Fabricate and supply of new furniture and mini conference table .
4. Supply and installation of fire extinguishers.
5. Construction of a 1.3 km road, Gashish - Kuzen.
6. Construction of 2km Road Nafak Njona Ude- Vatt in Foron District .
7. Grading and Maintenance of road at Zakok side, Vat Ribung Road.
8. Proposed construction of new clinics at Ginding Akwati.
9. Proposed construction of new clinic at Kuzen Phase II
10. Proposed construction of new clinic at Larwin, Heipang.
11. Proposed construction of new clinic at Rite, Fan.
12. Proposed construction of New clinic at Kurra- falls, Gashish.
13. Purchase of 50 hospital beds, mattresses and equipment.
14. Renovation of Primary School Pan Dadi, Foron.
15. Renovation of an 8- man quarters Lokojoro Road
16. Renovation of LGC 4- man Quarters.
17. Reconstruction and drilling of solar motorized borehole at zonal inspectorate office with reticulation for fetching points
18. Construction of one block of two toilets at PHC Clinic Faron and Drilling of solar motorized borehole at Dalo Memorial Secondary School Ladura Foron
19. Reconstruction of electric motorized borehole to solar motorized borehole at PHC Clinic Barkin Ladi with water heater system
20. Reconstruction of solar motorized borehole at Takwok Community with reticulation for fetching points
21. Reconstruction of solar motorized borehole at Makoli Community.

PRE-QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS:

- i. Evidence of registration as contractor with the council;
- ii. Certificate of incorporation with CAC/Registration of Business name;
- iii. Evidence of Tax Clearance for the last three years
- iv. Evidence of financial standing (copy of recent financial statement from the Bank your company operates with).
- v. List of equipments and technical staff;
- vi. Evidence of similar projects executed by the company;

Eligible contractors should forward their Bid documents to the Secretary, Barkin Ladi LGC Technical Evaluation Committee within two (2) weeks from the date of this publication.

Signed:
Christy Jacob Loyi.
Ag DPM

For: Transition Implementation Committee Chairman,
Barkin Ladi LGC



Kanke Local Government Council, Plateau State

INVITATION TO TENDER

Tenders are invited from reputable and registered contractors with the Council for the execution of the following projects:-

1. Installation of Solar Grid at Kwal Secretariat Kanke
2. Landscaping of the Secretariat

Eligible contractors or companies should forward their bid documents to the Secretary, Kanke L.G.C, Tender Board, within two (2) weeks from the date of this publication.

NOTE: The council is not bound to award the contract to the highest or lowest bidder.

Signed:
Mrs. LAMI DASHE
Director Budget, Planning, Research and
Statistic/Secretary Tender Board,
For: Transition Implementation Committee Chairman,
Kanke LGC

Change of Name

PHILIP	PYEMWA	YAKUBU
I, formerly known as NAOMI GAVOU PHILIP, PHILIP GAVOU NAOMI, NAOMI PHILIP, now wish to be known and addressed as PHILIP NAOMI GAVOU. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.	I, formerly known as MISS ARWINNA ISHAYA PYEMWA, MISS ARKWINNA PYEMWA ISHAYA, now wish to be known and addressed as MRS. PYEMWA JOSHUA GAMBO. Correct date of birth is 12/11/1992 not 11/11/1992. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.	I, formerly known as RAHILA RAIROM BADAU, now wish to be known and addressed as YAKUBU RAHILA BADAU. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.
CALEB	MUHAMMAD	SIMON
I, formerly known as CALEB NGWE AUDU, now wish to be known and addressed as CALEB AUDU KPANDO. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.	I, formerly known as MOHAMMED ABUBAKAR, now wish to be known and addressed as MUHAMMAD ABUBAKAR. Correct date of birth is 07-02-1990 not 09-01-1990. All former documents remain valid. First Bank and the general public please take note.	I, formerly known as OMARE ROSE AKUTSE, now wish to be known and addressed as SIMON ROSEMARY. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.
ASHIKON	SALOME	MAMMAN
I, formerly known as CHRISTIANS JAMES, now wish to be known and addressed as ASHIKON CHRISTIAN JAMES. Correct date of birth is 4/4/1993 not 19/4/1993. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.	I, formerly known as SALOME MADU DANGANA, SALOME AMADU DANGANA, now wish to be known and addressed as SALOME ANDREW DANJUMA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.	I, formerly known as MAMMAN TABITHA NDU, now wish to be known and addressed as MAMMAN TABITHA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.
NANRIBET	SHAKIRI	NANCHIN
I, formerly known as DICKSON DAKMUN, now wish to be known and addressed as NANRIBET DAKMUN. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.	I, formerly known as ALI LARRY SHAKIRI, now wish to be known and addressed as SHAKIRI TAPCHIN NANPAN. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.	I, formerly known as BIHAS NANCHIN ALI, now wish to be known and addressed as NANCHIN NANRIBET VICTOR. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.
EPHRAIM	SPACE FOR SALE	SPACE FOR SALE
I, formerly known as NANDI EDWARD KOHONAN, now wish to be known and addressed as EPHRAIM NANDI. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.	SPACE FOR SALE	SPACE FOR SALE

News

BASG partners private sector to resuscitate ailing industries

From **ABBAS GUNGURA, Bauchi**

IN its determination to boost economic activities in the state, the Bauchi State Deputy Governor, Rt. Hon. Mohammed Auwal Jatau, has said that the administration of Governor Bala Mohammed requires the support of the private sector to resuscitate its ailing industries and create more business opportunities.

The Deputy Governor, who serves as Chairman of the Board, spoke recently at the inaugural meeting of the Governing Board of the Bureau for Privatisation and Economic Reforms, said the inauguration signalled the beginning of another journey in the collective effort to ensure full and functional privatisation and commercialisation of moribund enterprises in the state.

According to him, "The mandate and role of the board, include, among others, determining the



Mohammed

political, economic and social objectives of privatisation and commercialisation of state owned enterprises, review from time to time, the socio-economic effect of the programme of privatisation and commercialisation."

He assured that the Board would complement the efforts of the state government in creating employment opportunities for youth and produce goods and services for the teeming

population.

Responding on behalf of the members of the Board, the Secretary to the State Government, Barrister Ibrahim Mohammed, expressed gratitude to the state government for finding them worthy to serve and promised to justify the confidence reposed in them by working tirelessly towards achieving set goals.

Mutfwang felicitates with Plateau Speaker

PLATEAU State Governor, Barrister Caleb Mutfwang, has felicitated with the Speaker of the Plateau State House of Assembly, Rt. Hon. Gabriel K. Dewan, on his birthday.

Governor Mutfwang, in a message made available to THE NIGERIA STANDARD by the Director of Press and Public Affairs (DOPPA), Gyang Bere, described Hon. Dewan, the youngest Speaker in Nigeria, as a patriotic and devoted son of the state who steadfastly defended the state's ideals and core values when it mattered most.

He applauded Dewan's pivotal role and immense

contribution to rebuilding modern Plateau, extolling his commitment to positive impact and excellence in governance.

The governor commended the Speaker's peaceful disposition, sense of unity and dedication to protecting Plateau's cherished heritage and urged him to continue promoting community cohesion.

He encouraged him to passionately represent his Pankshin North Constituency and the entire state in order to deliver the dividends of good governance and quality service to the people.

"On behalf of the

government and the peace-loving people of Plateau State, I extend my heartfelt congratulations to Rt. Hon. Gabriel Dewan. I pray for God to grant you strength, sound health, and boundless energy to continue serving the state," he concluded.

N5m bribe: SPANCI requests justice for panel beater

From **MUSLIUDEEN ADEBAYO, Ibadan**

A human rights group, Save the Poor and Needy Charity Initiative (SPANCI), has petitioned the Inspector General of Police, Kayode Egbetokun, and the Commissioner of Police, Lagos State, Kayode Fayode, over the refusal of FESTAC police officers to release a panel beater, Afees Tijani, for failure to pay N5m bribe.

SPANCI in the petition alleged that a panel beater identified as Afees Tijani, in Ogere, Ogun State, was wrongfully arrested by policemen from Area E FESTAC Town on Friday, April, 19, 2024, and had not been released as at the time of filing this report.

The group said that the policemen, among whom are Emmanuel Aboli, allegedly framed the panel beater as a criminal because he told them he refused to work on a

From **WILLIE ATTAH, Gombe**

CIVIL Society Organisations (CSOs) in Gombe State have called for participatory, transparent and credible local government elections scheduled for Saturday, April 27, 2024, in the spirit of Open Governance Participation (OGP).

Dr. Bachama Yusuf, who led other CSOs on an advocacy visit to the Ministry for Local Government and Community Development, stressed the need to create an enabling environment for people to exercise their franchise during the election.

According to him, "This clamour will go a long way in ensuring ownership of public offices by citizens, especially the government closest to them.

"For us, we are committed to mobilizing citizens to actively participate and we plan to monitor the electoral process across the 114 wards going forward."

