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Check spread of cholera-Reps



Chinda

Residents cry out as torrential rains cut off farming community P5



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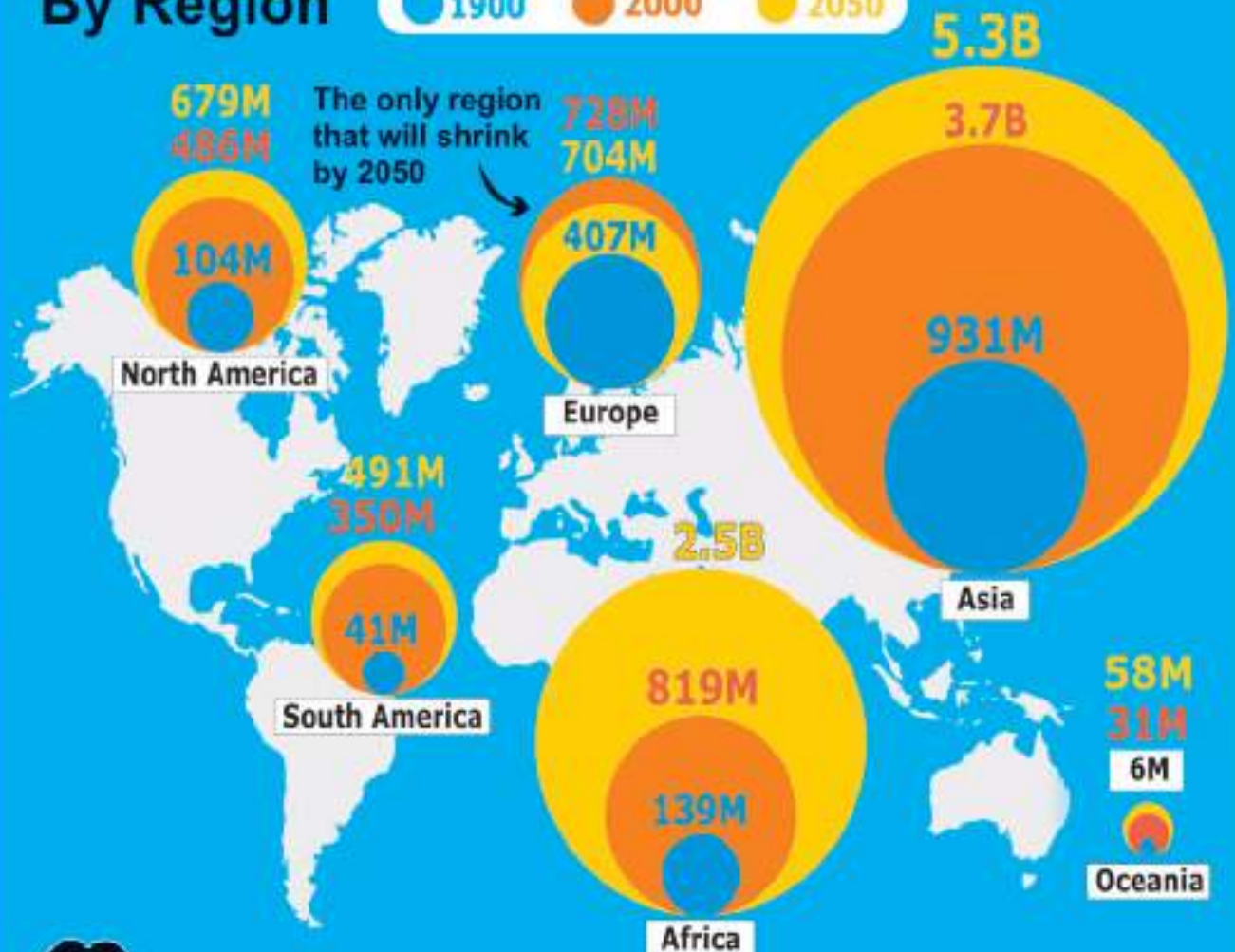
Population Growth

By Region

1900

2000

2050



Projections based on UN medium-fertility scenario.
Source: Our World in Data

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News

Check spread of cholera

-Reps



Chinda

THE House of Representatives has called on the Federal Government to quickly put in place measures to check the spread of cholera across the country.

Tuesday's resolution of the House followed the adoption of a motion of urgent public importance moved by the House Minority Leader, Kingsley Chinda, titled "Urgent need to check the outbreak of cholera in Lagos and other parts of the country."

Following the adoption of the motion during plenary presided over by the Deputy Speaker, Benjamin Kalu, the legislative chamber urged the Federal and

respective state governments "To urgently put in place measures to effectively check the outbreak of cholera in the country."

It also mandated its Committee on Information, National Orientation, Ethics and Values to "Undertake rigorous public enlightenment and education of the citizenry on the need to maintain personal hygiene at all times by relevant government agencies." **TAB Minimum Wage: Labour Kicks as FEC steps down memo** 0:07/1:01

It further mandated the Committee on Healthcare Services to urgently liaise

with relevant stakeholders in the health sector "To investigate the root cause of the outbreak and report back to the House within two weeks for further legislative action/intervention."

In his argument, Chinda noted that the House was concerned about the public and personal health of teeming Nigerians largely due to a lack of access to clean water, poor sanitation and personal hygiene etc.

He said, "The House is concerned about the rapid rate at which the disease has spread across Lagos and several other parts of the country within such a short time, especially against the backdrop of reports that the government has run out of vaccines to effectively tackle it, even as the death toll continues to escalate in those States."

"There is an urgent need for quick action/intervention by the federal and respective state governments to curb the disease from further spread across the country."

"We are worried that unless urgent and proactive steps/measures are immediately adopted, the disease would spread to several other places and possibly escalate than imagined and this would not be good for the health of the citizenry and the country at large."

FORMER Chief of Naval Staff, Admiral Alison Madueke, has filed a petition in the Lagos State High Court, seeking a legal declaration to end his marriage to Diezani and requesting that she stop using his last name.

He is asking the court to order the former Minister of Petroleum Resources to revert to her maiden name, Agama.

This was contained in Madueke's petition for jactitation of marriage (declaration that a marital union has ended).

The ex-Chief of Naval Staff argues that Diezani's use of his name despite their marriage being legally over is damaging to his reputation and could lead to unintended consequences, including mistaken liability, particularly given the corruption allegations against her. 0/1:01

Madueke is a former military governor of Anambra and Imo states. He married Diezani on June 30, 1999, under the Marriage Act.

The petitioner, Madueke, noted that Diezani had previously filed for divorce at the Nassarawa State High Court in Mararaba Gurku in November 2021, citing an irreconcilable

Stop Diezani from using my name

-Madueke

breakdown of their marriage, seeking to end their union formally.

He said he did not oppose the suit, resulting in the court's dissolution of the marriage, yet Diezani persists in using his surname, despite the formal termination of their marital union.

He stated, "On the 13th day of April 2022, judgment was delivered in Suit No. NSD/MG345/2021 by Hon. Justice A.A. Ozegya dissolving the marriage between the petitioner and the respondent on the ground that the marriage has broken down irretrievably."

"The said dissolution of marriage has now become absolute by the operation of law."

"Even though the marriage has been dissolved and is now legally finalised, the respondent continues to

use the petitioner's first name (Alison) and surname (Madueke) as her own without any justification or consent from the petitioner."

"It is now more than two-years that the respondent continues to use the name of the petitioner to his embarrassment."

Madueke revealed that he directed his legal representatives to serve Diezani a formal request on December 14, 2023, demanding that she cease using his surname and revert to her maiden name, Agama.

However, despite this legal notice, Diezani has failed to respond and continues to use his name.

The petition further read, "The respondent has continued to hold out herself as the wife of the petitioner even when the marriage has been dissolved."

Power cut leaves Kano varsity in quandary

ACADEMIC Activities may be disrupted at the Aliko Dangote University of Science and Technology Wudil, Kano, as the management has been thrown into dilemma following power cut by the Kano Power Distribution Company (KEDCO).

Addressing journalists on the development, Dean, Students Affairs, Professor Abdulkadir Dambazau, said the University authority was in a great shock, as KEDCO disconnected the institution from the national grid.

He lamented that despite the down payment of N20 million out of the N60 million debt, the company still went ahead to cut the power, a situation that has thrown the school into confusion.

"Among the options we have include either shutting down the University, or asking students not to return to school after the end of second semester break, or all students should bear the brunt's of staying without lights." According to him, the institution paid its entire monthly allocation of

N20 million to KEDCO but, despite that, the company went ahead and disconnected the school. Professor Dambazau, lamented how the power cut has plunged the school into serious water shortage since, they relied heavily on power to supply the water to the institution.

"Before they jacked up the bill to N60 million monthly we were scouting to pay N16 million to N17 million monthly, and that we were getting power supply for 23 hours daily but, suddenly they said we must pay accumulated bill of N248 millions debt before they restore the light"

He added: "Our monthly upkeep from Government was only N17 million but thanks to Governor Abba Kabir Yusuf who increased the money to N20 million which we paid to the company but, still they went ahead and disconnected us," Professor Abdulkadir explained. He further explained that the university had to resort to temporary arrangements of installing solar panels to supply water to the campus before the resumption of the 28,000 students to the school.

Customs intercepts arms, drugs in Rivers

THE Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) has intercepted a significant cache' of arms, ammunition, and drugs in Rivers State, with a total duty-paid value of N13.9 billion.

NCS Comptroller General, Bashir Adewale Adeniyi, disclosed this while briefing journalists in Onne Port, Rivers State, Monday.

Giving details of the seizures, Adeniyi said a 40-foot container carrying 844 rifles and 12,500 live ammunition rounds with a duty-paid value of N4.171 billion was concealed using doors, furniture, plumbing fittings, and leather bags.

He said the six 40-foot containers containing 1 million bottles of CSC cough syrup with

Codeine, 3.5 million Trodol Benzhexol tablets with N9.6 billion duty-paid value and two 40-foot containers with 720 bales of used clothes and N144 million duty-paid value were intercepted.

The customs boss said the weapon-laden container, which originated from Turkey, based on the number of risk factors associated with the importation, became a subject of interest to the service.

He said, "We have followed its sail across continents and we have benefitted immensely from credible information through our collaboration with intelligence communities both at local, national and international levels."

The importer tried to circumvent the procedure through the outlet of a private-bonded terminal, he said.

"On Friday 21st of June 2024, the auspicious container was subjected to a thorough physical examination. Inside the container were 844 units of assorted rifles and 12,500 pieces of life ammunition, which were concealed with various items like doors, furniture fittings and leather bags," he added.

He said the items would be handed over to the Coordinator of the National Centre for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons, under the office of the National Security Adviser for diligent investigation, and rigorous prosecution.



Corruption: We are all complicit

The Nigerian public servant or those at the helm of affairs see themselves as gods. It is the weight of the responsibility, the power that goes with it, and the resources at their disposal to do with as they please that first puts them in this fool's paradise.

Second, the realization that everything within the stipulated parameters is under them, and everything answers to them, can easily go to somebody's head. Absolute power corrupts absolutely.

There are uncountable numbers of African leaders who took the issue of their power far beyond what it should be. One of such leaders was Idi Amin, the Ugandan dictator whose reign was a reign of terror. He committed so many atrocities, including gruesome murder, rape, taking anything he wanted, and maltreating foreigners.

In fact, he was law unto himself. He was so power-drunk that he gave himself the highest military rank that anyone could attain. Idi Amin needed no prompting from anyone to unleash the dragon. He was conceited, inconsiderate, greedy, individualistic, self-serving.

Most of our leaders share some, if not most of, Amin's terrible attributes. They take the mantle of leadership with their own personal expectations. First on the list is to make sure they set plans in motion to make sure that their families and themselves never experience poverty again in their lives. That is the case in Nigeria. But in developed nations, a person sees leadership as a means of writing their names in gold. The leader sacrifices in the national interest.

Second, top on our leaders' priority list is paying back or compensating their strong supporters whose actions gave them the exalted position. This is a 'must do' or else the leader would be called an ingrate.

Recently, some political analysts opened my eyes to some subtle ways some people make sure the elected leader is indebted to them. One of the things they do the moment their acquaintance is declared winner of an election is to sew up to 20 caftans and flowing gowns, known as babban riga, and present them to the leader as a sign of goodwill. Unfortunately, some of these clothes are coming along with charms to force the one who wears them to become their puppet. It is borne out of the most selfish and wicked intentions. Such people often boast that 'Mr. Governor is in our hands'. But, as we say in local parlance, " God pass man."

There was a particular case I heard about. It was reported that if not for the financial assistance rendered by a particular wealthy man, a particular governor would not have scaled through to emerge winner of the gubernatorial race. Money politics. Afterwards, when it was payback time, no quality of contract was deemed good enough to repay Mr. Good's generous action. As a result, today they don't see eye to eye.

A public servant complained that the

amount of requests he gets for financial assistance on a daily basis will take millions of naira to take care of. To be on the safe side, he only helps the sick while his wife handles the hungry. In spite of that, they have been called names- that they are tight-fisted and insensitive to people's needs. In his words: " Some people think we have our local government's account at our disposal to do as we please. They don't know that every kobo has to be accounted for."

A lady whose husband was once a member of the State House of Assembly said they used to start receiving visitors from the break of dawn till the setting of the sun. And the language was the same: Request for financial assistance to feed the family or pay school fees. This lady reported that they used to eat their breakfast, lunch and dinner with the visitors. On top of it, her husband would try his best to take care of their problems. No wonder, she was disappointed when she overheard somewhere that her husband is tight-fisted. It's like they are insatiable and they will prefer one to be corrupt to satisfy them.

So many of us celebrate former governor Dariye as a very generous man who gives money to anyone he came across. That seems to be the criteria. If you want to be celebrated, throw money around and your flaws will be overlooked. It is a common practice that the moment one makes it known that he is an aspirant, invitations for launching, fund raising and chairing occasions begin to flow.

Have you noticed that it is usually during electioneering campaigns that churches begin fund raising, musicians begin album launch, and so many political groups come back to life? All of these entail lavishly dishing out money. We make it look as if they have to win a popularity contest in which the only language is money. It is for this reason that when they ascend the throne of political power or public office, they tell themselves, " It is payback time." Do you blame them?

To be in our good books, they borrowed from loan sharks. So, they are often up to their necks in debts before ascending the throne. We are all complicit in corruption - even the religious bodies that expect too much from our public officers to the idle political hangers-on who expect them to take care of all their needs.

We are all guilty of swindling our local governments and states of huge sums of money because, without remorse, we ask our leaders to sponsor, fund, provide and take care of our personal needs.

Until we become responsible citizens, we can never have responsible leaders. Until we allow them to follow the right path as dictated by law and their oath of office, we are never going to be taken seriously by other countries of the world.

News

First lady empowers widows

By JIDAUNA DARING

AS part of efforts to put smiles on the faces of widows, starter package grants of N50,000 were presented to over 200 selected widows from across the 17 local government areas of Plateau State.

Our correspondent reports that the widows recently participated in a two-day training workshop on production of household items to pave the way for them to be self-reliant.

Plateau State First Lady, Barrister. Helen Mutfwang, disclosed this during the symbolic presentation of the grants at the graduation ceremony of the trainees held at the Government House, Little Rayfield, Jos.

Mutfwang thanked God for making the training a huge success and charged the beneficiaries to make good use of the knowledge they acquired.

She advised the widows to always look up to God in whatever they do, urging them to resist any spirit of discouragement and never despise any little beginning in life.

The First Lady told them to step-down the training to other women in their respective localities so that more woman would become self-reliant.

She appreciated the resource persons for the knowledge imparted in the trainees and described some of the products made so far as a very encouraging beginning, urging them to sustain the tempo.

Earlier in her remarks, Plateau State Commissioner for Women Affairs and Social Development, Mrs. Caroline Dafur, applauded the First Lady for her show of love and concern for the plight of widows in the state.

Dafur said because of the love that Governor Mutfwang and his wife had for widows, Internally Displace Persons (IDPs) from Mangu, Bokkos and Barkin Ladi camps also participated in the skills training workshop.

In a vote of thanks on behalf of the widows, Mrs.



Helen

Grace Inuwa appreciated the First

Plateau First Lady laments spike in abase

By JIDAUNA DARING

WIFE of the Plateau State Governor, Barrister. Helen Mutfwang, has expressed concern about the rising cases of drug abuse among the youth, women and men in the state.

She made this known during an event to mark the International Day Against Drugs Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, held at Government House, Little Rayfield, Jos, recently.

She said drug abuse was a serious threat to the state's development, security and public health, adding that it had destroyed lives, broken families and undermined the fabric of society.

The First Lady pointed out that drug abuse caused multifaceted challenges that touched the lives of millions of people worldwide, adding that the impact was far-reaching and complex.

She stated: "We must take collective action to address this crisis in Plateau State, The Time is Now administration is committed to strengthening drug prevention and education programmes, enhancing access to treatment and rehabilitation services, and supporting law enforcement efforts to drug trafficking networks."

Mutfwang maintained that the theme for this year, 'The Evidence is Clear: Invest, in Prevention', emphasized the importance of preventing people from falling into the danger of experimenting with illicit drugs and subsequently falling into the trap of dependence on psychoactive substances.

She added that, to

Lady for her kind gesture and described the skills acquisition as the first of its kind in the state, which was another way of giving them the fish to eat while at the same time teaching them how to catch the fish.

She promised Mrs. Mutfwang of their readiness to make proper use of all they had learnt and prayed God to bless the governor and his wife as they pilot the affairs of the state.

combat the drug problem, government and relevant stakeholders must implement prevention programmes, especially among the youth, and take a firm stance against drug addiction through administrative and legal measures.

She urged youth to avoid the destructive path of drug abuse and embrace a life of purpose and fulfilment.

"To our parents and caregivers, educate and guide your children on the dangers of drug abuse," she said.

Mrs. Mutfwang enjoined relevant stakeholders to intensify efforts to help create a society free from the scourge of drug abuse and illicit trafficking, adding that the devastating effects of the scourge is much in the society.

In his remarks, Commander, National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), Plateau State Command, Anthony Gothar Tala, commended Governor Mutfwang and his wife for their passion for the war on substance abuse and drugs trafficking in the state.