He disclosed that the CSOs had observed that even when it's a known fact that local government is the closest to the people, there had been growing concerns about the conduct of local government polls in

CSOs call for participatory, transparent LG elections



Yahaya

Gombe State and all other parts of the country.

He lamented: "This has caused an alarming erosion of trust in the local government election process among most people, thereby causing voter apathy, and loss of interest by different actors.

"Open Government Partnership (OGP) is a multi-stakeholder global best practice mechanism involving government and the civil society working to make government more open, accountable, and responsive to the citizens, with Co-creation as the underlying principle.

"With efforts from various stakeholders, Gombe State signed up to the OGP having submitted

Letter of Intent by the Governor of Gombe State, Inuwa Yahaya and subsequent approval by the OGP National Secretariat."

Responding, the Commissioner for Local Government and Community Development, Alhaji Abdulkadir Mohammed, commended the CSOs for the visit and the vital issues raised.

He, however, stated that the conduct of the local government election was not directly under the mandate of his ministry but the Gombe State Independent Electoral Commission, as the ministry only waits for the Commission to hand over the elected chairmen to them.



Dewan



Egbetokun

requested for 5 million naira and negotiated to 2 million Naira, then requested for the account details and the officer sent it.

"But to our surprise today, we complained to Lagos Police Public Complaints Department who did a very good job. We were told the IPO said only one person was arrested with Afees and that the stolen vehicle is now in Kano.

"We humbly request for Justice for Tijani Afees and his immediate release from this unlawful detention and thorough investigation about the said matter to ascertain if truly Afees is culpable so that offender will not go unpunished and innocent will not be punished as offender."

All efforts made by our correspondent to get a reaction from the Public Relations Officer of the Lagos State Police Command, Benjamin Hundeyin, proved abortive as he directed our correspondent to the Police Complaints Desk.

suspected stolen vehicle. The group noted that the policemen had arrested some people in connection with the stolen vehicle but refused to release the panel beater.

SPANCI President, Comrade Yemi Ezekiel Bello, then appealed to IGP, CP, Lagos State Directorate for Citizens Rights, the Attorney General and Commissioner for Justice, Lagos State to intervene.

The petition read in part: "We are hereby appealing

to the above stakeholders in justice system to save Tijani Afees from some men of Area E FESTAC Town police who deliberately hide their identity, but true caller has revealed one.

"The Ogere Panel Beaters Association appealed to the police against such injustice but were told to bring 5 million Naira for Afee's exoneration."

"At this point, they consulted his father, Mr. Abdul Rahman Tijani. Who called the said officer who

IMAGES

MUTFWANG COMMISSIONS NEW PLAGIS OFFICE

Plateau State Governor, Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang, recently commissioned the new and remodelled Plateau Geographic Information System (PLAGIS) offices at the Ministry of Lands, Survey and Town Planning, Jos



Governor Mutfwang reading his speech



The PLAGIS offices commissioned by the Governor



A cross-section of government functionaries



PHOTOS: DANLADI DUK

Commissioner for Lands, Survey and Town Planning, Peter Nyam Gai (right), putting heads together with Governor Mutfwang

MRS. MUTFWANG ATTENDS COCIN WOMEN BI-ENNIAL CONVENTION

Wife of the Plateau State Governor, Barr Helen Mutfwang, recently attended the Church of Christ in Nations, COCIN, Women Fellowship Bi-Ennial Convention at Gindiri Schools Compound, Mangu LGA



Mrs. Mutfwang delivering her speech



TEKAN Women Fellowship Leader, Mrs. Deborah Jong (right), COCIN Director, Church Growth, Rev. Ayizeh James Ayuba, and the Coordinator, COCIN Women Fellowship, Mrs. Godiya Kitgakka



Wife of the COCIN President, Mrs. Deborah Mohzo (left), with the First Lady, Plateau State



PHOTOS: JOHN LAR

Members of the COCIN Women Fellowship rendering spiritual songs

IMAGES

CENTRE FOR EARTH WORKS ADDRESSES JOURNALISTS

Centre for Earth Works last week addressed members of the Press on the dangers of plastic and its pollution at the Nigeria Union of Journalists, NUJ, Press Centre, Jos



Leader of the team, Stanley Nwakocho (middle), addressing newsmen



A cross-section of journalists covering the assignment



Another cross-section of members of the pen profession at the briefing



NUJ Assignment Committee Chairman, Douglas Francis coordinating

PHOTOS: DANLADI DUK

NUJ CHAIR RECEIVES ZONAL COMMANDING OFFICER R54

The Chairman of the Nigeria Union of Journalists, NUJ, Plateau State Council, Mrs. Ayuku Pwaspo, recently received on a courtesy call the Zonal Commanding Officer R54 of Federal Road Safety Corps, Jos, ACM Meshach Adigizi Jatau, at the NUJ Press Centre, Jos



Ayuku Pwaspo responding to the message of the Zonal Commanding Officer



A cross-section of FRSC Officers that accompanied the Zonal Commanding Officer



Journalists during the visit



ACM MA Jatau (left) in a handshake with one time NUJ Chairman, Katdapba Gobum

PHOTOS: DANLADI DUK

Features

The state of our nation

By ISREAL NANJUL LAR

In his inaugural speech, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu announced the five famous words that have considerably altered the lives of Nigerians: "The fuel subsidy is gone." He added that the 2023 budget made no provision for fuel subsidy and, moreover, subsidy payment was no longer justifiable.

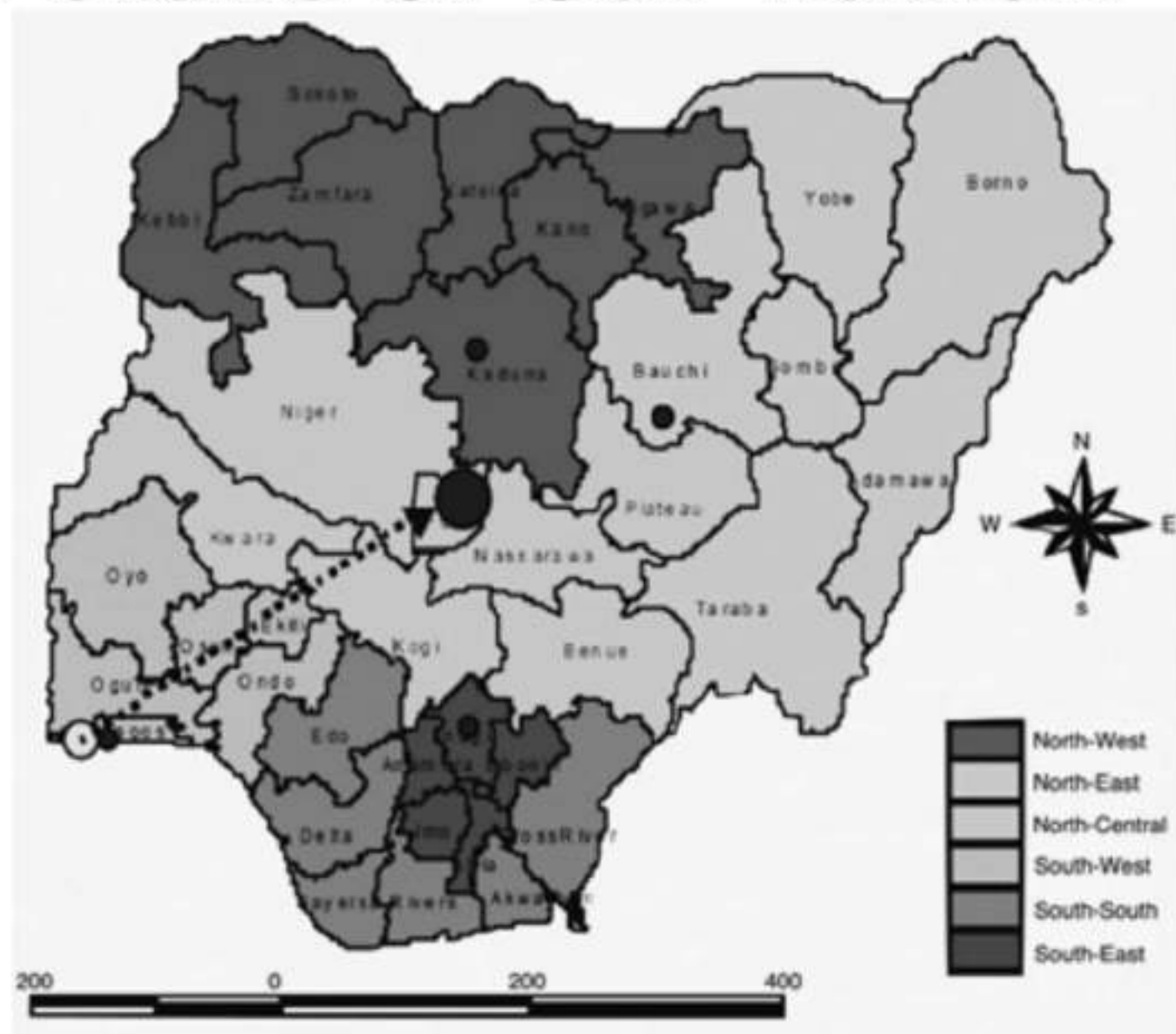
The removal led to the tripling of the prices of petrol across major cities from less than N200 per litre to about N700 per litre. This has in turn led to a huge increase in the costs of goods and services which further worsened the hardships being experienced by Nigerians.