Tala noted that parents were the most important people in the fight against drug abuse, particularly in the home by talking to their wards or children about the dangers of the scourge.

Earlier in her welcome remarks, Commissioner for Women Affairs and Social Development, Plateau State, Caroline Dafur, appreciated the First Lady for championing the war on war against substance abuse and thanked the governor for his support towards ensuring a drug-abuse-free society.

IMAGES

MUTFWANG ATTENDS WIDOWS' GRADUATION

Plateau State Governor, Caleb Mutfwang, attended the graduation ceremony of the Widowhood and Vocational Centre, Mangu, Mangu LGA, recently where he presented working tools to them



Mutfwang (right), being welcomed by the Permanent Secretary, Ministry for Women Affairs, Alex Anlong



Governor Mutfwang (right), in a handshake with the Chairperson, Gender and Equality Commission, Barr. Olivia Dazyam



Governor Mutfwang (left), putting heads with the Commissioner for Women Affairs, Caroline Pangiang



Mutfwang (right), presenting an electric oven to one of the beneficiaries



Cross-section of graduands appreciating the governor



Cross-section of royal fathers at the ceremony



Governor Mutfwang inspecting some materials made by the widows



The governor acknowledging cheers from the graduating widows

PHOTOS: DANLADI DUK

News

Governor Mohammed commends commissioner for ministerial briefing

From **ABBAS GUNGURA, Bauchi**

GOVERNOR Bala Mohammed of Bauchi State has commended the Commissioner of Information and Communication, Usman Garba Danturaki, and the entire staff of the ministry for their foresight and initiative for re-introducing the long abandoned tradition of ministerial press briefing to showcase government's activities to the people.

The governor gave the commendation while officially declaring the two weeks relaunching of the ministerial press briefing held on the July 1, 2024, at the auditorium of the Abubakar Umar Secretariat complex, Bauchi.

Governor Mohammed, who was represented by the Head of Civil Service, AlhajiYahuzaAdamu, said, "The good people of Bauchi State who gave us mandate to serve them are entitled, as matter of right to be kept abreast of what the government has been doing for the socio economic development of the state."

He added, "the responsibility of organizing the ministerial press briefing rests squarely on the Ministry of Information and Communication."

The governor used the forum to commend the state owned media organizations, BATV and BRC, for continuing to promote and project the activities of government



Mohammed

despite their financial challenges.

He assured that soon, the Bauchi State television would be on satellite to be able to compete with its contemporaries across the globe.

While calling on private media organizations in the state to partner with and support his administration to better the lives of the citizens, Governor Bala assured that his administration would provide them th enabling environment to carry out their duties efficiently and effectively.

He appealed to all ministries

and agencies to fully participate in the exercise to make it a success and directed the information commissioner to compile and summarize the submissions and produce a compendium on the activities of the government for record and reference purposes.

Earlier in his welcome remarks, the Commissioner of Information and Communication, Usman Garba Danturaki, expressed appreciation to the governor for giving the Ministry the opportunity to re-introduce the ministerial press briefing by not only approving logistics but for directing all MDAs participate.

Residents cry out as torrential rains cut off farming community

From **VICTORGAI, Jalingo**

PEVA, a farming community in Taraba State's Takum Local Government Area, has been cut off from all economic activities by floods.

THE NIGERIA STANDARD learnt that, Adu, a nearby village, thrives economically by being closely connected to Peva's market and serves as the agricultural hub supplying agricultural products to the market weekly.

However, this critical connection has been severed by torrential rains which have washed away the road linking Adu and Peva, cutting off the community from the outside world and causing economic hardships.

Mr. Tertsea Chieve, a resident of Adu, lost his rice farm to the floodwaters.

While reflecting on the sad development, Chieve lamented, "The rains came swiftly and fiercely, overwhelming Adu with a deluge that local elders describe as unprecedented."

The road, which once meandered through rolling fields and past small homesteads, succumbed to the forces of nature. Torrents of water cascaded from the hills, eroding the soil and undermining the roadbed, eventually causing large sections of the road to wash away.

"This is the worst rain I have seen in my life," he added,

"The road has never been in great shape, but it was our only link to the market. Now it's completely gone."

The destruction of the road has far-reaching implications for residents of Adu who relied on Peva market to sell their crops and purchase essential supplies.

Mr. Terkula Mnguve, a big-time farmer and businessman who regretted the development, said, "We don't have any alternative routes available, so we are forced to undertake arduous and costly journey often through neighbouring communities, just to reach Peva. The cost of transportation has increased tremendously, making it almost impossible for many to sell their goods at a profit."

Mr. Tersoo Mela, an economist and lecturer at the Taraba State University, pointed out that the impact of the damaged road extends beyond economic losses.

According to him, the road was also a vital conduit for essential services, including healthcare, education and supplies.

Said he: "With its collapse, residents are cut off from these critical services. I was told that one Mr. Samuel Tordoo lost his wife who was being transported to Peva during labour. Because of the damaged road they took a long path and before they could arrive Peva to access medication, she died on the way due to complications.

That road and many other rural roads in the state need to be fixed quickly, or many lives will be at risk.

"For many families, the road also serves as their access to education, as children from Adu attended schools in Peva. With the road gone, the daily journey to school has become an insurmountable challenge, threatening to disrupt the education of dozens of children."

Dr. Chiega Mela, Chairman of the Elders' Forum of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) in the area, in a telephone interview with journalists, appealed for urgent help from the authorities to rebuild the damaged road.

"We are a hardworking community, and all we ask is for the government to help us rebuild this road. It's our lifeline. Without it, our future is uncertain," Mela pleaded.

Hon. John Ali, Chairman of Takum Local Government Council, confirmed the destruction of the road by torrential rains and promised to mobilise resources and personnel to restore it.

"I received the report of the flooded road last night. The road is important to the people, and we cannot allow it to remain destroyed. I will mobilise resources and men to the area to ensure there is access for now before taking further steps for proper construction," Ali assured.



Is Nigeria going the way of Kenya?

There are ominous signs all over the place that Nigeria is sliding towards chaos and towing the path that was recently treaded by Kenya. Life is so difficult and hard that Nigerians are not finding it very hard to eke out a living. The basic essentials that used to grace the menu of almost every household have become totally unavailable and Nigerians have to make do with that which they can lay their hands on. Food, an essential for daily living, is hardly available in many homes. In addition, there is a growing army of the unemployed who has gone to school but has nothing to do. These unemployed graduates are discontented and angry. They are very active on social media and use it to vent their frustrations. This set of people of angry people must be worked on to assuage their frustrations. If not, they are likely to start a protest that government will find hard to contain.

Only recently, a Former Deputy Chief of Defence Administration at the Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA), retired Commodore Kunle Olawumi, in Abeokuta sounded the alarm bell that Nigeria may witness large-scale insurrection like the one that happened in Kenya unless the government takes urgent steps to assuage peoples' immediate societal needs. In a lecture titled: **"The Nexus Between Governance and Societal Needs and Peace in Nigeria"**, he warned, "Nigeria is in a state of anomie. The Nigerian state is today facing its worst economic crisis. Poor Nigerians are experiencing deprivations in basic necessities of life with multidimensional poverty. Money politics has derailed societal wellbeing. Currently there is what I call hopes dashed whereby a few people have held Nigeria to ransom and have left the country underdeveloped with little hope for redemption. The country is so unsafe, so unsecured that you

wonder whether there's actually any government in Nigeria."

The Tinubu administration since taking over power seems to be on a mission to pauperize Nigerians. Since day one when he declared that fuel subsidy was gone, he set the stage for Nigerians to sweat profusely before they eat. If he had been systematic and proactive, he would have avoided some of the suffering his pronouncement caused the people. He did not stop at removing fuel subsidy but went on to raise taxes to the extent that the poor pay through their noses for basic items. This has not only brought untold hardships to the people but eaten up whatever they have kept as savings. People can hardly afford to pay their children's school fees leading to an army of frustrated street children who are readily available to anyone with little resources to give them to cause mayhem to the society.

Today's Nigeria perfectly reflects the symptoms of a failed state as propounded by political scientists: widespread corruption, impunity in

“ It is unfortunate that our leaders have not been able to chart a prosperous pathway for the country. They have always relied on the Bretton Woods institutions to draw our development plans. These plans have not been favourable towards the development of any African country. Instead of taking lessons from the unsuitability of these development plans for our countries, we continue to stick to them as if we do not have our peculiar situations. ”

governance, mass unemployment and the celebration of criminality.

Indeed, serious economic decline, free fall of the nation's national currency and unchecked criminality, country wide banditry, terrorism, armed robbery and kidnappings all add up to the nation's woes. Also, massive election rigging, transgression of the people's mandate is obvious through the imposition of unpopular candidates on the people. The justice system is commercialized as the highest bidders take all. There is also the bastardization of education, widespread moral bankruptcy and the commercialization of religion. All these have led to a highly impoverished and frustrated citizenry with very low morale.

It is unfortunate that our leaders have not been able to chart a prosperous pathway for the country. They have always relied on the Bretton Woods institutions to draw our development plans. These plans have not been favourable towards the development of any African country. Instead of taking lessons from the unsuitability of these development plans for our countries, we continue to stick to them as if we do not have our peculiar situations.

Leaders must begin to draw up local, suitable and practical plans to push growth instead of relying on strategies that are alien to us. The Tinubu administration must as a matter of urgency fashion out alternative blueprints to push Nigeria's development. Failure to do that portends grave danger for the country and its people. What happened in Kenya should be a wake-up call to our leaders to start looking inwards to mitigate the potential menace that is staring the country in the face.

Nigeria must do everything possible to create jobs, secure its people, provide food and look at the tax system again so that citizens can have some reprieve and avert the Kenya-like revolt.

Editorial

Still on keeping Jos clean

EVEN though change is said to be the only constant thing in life, human beings have always devised means to resist it, especially if it does not suit their personal interests. This is more so when those personal interests have been nurtured and entrenched over long periods of time.

THEREFORE, when Governor Caleb Mutfwang of Plateau State signed the forward-looking Executive Order 003 into law on March 1, 2024, some individuals and groups rose up in stiff opposition. The new law set out stringent measures to control building construction and traffic congestion, preserve public infrastructure and protect the environment. This law was necessitated by the many years of neglect these aspects of citizens' lives had suffered in the hands of government in the last few years.

THE results were as sordid as they were very injurious to public health and safety. From illegally erected buildings to piles of rubbish growing up on virtually all streets of the city centre and the proliferation of motor parks run by shady individuals and groups without government permission, chaos was literally the order of the day. This was further compounded by a situation where traders freely displayed their wares on roads and mounted temporary kiosks and other such structures in major streets of the state capital, unhindered.

IT was, therefore, in a bid to stem this tide, which was having very debilitating effects on the lives of citizens and the fortunes and reputation of the state, that Governor Caleb Mutfwang stepped in. And Executive Order 003 was the perfect instrument for restoring the much-needed sanity and order on both the environment and the minds and character of citizens regarding urban renewal.

TODAY, the streets of the city centre and outlying areas are wearing a fresh and cleaner look. Traders are now clustered in organized markets - which has greatly eased the business of buying and selling. With the introduction of the metro bus service, which has been complemented by the construction and rehabilitation of major roads, commuting within the Greater Jos Master Plan area has become a very pleasurable experience. The constant road accidents involving articulated trucks, especially at the Polo Roundabout in Jos, with the attendant heavy loss of lives and property, have completely stopped because the movements of such vehicles have been restricted to certain hours.

SADLY, these praise-worthy initiatives have continued to be resisted by certain interests and groups, especially in the Jos/Bukuru metropolis, the main administrative, political, economic and social hub of the state. In the process of enforcing the law, security agents and government officials face constant harassment, even violent attacks, from recalcitrant citizens bent on returning the state to those days when law and order were thrown to the dogs and the environment abused and degraded at will. Only recently, a life was lost and property worth millions of naira destroyed in Bukuru by an irate mob that set upon government and security officials carrying out their lawful duties.

AS THE NIGERIA STANDARD has continued to maintain, sometimes change comes at a very high price and causes a lot of pain and anguish. That is, in the short run. Herein lies the need for sacrifice on the part of citizens because, in the long run, these temporary set-backs will certainly grow into bountiful benefits for the overall good of society.

FURTHERMORE, as government continues to seek ways to leverage on the state's huge tourism potentials, there is also an urgent need for Plateau people to support it by keying into its laudable urban renewal policy. This is because tourism cannot thrive in a filthy and disorderly environment. And as the state capital continues to attract very key sporting events, it, therefore, behooves on citizens to use this opportunity offered by the Mutfwang administration's Executive Order 003 to make the state more conducive and attractive to sports enthusiasts.

ALL of these have the great potentials of not only enhancing the health and safety of both citizens and the environment but create the enabling atmosphere for socio-economic development.



Land grabbing and need for sustainable peace

Land grabbing is becoming endemic in our communities in Plateau State and Nigeria as a whole and something needs to be done fast to curb the activities of perpetrators of this heinous activity.

This terrorist ideology dates back to the time of Usman Danfodio, who introduced jihad through conquest, killing, and divide-and-rule tactics. This legacy has been passed down to his descendants, who deceived our forefathers, pretending to be friends. They have discovered the riches on our land, endowed with mineral resources and agricultural potential.

As mentioned earlier, they pretended to be friends with our forefathers, gaining their trust, only to unleash violence on the natives, chasing them away from their ancestral homes and taking control of their land. Currently, Fulani jihadists are engaging in tin mining in areas like Barkin Ladi and Bokkos, where they have taken control of the mines. Whenever a native discovers tin deposit, the Fulanis will attack them forcing them to relinquish their claim.

It is important to recognize that farming is a crucial source of livelihood for many people in Plateau State, and any disruption to farming activities can have severe consequences. The fact that this is happening in multiple locations like Bokkos, Mangu, Riyom, Bassa, and other parts of the country, suggests a broader pattern of intimidation and violence. The impact of these actions can be devastating, leading to hunger, displacement, and instability in the region. It is essential to address this situation urgently, ensuring the safety and security of farming communities and holding accountable those responsible for these actions.

Let us continue to explore ways to raise awareness about this issue and support efforts to promote peace, security, and sustainable development in Plateau State and beyond.

It is unacceptable to continue living in a state of fear, violence, and displacement. Every person, regardless of their background, deserves to be treated with dignity and respect. We are all equal in the eyes of God and should be treated as such.

It is important to recognize that everyone has inherent value and worth, and that our diversity is a strength, not a weakness. We should strive to create a society that values inclusivity, understanding, and peaceful coexistence.

Let's work together to build a world where everyone can live without fear of violence or persecution, and where we can celebrate our differences and embrace our shared humanity.

We are all God's creations, and we are all blessed with unique gifts and talents. Let's use these blessings to lift each other up, rather than tearing each other down.

Nkieri Nzhuwa Ngha, a public analyst writes from Bassa LGA

Standard Cartoon



Oh God of Nigeria after changing our National Anthem and working on the minimum wage for the enjoyment of Nigerians, this stupid Boko Haram has resurfaced again in Borno State. *Walahi talahi* they will not succeed in the name of Allah.

Vox Pop

Making PHCs better

Primary Health Care Centres, PHCs, are the closest health services to the masses at the grassroots. They provide basic health care and are first responders to any health emergencies that arise in local communities. In view of the important roles they play, our correspondents, Hosea Nyamlong and Jidauna Daring, spoke to a wide variety of stakeholders on what needs to be done to make them more effective towards meeting the needs of citizens

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), Primary Health Care, as the name implies, is an essential health care that is based on practical, scientifically sound, socially acceptable methods. This is universally accessible to individuals and families in the community and country through their full participation at a cost that the people can afford.

Well, I will also like to say that the importance of PHC cannot be overemphasized, looking at the services it provides for the people when it comes to medication.

In view of the significant roles played by PHCs in our society, they provide services such as health education, provision of food and nutrition, provision of maternal and child health, family planning, environmental health, National Programme on immunization, protection and control of endemic diseases, provision of essential drugs, appropriate treatment of common diseases and illness, such as mental health, dental health, prevention and control of domestic and road transport accident, promotion of occupational health and integrated management of childhood illnesses.

It is true, that some PHCs have become an eyesore, particularly when we talk about some of the existing structures, despite government efforts to provide PHCs to its citizens.

I will use this opportunity to advise government at all levels on the needs to address or look into the dilapidated structures of PHC in country. I therefore, think that it is very necessary for the government to, as a matter of urgent public importance, health wise, to give more attention to the renovation of any dilapidated structures, so as to enable staff of the centers to render good service to patients who need medical attention at all times.

Since PHCs remain the closest to the people, particularly the rural people, government should reach out to communities that need the services of the centres by building more of them in order to save life.

To also ensure effective service delivery, government should ensure that the structures are adequately equipped with the needed facilities, manpower and provision of incentives for the health workers.



Dr. Mwanat Dayen Paul



Chimi Reuben Jalo, from Cham, Balanga Billiri Local Government Area (LGA), Gombe State

Thank you for the question, for me, primary health care (PHC), is of course, the first point of contact for those seeking medical attention. This is because it is the closest to the people. Therefore, the importance of the PHCs cannot be overemphasized.

Worthy of note is the fact that the primary health care in my community called Cham, Primary Health Centre, where I was born, 45 years ago is a shadow of itself. But to God be the glory, the community is fortunate to have a son of the soil, who was elected as a member representing Balanga/Billiri Constituency in the House of Representative Abuja, Hon. Ali Isa J.C, come to the aid of his people to renovate the PHC, which was in a bad condition.

I can assure you that today, the above mentioned PHC now has modern medical facilities to cater for the community.

I believe that the story of my community's PHC would have been different if not for this gesture by our House of Representative Member. I therefore, want to appeal to other leaders to emulate what our member has done to his community.

To get it right, we need to change the negative narratives about our PHCs. The Ministry of Health and Primary Health Care Boards of each state should be able to take inventory of dilapidated PHCs to ensure that proper attention is given to them. This could be done through the renovation or construction of new ones. If this is done, it would no doubt give hope to people who access such centres for medical attention.

To be candid, it is because of the dilapidated nature of our PHCs that private hospitals are thriving. PHCs which are the closest to the people, ought to be made functional so that they can stand in the gap for the common people.

Rakiya Munkaila Kantana, Jos North, Local Government Council Health Educator

To me, primary health care centres are first care givers to the people mostly found in rural areas. I think we have almost 332 basic primary health care facilities across the 17 LGAs of Plateau State.

Government is making concerted efforts to employ more health workers, so as to have staff that can make the centers functional at all times. I have seen PHCs that need urgent renovation for staff to have conducive working environment.

I am optimistic, that once attentions are given fully to PHCs, patients on their part would also want to patronize these centres for medical check-ups.

PHCs are helpful if they are in a good state, this is because, treatments at the PHCs levels helps both secondary and tertiary hospitals to have the patients history, before attending them.

I want to use this opportunity, to appeal to government to take the issue of PHCs serious, since such centers remain the closest place for people who are sick, to go for treatment such as malaria, typhoid, checking of high blood pressure, giving first aid to accident victims and immunization among several others.



The PHC system in Nigeria has contributed significantly in improving the health of the citizens particularly at the rural areas and even in the city centres. They are readily available and with moderate charges to assist people resolve their health challenges. Childbirth issues are also handled, and they also make

referrals on health conditions or issues beyond their capacity.

Over the years, they have done their best in terms of living up to the objectives of their establishment. However, due to inadequate funding, shortage of manpower, absence of needed equipment, dilapidated structures, lack of motivation for staff, etc, have hampered their smooth operations in some instances.

It is equal important to note that governments and some partners as well as communities where these PHCs are sited have done relatively well in ensuring the functionality of PHCs, but more still needs to be done in that direction.

So far so good, the PHCs have performed above average in providing basic healthcare to people, which has helped in no small measure to meet the immediate health needs of the people.

I think that the responsibility of taking care of the PHCs lies solely with the Local Government Authorities. There is the Department of Primary Healthcare through which the local governments administer the PHCs. Funding is provided for all issues for the operations of the department including the PHCs and all health related programmes and activities which are carried out by the various PHCs and their staff.

Occasionally the PHCs get support from partners like UNICEF, WHO and other partners and donors. The state PHCDB, and NPHDB from the state and federal governments respectively, also assist on routine basis.

But Fundamentally it is under the LGC and the LGAs have been doing a lot but more still needs to be done to achieve health for all.

To make PHCs work effectively, the following should be done. More Funding from government and Non Governmental Organizations, communities where they are sited and corporate bodies and individuals, training and retraining of the available manpower health personnel. Recruitment of more professionals to check shortage of manpower. Provision of modern

equipment and drugs to facilitate work and indeed, more incentives and motivation for the health personnel.



Rotshak Linus Wakdet, Jos North LGC

I have been a Local Government Staff for the past eleven years (11 years) with the Health Department. For these past years in service, there are good and bad experiences. We have had the privilege of being care givers at the grassroots. We also have been taking care of the aged, young ones, children among others. We are rendering immunizations and other government programmes in collaboration with the UNICEF, WHO, such as SMC, polio immunization, mosquito net distribution among others.

The major challenges we face include lack of good structure (facilities in some communities), inadequate staff in many clinics, in some places you find one or two staff, who cannot render adequate service delivery to the community.

I am appealing to the government to channel more resources to the primary health care centres, which have been neglected by past administrations. Adequately equip the PHCs and train staff to man the clinics effectively for the betterment of our communities.



Christiana A. Bisyt

PROBATE NOTICE

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

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

NAME OF DECEASED PERSON	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT	NAME OF DECEASED PERSON	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT	NAME OF DECEASED PERSON	NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT
Paul Anyen Longsen late of Plateau State, died on the 25th March, 2024 at Riverside Clinic Portharcourt.	Benita Longsen Anyen of No. 53 Angwan Abuja tudun Wada Jos North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful daughter of the said deceased.	Joshua Obed Musa late of Plateau State, died on the 20th November, 2023 at Gudum, Mangu LGA, Plateau State.	Bamshak Dambut Danok of COCIN Church Gudum, Mangu LGA, Plateau State. Lawful cousin of the said deceased.	Pam Ali late of Plateau State, died on the 19th April, 2024 at Heipang, Barkin Ladi LGA, Plateau State.	Simon Ali Pam Behind COCIN LCC Ban Heipang, Barkin Ladi LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.
Dakum Ibrahim late of Plateau State, died on the 27th March, 2004 at JUTH, Plateau State.	Isa Ibrahim of Dutse Uku COCIN Church Jos Jarawa Jos North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful brother of the said deceased.	Azi Deborah Samuel late of Plateau State, died on the 4th June, 2020 at Ikoyi Lagos State.	Stephanie Anya Joseph & Samuel Christopher Azi of COCIN Sabon Fobur Jos East LGA, Plateau State. Lawful daughter/brother of the said deceased.	Shaldas Isa Garba late of Plateau State, died on the 15th June, 2021 at Jos, Plateau State.	Shaldas Isa & Helen Iliya of Busa Buji T14 Jos North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful widow/son of the said deceased.
Salami Lawal Akanwo late of Plateau State, died on the 5th June, 2023 at Bukuru, Jos South LGA, Plateau State.	Mufutau Lawal & Madina Lawal all of No. 6 Bala Shawe Street Bukuru Jos South LGA, Plateau State. Lawful daughter/son of the said deceased.	Abah Alexander Oche late of Benue State, died on the 16th June, 2023 at Hospital, Otukpo Benue State.	Abah Emmanuel Alexander of No. 23, Ruso Village Jos North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.	Chuhwak Alexander Pam late of Plateau State, died on the 6th December, 2023 at Karu LGA, Nasarawa State.	Rotkangmwa Blessing Gobum & Pam Fredrick Danass all of behind Abattoir Market Jos, Plateau State. Lawful widow/son of the said deceased.
Victor Satji Barnabas late of Plateau State, died on the 23rd July, 2023 at Jos, Plateau State.	Victor Joshua Longji of FT. 99 Yantrailer Jos North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful brother of the said deceased.	Elias Manjel Mudutgap late of Plateau State, died on the 11th November, 2021 at Jos, Plateau State.	Esther Mudutgap Iyakwari University of Jos Senior Staff Quarters Tudun Wada Jos North LGA, Plateau. Lawful daughter of the said deceased.	Hirse Istifanus late of Plateau State, died on the 31st January, 2024 at JUTH, Plateau State.	Hirse Bagudu Mbwor Pushii Mangu LGA, Plateau State. Lawful brother of the said deceased.
Latsuk Patrick Gapyil late of Plateau State, died on the 1st March, 2023 at Dokan Kasuwa, Shendam, LGA, Plateau State.	Gapyil Naanman Paul & Wulnaankus Gapyil of St. Francis Catholic Church Dokan Kasuwa Shendam LGA, Plateau State. Lawful daughter/nephew of the said deceased	Laraba Dauda late of Plateau State, died on the 8th December, 2023 at Jos, Plateau State.	Akila Emmanuel Blessing of ECWA Landere Jos North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful daughter of the said deceased.	Asuquo Edet Effiong late of Plateau State, died on the 21st September, 2022 at OLA Hospital, Jos Plateau State.	Fom Margaret Simon of behind M and B Clinic Dorowa Bukuru Jos South LGA, Plateau State. Lawful widow of the said deceased.
David Dogo late of Plateau State, died on the 5th July, 2002 at JUTH, Plateau State.	Dogo David John & Helen David of All Jenta Mangoro Jos North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son/daughter of the said deceased.	Celina Sylvester Golmut late of Plateau State, died on the 6th December, 2022 at Amper, Kanke LGA, Plateau State.	Nenditka Golmut of Dawaki Kabwir District Kanke LGA, Plateau State. Lawful daughter of the said deceased.	Zamfara Mary Emmanuel late of Plateau State, died on the 16th January, 2022 at PSSH, Jos.	Charles Benedict Emmanuel of Kwasha Miango Bassa LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.
Bwode Helen Lynn late of Plateau State, died on the 6th January, 2024 at Maraban Jingre (Gure).	Bwode Bindo A'Aron of 11KV, Victory Primary School Dong, Jos North LGA, Plateau State. The lawful son of the said deceased.	M.W.O Pam David late of Plateau State, died on the 15th February, 2023 at Jos, Plateau State.	Pam Rebecca David of along Old Air-Port Road Jos South LGA, Plateau State. Lawful widow of the said deceased.	Ufulul Mafwalal Nyefesh late of Plateau State, died on the 12th September 2021 at Bokkos LGA, Plateau State.	Sunday Mashat Mafwalal COCIN RCC Mbat Bokkos LGA, Plateau State. Lawful brother of the said deceased.
Ezekiel Bahago Danboyi late of Plateau State, died on the 29th April, 2024 at JUTH, Plateau State.	Emmanuel Ezekiel Danboyi of Bukuru Low-Cost Jos, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.	Bala Musa late of Plateau State, died on the 24th May, 2021 at Rinji Toro LGA, Bauchi State.	John Sylvester Azi of Gada Jos East LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.	Kadyeng Jidauna late of Plateau State, died on the 20th October, 2019 at Vom Christian Hospital, Jos South LGA, Plateau State.	Bulus Dachung Kadyeng of Vom Jos South LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.
Shuaib Ahmad Muhammed late of Plateau State, died on the 20th March, 2024 at Jos, Plateau State.	Fatima Ahmad & Ismail Muhammed Adam S37, Sarkin Mangu Street Jos North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful daughter of the said deceased.	Peter Umaru Dimlong late of Plateau State, died on the 4th January, 2017 at Home, Angwan Rukuba Jos North LGA, Plateau State.	Sunday Umaru Dimlong of Angwan Rukuba Road Jos North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful brother of the said deceased.	Mangut Nyalwat late of Plateau State, died on the 17th February, 2024 at Cottage Hospital, Bokkos LGA, Plateau State.	Irimiya Mangut of Meweie Forof Bokkos LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.
Mshelia Ali late of Borno State, died on the 8th December, 2023 at General Hospital, Kwaya Kusar, Borno State.	Rose Siye Mshelia of after Deeper Life Church Angwan Jarawa utan Jos North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful widow of the said deceased.	Michael Kwampyen Nimmyel late of Plateau State, died on the 13th May, 2018 at OLA Hospital Jos, Plateau State.	Abel Nimyel Bindang all of COCIN Abattoir, Jos South LGA, Plateau State. Lawful sons of the said deceased.	Azeng Yusuf late of Plateau State, died on the 8th January, 2024 at Mangu LGA, Plateau State.	Liberty Azeng Yusuf & Guchibet James Friday of COCIN LCC Giling Janarot Pankshin LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son/cousin of the said deceased.
Dogo Gambo late of Plateau State, died on the 18th October, 2011 at Murtala Mohammad Specialist Hospital, Kano State.	Ayuba Dogo Gambo of Bukuru Jos South LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.	Signed (ANDRAWUS MAIKAI) PROBATE REGISTRAR PLATEAU STATE OF NIGERIA, JOS		Istifanus D. C Kasseem late of Plateau State, died on the 7th October, 2023 at General Hospital, Shendam LGA, Plateau State.	Wuruka Kasseem Istifanus of Tudun Dorowa Shendam LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.

Change of Name

<p>ITSEGOK</p> <p>I, formerly known as ATSEN EMMANUEL ITSE, now wish to be known and addressed as ITSEGOK EMMANUEL ATSEN. My Correct date of birth is 01/01/1997, not 01/12/1997. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>DAKOP</p> <p>I, formerly known as DAKOP ENOCH, now wish to be known and addressed as DAKOP ENOCH ANDRAWUS. My date of birth is 4/6/1998 not 12/3/1999. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public please take note.</p>	<p>OKEWU</p> <p>I, formerly known as OKEWU ANDREW AGADA, now wish to be known and addressed as OKEWU ANDREW PAUL. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>YOHANA</p> <p>I, formerly known as YOHANA HAUWA DUINOH, now wish to be known and addressed as YOHANA HAUWA DUWOH. Correct date of birth is 14/2/1964 not 15/2/1952. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>ADUBOK</p> <p>I, formerly known as ISHAYA MARGRET AKARE, now wish to be known and addressed as ADUBOK MARGRET ISHAYA. My date of birth is 27/9/2000. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>REUBEN</p> <p>I, formerly known as AMOS HOPE REUBEN, and AMOS REUBEN, now wish to be known and addressed as REUBEN AMOS OGBU. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>
<p>TOMA</p> <p>I, formerly known as TOMA SUNDAY, now wish to be known and addressed as TOMA SUNDAY RANTE. My date of birth is 15/10/1970. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>MOHAMMED</p> <p>I, formerly known as MUHAMMED MASAU DA ABDULLAHI, now wish to be known and addressed as MOHAMMED MASAU DA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public please take note.</p>	<p>PATIENCE</p> <p>I, variously known as PATIENCE BORASH, PATIENE UFULUL BORASH, SANDRA PATIENCE BORASH, NORO PATIENCE BORASH and MAFIYAI UFULUL MAKOP, now wish to be known and addressed as PATIENCE BORASH. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>TUPSHAK</p> <p>I, formerly known as DASHEM KATZUGHUM UANSHAK, now wish to be known and addressed as TUPSHAK KATZUGHUM NANSHAK. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>JOSHUA</p> <p>I, formerly known as BLESSING JOSHUA, now wish to be known and addressed as JOSHUA BLESSING AMANI. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>NANACY</p> <p>I, formerly known as CHRISTIANA STEPHEN, now wish to be known and addressed as NANCY STEPHEN. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>
<p>SHANGYA</p> <p>I, formerly known as SHANGYA SILA, now wish to be known and addressed as SHANGYA DANIEL DAJIN. My correct date of birth is 01/01/1989 not 19/8/1985. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>GOSIBE</p> <p>I, formerly known as GOSIRE ZUBAIRU, now wish to be known and addressed as GOSIBE ZUBAIRU. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>MARY</p> <p>I, formerly known as MARY NANDAK JACOB DELTANG, now wish to be known and addressed as MARY GABRIEL LOHOR. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>RICHARDS</p> <p>I, formerly known as RICHARD ABAYOMI ANJORIN, now wish to be known and addressed as RICHARDS YOMI LAWSON. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>IDRIS</p> <p>I, formerly known as SHUAIBU IDRIS ALIYU, now wish to be known and addressed as IDIRS SHUAIBU ALIYU. My correct date of birth is 11/11.2003 not 7/11/1997. 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 DAVID TIMOTHY SAMUEL, now wish to be known and addressed as PAM TIMOTHY SAMUEL. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>
<p>JAMES</p> <p>I, formerly known as SARAH JAMES AZI, now wish to be known and addressed as JAMES ANYA SARAH. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>ILIYASU</p> <p>I, formerly known as ILIYA M. YARI, now wish to be known and addressed as ILIYASU M. YARI. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>JOSIAH</p> <p>I, formerly known as JOSIAH ARAGAH BISS, now wish to be known and addressed as JOSIAH ARAGAH AMOLLO. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>MICHEAL</p> <p>I, formerly known as EBUBE MICHEAL, now wish to be known and addressed as MICHEAL EBUBE KELVIN. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>FIDELIS</p> <p>I, formerly known as PAM FIDELIS ZIH, now wish to be known and addressed as FIDELIS PAM ZIH. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>DANBILYA</p> <p>I, formerly known as DANFILIYA PETER, now wish to be known and addressed as DANBILYA PETER. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>
<p>DIANA</p> <p>I, formerly known as MISS. AUGUSTINE DIANA MANCHA, now wish to be known and addressed as MRS. DIANA JOSEPH MICHAEL. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>OLADOSUN</p> <p>I, formerly known as OLUWAPAMILERIN ENIOLA OLADOSU, now wish to be known and addressed as OLADOSUN ENIOLA OLUWAPAMILERIN. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>NWACHUKWU</p> <p>I, formerly known as OGUELI VIVIAN CHINYERE, now wish to be known and addressed as NWACHUKWU CHINYERE VIVIAN. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public please take note.</p>	<p>JOK</p> <p>I, formerly known as NERAT TOMA MWANTEP, now wish to be known and addressed as JOK NETAT TOMA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public please take note.</p>	<p>PUSHIS</p> <p>I, formerly known as PETER LYDIA, now wish to be known and addressed as PUSHIS LYDIA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>EMMANUEL</p> <p>I, formerly known as EMMANUEL DAMULAK TADDOGOER now wish to be known and addressed as EMMANUEL DAMULAK TADDOGOR. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public please take note.</p>
<p>IBRAHIM</p> <p>I, formerly known as ABRAHAM ADAMU IYOGIDI, now wish to be known and addressed as IBRAHIM IYOGIDI ADAMS. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>KAFWENNA</p> <p>I, formerly known as DEKOM NKEN, now wish to be known and addressed as KAFWENNA DAKOM NKEN. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>NKEN</p> <p>I, formerly known as SILA YIRANGMWA GONDANG, now wish to be known and addressed as NKEN PEACE DAKOM. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>VICTORIA</p> <p>I, formerly known as VICTORIA JULIUS JAMES, now wish to be known and addressed as VICTORIA JAMES GYANG. My date of birth is 2/01/1981. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>GAMA</p> <p>I, formerly known as DARENG CHUNDUNG REBECCA, DARENG REBECCA CHUNDUNG, now wish to be known and addressed as GAMA, CHUNDUNG REBECCA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>ZAINAB</p> <p>I, formerly known as ZAINAB ABDULLAHI, now wish to be known and addressed as ZAINAB ABDULMUMEEN ABDULLAHI. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>
<p>USMAN</p> <p>I, formerly known as MOHAMMED SAAD, now wish to be known and addressed as USMAN SAAD. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>SULEIMAN</p> <p>I, formerly known as SULAIMAN ZUBAIRU, now wish to be known and addressed as SULEIMAN YAHAYA. 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 DANIEL SARAH PAM, now wish to be known and addressed as EMMANUEL SARAH LUKA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>AMOS</p> <p>I, formerly known as SOJA JOSHUA, now wish to be known and addressed as AMOS JOSHUA SOJA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>MOHAMMED</p> <p>I, formerly known as UMAR FARUK, now wish to be known and addressed as MOHAMMED UMAR NUHU. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>MATUR</p> <p>I, formerly known as KEFAS JONATHAN MATUR, now wish to be known and addressed as MATUR JONATHAN KEFAS. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>
<p>TANKO</p> <p>I, formerly known as SHUAIBU HAJARA UMAR, now wish to be known and addressed as TANKO HAJARA UMAR. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>MUYIHDEEN</p> <p>I, formerly known as ABDULLAHI MUYIDEEN ABDUL, now wish to be known and addressed as MUYIHDEEN ABDULRAUF. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>CATHERINE</p> <p>I, formerly known as KATHERINE KANGLONG KUTVEL, now wish to be known and addressed as CATHERINE KANGLONG ALBERT. correct date of birth is 2/3/2000 not 2/3/2003. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>MOHAMMED</p> <p>I, formerly known as MUHAMMED FATIMA ABDULLAH, now wish to be known and addressed as MOHAMMED IYAMI ABDULLAHI. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>AJANG</p> <p>I, formerly known as AJANG AZI JEPHTA, now wish to be known and addressed as AJANG JEPHTAH MUSA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>JIMANG</p> <p>I, formerly known as GOLADI EUNICE, now wish to be known and addressed as JIMANG EUNICE AMOS. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>
<p>MARKUS</p> <p>I, formerly known as MARKUS SELLENG, now wish to be known and addressed as MARKUS SELLENG ADADA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>JULIANA</p> <p>I, formerly known as JULIANA LINUS, now wish to be known and addressed as JULIANA LINUS WASE. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>DANAT</p> <p>I, formerly known as DAVID JOY TUKAT, now wish to be known and addressed as DANAT, JOY DAVID. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>CHAMUN</p> <p>I, formerly known as MERCY MUTTOK REX, now wish to be known and addressed as CHAMUN MERCY REX. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>YAHUZA</p> <p>I, formerly known as MUHAMMED FADIMATU, now wish to be known and addressed as YAHUZA FATIMA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>MARY</p> <p>I, formerly known as MARY YAKUBU AZI, now wish to be known and addressed as MARY ATANG ADAMU. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>
<p>NANGAR</p> <p>I, formerly known as FAITH TIMBU, now wish to be known and addressed as NANGAR FAITH TIMBU. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>ABUBAKAR</p> <p>I, formerly known as ABUBAKAR SADIQ, now wish to be known and addressed as ABUBAKAR SADIQ ABUBAKAR. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>WALSHAK</p> <p>I, formerly known as TIMOTHY PEACE SAPI, now wish to be known and addressed as WALSHAK TONGRIANG. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>LOUIS</p> <p>I, formerly known as LOUIS ILIYA, now wish to be known and addressed as LOUIS JAMES. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>GOKIR</p> <p>I, formerly known as GOKIR NENJI LAURENCE, now wish to be known and addressed as GOKIR NENJI LAURENCE. Correct date of birth is 24/9/1997. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>SADIQ</p> <p>I, formerly known as SADIQ IDRIS, now wish to be known and addressed as SADIQ IDRIS SHEHU. Correct date of birth is 12/4/1988. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>