President Tinubu had warned that the Nigerian economy was in distress but highlighted the progress his administration was making towards creating opportunities for growth and development in the country. He made these disclosures in a speech at a 2023 leadership conference and awards ceremony where he was represented by the Minister of Information and National Orientation, Mohammed Idris.

According to the president there were other key initiatives being made in the areas of investment. And while efforts were in top gear to support Nigerian businesses, policies had been introduced to assist students and vulnerable households as well as enhance food security and attract foreign direct investment.

Tinubu further acknowledged that even though these were indeed challenging times, they have also been marked by unprecedented opportunities to reset and build a new and sustainable economy, away from the past culture of waste—once the order of the day.

He disclosed that the



intervention funds, totaling N200 billion, had been set aside to support Nigerian businesses, in addition to a new federal students' loan programme and the Presidential Initiative on CNG. However, the N200 billion would be disbursed through three special intervention funds established to support Nigerian businesses.

The president also outlined the substantial increase in revenues accruing to the three tiers of government since the removal of the petroleum subsidy. Hence, it

is believed that more funds would be available to directly impact the lives of Nigerians through investments in critical infrastructure, social security and other areas.

He pointed out that the other efforts of the Federal Government aimed at bringing economic relief to Nigerians included the commencement of negotiations between the Federal and state governments and the organized labour for a new

minimum wage for the country and scaling up the second investment programme.

Tinubu added that, for the poorest and most vulnerable Nigerians, the social investment programme was currently under review to reposition it for maximum impact in order to support millions of households with direct cash transfers to enable them meet their basic needs.

The president emphasized that since assumption of office in May 2023, his administration had attracted \$30 billion in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) commitments into the real sectors of the economy, including manufacturing, telecoms, health care and oil, just to mention but a few.

However, what have been the effects of these policies and the foreign investments coming into the country on the economy of the country? In what ways have these positively impacted the living standards of the masses?

According to a recent report by the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN), about 767 manufacturers have shut down their operations while 335 became distressed. These, they noted, came against the

backdrop of the exchange rate volatility, rising inflation and other economic challenges that have worsened the investment climate as well as the negative consequences on the manufacturing sector which is huge and cannot be accommodated at this time of evident economic distress.

In the same vein, food security in Nigeria has become critical, according to a policy brief on the state of emergency declared on food security, with about 17 million people estimated to be critically food insecure.

This situation has over the years been impacted especially by violent conflicts, including the Islamist insurgency in the Northwest, perennial attacks on farmers, land grabbing as well as separatist agitation.

A strategic food security programme can help increase agricultural productivity, expand market participation, increase resilience of vulnerable households, create a business enabling environment and increase access to finance.

These, to a large extent, will go a long way in bringing back the good old days.

"According to a recent report by the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN), about 767 manufacturers have shut down their operations while 335 became distressed. These, they noted, came against the backdrop of the exchange rate volatility, rising inflation and other economic challenges that have worsened the investment climate as well as the negative consequences on the manufacturing sector which is huge and cannot be accommodated at this time of evident economic distress. In the same vein, food security in Nigeria has become critical, according to a policy brief on the state of emergency declared on food security, with about 17 million people estimated to be critically food insecure."

ODD WORLD

British farmers spray rams with deodorant

By NIKHIL PANDEY

THIS fragrant method not only prevents ram fights but also tricks ewes into accepting lambs by masking their scent.

British sheep farmers have discovered an unexpected tool for keeping their rams calm: Axe body spray (known as Lynx in the UK), according to *The Wall Street Journal*.

Sam Bryce, a farmer on the Norfolk-Suffolk border, credits a Facebook group called "Ladies Who Lamb" for the tip. According to the group, the strong scent of the Africa (Lynx Africa) variety masks the hormones that trigger aggression in rams.

Since using the deodorant,

Bryce reports a peaceful coexistence among her rams. "There's no argy-bargy, no rowing," she told *The Wall Street Journal*.

"They puff themselves up and square up to each other and make this grunting noise," explains Bryce, 55 years old, who often favours unwieldy Wellington boots paired with purple nail polish and sparkly eye shadow. "It's like when you see drunk men put their fists up and say, 'I'll fight you.'"

Apparently, this fragrant solution is gaining traction. Bryce says several farmers across the country, and possibly even worldwide, are adopting this method.

The benefits extend beyond preventing ram fights. Ewes identify their young by smell, and the deodorant's strong scent apparently tricks them into thinking the lamb belongs to them.

"I always go for Lynx Africa because it has a very distinctive, strong smell," Caitlin Jenkins, a 31-year-old shepherdess in nearby Suffolk, says. "The ones that don't smell as strong have less chance of working."

Axe was first launched by Unilever in France in 1983 after the company saw a gap in the market for a strong deodorant that smelled like cologne. The brand was sold as Lynx in markets where the Axe trademark was already taken, including the UK, Ireland, Australia, and New Zealand.

The wall street journal

US man, 61, claims body of 38-year-old



He's achieved this with a fraction of the cost and a less extreme regime.

By NIKHIL PANDEY

A 61-year-old man from Michigan named Dave Pascoe is making headlines for his unusual approach to health and longevity, according to *The New York Post*. Pascoe, who describes himself as a "biohacker," claims to have reversed his biological age to that of a 38-year-old through a strict regime of diet, exercise, and supplements.

Pascoe's website details his elaborate routines, which include waking naturally (before sunrise), spending time outdoors, and completing a vigorous exercise program. He also consumes a specific

diet and takes a staggering 158 supplements daily.

Pascoe's ultimate goal is to achieve a "healthspan" equal to his "lifespan," aiming to live a healthy life well into his 90s or even beyond 110. While acknowledging the importance of routine, he emphasises a flexible approach, allowing for spontaneous activities.

Pascoe's story has sparked interest in the growing "biohacking" movement, where individuals experiment with various methods to optimise their health and potentially slow aging. However, experts caution that such extreme approaches lack scientific validation and may not be suitable for everyone.

In conversation with *The New York Post*, he said, "My 'me time' is extremely important to me, so I schedule for it, but I will not pass on an opportunity to spend quality time with others. As a single guy who lives alone, I'll trade that workout, sauna session, or biohack for connected quality time every time. A single day of missing a few routines will not kill me."

As for the rest of his day, Pascoe notes that he rarely eats lunch. Instead, he tucks into dinner anywhere from 3 to 5 p.m.

The Michigander always opts for organic, grass-fed beef, free-range chicken, or wild-caught fish.

He also loads up on a colourful variety of vegetables and regularly adds garlic, herbs, and sauerkraut to his meals.

Interestingly, Pascoe doesn't count calories, saying: "By limiting simple carbohydrates most of the time, I eat as much as I like without gaining weight and apparently without increasing my rate of ageing."

Source: *The New York Post*



The shepherdesses say they're careful to avoid the animals' eyes while spraying them

Woman dances on roof of Lamborghini, smashes windshield

By RITU SINGH

AS she steps onto it, the windshield of the car shatters, leaving a huge crack in the glass.

In the age of social media, influencers, and content creators are often seen recording TikTok videos or Instagram reels in public. In an attempt to go viral, several creators are also seen engaging in rather risky feats and bizarre stunts. One such video has surfaced on social media websites showing a woman smashing the windscreen of a Lamborghini after she ran it up dancing.

The video shared on Reddit, shows the TikToker, wearing a pink tube top and a white skater shirt, running up the hood of a blue Lamborghini, up its windscreen and onto its roof. As she steps onto it, the windshield shatters, leaving a huge crack in the glass. Though she notices it and appears to be shocked for a second, she continues to complete her dance routine as planned.

"Why do people do this just to get views and likes?" the Reddit video was captioned.

The exact date and location of the video is not known.

In the past too, the woman identified as TikTok user @snowbunnyjelly, has shot several such videos of herself throwing slushies on cars, jumping on their roofs and throwing bats at them.

The video which has gone

viral, has angered many, who said that it "hurts" seeing an expensive car like that damaged. Meanwhile, some wondered how easily the window appeared to give way under her weight. Some viewers also speculated the video may have been staged.

One user wrote, "Just broke

that windshield like nothing."

Another commented, "It's giving her too much attention, just let her fade away into irrelevance."

A third wrote, "the look on her face when she noticed." A fourth added, "That windshield was weak as f**k. She's got to be 90lbs." Source: *Reddit*



Many said that it "hurts" seeing an expensive car like that damaged

Foreign Commentary

Iranian province hit by Israel highlights regime's weaknesses

By BENJAMIN WEINTHAL

JUST a week ago, some residents of Iran's central province of Isfahan - a nuclear weapon and missile production hub of the Islamic Republic - cheered the Iranian rockets fired into Israel.

In the early-morning hours of last Friday, the Isfahan authorities were jolted by Israeli strikes that triggered their air defense systems in the cities of Isfahan and Tabriz after three explosions went off near an important military airbase close to Isfahan. It is unclear how much damage Israel's strikes inflicted. Iran's regime reported no casualties.

Potkin Azarmehr, a British-Iranian expert on Iran, told Fox News Digital, "What my sources are saying is that there is no damage to the airbase, but Israel proved it can jam Iran's air defense and bypass it to the extent that they didn't even manage to sound the alarm despite Isfahan being in the heart of Iranian territory."

He continued that "Isfahan is the epicenter of Iran's air defense. If they couldn't detect the attack, serious questions about the reliability of Iran's air defense must be asked."

Azarmehr noted, "When the Pakistan Air Force retaliated after Iran missile attack, there



Raisi



Netanyahu

was no air defense."

Isfahan is a top-priority strike location for Israeli forces, because the area is one of the central features of the regime's illicit atomic weapons program. It is where the powerful Shahab medium-range missiles are made. Isfahan was the testing ground back in late October for the country's missile system, which proved capable of reaching Israel last week.

Israeli strikes against Iran's regime are typically shrouded in ambiguity to avoid any fingerprints on the missions

and to leave Tehran's rulers guessing.

In January, 2023, Israeli drone strikes allegedly hit a weapons factory inside Isfahan. The drone attack last year was said to be executed by Israel's foreign intelligence service, Mossad.

The Jerusalem Post reported that Friday's response was meant to be internalized as "An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. Israel retaliated where they were attacked."

Isfahan is also a hotbed of antisemitism and Holocaust

denial. At an April Al-Quds cartoon contest that aims to mock and deny the Friday of Ramadan, Iran promoted the destruction of Sheina Vojoudi, an associate fellow at the Gold Institute for International Strategy, told Fox News Digital that "It is our obligation to support the oppressed Muslims who have been oppressed, and we hope that, with divine providence in this path of resistance, we will be able to wipe the Zionist regime off the face of the earth."

In 2016, the Islamic Association of the University of Isfahan announced a

cartoon contest that aims to mock and deny the Friday of Ramadan, Iran

Holocaust. Sheina Vojoudi, an associate fellow at the Gold Institute for International Strategy, told Fox News Digital that "Isfahan is of great strategic importance in Iran. There are military and nuclear bases in Isfahan, and it shows how the regime is concentrated in this city and the rockets that were fired at Israel were also fired from one of the bases in Isfahan."

Vojoudi, an Iranian dissident who opposes the Islamic Republic's government, added that the "attack on Isfahan means that this city is one of the main points where the regime can pose a threat to Israel and, of course, to the Iranian people because of the intense activities of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. The regime's nuclear activities have almost ruined the lives of the people of Isfahan and increased the rate of cancer in Isfahan."

While the U.S. and allies seem to be content with Israel's reaction, other experts say an opportunity has been wasted.

"This is a missed opportunity. Israel needed to impose a serious cost on Iran to restore deterrence. I worry that this pin-prick reprisal will instead teach Iran that it can get away with large-scale attacks on U.S. partners without serious consequences," said Matthew Kroenig, vice president and senior director of the Atlantic Council's Scowcroft Center for Strategy and Security and the Council's Director of Studies.

Source: *The Jerusalem post*.



Iranian pro-government supporters hold a giant Palestinian flag at Palestine Square in Tehran, on April 14, 2024, in a celebration of Iran's early-morning IRGC attack on Israel. Iran fired over 100 drones and ballistic missiles on Saturday, April 14, 2024, in retaliation for an attack on a building attached to the country's consular annex in Damascus that killed seven members of the Quds Force of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) on April 1, 2024. Iran has blamed Israel for the attack on April 5, 2024, in Tehran.

News

PLSG vows to provide adequate security at PLASU

By DUMAH RANDONG

THE Plateau State Government has promised to protect the state-owned university in Bokkos by providing adequate security for the lives and property of students in the institution and environs.

The Plateau State Deputy Governor, Ngo Josephine Piyo, who received the leadership of the Students' Union Government of the institution on behalf of the state government, commiserated with the students over the loss of their colleague and others who sustained injury during the April 19 attacks in a neighbouring community of the university.

Piyo stated that government was deeply saddened by the incident but assured that the state government would continue to prioritise the safety of students, especially in the face of recurrent security challenges in the area.

She pointed out that government had put in place measures to forestall future threats to the school, adding that security agencies had been directed to ensure the deployment of



Piyo

additional personnel to the institution.

The deputy governor said that arrangements were in top gear to build more hostels to accommodate more students within the campus.

She called on the students to collaborate with government and remain calm and peaceful as it continued to fight against the growing insecurity in parts of the state.

Earlier, the President of the Students' Union Government, Comrade Gomos Timothy, called on government to deploy more security personnel in and around the university to protect and safeguard

the lives and property of students.

He stated that the insecurity in the area was truncating the growth of the institution and caused setbacks for students, adding that more hostels should be provided within the school as students living off campus were most of the victims of attacks.

He also called on government to ban open grazing within and around the university premises to prevent easy access by criminals.

He, however, thanked the state government for its proactive response and assured that students would remain calm and not take laws into their hands

From ANENE AIKE, Sokoto

SOKOTO State Governor, Dr. Ahmad Aliyu Sokoto, has commended the academic records of the Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto, (UDUS), for their part in educational excellence.

The governor, who was speaking during the convocation ceremony of 38th, 39th, 40th and 41th graduands of the institution, said that he remained indebted to teachers in the institution for their immense contributions to national development.

He added that the university had remained one of the best in the country because it did not compromise on standards.

Aliyu also told the graduands to count themselves lucky for the opportunity to have passed through the institution which was free of corruption and other social vices and urged them to be good Danfodites as they ventured

Governor Aliyu commends ODUS education icons



Aliyu

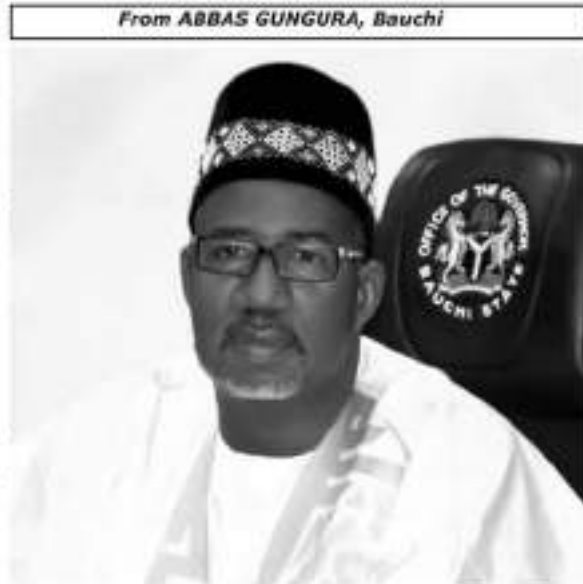
into the labour market. prompt payment of WAEC, The governor also NECO and NAPTEB acknowledged the examinations fees so as to ensure that candidates institution to the access their results quickly. educational development The governor revealed of Sokoto State and that arrangements were commended the present also in top gear to settle the leadership role and backlog of examination commitment to the fees left behind by the progress of state. immediate past He further assured of administration.

Hajj Commission assures of improved Hajj exercise

From ABBAS GUNGURA, Bauchi

THE fifteen-man Bauchi State Amirul-Hajj Committee has expressed its determination to ensure adequate welfare of all intending pilgrims from the state to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia this year.

Alhaji Usman Bilyaminu Othman, the state Amirul



Mohammed

Hajj, gave this assurance achieving desired during the committee's objectives.

The Executive Secretary of the State Muslim Pilgrims Welfare Board, Bauchi, recently.

Alhaji Othman, who is the Imam Abdurrahman Emir of Dass, assured that Ibrahim Idris, said the the committee would Board had made adequate study the report of last preparations to ensure a year's Hajj exercise with a hitch -free exercise, view to proffering before, during and after. solutions to the challenges He revealed that through identified to improve the proper support from the exercise. state government, Bauchi

While appreciating had successfully registered Governor Bala Mohammed over two thousand six for the confidence reposed hundred intending in them, the Amirul-Hajj pilgrims, which was higher charged the members to than most other states work in synergy towards across the country so far.

PLASU loses student in attack

By HOSEA NYAMLONG

THE Plateau State University community woke up to the sad news

of another attack on Chikiam, a community close to the institution, recently.

According to a statement

by the Registrar, Mr. Yakubu F. Ayuba, the sad event led to the loss of a 200-level Computer Science student residing in Chikiam, Dating James Jordan.

The statement added that the unfortunate accident happened despite the relentless efforts of the Plateau State Government, security agencies, management of the university and other stakeholders to improve the security situation on the campus and the surrounding communities.