Change of Name

<p>AZI I, formerly known as ASHOM ABOK AZI, now wish to be known and addressed as AZI ABOK ASHOM. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>ISAH I, formerly known as ISA NDA MARAFA, now wish to be known and addressed as ISAH NDA MARAFA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>LENGKUKA I, formerly known as LENGKUKAH JACOB, now wish to be known and addressed as LENGKUKA JACOB GONGU. Correct date of birth 25/12/1980 not 23/1/1973. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>DANIEL I, formerly known as EVELYN NUNGTEI, now wish to be known and addressed as EVELYN DANIEL OBED. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>ROHVEN I, formerly known as ROHVEN BITRUS, now wish to be known and addressed as ROHVEN BITRUS KRINTET. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>BINDA I, formerly known as BINDA NANMAN, now wish to be known and addressed as BINDA NANMAN PONFA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>
<p>YAU I, formerly known as MUSA YAU MOHAMMED, now wish to be known and addressed as YAU MUSA MOHAMMED. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>NKEM I, formerly known as NANBYEN DOMBIN, now wish to be known and addressed as NKEM NANBYEM DOMBIN. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>MUSA I, formerly known as RUFAL BALKI, now wish to be known and addressed as MUSA FATIMA. Correct date of birth is 5/1/1996 not 1/6/1992. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>HELEN I, formerly known as HELEN SAMUEL JWAN, now wish to be known and addressed as HELEN SIMON WANTUL. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>Correction of date of birth I, MUKAILA ZULAIHAT LAWAL, wish to state that the correct date of birth is 15/06/2000 not 15/06/1993. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public to please take note.</p>	<p>UMAR I, formerly known as UMAR MUSA UMMULKAIRI, now wish to be known and addressed as UMAR IBRAHIM UMMULKAIRI. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>
<p>SHUWARDANG I, formerly known as SHUWARDANG DAMER GOON, now wish to be known and addressed as SHUWARDANG KEZIAH CHUKWUEMEKA. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>JOHN I, formerly known as JOHN RAYMOND, now wish to be known and addressed as JOHN RAYMOND ZUNKI. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	<p>MUSTAPHA I, formerly known as MUSTAPHA HABU IBRAHIM, now wish to be known and addressed as MUSTAPHA HABU. All former documents remain valid. All concerned authorities and the general public should please take note.</p>	SPACE FOR SALE		

PROBATE NOTICE

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

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

<p>NAME OF DECEASED PERSON Sylvanus Namang, late of Plateau State, died on the 17th Feb, 2024. At Pankshin, LGA Plateau State.</p>	<p>NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT Milcah Namang of Opposite Gut Central Hotel Rayfield, Jos south LGA, Plateau State. The lawful widow of the said deceased.</p>	<p>NAME OF DECEASED PERSON Luka Ajiji Azi late of Plateau State, died on the 2nd Jan, 2023. at Farin Gada, Jos North LGA Plateau State.</p>	<p>NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT Luka Atang Azi of Angwan Jarawa Farin Gada Jos North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.</p>	<p>NAME OF DECEASED PERSON Bako Danladi late of Plateau State died on the 25th May, 2021. at Port-Harcourt, River State.</p>	<p>NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT Emmanuel Achigak Danladi & Elizabeth Odi Danladi of C/O ECWA Bishara 4 Jenta Adamu Jos North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son and widow of the said deceased.</p>
<p>NAME OF DECEASED PERSON Hajiya Mairo Yaluna late of Plateau State died on the 21st Jan, 2021. At JUTH, Plateau State.</p>	<p>NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT Yaluna Yusuf Dauda of Azirfa Bauchi Ring Road Jos North LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.</p>	<p>NAME OF DECEASED PERSON Mary Tandong late of Taraba State died on the 19th Jan, 2024. at Jalingo, Taraba State.</p>	<p>NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT Shaibu Cyril Atambi of Zamaganda Railway Jos South LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.</p>	<p>NAME OF DECEASED PERSON Lydia Gwom Pam late of Adamawa State. died on the 6th May, 2024. At. Gombe State.</p>	<p>NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT James Gwom Pam of Ratt, Barkin Ladi LGA, Plateau State. Lawful brother of the said deceased.</p>
<p>NAME OF DECEASED PERSON Mathew Vou late of Plateau State died on the 15th July, 2019. At Zawan, Jos south LGA Plateau State.</p>	<p>NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT Gyok Pam Monday of Kuru Jos South LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.</p>	<p>NAME OF DECEASED PERSON Zi Joseph Davou late of Plateau State died on the 27th Nove, 2020. At dorowa (Bukuru) Jos south LGA, Plateau State.</p>	<p>NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT Samuel Shombot Davou of St, Joseph Catholic Church du, Jos south LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.</p>	<p>Public notice LOSS OF DOCUMENT This is to notify the general public of the lost of original copy of Right of Occupancy (R of O) with No. BP593 of property located at Jos GRA Street Ref. Jos 59 and belonging to PROF. DEBORAH E. AJAKAIYE. All efforts made to traced the said document proved abortive. The Ministry of Land, Survey and Town Planning Jos and other concerned authorities to please take note. Signed: Prof. DEBORAH E. AJAKAIYE</p>	
<p>NAME OF DECEASED PERSON Batwa Namunday Sarah late of Plateau State died on the 21st sept, 2021. At Kabwir Kanke LGA Plateau State.</p>	<p>NAME OF ADDRESS OF APPLICANT'S FOR GRANT Batwa Semshak Gotfwan of opposite St. Theresa Catholic Church kabwir kanke LGA, Plateau State. Lawful son of the said deceased.</p>	<p>Signed (ANDRAWUS MAIKAI) PROBATE REGISTRAR PLATEAU STATE OF NIGERIA, JOS</p>			

Preview (ocntinued from page 1)

Infographics

World population growth rate

Population growth is one of the most important topics we cover at Our World in Data.

Population growth rate compares the average annual percent change in populations, resulting from a surplus (or deficit) of births over deaths and the balance of migrants entering and leaving a country. The rate may be positive or negative.

Asia is the most populous continent in the world, with 4.79 billion people accounting for nearly 58.94% of the world population as of 2024. Africa is the second largest continent by population,

with around 1.49 billion people, or 18.41% of the world's population. Only these two continents have crossed one billion milestone.

Asia and Africa, together share over 77% of the global population. Europe has a population of around 742 million (9.13%), North America is home to around 608 million (7.49%), South America, the second least populated continent, has about 443 million inhabitants (5.45%).

Oceania (46 million) is the smallest continent on the basis population if Antarctica is excluded as there is no population estimates for Antarctica by UN (World Population Prospects 2022).

Top three biggest subregions belong to Asia Continent: Southern Asia (2.05 bn), Eastern Asia (1.686 bn) and South-Eastern Asia (693 mn). 45.7% of the world's population lives in Southern Asia (25.24%) and Eastern Asia (20.46%). Southern

Asia includes India, the most populous country and Eastern Asia includes China, the 2nd most populous country. Micronesia is the smallest subregion followed by Polynesia having less than 1mn people.

Africa has the highest population growth rate as (0.66%), South America (0.70%) and North America (0.66%) are all growing over 2% are in Africa. Middle Africa has the highest rate of over 3% followed by Eastern Africa and Western Africa growing over 2%. The

modest growth rate of -0.07% as lowest two ranked subregions are located in Europe. Southern Europe, Eastern Europe and Eastern Asia have negative growth rate.

With 35 mn more people in 2024, Africa is the top contributor of the total world population increment closely followed by Asia (32 mn).

Population of Europe has reached its peak level in 2020, Asia and South America is projected to peak in 2055 and. North America is projected to peak in 2072. Population of Africa and Oceania will not peak until 2100.

Feature

As Forbes honours Mutfwang for exceptional leadership

By GOLU TIMOTHY

MORE accolades have continued to trail the Governor of Plateau State, Barr Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang as Forbes, the leading global media group has honoured him as one of the three best Nigerian governors providing good governance. Alongside his Bayelsa and Osun State counterparts, Senators Diri Douye and Ademola Adeleke respectively, all of the Peoples Democratic Party, PDP, the global media company has rated the performances of the three governors as worthy of world recognition and commendation.

While Diri of Bayelsa state is a two-term governor who just kick started his second term in February 2024, Ademola and Mutfwang are first term governors. Ademola is getting to three



Mutfwang

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“Previous awards and recognitions from reputable organizations, which signify Governor Mutfwang's contributions and impact, and many more, has provided a strong foundation for your consideration for the Forbes Best of Africa Visionary Award. For these reasons, the Forbes Best of Africa Award committee has decided to honour you with the above mentioned award. The award would be conferred on you during the FIN annual International Business Round Table and Forbes Best of Africa Award Ceremony. This prestigious event will be held on the 28th of June 2024 (Friday) at the Intercontinental Hotel in Lisbon, Portugal.”

years in office while Mutfwang is barely a year in office. The Plateau governor effectively assumed office in January 2024 after a protracted legal battle over the 2023 governorship tussle which ended early 2024.

The letter addressed to the Governor dated and signed by Mark A Furlong, reads, "It is with great pleasure that Forbes Media and the creators of Forbes Best of Africa from America wish to inform you that you have been nominated for the FORBES BEST OF AFRICA VISIONARY LEADERSHIP AWARD".

For years Forbes has been monitoring and assessing governments across the globe as a way of encouraging good governance and through its awards, Forbes acknowledges and celebrates exemplary leaders, top businessmen, political leaders and dynamic personalities with records of making far-reaching impacts and positive contributions to the development of their respective countries, sectors and industries.

The letter adds, "Since your appointment (election emphasis mine) into office, you have exemplified exceptional leadership in managing the state of affairs in Plateau State. Your strategic vision has not only fostered significant development within the state but has also set a benchmark for good governance in Nigeria. Implementation of significant reforms and policies that has positively impacted the socio-economic landscape of Plateau State. Demonstrating transparency, accountability, and good governance practices, thereby fostering a culture of integrity and ensuring the effective use of public resources. Successfully attracting domestic and foreign investments into Plateau State, contributing to job creation and economic growth. Significant contributions to the development of critical infrastructure such as roads, bridges, schools, and

hospitals, which has enhanced the quality of life for the citizens.

Community Programs and projects aimed at improving the living standards of the people, especially in rural areas including your efforts in poverty alleviation, youth empowerment, and social welfare.

Enhancing access to quality education and healthcare services, which are fundamental for sustainable development.

Conflict Resolution and Effective measures to address and mitigate conflicts within Plateau State, promoting peace and stability.

Strengthening security infrastructure and strategies to ensure the

safety of residents, thereby creating a secure environment conducive to growth and development.

Demonstrating a clear vision for the future development of Plateau State and implementing innovative solutions to address challenges.

Promoting environmental sustainability through

policies and projects that protect natural resources and promote green energy.

Previous awards and recognitions from reputable organizations, which signify Governor Mutfwang's contributions and impact, and many more, has provided a strong foundation for your consideration for the Forbes Best of Africa Visionary Award.

For these reasons, the Forbes Best of Africa Award committee has decided to honour you with the above mentioned award. The award would be conferred on you during the FIN annual International Business Round Table and Forbes Best of Africa Award Ceremony. This prestigious event will be held on the 28th of June 2024 (Friday) at the Intercontinental Hotel in Lisbon, Portugal".

The strategic essence and significance of this event cannot be overemphasised. It serves as a platform for global leaders, industry titans, and visionaries to converge, exchange insights, and foster collaborations that drive meaningful economic growth across continents.

According to Forbes, "Our aim is to facilitate strategic alliances that not only benefit individual businesses but also contribute to the socio-economic development of diverse regions".

Previous recipients of this prestigious award includes; H.E Sam Matekane the Prime Minister of Lesotho, Dr Adesola Adeduntan, MD of First Bank Nigeria, Paul Adefarasin, and many more.

Also to receive the Forbes African awards are the Senate President Godswill Akpabio, a former governor, foreign affairs Minister Tuggar Maitama Sule and other eminent leaders across the country. It is on record that only few Nigerian leaders have qualified for the Forbes global recognition so far, making it a great and lofty height for whoever has attained the feat.

Those invited at the global media event include: policy makers, entrepreneurs, politicians, opinion leaders, the media partners, religious leaders and international investors.

Dr Golu Timothy Is Special Adviser to Governor Caleb Mutfwang On Strategic Communications.

Feature

Governor Mutfwang's city renewal initiative

By GYANG BERE

ON March 1, 2024, Governor Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang of Plateau State took a bold step towards transforming the urban landscape of the state. With the signing of Executive Order 003, he embarked on a mission to regulate urban development, enhance public safety and stimulate economic growth across the state.

This landmark legislation is integrated within the Greater Jos Master Plan, reflecting the government's commitment to creating a sustainable and prosperous future for its citizens.

Plateau State, located in the heart of Nigeria, has a rich cultural heritage and natural beauty. However, its urban areas have faced challenges in recent years, including rapid urbanization, traffic congestion and environmental degradation. Therefore, the state government recognized the need for a comprehensive approach to address these issues and create a more livable and sustainable environment for its citizens.

The Executive Order 003 is a decisive initiative towards achieving this vision. It introduces stringent measures to regularize building construction, control traffic congestion and preserve public infrastructure. The order also aims to enhance public safety, promote economic growth and protect the environment.