Despite all of these, according to the Registrar, the enemies of the university and the state perpetrated "this dastardly attack, leading to the loss of our dear student.

"The Vice-Chancellor and the entire management conveyed their

condolences to the family of the deceased, the student body, and the university community."

He added that following the sad development, management had decided on a two-day mourning period from Friday, April 19 to Saturday, April 20, 2024.

"Accordingly, all the examinations earlier scheduled for Friday 19 and Saturday 20 April 2024, are hereby suspended," he stated.

The statement cautioned students against taking the law into their hands and urged them to remain calm and law-abiding.

"We wish to call on the security agencies to beef up security around the university to secure staff and students, as well as look into other ways of making the university more secure," the statement said.



Best

NIGERIA

in the Foreign Press



She was kidnapped a decade ago with 275 girls. Finally, she escaped

By ISMAIL ALFA
and RUTH MACLEAN

THEIR capture set off a global campaign to "Bring Back Our Girls." But many are still missing, and kidnappings in Nigeria have proliferated.

Saratu Dauda had been kidnapped. It was 2014, she was 16, and she was in a truck packed with her classmates heading into the bush in northeastern Nigeria, a member of the terrorist group Boko Haram at the wheel. The girls' boarding school in Chibok, miles behind them, had been set on fire.

Then she noticed that some girls were jumping off the back of the truck, she said, some alone, others in pairs, holding hands. They ran and hid in the scrub as the truck trundled on.

But before Ms. Dauda could jump, she said, one girl raised the alarm, shouting that others were "dropping and running." Their abductors stopped, secured the truck and continued toward what, for Ms. Dauda, would prove a life-changing nine years in captivity.

"If she hadn't shouted that, we would have all escaped," Ms. Dauda said in a series of interviews this past week in the city of Maiduguri, the birthplace of Boko Haram's violent insurgency.

Kidnapped from their dormitory exactly 10 years ago, the 276 captives known as the Chibok Girls were catapulted to fame by Michelle Obama, by churches that took up the mostly Christian students' cause and by campaigners using the slogan "Bring Back Our Girls."

"The only crime of these girls was to go to school," said Allen Manasseh, a youth leader from Chibok who has spent years pushing for their release.

A still image from a 2014 video that showed the kidnapped Nigerian girls. Credit... via Agence France-Presse — Getty Images

Their lives have taken wildly different turns since the abduction. Some escaped almost immediately; 103 were released a few years later after negotiations. A dozen or so now live abroad, including in the United States. As many as 82 are still missing, perhaps killed or still held hostage.

Chibok was the first mass kidnapping from a school in Nigeria — but far from the last. Today, kidnapping — including of large groups of children — has become a business across the West African country, with ransom payments the main motivation.

"The tragedy of Chibok plays over and over every week," said Pat Griffiths, a spokesman with the International Committee of the Red Cross in Maiduguri.



Saratu Dauda shares what happened after the terrorist group Boko Haram abducted her and her classmates.

The Chibok Girls are only the most prominent victims of a 15-year conflict with Islamist militants which, despite the hundreds of thousands of people killed and millions uprooted, has largely been forgotten amid other wars.

More than 23,000 people in northeastern Nigeria are registered as missing with the Red Cross — globally, its second biggest caseload after Iraq. But that is a vast underestimate, Mr. Griffiths said.

Before she was abducted, Ms. Dauda said, she was a happy teenager in a large, close-knit Christian family. She loved playing with dolls and dreamed of becoming a fashion designer. She was her father's pet and adored her mother.

For months after being captured, Ms. Dauda said, the girls slept outside in the Sambisa forest, Boko Haram's hide-out, listened to a steady stream of Islamic preachers and fought over limited water supplies. When two girls tried to escape, she said, they were whipped in front of the others.

Then, she said, they were given a choice: Get married or become a slave who could be summoned for housework or sex.

Ms. Dauda chose marriage, converted to Islam and changed her first name to Aisha. She was presented with a man in his late 20s whose job was to shoot video of Boko Haram's battles. Hours after they met, they were married.

He was not cruel to her, she said, but after a few months, he came home one day and found

her playing with a doll she had fashioned out of clay and made a dress for.

"You're playing with idols? You want to cause me problems?" she remembered him saying. She got angry and left their home, staying with another girl from Chibok. When he realized she was not returning, she said, he divorced her.

She soon married another Boko Haram fighter, Mohamed Musa, a welder who made weapons, and over time they had three children. Although she was still a hostage of Boko Haram's murderous leader, Abubakar Shekau, and his henchmen, she said that they were given everything they needed, surrounded by people "who cared about each other like a family," and that she was happy.

The Chibok Girls were treated far better than other kidnap victims, other escapees have said.

Her husband said in an interview last week that Ms. Dauda refused to join the cohort of Chibok Girls freed in 2017 after government negotiations.

"There were many of them that refused to be taken home simply because they feared that their family would force them out of Islam," said Mr. Musa, or that "they might be stigmatized."

But as the years went by, Ms. Dauda kept track of the friends from Chibok who died. Sixteen in air raids and bomb attacks. Two in childbirth. One as a suicide bomber, coerced by Boko Haram. One of sickness, and one of snakebite. She noticed that it

was mostly women and children dying in the air raids and wondered when it would be her turn.

And life became harder. When Boko Haram's leader died and its powerful offshoot, Islamic State West Africa Province, took over in the Sambisa forest, Ms. Dauda and her husband found themselves on the wrong side, she said, and under suspicion. They worried they would be made slaves. Late at night, in whispers, they talked about escape. But Ms. Dauda wanted to act faster than her husband and decided to go ahead. He refused to let her take the children, saying he would follow with them later.

One night at 3 a.m. she made a little bundle of food, looked at the faces of her sleeping daughters and said a short prayer for their protection. She ducked out of their home. She waited under a tree, checking that nobody had seen her. Then she walked for days through the bush, going from village to village, telling people she was on her way to visit friends and always leaving during morning prayer, when the men would be in the mosque and not see her going.

She met up with other fleeing women on the way, and last May, they handed themselves over to the military together. She had heard on the radio that the Chibok Girls had become a cause célèbre, and finally she experienced it.

"Is this a Chibok Girl?" she remembered a soldier marveling, when he learned her

identity. "We are thanking God."

It had been six years since the last negotiated release, and many families had given up hope. Mr. Manasseh said he despaired over the years as three governments failed to bring all the girls home and mostly stopped talking to the families.

"Silence," he said. "It's a giant government failure."

Since Chibok, Nigerian schools have become a hunting ground for kidnapers of all stripes. In just one of many such instances, last month dozens — or possibly hundreds — of children were kidnapped in Kaduna State, hundreds of miles from territory controlled by Boko Haram and its Islamic State offshoot. A few days earlier, hundreds of women and children were kidnapped in the northeast while foraging for firewood.

After surrendering, Ms. Dauda was taken to Maiduguri and enrolled in the government rehabilitation program, for counseling and deradicalization. A few months later, she got word that her husband had escaped with their three daughters, and they were all reunited.

She said she had dreamed of seeing her parents again, holding them, feeling their warmth. One day, she was allowed out of the government facility with her children, to visit them in their village, Mbalala.

She hugged her father and her mother.

"She was crying, and I was crying," Ms. Dauda said.

Her father offered her and her husband a place to stay if they became Christians, she said. But she refused, saying she had become a Muslim freely and wanted to stay one, even if many people thought that she and other escapees were victims of Boko Haram's indoctrination.

"I was not brainwashed," she said. "I was convinced by what was explained to me."

Two of her daughters are named for her friends from Chibok. Zannira, 7, was named for a girl who escaped. Five-year-old Sa'adatu is named for one still in captivity.

Recently, she said, her husband gave their girls a doll.

While in captivity, Saratu Dauda converted to Islam and changed her first name to Aisha, the name of the Prophet Muhammad's third wife.

Ruth Maclean is the West Africa bureau chief for The Times, covering 25 countries including Nigeria, Congo, the countries in the Sahel region as well as Central Africa.

A version of this article appears in print on April 15, 2024, Section A, Page 1 of the New York edition with the headline: Kidnapped with 275 Girls, She Finally Escaped.

The New York Times

EYE'S WORLD

With Palang Kasmi

Relationships

Ways to find out if he's really into you

By PALANG KASMI

IN their quest to find love, most women get so carried away that they don't watch out for signs to know if the man they love and care about loves them too.

Many women have ended up heart broken simply because they failed to read some of the visible signs which show that he is not interested in having a serious relationship with them.

Some women just chose to ignore the signs even when they are visibly there for you to see; even when you do not need a soothsayer to tell you that he is not serious with you.

It is possible to find true love. But you must not end up with a man that does not really care about you. It is best to end the relationship than remain with a man who does not care about you.

Open your eyes and read what Stacey Laura Lloyd said on *LiveAbout.com* about how to decode signs that your man does not want to have a serious relationship with you.

"When you really like a guy, you may be trying to decode and interpret his every move in order to determine if he wants a relationship with you in the future. You may find yourself wondering what his intentions truly are, and you may even count how many times he texts you during the day to try and gauge if he's interested in being your man," says Stacy.

However, according to her, while you may want a long-term commitment, it's important to pay attention to the following six clear signs that he doesn't want a relationship with you:

He's distracted when you're together

Have you noticed that he's always on his phone when you're with one another? Do you find yourself having to repeat things because he isn't paying attention to you? One of the clear signs that he's not interested in having a relationship with you is that he's distracted and disengaged when you're together.

If his mind is elsewhere, he's checking out mentally, and he doesn't seem present, he's actually presenting you with clear evidence that you're not of much importance to him. But if he's giving you his full and undivided attention and cherishes your every word, he's showing you that you matter, and he's far more likely to want a relationship with you.

He won't make Long-Term Plans (LTP)

When you really like a guy, you may be eager to make long-term plans with him. For instance, you may want to invite him to your friend's wedding a few months in advance, buy concert tickets ahead of time, and even nail down some dates for a trip together. But when a guy doesn't want a relationship with you, he's unlikely to commit to anything far off in the future. Rather than being excited by the prospect of being with you for these kinds of activities down the road, he's hesitant and unable to give you a definitive "yes." And if a guy doesn't



want to think about your future together, he should be history to you.

He doesn't introduce you to his friends

Have you met his group of friends yet? When a guy is into you, he'll make it a point to introduce you to the other important people in his life. Not only will he want his friends to meet you and get to know you, he'll also want to see how you mesh with everyone, especially when he's thinking about being with you for the long-term. However, if you haven't yet met his friends or really anyone else who is significant in his life, he's actually showing you that you're not that significant to him. When a guy isn't serious or truly interested in you, he's not going to introduce you

to his friends because it's not worth his time and effort. And if this is the case, he certainly isn't worth any more of your time and effort, either.

He's unreliable

If you can't trust him or count on him, you can count on the fact that he doesn't actually want a relationship with you. When a man is unreliable and undependable, it's because he hasn't made you a real priority in his life. For instance, if he frequently breaks plans with you, is vague about his whereabouts, and isn't forthright with you, he doesn't want to be with you. After all, if he was serious about having a relationship with you, he'd try his hardest to keep his word and honor his commitments to you as much as humanly possible. But if he's

constantly letting you down, it's time to let this guy go.

He's frequently MIA

Does he disappear for days or even weeks at a time before you hear from him again? This is a classic sign of a man who isn't truly interested in having a relationship with you. For example, when a guy goes MIA, it's not uncommon for him to be more of a player and date other people on the side. When he suddenly goes dark, it's typically because there are other people with whom he'd rather spend his time. And if you never really know when you're going to hear from him again or see him again, this is a key indicator that he doesn't want anything serious with you.

He's emotionally unavailable

While you may have opened up to this guy and feel as though you can confide in him, it's important to take a step back and look at his willingness to open up to you in return. Has he let you in emotionally? When a man doesn't want a relationship, he's going to keep conversations about his feelings and his past as superficial and light as possible. He's not going to take the time to fully open up to you because he's not emotionally investing in you or in a future relationship with you. Even if you're comfortable being vulnerable around him and having personal discussions, his decision to be emotionally detached and keep you at a distance is a clear sign that you should be distancing yourself from him instead.

Opinion

By FREDERICK FEMI AKINFALA

Students' loans: Clarifying the misconceptions

THE Nigerian Education Loan Fund (NELFUND) was established under the Students Loans (Access to Higher Education) Act 2024, which replaced the Students Loans (Access to Higher Education) Act 2023.

NELFUND's primary role is to receive, manage, and invest funds to provide loans to Nigerian students for higher education, vocational training, and skills acquisition.

In simpler terms, NELFUND's primary responsibility is to administer loans to students in tertiary and monotechnic institutions, manage the funds entrusted to it and invest them in worthwhile ventures to generate higher returns in the future.

As a newly established agency, NELFUND's management acknowledges its significant responsibility, particularly towards the millions of Nigerian students and parents who are potential fund beneficiaries. It is crucial

to balance public expectations, alongside the powers and duties granted by the NELFUND Act. Therefore, it is necessary to define the limitations of the agency as well.

One recurring topic of discussion in various forums attended by NELFUND's management and the public revolves around the loan application process and the eligibility criteria for potential beneficiaries.

A parent who can afford tuition fees of one million naira or more is not in the same circumstance as someone who struggles to make a living and educates his/her child through the public education system. Similarly, while a student in a high-end private university may graduate quickly, his/her peers in public universities may face various challenges, including financial difficulties.

As previously clarified, the loan scheme applies to

Nigerian students in public tertiary institutions. The fundamental aim of the fund is to ensure educational equity, providing an opportunity for financially disadvantaged students to start and complete their studies, just like their counterparts from more affluent backgrounds.

The goal is to prevent underprivileged students from dropping out due to financial constraints during their research. It is unnecessary to define this specific eligibility factor extensively, as it is self-explanatory and highlights the difference between financially privileged and underprivileged individuals.

NELFUND exists to address such obstacles, promoting fairness and equality in accessing higher education.

Another issue is whether inmates are eligible to apply for the loans. According to the NELFUND Act 2024, individuals convicted of a

crime do not qualify for the loans. Specifically, Section 25, sub-sections (a) (b)(c)(d) of the Act prohibit the following categories of individuals: those who previously received federal and state government student loans but defaulted on repayment; those found guilty of misconduct, plagiarism, education malpractice, cultism, possession or use of hard drugs; and those convicted of dishonesty or fraud, violence against individuals, and drug offences.

NELFUND is determined to fulfil the desires of President Bola Tinubu and the Renewed Hope agenda. It is a pan-Nigerian policy, which is non-discriminatory, and will ensure equal access to every eligible Nigerian student, regardless of tribe, religion, or language.

This eligibility criterion should not be up for debate, just as one would not question an employer for not hiring a drug addict or a convict if they

so desire. NELFUND gained existence through an act of the National Assembly, the highest legislative body in Nigeria responsible for making laws and ensuring good governance. The content and context of the Act reflect the consensus among the 109 senators and 360 representatives elected to enact laws for the country.

Understandably, the lawmakers aligned the eligibility clauses with the provisions outlined in Chapter 6, Part 2, Section 182 of the 1999 Nigerian Constitution (as amended). These provisions, among others, exclude mentally unstable individuals, convicts of fraud and dishonesty, and those involved in occult activities. NELFUND will certainly not exceed its powers or fall short of the genuine expectations of underprivileged Nigerians who hold high hopes for establishing the student loans scheme.

Culled Premium Times

Restructuring NYSC for productivity and relevance

By ABDULSALAM MAHMUD

To fast-track genuine reconciliation among discontented masses, speed up the reconstruction of damaged infrastructure and other national assets, together with the exigent task of rebuilding the wrecked Nigerian 'ship', on May 22, 1973, something epochal happened. On that day, the NYSC was established by the regime of General Yakubu Gowon.

The birth of the scheme incontestably was as a result of Gowon's priority for building lasting peace, while forging rock-solid unity and uncommon national progress, post-civil war. It was established to conscript Nigerian graduates into the nation-building project, and to accelerate national development.

Since 1973, graduates of universities and later polytechnics have participated in the NYSC programme for one year-known as national service year. It is, however, depressing to note that the scheme has only achieved a few of its objectives. One can say, without contradiction, that it has been mixed fortunes for the NYSC.

Of course, we have seen and appreciated the outstanding contributions of the scheme in building and consummating marital relationships among Nigerians of diverse ethnic lineages.

Kudos to the scheme, corps members and their staff are also actively involved in conducting sensitive national assignments like elections, where they are recruited as ad-hoc staff by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC).

Also, the NYSC has contributed to promoting national unity, and increased mobility of labour, which has assisted public schools, hospitals and private organisations to have a steady pool of cheap skilled labour. Suffice to say that the scheme has also served as a veritable platform for 'adventurous' youths to explore the rich cultural traditions and

heritage of other ethnic groups different from theirs, in the states they are posted to.

Through the Community Development Service (CDS), essential infrastructure and basic amenities have been provided for many remote communities by generous and philanthropic corps members.

But some lingering and bothersome issues have made critics to utterly demonise, flagrantly condemn and question the scheme's continued relevance, just as others are 'baying for its blood', saying it should be abolished.

Among other things, the NYSC has succeeded little in producing enterprising youth who become financially self-reliant or, if you like, budding entrepreneurs and employers of labour, instead of job-seekers. This is owing to the fact that most of the scheme's graduates, all through their service year, are not taught relevant skills of lucrative vocational trades, just as the skills acquisition and training centres are grossly inadequate.

Aside the 2011 post-election mayhem, several corps members have been killed extra-judicially by trigger-happy corps and men of other security agencies. Scores also met their untimely death during violent ethno-religious bloodlettings.