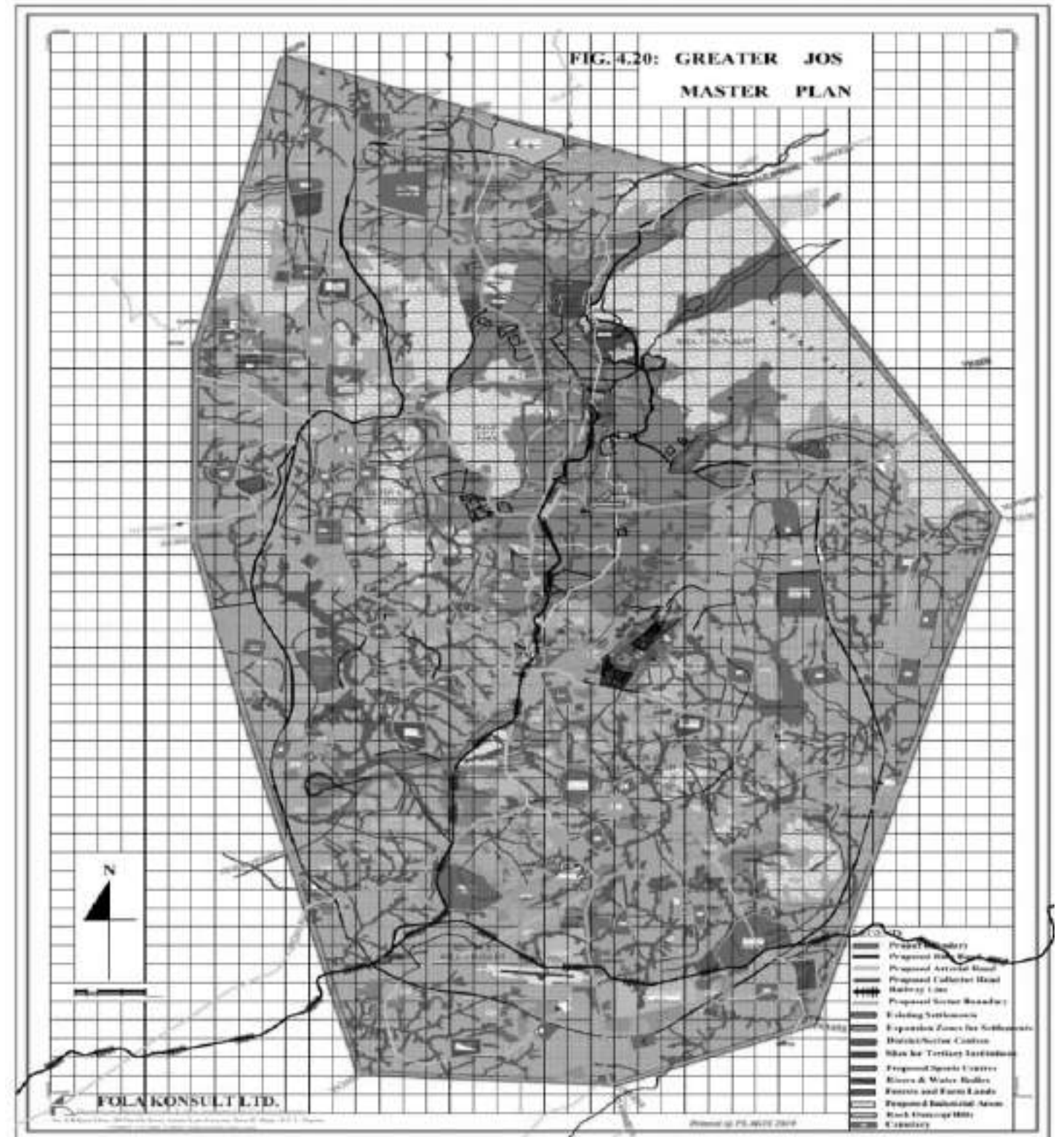
The Executive Order 003 includes the following key provisions:

Building Regulations: The order introduces new building regulations to ensure that all constructions are safe, durable and compliant with international standards.

Traffic Management: The order aims to control traffic congestion by designating specific routes for commercial vehicles, promoting the use of public transportation and enhancing pedestrian safety.

Environmental Protection: The order prohibits activities harmful to the environment such as littering and encourages sustainable practices like recycling and waste management.

Public Infrastructure: The order mandates the maintenance and upkeep of public infrastructure, including roads, bridges, and



public buildings.

The Plateau State Government established a task force to implement and enforce the Executive Order 003. The task force comprises representatives from various government agencies, security services, and community leaders. The government has also engaged in extensive public awareness campaigns to educate citizens on the benefits and requirements of the order.

Unfortunately, the enforcement of Executive Order 003 has not been without challenges. Recently, an unfortunate incident in Bukuru claimed some lives and led to the loss of valuable property. This highlighted the resistance faced by the government's Task Force from criminal elements

opposed to these reforms.

Governor Mutfwang has strongly condemned such acts, emphasising that they jeopardise the state's peace and development agenda. The media must be commended for playing a critical role in supporting the government's efforts and amplifying dissenting voices.

Despite this setback, on the whole Executive Order 003 has been widely welcomed. Thus, the government remains committed to engaging with stakeholders and addressing their concerns.

The order also presents opportunities for economic growth, job creation, and sustainable development. By promoting a safe and organized environment, the government aims to attract investors, boost tourism,

and enhance the quality of life for its citizens.

Several success stories have emerged since the implementation of the Executive Order 003. For instance, the renovation of the Jos Metropolitan Development Board (JMDB) building has improved the aesthetic appeal of the city. The construction of new roads and the rehabilitation of existing ones have reduced traffic congestion and enhanced mobility.

The establishment of the Plateau State Waste Management Agency (PLAWMA) has improved waste collection and disposal, reducing the risk of environmental pollution. The agency has also created jobs for hundreds of youths in the state.

The Executive Order 003

has also had a significant impact on the environment in Plateau State. The prohibition on harmful activities like littering and the encouragement waste management have reduced environmental pollution.

Governor Mutfwang's vision for a renewed and sustainable Plateau State is a laudable effort. The Executive Order 003 is a significant step towards achieving this vision, and its successful implementation will have far-reaching benefits for the state and its citizens.

As the government continues to engage with stakeholders and address challenges, it is essential to recognize the importance of this initiative and support its efforts towards creating a better future for all.

Feature

Shifting roles as bane on Nigeria's democratic journey

By AYUBA, YILGAK'HA

DEMOCRACY is broad but at the centre of it are issues of leadership recruitment, the rule of law which emphasises equality and fundamental human rights. Therefore, one cannot be wrong to see democracy in terms of freedom of choice based on the dictates of law and the superiority of majority decision.

This discourse focuses on democracy in relations to constitutionalism, adherence to rules as it affects leadership selection. Of all that matters in a democracy, periodic election is key. However, electoral processes are best consummated through strict adherence to regulatory provisions. That is why a country's Constitution and Electoral Act are very important ground norms.

June 12, celebrated as democracy day in Nigeria. Before now, the day was observed on May 29 until former President Muhammadu Buhari changed it in 2018. Since then, the day has become a big day for National celebration as far as the history of democracy of democracy in the country is concerned.

The commemoration of the Day of Democracy is a period for sober reflection with MKO Abiola of blessed memory at the centre of it. At a glance, it can be said that the fallout of the annulment of the supposedly freest and fairest election which produced the Late Chief as winner led to the spontaneous reaction from pro-democracy groups, especially, the National Democratic Coalition (NADECO). The national reaction led to the historic "stepping aside" of the then "Military President" Ibrahim Badamasi Babagida (IBB) and the emergence of Earnest Sheneke's led "Interim National Government" (ING) and the eventual resignation of 'the man in the Mirror'. This was followed by the returned of military government under late General Abacha who almost metamorphosed into a democratic president until death snatched him out of the Seat of Power, the Aso Rock Villa before Abdulsalami took over and led the country back to democratic rule on May 29, 1999 with former President Olusegun Mathew Aremu Obasanjo kang charge for 8 years.

As can be seen, the period between 1993 when the presidential election was annulled and the returned of democracy on May 1999, a lot happened and in quick succession too. The period was turbulent with so many twists and turns in the political space. During the time, new political nomenclature like the ING or phrase like stepping aside surfaced in the country before



the invention and invocation of "Doctrine of Necessity" which later followed under the transition era of former President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan from Acting President to President, following the demise of the then President Umaru Yar' Adua of blessed memory on 5th May, 2010. This history is very important as a way of appreciating the journey that led to the birth of the Fourth Republic/current democratic dispensation.

Since the return of democracy in 1999, May 29 has become handing over and taking over date except for State with off-season elections due to election tribunals' rulings on governorship polls in those States. Be it May 29 or June 12, the fundamental question that begs for prompt answer is whether or not Democracy Day should be celebrated in Nigeria at all? This question is germane in view of the socio-economic and political contradictions currently facing the country and its citizens. Irrespective of what anybody can say, the reality is that most Nigerians are not smiling under this democracy. Since 2019, Nigeria became the poverty capital of the world after overtaking India. The country is battling multidimensional poverty with over 63% of the citizens living in abject poverty occasioned by unemployment, insecurity, policy failures, corruption, terminal diseases, climate change, etc.

This idea that 'the worst democracy is better than the best military regime' has become a fairy tale. Democracy, they say, is work in progress but it is grossly not working in Nigeria. The political culture of the country seems to be in favour of coercion if anything is to work at all. Under democracy, for instance, Nigeria can hardly be restructured even though the need for that is glaring.

How can a country have states where majority of them cannot pay, at least, N62,000 minimum wage that is not even enough to buy a bag of rice for its toiling citizens? How can a country which cannot afford a decent

living minimum wage build spatial accommodations for its public officials (elective and appointive) with fat allowances to them? What a visible case of inequality perpetrated in high places? Government officials need decent houses to function, no doubt about it but the times are hard to warrant any luxury for them now except if the narrative from government that resources are grossly scarce is false or a mere excuse.

Democracy is supposed to be an inclusive system. Being an inclusive system, democracy should deconstruct inequality, equate opportunities and make human systems more responsive to the needs of all. Democracy is a civilised and honourable system of politics that serves as harbinger of hope for liberty and freedom. In other words, democracy is about the rule of law that concerns the trinity of superiority of the law, equality before the law and Fundamental Human Rights (FHRs) like the right to life; the right to freedom of association and the right to freedom of choice. Democracy is about good governance which is centred on transparency and accountability. Anything outside these ideological frequencies is tantamount to tyranny and will not be desirable in the system.

In some parts of the world, particularly, Africa and Middle East, democracy is cultivated and nurtured carelessly. Most countries within places ignore the fact that democracy and its cherishable dividends (fruits) do not come by wishing thinking but practical commitment to its lofty ideals.

In Nigeria, for instance, the reality of lawlessness, corruption and inequality and the careless manner in which these contradictions are fought is a pointer that the country's democracy has not matured yet. In other words, the existence of lawlessness, institutional corruption and inequality have indicted Nigeria's democratic credentials even after 25 years of unbroken experience with

the system.

The primary responsibility of government is to ensure that the stability, security and welfare of the citizenry is promptly and sustainably attained. No nation strives and develops in an atmosphere of chaos and abject poverty. One of the potent ways through which a country can achieve good governance is for its citizens to respect and faithfully follow the dictates of extant laws and sound rules of behaviour (ethics). In other words, constitutionalism that is strict adherence to rules must take precedence over lawlessness. Through rules, roles are assigned to institutions and individuals in the polity (society).

When system rules and processes are violated, there are fatal consequences. This lesson is so loud a book titled, "People Like Us" written by Dominick Dunne, a master storyteller.

In that book, the author told his readers about the story of the struggles of a certain Renthall Family whose ambition was to win acceptance in an elite society characterised by Knowledge, wealth and ultimately power. The main characters Elias and Ruby Renthall who left Cincinnati to build business empires in New York, United States of America as well as Baily.

Elias and Ruby can be likened to two politicians or two political parties contesting for an election. Gus Bailey was a journalist whose primary responsibility was to observe and report the cataclysms (catastrophic power plays) that determine who get what amongst members of the ruling class. By schedule of duty, he can be likened to an Electoral Umpire who ought to be independent and neutral in the discharge of his functions.

One of the most outstanding features of the people in "People Like Us" was that they operated their society based on detailed rules that were not followed to the latter. Gus Bailey moved from his observatory, reporting

or supervisory roles to be a power player himself. This means there was a shift in role and the world of the society referred to in the book never remained the same.

Shifting roles can be described as situations whereby a person or group of people abandoned their roles for other roles. It can also be seen as an unwelcomed deviation from a well-established or acceptable ideological orientation or tradition.

In a democracy, periodic election is a tradition which takes care leadership recruitment in the polity. The credibility of the leadership selection process is the basic determinant of the functionality and strength of the democratic system. Therefore, the conduct of free, fair and credible election becomes a pivotal goal in every responsible democracy.

In an ideal electoral system, citizens/stakeholders play distinct roles. These roles include that of electoral observers (civil society), news reporters (journalists), electoral umpires (Independent Electoral Commission), impartial judges (tribunal judges), partisan politicians (contestants) and electorates. If, however, an impartial arbiter (observers, journalists, INEC or tribunal judges), directly or indirectly, meddled into political ding dongs or vice versa, then, there will be real problem. The electoral processes will be badly compromised with its attendant negative consequences. This is squarely the bane of Nigerian's democracy within the context of its leadership recruitment process.

Gus Bailey, the observer, enjoyed the trust of the political actors he was reporting but, having being armed with their secret strategies, he decided to be a player as well. Morally, his action was wrong but a typical politician will tell you there is no morality in the game of politics.

The Gus' scenario has become a recurrent decimal in Nigeria's democratic enterprise or practice. The country's political system cannot be trusted because our rules of engagements have been betrayed in many ways than one and frequently too. There are always reasons to suspect the sincerity of the moves of every political players and those superintending over our electoral processes.

Nigeria celebrated its 25th Democracy Day yesterday. The celebration was the Silver Jubilee of the country's democracy. It can be said that so much effort has been invested in Nigeria's democracy but so much is still left undone. With discipline and dedication to the ideals of democracy, the next 25 years will be eventful for the common good. Happy Democracy Day Nigerians!

Foreign

History of the secret Saudi-Israeli relationship

ON the surface, Israel and Saudi Arabia appear to be sworn enemies. They don't share borders, values, or culture, and for decades, Saudi officials have even made inflammatory claims about Jews. However, behind closed doors, the two countries have been secretly collaborating for years, driven by a shared pragmatism and the need to counter common threats.

Even before Israel became a country, David Ben-Gurion was looking for potential allies, including Saudi Arabia. The Saudis were seen as pragmatists who didn't want other Arab countries to have too much power in the region, and the presence of a friendly state like Israel could potentially advance Saudi Arabia's interests. However, King Ibn Saud rebuffed every attempt to make contact and even sent troops to fight against Israel in its war of independence.

American President Franklin Delano Roosevelt (R, 1882 -1945) meets with King Ibn Saud (1880- 1953) of Saudi Arabia, chief of staff William D. Leahy (on knee, 1875 - 1959) and Col. William A. Eddy (to Leahy's right, 1896 - 1962), minister to Saudi Arabia aboard a US warship, on February 20, 1945 (Archives: Hulton).

The first significant milestone in the secret relationship came in the early 1960s when civil war broke out in Yemen. Rebels had just overthrown the government, and the country was in chaos. Most of the countries in the region, including Saudi Arabia and Israel, were not fans of the rebels. Saudi Arabia quietly opened its airspace to the Israeli planes that dropped aid to the Yemeni government fighters. This was the first time that Saudi and Israeli interests aligned and it wouldn't be the last.

Khartoum Resolution, the "3 No's"

In 1967, the entire Arab League formally adopted the Khartoum Resolution, also known as the "3 No's": no peace with Israel, no recognition of Israel, and no negotiations with Israel. Behind the scenes, however, Israel was working overtime to build bridges with the Saudis. They passed on information about local attempts to overthrow the Saudi government and warned the Saudis about a



Front row from 2nd left: Syria's President Bashar al-Assad, Egypt's President Abdel Fatah al-Sisi, Jordan's King Abdullah II, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, Palestinian President Mahmud Abbas, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi and Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, standing for a group picture ahead of an emergency meeting of the Arab League and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

plot to assassinate the Jordanian king.

Saudi pragmatism

The Saudis, known for their pragmatism, eventually realized that Israel was here to stay. In 1977, the Saudi king admitted that no one was trying to wipe Israel off the map anymore. The Israeli foreign ministry, however, remained silent, waiting for the Saudis to make the first move.

Failed Saudi proposal for peace

In 1981, the Saudi prince sent Israel a concrete proposal: if Israel withdrew from all the territories it acquired during the Six-Day War and handed over Jerusalem to be the capital of a Palestinian state, the region would be at peace. However, the Israeli prime minister rejected the offer immediately, citing concerns about Israel's security and the importance of Jerusalem.

The Gulf War anti-Sadam coalition

A decade later, the Saudis and the Israelis found themselves on the same side again, both being targeted by Saddam Hussein, who had invaded Kuwait. Saudi Arabia joined a coalition of more than 30 countries to pressure him to leave, and when Saddam shot at Israel, the Jewish state didn't retaliate, preventing the Arab states in the coalition from having to choose sides.

Later that year, the Saudis and the Israelis sat in the same room for the first time at the Madrid Peace Conference, a joint effort by

the US and USSR to end the Arab-Israeli conflict. Though no peace came out of the conference, the relationship between Saudi and Israel was warming, and behind closed doors, they kept talking about joint projects that would bring in money if they could just nail down a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Israeli Premier Yitzhak Shamir (L) speaking in Madrid with his advisor Benjamin Netanyahu (R) at the Madrid Middle East Peace conference on October 30, 1991.

In 2002, the Saudis repeated their offer from 1981: withdraw from all the territories won in 1967, give up Jerusalem, and the Arab world would make peace. Again, the Israeli government rejected the offer, citing concerns about security and the ongoing Second Intifada.

It took another war to bring the Jewish state back to the negotiating table. When the Iran-backed terror group Hezbollah kidnapped two Israeli soldiers in 2006, Israel responded with a massive show of force. The war revealed that Hezbollah was stronger and more powerful than anyone had realized, putting both Saudi Arabia and Israel in the same precarious boat, directly threatened by the Islamic Republic of Iran. This shared threat finally brought the two countries together to discuss how to stop the Iranian regime.

The 2020 Abraham Accords

In 2020, the United States brokered a historic agreement between Israel and multiple Arab countries, two of which border Saudi Arabia: the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain. Though the Saudis weren't part of the deal, there were hints that they too might normalize relations with Israel, allowing the accords to go through and hinting that a normalization deal would come once Israel worked out its problems with the Palestinians.

Bahrain Foreign Affairs Minister Sheikh Khalid Bin Ahmed Al-Khalifa, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, US President Donald J. Trump and UAE Foreign Affairs Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan during the Abraham Accords signing ceremony, which normalizes relations between the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain with Israel, on the South Lawn of the White House in Washington, DC, USA, on September 15, 2020.

In 2023, the Saudis openly stated that they were willing to normalize ties with Israel, indicating that the two countries were getting closer to making their relationship official. The only question was what it would take to seal the deal.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken meeting with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in Riyadh on April 29, 2024.

Many analysts have suggested that Hamas's

devastating attack on Israel in October 2023 was engineered to tank a potential deal between Israel and the Saudis, as the Arab world harshly criticized Israel's response to the terrorist group.

The war between Israel and Hamas has cost tens of thousands of lives, and the entire Arab world has harshly criticized Israel's response, with some countries condemning the "indiscriminate bombing of Palestinian innocent civilians in Gaza."

However, when Iran attacked Israel in April 2024, multiple Arab countries, including some with no public ties to the Jewish state, came to Israel's defense, passing on intelligence, allowing Israel to use their airspace, or even actively helping to track and intercept the Iranian missiles. This suggests that the Saudi-Israeli relationship may have deeper roots than previously known.