There have also been reported deaths of corps members during the three-week orientation programme perhaps out of negligence aborting the lofty dreams of the promising youths. In 2016, Ifedolapo Oledapo, a first class graduate of Transport Management from the Ladoke Akintola University of Technology (LAUTECH), in Oyo state, died as a result of professional carelessness by staff of the Kano State NYSC camp.

Thereafter, Ukeme Monday passed on after a brief illness at the Zamfara State camp. Late Monday was a first class graduate of Petroleum Engineering from

the University of Uyo (UNIUYO), Akwa Ibom state. Just recently, the Niger State orientation camp at Paiko came under derisive media spotlight in a report inside a Saturday edition of The Punch. According to the report, the camp's dilapidated facilities deemed unfit for human dwelling have remained in a state of abject disrepair for years.

Judging from that, it will not be difficult to picture the health risks it posed to corps members during the orientation programme. Many other NYSC camps across the country in disrepair also expose corps members to health risks. Furthermore, the scheme, in recent times, has been battling financial challenges, which has resulted in many graduates spending more than a year after graduation before they are finally mobilised for service.

And the fact that we now have batches and streams of NYSC programme indicates that rising population of graduates is overstretching the scheme. A replica land of Sodom and Gomorrah may gradually be sprouting up at some orientation camps if the disturbing tales of military officials and even some corps members having raunchy sexual affairs is not hearsay.

And only during the service year will one find a medical doctor teaching English Language in a secondary school; a law graduate working in a commercial bank; or a chemical engineer filing cabinet papers and running errands for older staff in a local government secretariat.

The sordid challenges, notwithstanding, the NYSC has come to stay. Despite some shortcomings associated with the scheme, its relevance far outweighs its limitations. To this end, it is high time government restructured the programme, not only as a means of mobilising our teeming youths into agriculture (through the farm settlement scheme), but to reshape their mindset about white-

collar jobs being the most reliable means of getting quick wealth.

This will also go a long way to curb restiveness expressed in the form of militancy, kidnapping, armed robbery, rape, cultism, among others. Furthermore, regular research, diligent implementation of planned programmes, effective communication of successes achieved by the scheme as well as critical evaluation, which are the hallmark of public relations, should be prioritised by NYSC officials so as to ascertain emerging challenges and map out strategies to surmount them.

To help address unemployment, both the federal and state governments should establish more skills-acquisition centres, so as to equip corps members with relevant entrepreneurial skills for self-sustenance. Cases of individuals or groups who murdered serving corps members should be revisited and commensurate punishment served those who are convicted.

To provide requisite logistics and facilities that can help sustain the scheme, adequate funding should be a priority of government. As a corollary to the preceded statement, government should evolve a mechanism to help ascertain the capacity and needs of each state before NYSC participants are posted to them.

Also, corps members should be accorded due co-operation and direction to carry out quality developmental projects, so as to complement government's efforts in providing essential infrastructure at various communities. It is also germane that prospective corps members resist the temptation to serve only in 'choice' places like FCT, state capitals, NNPC and CBN, which are almost saturated to the detriment of other sectors.

These are ways to go about restructuring the NYSC for productivity, relevance and sustainability. Can't we then test-run them for practical solutions?

Culled Premium Times

Sports

GOVERNOR'S CUP FINAL

Plateau State Governor's Cup Football competition finals between Jos North and Mangu Football Club was determined at the Mangu Mini Stadium where the Mangu Boys won the trophy, 1:0



Special guest of honour, Governor Mutfwang (right), putting heads together with the Speaker, Plateau House of Assembly, Rt. Hon. Gabriel Dewan (middle), and Chief of Staff, Government House, Engr. Jeremiah Satmark



The lone goal scored by the Mangu Boys to win the trophy



Governor Mutfwang presenting the trophy to the winning team



Governor Mutfwang (left) discussing with the former Deputy Governor, Nasarawa State, Silas Agara

MTN CHAMPS season 2 kick off on the Plateau

BY ANDRE D BISYIT

IN its effort to discover untapped talents in the country, MTN Nigeria has organized a talent hunt tagged MTN CHAMPS season 2 which kicked off yesterday at the New Jos Stadium.

Emamoke Ogoro, General Manager, MTN Brand and Communication, explained that the vision was initiated in order to catch the athletes young and nurture them in order to represent the country in international tournaments.

She said those participants were between the ages of fourteen and seventeen out of whom a few would be selected to participate in the finals in Calabar.

Ogoro disclosed that MTN had been sponsoring sporting activities for the past two decades in the country.

"MTN have been sponsoring sporting activities in the country, we are part of the NFF and support the Super Eagles and many other teams," she said.

She added that because about 70 per cent of Nigeria's population was below twenty, engaging them positively was key to national development.

She noted that MTN's vision was to put Nigeria on the global map and that, with government support, they would achieve that.

Plateau State Commissioner for Youth and Sports Development, Bashir Lawandi

Dati, through the Permanent Secretary of the ministry, assured of government's readiness to partner with any organization that meant well for the state and its citizens, saying that initiatives like this would go a long way in taking the youth off the streets.

He said that, as a ministry, their responsibility was to coordinate, monitor and plan all the activities of youth and develop sporting activities in the state.

Rita Mosunde, Secretary General, Athletics Federation of Nigeria, commended MTN's vision of propagating sporting activities and pleaded that the venues of the tournament make it more accessible to the youth of all geographical zones of the country.



Ogoro

youth of all geographical zones of the country.

NPFL fixtures

Fri 26, 4:00pm	Remo Stars vs Niger Tornadoes
Sat 27, 4:00pm	Bendel Insurance vs Heartland
Sat 27, 3:00pm	Doma United vs Kwara United
Sun 28, 4:00pm	Sporting Lagos Vs Abia Warriors
Sun 28, 4:00pm	Enugu Rangers vs Plateau United
Sun 28, 4:00pm	Bayelsa United vs Rivers United
Sun 28, 4:00pm	Akwa United vs Kano Pillars
Sun 28, 4:00pm	Shooting Star vs Sunshine Stars
Sun 28, 4:00pm	Enyimba vs Katsina United
Sun 28, 4:00pm	Gombe United vs Lobi Stars

Nigeria Professional Football League (NPFL) Table

	MP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
1. Eungu Ranger	31	16	6	9	44	31	+13	54
2. Lobi Stars	31	15	7	9	34	28	+6	52
3. Plateau Utd	31	16	2	13	46	31	+15	50
4. Enyimba	31	15	5	11	37	27	+10	50
5. Remo Stars	30	15	5	10	35	27	+8	50
6. Shooting Stars	31	14	7	10	37	29	+8	49
7. Katsina Utd	30	13	9	8	32	27	+5	48
8. Kano Pillars	31	13	5	13	40	38	+2	44
9. Bendel Insurance	31	11	10	10	28	25	+3	43
10. Niger Tornadoes	30	12	6	12	29	29	0	42
11. Abia Warriors	30	12	5	13	32	34	+2	41
12. Sporting Lagos	31	10	8	13	29	32	-3	38
13. Doma United	31	10	8	13	22	33	-11	38
14. River United	25	10	7	8	30	23	+7	37
15. Kwara United	29	8	12	9	24	28	-4	36
16. Sunshine Stars	30	8	12	10	28	32	-4	36
17. Bayelsa United	30	9	9	12	34	39	-5	36
18. Akwa United	31	9	7	15	31	35	-4	34
19. Heartland Owerri	31	6	11	14	28	38	-10	29
20. Gombe United	31	7	7	17	22	56	-34	28



By **CHRIS GYANG**

HE quoted an exultant El-Rufai explaining how that childhood victory enriched his adult life: "If I can give the bully a hard enough time, he would not do it again. Permanent peace comes about as

state." These included the 1984 gubernatorial election. plan to ban public preaching, which ultimately backfired because it became clear that it would likewise affect Muslims. Also, in 2017 and 2018, he merged many districts in Southern Kaduna and changed

Ade-Zaky also bemoaned El-Rufai's imposition of Muslims as heads of the other two arms of government – the legislature and judiciary – and other key government ministries, departments and agencies as

FRAGMENT

"His rabid obsession with his racial and religious superiority had pushed him to upset, for the first time, the familiar and longstanding political apple cart of that racially and religiously diverse state where Christians and Muslims had hitherto shared power equitably and seamlessly. To further push home the point that he had no qualms and that he had made up his mind to irrevocably and firmly institute Muslim dominance in the state's political power structure, he proceeded to mastermind the emergence of a Muslim-Muslim ticket for his APC for the March 11 gubernatorial election."

CHRIS GYANG

Portrait of Tinubu's disgraced hatchet man (II)

a result of a resolute and uncompromising effort to define your position on a matter – and that is the way things are." Once again, you can detect that incredible finality in his belief about the total efficacy and efficiency of such extreme measures.

This ploy later came in handy when he had problems with the late President Umaru Yar'Adua and the people he described as "his cowardly gang" in the autobiography.