The relationship between Saudi Arabia and Israel has been an open secret for years, with both countries recognizing the mutual benefits of an alliance. As the Iranian regime continues to threaten regional stability, the incentive for the two countries to make their partnership official has never been greater. The only question is when they will finally take the plunge and go public with their long-standing cooperation.

Source: IsraelHayom

ODD WORLD

Stolen remains found in plastic bag traced to woman

By Johnny Diaz

IN October 1985, partial skeletal remains were found in a plastic bag in the Channel Islands Harbor in Oxnard, Calif., Northwest of Los Angeles. The authorities determined that they belonged to a woman who died when she was between 35 and 50 years old, but nothing else about her was known and, for decades, the trail went cold.

Nearly 40 years later, the woman once again has a name. She was Gertrude Elliott-Littlehale, a musician who was born in 1864, lived in San Francisco and died in 1915. And at one point decades ago, her grave was robbed and her skull was taken, according to Othram, the forensic laboratory that announced the identification of her remains last week.

The break in the case came after scientists were able to build a DNA profile from the remains. Investigators tracked down living potential relatives and collected a reference sample from one of them, leading to the identification.

David Mittelman, the chief executive of Othram, said in an interview that his company had worked on century-old cases before, and that "we have worked with DNA that is sometimes in very terrible shape" because of chemical damage and heat damage. "The circumstances are very unusual though," he said of Ms. Elliott-Littlehale's case. "A grave robbery, the theft of the skull."

"We use a process we developed called forensic-grade genome sequencing," Mr. Mittelman said, "and this is a robust forensic DNA test method that works broadly on challenging DNA. So we had no trouble in this case. It was far from the worst we have seen, in terms of DNA quality."

Such advance forensic genetic genealogy techniques were still decades in the future in 1985, when the Ventura County Sheriff's Office began puzzling over the remains that had been found in a plastic bag in Oxnard. Without leads, the investigation eventually went cold.

In 2016, information about the case was added to the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System as case UP15170.

Investigators eventually developed a clay facial reconstruction of the woman and shared images of it with the public, hoping to generate



A black-and-white portrait of a woman wearing a coat, a patterned scarf and a bonnet

new leads. Despite this and other "extensive efforts by law enforcement investigators to identify the woman," Othram said in a statement, "no matches were found."

In May 2023, the Ventura County Sheriff's Office cold case unit, in collaboration with the Ventura County Medical Examiner's Office, submitted

forensic evidence to Othram to determine whether advanced DNA testing could help identify the woman.

Othram scientists were able to extract DNA from the evidence provided by the sheriff's office and used it to "conduct extensive genetic genealogy research." That, Othram said, produced new leads, including potential relatives,

World's most expensive cow

Brazil has hundreds of millions of cows, but one in particular is extraordinary. Her massive, snow white body is watched over by security cameras, a veterinarian and an armed guard.

Worth \$4 million, Viatina-19 FIV Mara Movéis is the most expensive cow ever sold at auction, according to Guinness World Records. That's three times more than the last recordholder's price. And at 1,00 kilograms (more than 2,400 pounds) she's twice as heavy as an average adult of her breed.

Along a highway through Brazil's heartland, Viatina-19's owners have put up two billboards praising her grandeur and beckoning ranchers, curious locals and busloads of veterinary students to make pilgrimages to see the supercow.

Climate scientists agree that people need to consume less beef, the largest agricultural source of greenhouse gasses and a driver of Amazon deforestation. But the cattle industry is a major source of Brazilian economic development and the government is striving to conquer new export markets. The world's top beef exporter

wants everyone, everywhere to eat its beef.

The embodiment of Brazil's cattle ambitions is Viatina-19, the product of years of efforts to raise meatier cows. The country's prizewinners are sold at high-stakes auctions so high that wealthy ranchers share ownership. They extract the eggs and semen from champion animals, create embryos and implant them in surrogate cows that they hope will produce the next magnificent specimens.

"We're not slaughtering elite cattle. We're breeding them. And at the end of the line, going to feed the whole world," one of her owners, Ney Pereira, said after arriving by helicopter at his farm in Minas Gerais state. "I think Viatina will provide that."

The cow's eye-popping price stems from how quickly she put on vast amounts of muscle, from her fertility and crucially how often she has passed those characteristics to her offspring, said Lorrany Martins, a veterinarian who is Pereira's daughter and right hand. Breeders also value posture, hoof solidity, docility, maternal ability and beauty. Those eager to level up their

and ultimately led to the identification of Ms. Elliott-Littlehale.

A few biographical details have since surfaced.

A native of Stockton, Calif., she graduated from high school when she was 16, attended the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston before continuing her musical studies in Paris, according to a news article about her death, from appendicitis, in *The Stockton Daily Independent*. She lived in San Francisco with her husband, James M. Littlehale, and their daughter, who was 7 when her mother died.

A capsule profile in the March 1905 edition of *The Wasp*, a weekly magazine published in San Francisco, described her as "an accomplished musician, a delightful conversationalist and an observant traveler" who had returned after a period of "travel and residence in Europe" to teach voice lessons.

Mr. Mittelman said that Ms. Elliott-Littlehale traveled weekly from San Francisco to Stockton, Calif., where she was part of something called

the Saturday Afternoon Musical Club, he added. The lab shared a color image of her based on a black-and-white image provided by her family that showed Ms. Elliott-Littlehale in a patterned scarf and a bonnet covering her light brown hair. She was buried after "brief and simple services" at a family mausoleum in a cemetery in Stockton, *The Daily Independent* reported. Decades later, investigators received a tip that a grave had been robbed and a skull was taken, Othram said.

"This was Elliot-Littlehale's grave that had been disturbed," the company said. It was not clear when her grave was desecrated.

It was also not immediately clear what would become of her remains. The Ventura County Sheriff's Office's lead detective in the case was not available on Monday.

Ms. Elliot-Littlehale's case was the 38th one where California officials have publicly identified an individual using Othram's technology, the company said. **New York Times**

livestock's genetics pay around \$250,000 for an opportunity to collect Viatina-19's egg cells.

"She is the closest to perfection that has been attained so far," Martins said. "She's a complete cow, has all the characteristics that all the proprietors are looking for."

A commodities boom in the 2000s turbocharged Brazilian agriculture, especially with a rising China buying soy and beef. Today, agriculture's influence extends to Brazil's Congress and the national consciousness. Country

music is booming. TV viewers can watch the massive Globo network's seven-year campaign exalting the sector. The Cow Channel features live auctions. And Brazil, along with the U.S., is at the forefront of cattle genetics; it does more in-vitro fertilizations than any country in the world, said João Henrique Moreira Viana, genetic resources and biotechnology researcher at the government's agricultural research corporation. **Source: Independent**



A stockman shows off the Nelore cow known as Viatina-19 at a farm in Uberaba, Minas Gerais state, Brazil, Friday, April 26, 2024. Viatina-19 is the product of years of efforts to raise meatier cows, and is the most expensive cow ever sold at auction, according to Guinness World Records. (AP Photo/Silvia Izquierdo)

NIGERIA

in the Foreign Press



Democracy under scrutiny as Nigerians struggle

Nigeria has played a major role in fostering democracy in Africa's west but after 25 years its people are losing faith

For visitors to Lagos, the gentle plea begins with immigration officials at the airport and is echoed across the streets of Africa's most populous city: "Show me love."

It is a familiar request for tips in a city of omnipresent hustle, but residents say the requests have intensified in the last year as people struggle under the crushing weight of Nigeria's underperforming economy.

Wednesday May 29, marked the completion of the first year in office of the president, Bola Tinubu, after the disputed election of February 2023. It was also the 25th anniversary of Nigeria's return to democracy, a promising point in a region where six out of eight coup attempts since 2020 have been successful. Official ceremonies were restrained, and on the eve of the landmark date, the national mood in the capital, Abuja, was far from celebratory.

Overall economic progress since 1999 has been hard to measure due to the many periods of growth and decline, said Bongo Adi, a professor of economics and data analytics at Lagos Business School. "The economy has moved in different directions over this period," he said. The best era of economic welfare and sustained employment, however, was in the early 2000 under the former president Olusegun Obasanjo, he added.

Last year, Nigeria lost bragging rights as Africa's largest economy when it dropped behind South Africa. The International Monetary Fund has already projected a further slip to fourth place behind Egypt and Algeria.

Data from the Nigerian Bureau of Statistics put the economy as growing slightly by 2.98% in the first quarter of 2024. But unemployment remains high in a country where more than 2 million people join the workforce annually.

In 2019, the monthly minimum wage was increased from N19,000 (£10) to N30,000 (£16), but many say that amount is



nowhere close to enough. Workers nationwide say their living expenses have rocketed as food inflation - already in double digits - continues to rise. Electricity tariffs have surged by at least a hundredfold in the last year.

In 18 months, the price of bottled water has gone from N50 (3p) to N100 to N200. In some markets outside the big cities, yams are now also sold in huge slices, for those who cannot afford the whole vegetable. The cost of making the staple dish jollof rice has tripled in the last three years.

As a coping mechanism, analysts say young people are increasingly turning to sex work and cybercrime in small towns, especially in the south.

"The cost of living wants to kill the living," one Nigerian lamented during a call-in show on national television.

Everything is really hard. On 29 May 1999, as Nigeria transitioned from military rule to civilian leadership, Tinubu, now the president, was taking the oath of office to be the third elected governor of Lagos.

His supporters say he went on to lay the groundwork for transformation of the city's economy and infrastructure in two four-year tenures. Today, his aides say he remains passionate about fixing Nigeria's economic challenges.

The number of poor Nigerians "is totally unacceptable to the president ... that is why it is perhaps his No 1 priority to tackle poverty, and he has a

programme to stabilise and grow the economy in general," Wale Edun, the finance minister, said last October at the launch of a welfare programme to give N75,000 (£42) across three months to each of the country's 15 million low-income households.

From his first day in office, Tinubu began announcing textbook reforms that economists and policymakers had suggested for years: currency devaluation and cutting off a fuel subsidy that had fanned corruption for decades.

However, the changes have squeezed the economy - the naira is still fluttering and the subsidy cut tripled petrol prices - and have not been rolled out without controversy.

"Economy does not obey orders, not even military orders," said Obasanjo, the president from 1999 to 2010 in Abuja last week, adding that the reforms were necessary but had been wrongly implemented.

In January, Betta Edu, the humanitarian affairs minister, was suspended while an investigation was launched into the alleged diversion of N585m (£329,000) in funds related to the welfare scheme. Edu has denied any wrongdoing.

A group of oil dealers and a prominent ruling party member have also claimed that the subsidy cuts have been reversed, although the junior petroleum minister, Heineken Lokpobiri, has denied this.

Tinubu's critics have also

pointed out that he has yet to appoint ambassadors but has named advisers for mundane things like national values and a personal assistant for teleprompter usage. Sources in the presidency say a cabinet shuffle could be announced in the coming days in what is being interpreted as a sign of his discontent with the current cast's performance.

Recently, he visited Lagos to open a controversial coastal highway stretching to Calabar, a port city in the oil-rich Niger Delta, close to the border with Cameroon. A few miles away from where he stood promising that the project would boost 30m businesses, traders in the Oniru market went about their day unexcited about the present and their future.

Chidi Obi, a 40-year-old owner of an electrical shop within the market who remembers being thrilled as a teenager in 1999, said he was "not feeling the democracy of Nigeria today" and accused unions of not doing enough to challenge the government.

"Look at fuel prices today, nobody is talking ... people are dying," he said. "The money you make in a day, one plate of food collects it all and you're still going home to your wife and children and family. Everything is really hard."

A refinement process across West Africa, there have been raging debates about whether democracy has lifted living standards as support for coups surges in

Nigeria's neighbours such as Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso.

Oge Onubogu, director of the Africa Program at the Washington DC-based thinktank Wilson Center, said citizen frustrations with democracy can, in fact, help strengthen the democratic system as long as leaders respond to them by pushing for more inclusive governance.

"For the first time in a long time, we are seeing citizens question the status quo, the state-society relationship," she said. "People are saying it can no longer be business as usual. Citizens are rising up and questioning the way things are being done," she added. "Isn't that democracy itself? So maybe this provides that opportunity for us to even begin to think about how we reset."

For many years, Nigeria was seen as the police officer of West Africa, given its outsized financial and military contributions to enforcing rule of law and fostering democracy within the Economic Community of West African States (Ecowas)

Tinubu, the current chair of Ecowas, has been pushing for a return to civilian administration in Niger where a 30 July 2023 coup ignited a split within the bloc. Yusuf Tuggar, Nigeria's foreign affairs minister, argues that democracy offers better outcomes for everyday people.

"We're not saying that everybody has to adopt our own style of democracy or another country's style of democracy, but at least let's have constitutional governance," he said in Abuja.

"The reason why we're emphasising constitutional governance is it's easier to have policy predictability, property rights, effectiveness of contracts when your system is predicated on some sort of constitution ... it's easier to tackle some of the challenges that we're facing like terrorism."

Still, within Nigeria, people like Obi, the electrical shop owner, remain sceptical that democracy fulfils its promise. "Military should just take over and fix the economy. We are tired."

Source: The Guardian

Politics

Rivers: RSIEC announces October 5 for LG elections

THE Rivers State Independent Electoral Commission (RSIEC) as fixed October 5, 2024 for the conduct of Local Government Areas (LGAs) election in the state.

RSIEC chairman, Justice Adolphus Enebeli (rtd), disclosed this during a stakeholders meeting in Port Harcourt on Monday.

Enebeli told stakeholders that the planned conduct of the LGA elections followed the tenure end of the immediate past chairmen in the 23 council areas.

He said, "The commission therefore made the following: There shall be local government council elections on Saturday, the 5th of October, 2024 in all the 23 local government areas in the state.

"One Councillor shall be elected in each Ward. The Chairman and Vice Chairman shall be elected for each of the local government areas."

The RSIEC boss appealed to political parties wishing to take part in the elections to play by the rules to ensure a hitch-free process.

He added, "We enjoin all stakeholders here present to partner with the commission in this onerous task. In some countries of the world, people are not required to vote because there are no elections.

"In other countries, people are fighting and dying simply for the right to vote in free and fair elections. And here we are in this country where we have the right and freedom to vote. But sometimes there is apathy due to lack of voter and civic education."

Stakeholders at the meeting encouraged the commission to ensure a level playing ground for all political parties.

Meanwhile, the Nigerian Bar Association, Port Harcourt Branch has expressed its readiness to partner with the state electoral umpire in ensuring a successful local government elections.

The newly elected Chairman of the NBA, Port Harcourt Branch, Cordelia Eke, gave the assurance while speaking at the meeting.

Eke commended the Rivers State Government for taking the bold step to conduct the elections.

She said, "As you all know, the Nigerian Bar Association is set up to stand for upholding of the law, and we are therefore happy to be associated with any activity that has to do with the rule of law; and the peace, unity and



Enebeli

development of the society. "We are happy to partner with the government in this particular process. And we want to encourage all stakeholders to abide by

Why I want Southeast governors to work together- obi

THE Labour Party (LP) presidential candidate, Mr. Peter Obi, has reiterated his call for South-East governors to collaborate, emphasizing that such unity is crucial for the region's development.

A statement by his spokesperson, Dr. Yunusa Tanko, said Obi made the call at Jesuit College in Port Harcourt while responding to a question seeking clarification on his previous day's call for the Southeast governors to work together.

Obi highlighted that the entire country was facing diverse challenges, including the South-East zone.

He expressed his desire for all regions to work collectively for the progress of their respective areas, thereby contributing to the overall development of Nigeria.

Obi said, "In the case of the South-East, the problems, like elsewhere, are many. However, security is the most pressing issue. I again urge



Obi

the rules that have just been unveiled and the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria which guides our conduct as citizens of the country."

the Governors to work as a family, especially now towards solving this problem, because working in isolation will achieve less and consume more resources."

Obi emphasised that now is the time for the Governors to collaborate among themselves, working towards becoming collective champions.

He suggested they engage with one another and even seek insights from former governors to share experiences. This approach, he argued, is more effective than striving to be individual champions and failing in such selfish

pursuits. It will be recalled that Obi expressed similar sentiments while speaking to journalists in Onitsha on Saturday, where he stated: "I thank the government for their efforts so far, but there is a need to do more. All leaders must come together to join hands and fight this. In the South-East, the governors need to unite to tackle these challenges effectively."

"Even in economic matters, I want to see the South-East governors work more closely. We need them to come together and also engage other groups in the zone for comprehensive development."

THE Coalition for Good Governance and Leadership (CGGL) has appealed to the House of Representatives to ensure the speedy passage of the proposed repeal and re-enactment of the Nigerian Shippers' Council and Economic Regulatory Bill.

In a statement signed by its president, Dr. Ogunbiyi Oguntola, the CSO said this will promote economic growth, strengthen the regulatory framework for the maritime industry, and enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the Nigerian Shippers' Council.

Oguntola commended the Hon. Abdussamad Dasuki-led committee on Shipping Services for a job well done during the public hearing which accommodated all shades of opinion leaders and critical stakeholders to make inputs into the bill.

THE Chairman House of Representatives committee on Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND), Miriam Odinaka-Onuoha, has expressed concern over the inability of tertiary institutions to assess funds allocated to them and promised to amend the law establishing the TETFUND which has been an impediment.

The chairman of the committee said this when she and members of the committee visited Lagos on Monday to find out why the tertiary institutions in the state have not been assessing the funds allocated to them between 2017 and 2023.

"Myself and the committee, alongside the relevant departments TETFUND agency and team of consultants that have made up a technical team, are here on a working visit to Lagos State governor and the

Ensure quick passage of Shippers Regulatory bill, group tells Reps

"The new bill seeks to repeal the existing Nigerian Shippers' Council Act and other stakeholders, leading to increased confidence and investment in the maritime industry."

"Furthermore, it will increase revenue generation for the government, leading to improved funding for infrastructure development and other public services, and create jobs and opportunities for Nigerians, leading to enhanced economic growth and development."