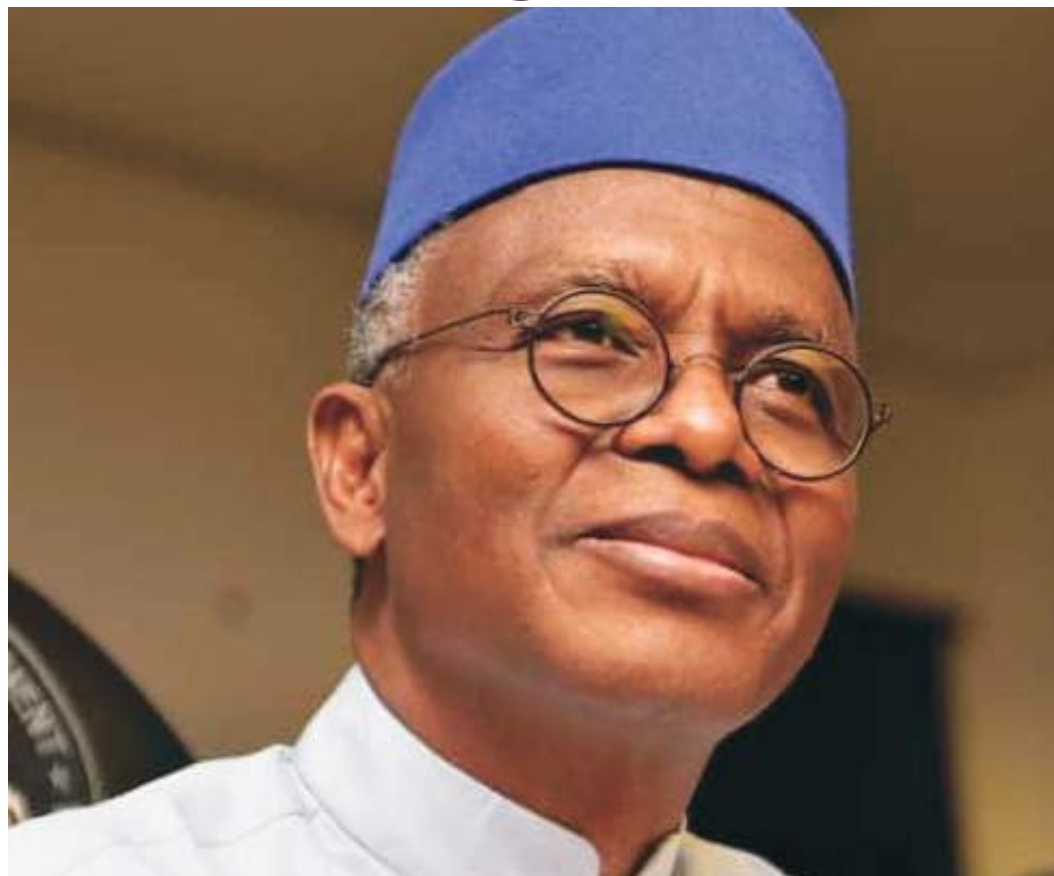
He explained: "To me, THE BEST WAY TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM ... WAS TO ATTACK SOMEONE HIGHER UP IN THE HEIRARCHY SUCH THAT EVEN IF I LOST, I STOOD A CHANCE WITH AN ATTACK WHERE HE IS MOST VULNERABLE.... But despite my natural instinct to attack Yar'Adua, I deferred to the wishes of my friends as I did not want to jeopardise whatever they had at stake.... I know this strikes some people as arrogance, but I AM REALLY NOT SENSITIVE TO PEOPLE NOT LIKING ME" (emphasis mine).

The germ of this particular approach is to viciously strike the leader in order to instil fear in his followers - "his cowardly gang." Despite the fact that the risks may be enormous, the repercussions for likely failure do not matter as long as you succeed in creating the impression that you are bold and fearless. But, most significantly, you would have exposed the weaknesses of the leader.

See any resemblance between the above style of confronting your adversary and the way Tinubu continually harangued Buhari and his men immediately he got the impression that they may not be backing his presidential ambition?

Are there any similarities between the above tactic and the manner El-Rufai carried out his diatribe against President Buhari, his supporters and aides regarding the naira swap and the consequent brouhaha about that Supreme Court order on the legality or otherwise of the new and old currencies? Your guess is as good as mine.

According to Ade-Zaky, in furtherance of El-Rufai's exclusionist agenda against the Southern Kaduna people, "he initiated certain measures inimical to their interests and well-being which would promote Islam and the welfare of Muslims in the



El-Rufai

the names and titles of some indigenous chiefdoms to emirates and some tribal chiefs to emirs. "It came to light that the governor asked the Muslim communities in the areas to demand for emirates, which they did," Ade-Zaky noted.

"El-Rufai did not stop there," he continued. "He moved to 'restructure' the political equation in the state by picking a fellow Muslim as his deputy in the 2019 election." The Muslim-Muslim ticket that was one of the most contentious hallmarks of the Tinubu/Shettima presidential run was first tested during this Fourth Republic by El-Rufai in Kaduna State.

His rabid obsession with his racial and religious superiority had pushed him to upset, for the first time, the familiar and longstanding political apple cart of that racially and religiously diverse state where Christians and Muslims had hitherto shared power equitably and seamlessly.

To further push home the point that he had no qualms and that he had made up his mind to irrevocably and firmly institute Muslim dominance in the state's political power structure, he proceeded to mastermind the emergence of a Muslim-Muslim ticket for his APC for the March 11

gubernatorial election. well as major government institutions.

"Similarly," he revealed, "for the first time since the return of democratic governance in 1999, no minister was appointed from Southern Kaduna. All ministers representing the state in the federal cabinet have been Muslims....He has since declared Friday as public holiday in the state so that all government offices are closed to business."

Considering Tinubu's slavish subservience to the core north before he became president, (of course, for political capital and expediency), could El-Rufai have suggested the Muslim-Muslim pairing to him or could he (Tinubu) have adopted it to please extreme elements such as El-Rufai who see politics and leadership mainly as a tool for religious expansionism?

If Tinubu thought that the Muslim-Muslim ticket would work in Nigeria, he should have taken another look at the dark clouds of division and mutual suspicion hanging over Kaduna State today. El-Rufai pushed large segments of the citizenry to the fringes of society as a whole through his egregious realignment of the power equation.

Nigeria cannot be turned into a

theocracy the way El-Rufai virtually did to Kaduna. The prospects are frightening, unethical and totally repugnant. Herein lay the fears of majority of Nigerian Christians and, indeed, liberal Muslims about the APC's Muslim-Muslim presidential ticket.

They were apprehensive that, should Tinubu win, there was a huge possibility that he would attempt to institute the kinds of horrors El-Rufai unleashed on Kaduna State as national policy. And the likelihood of that was extremely high because it was widely though, and the possibilities were very high at the time, that El-Rufai would most certainly form part of Tinubu's innermost kitchen cabinet.

And because it was thought at the time that Tinubu had a penchant for outsourcing his power, leadership and responsibilities (some said due to his frail health), the way he did at Chatham House, there was no doubt that extreme elements such as El-Rufai would hijack his government. The consequences, as we had seen in Kaduna State, would have been catastrophic, most especially for the much larger and extremely complex Nigeria.

These thought-provoking

words of Bishop Kukah, though spoken in 2020, still shed more light on some of the issues at stake at the time: "On our part, I believe that this is the defining moment for Christians and Christianity in Nigeria... We accepted President Buhari when he came with General Idiagbon, two Muslims and two northerners. We accepted Abiola and Kingibe, thinking that we had crossed the path of religion, but we were grossly mistaken..."

"Today," he added, ominously, "we are living with a Senate whose entire leadership is in the hands of Muslims. Christians have continued to support them. For how long shall we continue of this road with different ambitions?"

The other spectre, as it has become clear from this narrative, is the similarities in the political modus operandi and thought patterns of El-Rufai and Tinubu. That may have accounted for the duo's dangerous fascination with using attack and subterfuge as a means of conflict resolution and self-preservation and, of course, their fixation with the Muslim-Muslim ticket.

On July 30, 2022, one JOm, still miffed by El-Rufai's tweet of July 15, 2012, referenced above, tweeted this angry, but extraordinarily perceptive, reply: "How did an extremist like this become a governor in Nigeria [?]."

As citizens went to the polls to elect a president in 2023, it was the prayers of many that the electorate should avoid hardliners like El-Rufai and all the people and ideals they represented. Like a plague, such bigots portend great danger for our country's religious and ethnic plurality which came under severe attack in the eight years of the Buhari administration.

But Tinubu triumphed. And El-Rufai was subsequently rubbished by Tinubu's government. And Kaduna State is now beginning to come to terms with Mallam El-Rufai's toxic legacies.

Political analysts say that, President Tinubu, just like Olusegun Obasanjo and Goodluck Jonathan, will certainly have a taste of El-Rufai's other, nasty, side. Sooner or later.

This write-up, which was first published in newsng.ng on February 22, 2023, has been slightly updated to reflect current realities