"The bill will address the current challenges facing the Nigerian Shippers' Council, including the lack of an enabling law to back up its status as a Port Economic Regulator. This in the maritime industry, has hindered the agency's ability to enforce sanctions on ports and shipping shippers and other stakeholders in the nation's maritime sector."

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Lawmakers to amend TETFUND Act, make assessing funds easier



Onuoha

state to intimate them of the solution of the house and indeed the committee on TETFUND and other services to ensure that the accumulated unassessed TETFUND intervention to affected institutions from 2017 to 2023 are not released to the beneficiary institutions" She said.

She explained that on the 28th of May 2024 the committee embarked on its annual oversight to TETFUND agency and in the course of their job, they found out that some institutions were behind in assessing their TETFUND intervention which government has allocated to bridge infrastructure gap in the tertiary institutions.

"Rising from an extraordinary committee meeting, the committee resolved to work with TETFUND and the affected institutions to ensure that

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the impediment which has given rise to this intervention accumulating unassessed be relaxed to ensure the Nigerian people enjoy the intervention made to them and have the value for money."

The committee chairman further explained that TETFUND intervention does not come with a matching ground but, it comes with a guideline which intending beneficiary or ongoing beneficiary must meet up to ensure compliance as set out in the Act. "So we are reviewing with our stakeholders challenges that they have been having.

"From what we see there are nine items to deal with physical infrastructure, research and development, training of staffs and maintenance, i would have thought that the challenge has to do with physical infrastructure but we see also that we have unassessed funding for training and research, fabrication of equipment to bring technology gap, that will mean our institutions will need to sit up ensure that we use and utilise these funds well."

Responding, Lagos State commissioner for Tertiary Education Hon. Tolani Sule said the State government is grateful for the steps taken by the committee to find out why institutions have not been assessing the fund allocated to them saying that was a better approach to solve problem.

He noted that since the lawmakers have assured them, that the impediment would be removed, there would be upward assessment of the fund.

THE NIGERIA STANDARD

With **Palang Kasmi**

Living

YouPaD, stakeholders advocate reduced tax burden on women, others

By **PALANG KASMI**

While governments use taxes to source Internally Generated Revenue (IGR), stakeholders have asked the Federal Government to streamline its taxes and levies to reduce undue burden on women and vulnerable groups.

The stakeholders, comprising university dons, students, business people, representatives of the public and private sectors, and Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs), among others, gathered on June 28, 2024, at the Post Graduate (PG) Board Room, Department of Political Science, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Jos (UniJos), for brainstorming policy discussions.

The forum, with the topic, 'Should we pursue Internally Generated Revenue (IGR) at the expense of the citizens?', was organised under the aegis of Agora by Policy Dialogue Series (YouPaD), in collaboration with Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Nigeria Office.

The Agura Young Professionals Policy Debate Series has been holding for years, aimed at finding ways of promoting democracy, development and international dialogue.

Two panelists at the forum engaged the stakeholders. They were a Political Economist in Development Studies and Head of Department, Political Science, UniJos, Prof. Ezekiel Major Adeyi, and Deputy Director, UniJos Center for Gender and Women Studies, Prof. SayitaWakjissa. The moderator was the Deputy Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences, UniJos, Dr. Plangsat Bitrus Dayil.

The interaction provided an avenue for stakeholders to hold candid and open discussions which culminated with a policy suggestion to government.

Prof. Wakjissa, in her presentation stated that it is very important to consider women in IGR issues in the country because the high taxes paid by female petty traders was not only wearing them down but was not commensurate with their meager earnings.

She pointed out: "There is need for tax payments but government needs to be fair to women. These women, who are into petty trading sit under the sun and rain, some of them have umbrellas, some don't have, and even when the rain is coming, they will have to find a way of securing their wares so that the rain will not destroy it.

"The cost and the hardship is too much on women, because they are the ones you see sitting outside selling, you hardly find the men outside as most of them can afford the shops. But these women who cannot afford to raise the funds for shops are under the sun.

"And some of the roads to these villages are terrible, they have to enter Pick-up vehicles and trucks to go to the markets, not minding the dangers they are exposed to. There is little done to actually help them, so that they can take care of their needs.

We are not saying the IGR is bad, but government should try to moderate, make it affordable, so that the women can pay."

While lamenting the poor state of Primary Health Care (PHC) facilities and very limited access to health care and maternal services in rural areas, the gender expert disclosed that most PHCs in rural areas lacked basic facilities and medicines. Thus, she tasked governments to optimise revenue, be transparent and provide social amenities to the people to justify the IGR being generated.



Ikwelle



Cross-section of stakeholders at the forum

Dr. Dayil, on her part pointed out that, due to poor management and lack of transparency in handling IGR, many Nigerians do not know why they pay taxes because they do not see and feel the impact of what is done with the monies.

While spearheading responses on how to moderate IGR to reduce the burden on women and low income earners, Dayil stated that most poor women paid multiple taxes on the roads and various other points whenever they go to the market to buy wares to sell.

"Young people too, who are going into nano business are facing similar challenges and not finding it easy. We don't have a one stop shop for taxation. So when youths start a business, they have multiple tax collectors coming to take money from them," she added.

An Economist, and Director General (DG) of Jos Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines, and Agriculture (JOCCIMA), Dr. Idris Joseph Nubuya, called for transparency, accountability and feed-back structures so that IGR will serve its purpose much better in the country.

Earlier in his opening remarks, Prof. Adeyi noted that most state governments were looking inwards by focusing on raising IGR because of their inability to meet up with their responsibilities to citizens.

He said that even though the call to hospitals and agencies of government to generate IGR was being given prominence, there was still the need for an IGR with a human face. He lamented the extravagance displayed by government officials who move

around with many political aides, fly private jets, ride exotic cars, etc, at the expense of the people.

"Governments are not putting targets to IGR generated, they need to be seen to say the money generated from car park tax, or toll gate has been used to build this particular project, to motivate citizens to pay taxes," he advised.

University of Jos Students Union Government (SUG) President, Izam Samuel, agreed that multiple taxation in the banking, health and other sectors was harsh on citizens, especially students, and does not have a human face.

He, therefore, tasked government to justify the IGR collected from citizens by providing visible and meaningful developmental projects. He called for the adoption of other strategies of raising revenue in order to lessen the burden of taxation on citizens, especially vulnerable groups.

Communications Coordinator, YouPaD, Ekene Ikwelle, commended the forum for coming up with rich and beautiful suggestions and assured that his organisation would forward the outcomes of the dialogue to government.

He explained that the YouPaD Agura Policy Dialogue forum was brought to the university community to get intellectual contributions from young professionals, students and experts on how to drive developmental issues and governance in the country.

Various discussants lamented lack of transparency in taxation, high and multiple taxation, lack of adequate sensitisation of citizens on IGR issues.

The forum challenged governments to attach certain



Wakjissa



Dayil

projects to taxes collected in order to build a better level of trust among citizens, be transparent and create sensitisation for a to bridge the gap between the government and the people.

The forum further called on governments at all levels to regulate multiple taxation, reduce taxes, allow nano businesses to thrive by not placing taxes on certain petty businesses. Other areas listed for attention of policy makers included putting off borrowing, diversifying the economy from dependence on oil to tourism, sports, agriculture and building state farms to create jobs and creating an enabling environment for businesses so that collecting IGR will be justified.

It would be recalled that in May 2024, The Director General, World Trade Organisation (WTO), Dr.

Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, had advocated for balanced taxation policies in Nigeria to avoid undue burden on citizens. She was speaking at a gathering of Women in Leadership Nigeria, jointly hosted by her and the Duchess of Sussex, Meghan Markle, the co-founder of the Archewell Foundation, during the Duchess's visit to Nigeria, along with her husband, the Duke of Sussex, Prince Harry.

Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala had emphasised the necessity of Nigeria broadening its tax base while ensuring that citizens enjoyed the value for their contributions. She asked the Federal Government to streamline its taxes and levies, arguing that although higher taxes may not be bad, they should not constitute an undue burden on citizens, especially the poor.

Focus

People Power: Lessons from Kenya

By LANG GYANG RAHWOL

THE recent protests in Kenya, which lasted for weeks and resulted in the deaths of over 22 people, demonstrated the power of unity and determination in the pursuit of a common goal. The persistence of the protesters led to a halt in planned tax hikes.

While conceding that he would no longer sign the tax bill (which had been passed by parliament) into law, a defeated and downcast President Ruto declared, "The people have spoken."

Certainly, that underlined the enormous strength inherent in people power.

But that would not have been possible in Nigeria. Why? Whenever governments here make laws that cause so much pain and suffering, Nigerians cannot unite and resist them the way the Kenyan people did mainly due to deeply entrenched divisions along religious and tribal lines, among other factors.

Nigeria has over 250 ethnic groups and a roughly equal population of Christians and Muslims. This diversity has often led to conflicts and divisions, which have been exploited by politicians to maintain their power and influence.

For example, during the END-SARS protests in 2020 (largely driven by young people from the South West) demanding an end to police brutality, northern governors and some Muslim leaders accused the protesters of being anti-government and anti-north. But even then, even if the president at the time was from the South West, his people from that part of the country would have accused the agitators of plotting the downfall of their son.

And earlier during the fuel subsidy protests in 2012, some northern leaders accused the protesters of being sponsored by the opposition to destabilize the government of President Goodluck Jonathan.

This retrogressive trend has continued right into the current Tinubu administration. The sudden removal of fuel subsidy has caused so much economic and social dislocations all over the country. But Nigerians have not been able to react as practically as the Kenyan people. This is also because we are a docile and complacent people. Even when government also proceeded to increased electricity tariff, citizens could not rise up to protest, even when that policy hurt them so much.

As a people, we simply grumble about negative government policies, go back and continue complaining



Ruto

without taking any practical steps to make government change its mind. And our governments, knowing how docile we are, do not mind taking decisions that are detrimental to our overall wellbeing.

Also, Nigerians cannot make personal sacrifices for the overall good of the country, the way we saw young Kenyans on the streets of their country risk their lives to force government retrace its steps. Which is why the Federal Government is not taking the issue of a new minimum wage seriously. That is even when it's very clear that the salaries and emoluments of our lawmakers and high-ranking government officials are astronomically high, in fact among the highest in the whole world.

To worsen matters, the organized labour unions have not lived up to expectations while negotiating for the improved wages. Many workers here believe their leaders have not been sincere and committed in their negotiations with government. That is why this matter has continued to linger endlessly.

The Kenyan protests were led by a range of civil society organizations, including human rights groups and trade unions. These organizations were able to mobilize people and to create a sense of unity and purpose.

On the other hand, Nigerian civil society organizations are often weak and divided, which has made it difficult for them to mobilize people and to create change. This has allowed the

government to maintain its power and to ignore the demands of the people.

Apparently, the political class has continued to exploit these cleavages and weaknesses to the detriment of citizens and, by extension, the overall development and progress of the country. During the 2023 elections, many politicians used ethnic and religious rhetoric to mobilize support, rather than focusing on issues that affect all Nigerians. This led to a situation where people were more concerned with protecting their ethnic and religious interests than with working together to address the country's problems.

Another reason for ordinary Nigerians' lack of unity is the country's political structure. Nigeria has a federal system of government, with a strong central government and weaker state governments. This has led to a situation where states are dependent on the federal government for funding, which has created a culture of dependency and patronage.

As a result, state governments are often unable to take decisions that benefit their people without clearance from the federal government. This has eroded accountability and bred a culture of corruption which have further divided Nigerians along ethnic and religious lines.

But Kenya has a more decentralized system of government, with stronger county governments and a weaker central government. As

a result, counties can take decisions that benefit their people, without any need for clearance from the central government.

For example, the county government of Nairobi alone has been able to implement a range of reforms, including a new public transportation system and a renovation of the city's central business district. These have improved the lives of Nairobi's residents and shown the benefits of decentralization.

The lack of unity in Nigeria has also been exacerbated by the country's economic situation. Nigeria is one of the poorest countries in the world, with over 80% of the population living below the poverty line. This has created a situation where, because people are always struggling to survive, they are often unable to think about larger political issues. Kenya has a growing economy, with a GDP per capita of over \$2,000. This has allowed Kenyans to focus on political issues, rather than just the daily struggles of survival.

The Kenyan protests also showed the power of social media in mobilizing people and creating change. Social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook were used to mobilize protesters and to spread information about the protests. And although they operated from the shadows and were essentially without any form of discernable leaderships, the protests were able to gain national and international attention, which put pressure on the government to act.

On the contrary, Nigerian social media is often used to spread hate speech and divisive rhetoric, rather than to mobilize people for positive change. This has contributed to the country's divisions and has made it difficult for people to work together towards a common goal.

The Kenyan protests also showed the importance of international pressure in creating change. The international community, including organizations like the United Nations and the African Union, put pressure on the Kenyan government to respect the rights of protesters and to withdraw the controversial tax bill.

In contrast, the international community has often been reluctant to put pressure on the Nigerian government due to the country's perceived strategic importance and its role in the security of the West-African sub-region. This has allowed the government to ignore the demands of the people and to maintain its power.

On the whole, the Kenyan protests offer valuable lessons for Nigerians. They show the power of unity and

determination in achieving a common goal, and the importance of leadership, social media, and international pressure in creating change. Nigerians must learn from these lessons and work towards creating a more united and prosperous country.

To achieve this, Nigerians must first address the country's ethnic and religious tensions. This can be done by promoting dialogue and understanding between different ethnic and religious groups, and by encouraging politicians to focus on issues that affect all Nigerians, rather than exploiting divisions for their own selfish gains.

Second, Nigerians must work towards decentralizing the country's political structure, to give more power to state governments and to reduce the dependence on the federal government. This can be done by amending the constitution to give more powers to state governments, and by encouraging states to take more responsibility for their own development. Alternatively, resorting to regional governments comes highly recommended here.

Third, Nigerians must address the country's economic situation by working towards creating a more prosperous and equitable society. This can be done by implementing policies that promote economic growth and reduce poverty, such as investing in education and healthcare and creating jobs and opportunities for young people.

Fourth, Nigerians should use social media platforms to spread positive messages and to mobilize people around common goals, rather than using them negatively as we see today.

By working together and learning from the lessons of Kenya, we can build a brighter future ourselves and for generations to come. They can create a country where all citizens can live in peace and dignity, regardless of their ethnic or religious background.

But this will require hard work, determination and a willingness to learn from the lessons of others. In other words, if Nigeria must achieve greatness, the people must learn from what has just happened in Kenya: they must act resolutely and in one accord, irrespective of their differences.

RAHWOL is Secretary of the not-for-profit organization, Journalists Coalition for Citizens' Rights Initiative - JCCRI, based in Jos, Plateau State. Emails: info@jccri-online.org; rahwol65@gmail.com

News

Mutfwang hosts FAAN MD

By PETER TITLE

THE Governor of Plateau State, Barrister Caleb Mutfwang, recently hosted the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of the Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN), Olubumi Kuku, at a meeting aimed at enhancing the Jos airport's status to a cargo and eventually international airport.

While welcoming the MD of FAAN to Plateau State, Mutfwang expressed appreciation for the dedication and selfless service rendered by staff of the Jos Airport.

He expressed confidence in Mrs. Kuku's leadership capacity to transform the airport's fortunes.

Governor Mutfwang intimated his guest that Plateau State is blessed with agricultural produce in high demand worldwide, particularly vegetables, and pointed out that enhancing the airport's status would significantly aid in exporting the products.

He said that his administration had inaugurated a committee comprising former aviation staff to develop a blueprint for improving the existing infrastructure to ensure effective service delivery at



Mutfwang

the airport.

He lauded the visit of the Managing Director, saying it had sparked the hope and confidence that Jos Airport would receive the necessary intervention for its upgrade and gave the assurance that the state government would provide the necessary cooperation and intensify efforts to ensure the airport received a new lease on life.

Managing Director of FAAN, Olubumi Kuku, acknowledged the strategic location of the Jos Airport within the aviation industry and assured that it would receive the required attention.

Kuku noted that the airport was designated a cargo airport due to Plateau's centrality in Nigeria and promised to ensure that it was upgraded.

She emphasized the need for major infrastructure improvements at the facility to enhance its operations to meet international standards.

Our Government House correspondent reports that a committee comprising members from the Plateau State Government and the Airport Authority was mandated to develop a strategic plan for upgrading the airport.

FORMER Chief Press Secretary to the Kogi State Deputy Governor, Philip Salau, Jimoh Yusuf Itopa, has been appointed the new Managing Director of the Kogi State-owned newspaper, **The Graphic**, by Governor Ahmed Usman Ododo.

Itopa served as Chairman of the Editorial Board of the paper before he was seconded to the state Ministry of Information as a Director.

Itopa, who officially resumed on Monday at the Lokoja head office of the newspaper, promised to work towards actualising the vision of the founding fathers to move the paper

Kogi owned newspaper gets new MD

From AMEDU JOSEPH, Lokoja

to the next level.

He said: "I want to thank His Excellency for counting me fit for this appointment and I promise not to disappoint him in any way.

"After being part of the team here once, I will work alongside with the team on ground to actualise the vision of the founding fathers of the newspaper and move this organization to the next level where it can compete with other papers without losing focus of the vision of our

founding fathers."

Amoka Eneji, Chairman, Okehi Local Government Council, where Itopa hails from, who witnessed the occasion, described the appointment as "well deserved to our worthy son in the local government area," adding that he was a round peg in a round hole.

"I have no doubt that he will reposition the paper to meet the challenges ahead, given his pedigree as an astute professional journalist," he added.

Support OPSH, accept dialogue as conflict resolution tool- Auta

By EZEKIEL DONTINNA

THE Correspondents Chapel's Chairman of the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ), Plateau State Council, Mr. Polycarp Auta, has identified dialogue as the main tool for conflict resolution and called on citizens to embrace it.

He stated this recently while delivering a welcome address at the Peace Dialogue with Youths organised by the

Correspondents Chapel supported by Operation Safe Haven (OPSH), held in Barkin-Ladi.

The occasion, which was titled, 'Inter-ethnic and Religious Dialogue: Toward Ensuring Food Security in Plateau', had in attendance stakeholders from the state.

He called on citizens to support and cooperate with the security agencies deployed to their communities "in their bid

to stem out bad elements causing mayhem."

He lamented that there were a few bad eggs within the security circles and appealed to citizens to look at the larger picture and maintain a cordial relationship with the security personnel deployed to protect their communities.

In a keynote address, Major General Abdusalam Abubakar, the Commander of Special Tasks Force (OPSH), said that the military had adopted a myriad of non-kinetic approaches towards stemming the tide of insecurity in the state.

Represented by Col. Usman Abdusalam, Abubakar said that OPSH had launched a series of aggressive operations against kidnapers, cattle rustlers, armed robbers and illegal gun manufacturers, among other criminal elements, within its areas of responsibility.

The commander, who doubles as the General Officer Commanding, 3 Division of the Nigerian Army, Rukuba, described the summit as timely, adding that the organisers had keyed into the peace efforts of the government and the taskforce.

Earlier, the Guest Speaker, Rev. Fr. Stephen Akpe, attributed the looming food crisis in the state to persistent conflicts that had, over the years, hindered farmers from cultivating their farmlands.

He maintained that interfaith dialogue remains a major tool toward addressing the current security challenges in the state and called on the youths to collectively develop an approach that would breed lasting peace, tolerance and unity in the society.

PLSG commits to eradicating preventable diseases

By DUMAH RANDONG

THE Plateau State Deputy Governor, Ngo Josephine Piyo, has said that the Plateau State Government is committed to eradicating preventable childhood diseases in the state through effective immunisation programmes.

Piyo, who is the Chairman, Taskforce on Immunisation in Plateau State, stated this during the Task Force's quarterly meeting in Jos, recently.

The Deputy Governor, represented by the Commissioner of Health, Dr. Cletus Shurkuk, disclosed that the government had undertaken a total overhaul of the health sector to ensure effective healthcare

delivery through massive collaboration with partners such as UNICEF, National Primary Healthcare Development Agency and the World Health Organisation (WHO), among others.

She added that the meeting was aimed at X-raying challenges that affect total coverage of immunisation and expressed satisfaction with the just concluded Human Papilloma Vaccine (HPV) in the state which recorded a 99 percent coverage.

She appreciated all partners for their coverage and commitment to providing health care services to children in the state and urged parents and

guardians to always present their children for vaccines and other routine immunisations.

The Executive Secretary, Primary Health Care Board (PHCB), Dr. Raymond Jurit, disclosed that Plateau State recorded 99 percent coverage in the HPV vaccine campaign in the state using the MAC campaign targets.

Dr. Jurit added that this was made possible through the efforts and determination of the Governor Mutfwang administration in ensuring that resources and manpower were provided for the vaccination campaign.

The Executive Secretary also commended the government for ensuring that most primary health care centres were renovated and equipped with modern facilities to make healthcare accessible to citizens.

The State Coordinator, World Health Organisation (WHO), Dr. Musa Mahdi, stated that he was excited that the current administration was taking serious steps towards healthcare and had not failed since its inception.

Represented by Mrs Lilian Banah, the Monitoring and Evaluating Officer of World Health Organisation (WHO), he said that a very resilient primary healthcare was the bedrock for achieving

universal health coverage and called on all partners to collaborate across sectors to achieve good health outcomes for the state.

Representatives of the Christian Association of

Pilot survives helicopter crash in Kaduna

From JOHN FWAH Kaduna

A pilot of the Nigerian Air Force (NAF) helicopter which crashed in the early hours of Monday morning survived the incident.

According to an eyewitness account, the incident, which occurred at Tami village, located in Igabi Local Government Area of Kaduna State, caused significant alarm among local residents.

Reports indicated that the helicopter, which was on a routine operational flight, experienced technical difficulties that led to the crash.

It was reliably gathered that the pilot survived by managing to execute emergency protocols effectively.

Eyewitnesses at the scene said that the pilot emerged from the wreckage unscathed.

It was further learnt that residents of the village quickly mobilised to the

crash site, offered assistance where possible and expressed relief that no life was lost.

A villager who witnessed the crash said, "We heard a loud noise and rushed to the scene. We were surprised and relieved to see the pilot alive."

It was gathered that a team of military officers from the Nigerian Air Force swiftly arrived the scene to secure the area and conduct initial investigations.

NAF, on arrival, cordoned off the crash site to prevent unauthorized access and ensure the safety of the villagers.

The officers also began preliminary assessments to determine the cause of the crash, which remains unknown at the time of filing this report.

Similarly, the Public Relations Officer (PRO) for the Air Training Command, NAF, Kaduna, Wing Commander Alaere EyinimiereObidake, had not reacted.



Piyo

IMAGES

MRS. MUTFWANG ATTENDS WIDOWS GRADUATION

Plateau State First Lady, Helen Mutfwang, recently attended the graduation of 200 widows who were trained in different fields at the new Government House, Little Rayfield, Jos



Helen Mutfwang (right), presenting a cash donation to one of the graduands



One of the graduands (standing), responding on behalf of beneficiaries



Mrs. Mutfwang (middle), in a group photograph with wives of the TIC Chairmen and Commissioner for Women Affairs



Cross-section of dignitaries at the occasion

PHOTOS: JOHN LAR

2024 INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST DRUG ABUSE

Mrs. Helen Mutfwang also attended the 2024 International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking at the Government House, Little Rayfield, Jos



Mrs. Mutfwang delivering her speech



From left are Ikpan Samuel, Anthony Gotar, former Minister, Water Resources, Mrs. Sarah Ocheke and PDP Woman Leader, Mrs. Martina Dakur



Cross section of Permanent Secretaries at the occasion



Cross-section of NDLEA officers at the event

PHOTOS: JOHN LAR



By JENNIFER YARIMA

The rising number of deaths from sickle cell anemia is alarming and calls for caution and attention. Sadly, these deaths are mostly recorded among young and promising youth with very bright future. You often wonder why the disease and its effects are on the rise in this computer age where every individual is expected to be knowledgeable about these things.

According to medical experts, sickle cell anemia can be prevented as much as possible, even totally eradicated. That is, if necessary precautionary steps are taken and strictly adhered to. But why is this disease on the increase, instead of declining? The answer is not far-fetched. To start with, sickle cell anemia is a hereditary disease that affects the white blood cells, making them have the shape of a sickle and porous enough for other diseases to come in and attack the anti-bodies.

Recognized by the United

Nations (UN), the annual commemoration of World Sickle Day aims to raise global awareness about the disease. A resolution adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 22, 2008 recognized sickle cell disease as a public health problem and "one of the

need to get themselves tested to be able to ascertain what genotype they possess.

The negative effects of not knowing one's genotype might not be immediately discernable. But it definitely becomes prominent later on in life when the issue of marriage and compatibility



Genotype test: Safeguarding the unborn

world's most devastating genetic diseases." The resolution urges member states to promote sickle cell disease awareness nationally and internationally on June 19 each year.

World Sickle Cell Day is a significant occasion as it raises awareness by educating the public about Sickle Cell Disease (SCD), its symptoms and the challenges faced by patients, as the disease can be relatively unknown outside affected communities. It also provides a platform for advocacy, enabling SCD organizations and patients' advocates to lobby for increased research funding, improved access to health care and better treatment options.

People living with this infirmity are said to possess genotype of SS. It is hereditary in the sense that if both parents are SS, they will definitely give birth to children with the same genotype. Or if both of them have the genotype of AS, then they would definitely have an offspring with the disease. Even at a young age, people

sets in. Most young people in love ignore details like knowing their genotypes before they get neck deep into their relationships. The danger lies in the fact that they might refuse to part ways, after being so much in love with each other. In that case, when they get married, there is a high possibility of giving birth to children who will have that ailment and suffer for their parents' carelessness and stubbornness.

Genotype AA, according to health experts, is the universally compatible genotype that can pair up. There is no possibility of them giving birth to a child with sickle cell disease. Intending couples must make sure that they know their genotypes and be sure its compatible for marriage before going ahead to get married.

Research has shown that most people living with sickle cell anemia do not get to live past early adulthood. Unfortunately, even in the long run, there is always a battle to survive. This is referred to as their 'crisis period' which puts them in a

very pitiable and regrettable health condition. The parents are also not left out as they have to spend huge amounts of their resources in running from one health center to another in a bid to save their children's lives.

Tragedy recently struck in the University of Jos community when a 40 level student from the Department of Chemistry who had a very promising future passed on as a result of this deadly disease. During his lifetime, the 22-year-old was an excellent student who also engaged in petty businesses to make ends meet.

Not allowing his condition weigh him down, he always prayed and wished for long life. Shortly before his demise, one of his last posts on WhatsApp was a plea to God to heal him and grant him long life. He was very hopeful that he would be counted among the very few survivors of the sickle cell condition who lived long. But, alas, that could not be. He passed on and left behind beautiful, unachieved, dreams.

More needs to be done with respect to creating awareness

about the importance of knowing one's genotype and the consequences of not knowing. This would go a long way in curtailing the rising cases of mortalities as a result of something that could have been avoided at a point in time. Individuals, on the other hand, should make deliberate efforts to visit any health centre near them to ascertain their genotype. As a result, the menace will be reduced to its barest minimum, even subsequently eradicated from our communities.

Also, religious leaders need to be involved in the enlightenment campaign about this life threatening condition. Traditional rulers, likewise, have crucial roles to play in this regard as some of those suffering from sickle cell anemia are assumed to be suffering from witchcraft attacks and are, therefore, stigmatized. All hands must be on deck to safe unborn children from this traumatizing, hereditary, condition. Young adults need to have this requisite knowledge from home to avoid future regrets.



By KENNETH DARENG

On October 7, almost a year ago, the world watched in shock as 3000 Hamas-led terrorists massacred young men, women, children, old and sick people in cold blood when they launched a surprise attack on Israel. The militants had breached the Gaza-Israel barrier and also launched thousands of rockets into Israel.

Hamas, which has been designated as a terrorist organization by the United States and most western countries, is backed by the Islamic Republic of Iran. On that fateful day, its well-armed members stormed civilian Israeli communities, raped women and killed hundreds. That attack left over 3,400 wounded with 247 soldiers among the hundreds of hostages taken into Gaza.

That attack drew global condemnation while the Israeli government, led by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, quickly assembled a war cabinet and launched a counter-attack. It is worthy of note that the Hamas

Israel/Hamas war: The United Nations' double standards

assault is considered the bloodiest in Israeli history since the Holocaust.

Since the outbreak of the war, countries such as the United States of America, the United Kingdom and other European countries have supported Israel and emphasized the fact that Israel has the right to defend itself from the barbaric attacks orchestrated by Hamas over the years.

Israel has vowed to defeat Hamas and ensure the release of the hostages still being held by the militants in different locations within Gaza and Rafah where thousands of tunnels connected to hospitals, refugee camps and residential buildings were used to launch rockets.

The conflict is very complex considering the fact that Hamas has been using the dense civilian population as human shields which has caused so much collateral destruction of human lives and property on the Palestinian population.

The war has brought with it heavy civilian casualties on both sides. But with the heaviest toll has been on the Gazans who will have to bear the massive destruction that has left the entire Gaza in ruins. There is no potable water, no electricity supply while the supply of food and medical supplies have been severely restricted by the war.

However, the world seems to have forgotten so easily what it means for Israel to be surrounded by hostile neighbours whose only aim

is to annihilate the Jewish state from the face of the earth.

The role the United Nations General Assembly, UNGA, under Secretary General Antonio Guterres, has so far played indicates that it has already taken sides with the Palestinians. But, at the beginning of the war, this same UNGA had acknowledged the fact that Hamas is a terrorist organisation and that the world must do everything possible not to allow it endanger the peace and stability of the Middle-East. Interestingly, that initial posture has now given way to speaking from both sides of the mouth. The United Nations has now thrown objectivity to the winds by closing its eyes to the role of Hamas as a terrorist organization whose only ideology is to exterminate a particular people using whatever means possible.

This double standards of the UN has paved way for the passage of several resolutions condemning Israel and even instigated and lobbied some member nations to join in dragging Israel to the International Criminal Court [ICC] in the Hague.

But it was quite commendable that at the recent meeting of the General Assembly held at the request of the leaders of the European Union and the New Arab Block, the representative of Israel at the UN, Miriam Novak, took a swipe at the UN body and reminded members about how the world has been unkind to Israel in

the midst of provocations, threats and unwarranted attacks.

Novak said: "Ladies and gentlemen, as you all know, eighty years ago, Europe, led by Germany carried out an ethnic purge. It exterminated all the Jews who lived in there. French, Belgians, Dutch, Norwegians, Hungarians, Slovaks, Poles, Lithuanians, Ukrainians- all helped the fascists.

"You killed at least six million Jews, including new born babies each of them could have given the world children, grandchildren, so you can multiply the number of those killed by four or five....

"And now, when we are again plundered, beaten and killed in all your countries, and your courts release the murderers, you tell us that we have no right to defend ourselves? We have no right to warn our enemies that we will respond to a new ethnic cleansing with an even powerful strike?

"Perhaps you can name another nation whose extermination is so fanatically sought by your new Iranian-led International community? And why?

"For two thousand years, we have lived among you, offering you our knowledge, discoveries and inventions. We have given you the alphabet, the Bible, the Virgin Mary, Jesus Christ, the apostles, Spinoza, Disraeli, Columbus, Newton, Heine, Mendelssohn, Nostradamus, Einstein, Marcel Maceau, Barbra Streisand, Paul Newman, Mark Zuckerberg, Lloyd Webber among other thousands of other scientists and educators....

"Finally, in June 2020, the Rev, John Hagee, the leader of American Evangelical Christians, published his "Appeal to the world," in which he said simply and clearly, "Why do we 8million patriotic American Christians, support Israel? Because God is on Israel's side. If a Christian says he doesn't like the Jews then his Christianity is dubious. God says, "I will bless those who bless Israel, I will curse those who curse Israel."

Today, the echoes of these breathtaking words from Miriam Novak should be a wake-up call to the entire membership of the UN and indeed the rest of the world that we cannot set rules for ourselves and shred the same rules through our selfish ideological differences and selfish interests.

The aim of the founding fathers of the UN was to advance global peace and unite the various peoples that make up the global community by calling to attention those who think that they have the monopoly to cause mayhem and expect that justice is given them.

The UN must respect its own rules and play the role of an unbiased arbiter in crisis situations and not play to the gallery as middlemen whose only interest is acting the script of certain unseen hands. A conflict in Sudan or in Afghanistan or in Ukraine should be treated within the same threshold so as to maintain respect and be taken seriously by all members of the global community.

Sports

Mutfwang affirms commitment to sports development

By ANDRE BISYIT

GOVERNOR Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang of Plateau State has reaffirmed his administration's commitment and determination towards providing the enabling environment for sports to thrive because of their benefits to the youth of the state.

He gave this assurance during the Olympics Day Celebration held at the Rwang Pam Township Stadium on Saturday, adding that the annual international event was organized to commemorate the formation of the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

Represented by Bashir Lawandi Datti, Commissioner of Sports and Youth Development, the governor pointed out that the celebration was aimed at promoting world peace and unity, friendship in order to encourage wider participation amongst people from all walks of life.

"Initially the event was known as the Olympics Day Run, but now changed to Olympics Day



Datti(R) and Sati, the representative of the President, IOC, and Kwande, FA Chairman during the celebration

celebration, in order to encourage wider participation, 'he further explained.

Thomas Bach, President, International Olympic Committee, through Lorinda Sati, disclosed that this year's celebration was a special as the Olympics Games was around the corner to be held in Paris, tagged, 'Paris 2024'.

He added that this year's Olympics Games would be full of gender parity and bring people together in peace and solidarity while keeping them healthy.

Professor Ezra Gunen, Director, Plateau State Sports Council, pointed out that the celebration would be used as model of

promoting participation in sports, recreational activities for the purpose of improving personal fitness and health.

He said communities engaging in recreational activities for the purpose of promoting peace and stability would not be left behind and advised people to exercise due to the health benefits.

"His Excellency Governor Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang has looked at sports with keen interest and for the very first time we are having some athletes of the state qualified for the Olympics Games and our coaches have been training them for better performance," he said.

at ensuring the fans' target of reaching the highest heights.

He thanked Abel Iliya for the services rendered to the club over the years and wished him well in his future endeavours.

Plateau United sacks manager

By ANDRE BISYIT

PLATEAU United Football Club of Jos has sacked its team manager, Abel Iliya, and replaced him with Ibrahim Title.

This was contained in a statement signed by the club's Director of Media, Yaksat Maklek, and made available to THE NIGERIA STANDARD, adding that the team's General Manager, Habila

Hosea Mutla, disclosed this while announcing an official three-week break for the main team following the culmination of the NPFL 24 season.

He charged the players to go home and reflect on their performance in the season under review.

He praised their performances which, he said, ensured the team ended fifth at the end of the season but expressed displeasure on their inability to secure a continental slot.

Mutla commended the technical crew for their good efforts during the season, adding that plans were in top gear for an official thanksgiving prayers for a safe and fruitful end of season.

He further revealed that there would be more changes in the technical crew of the men, women and the youth teams to enhance efficiency aimed



Iliya

AS Jan Oblak's hand tipped Cristiano Ronaldo's extra-time penalty on to the post, the Portuguese legend's dreams shattered in a moment.

He had "hit rock bottom." BBC SPORT said that the 39-year-old, who afterwards told Portuguese media this was his last Euros, bowed his head and burst into tears while team-mates raced to console their captain, with Slovenia threatening one of the Euros' biggest ever shocks.

A legendary European Championship career seemed set to end in the cruellest of ways.

Ronaldo's penalty was saved in extra time with the last-16 tie goalless, but just 15 minutes later he stepped up to the same spot to fire in the first of his country's shootout kicks.

Goalkeeper Diogo Costa then made Euros history with three penalty shootout saves as Portugal survived a humiliating exit, overcoming Slovenia to set-up a quarter-final tie with France.

"Even the strongest people have their [bad] days. I was at rock bottom when the team needed me the most," said Ronaldo afterwards, before tearing up again.

Sadness at the start is joy at the end. That's what football is. Moments, inexplicable moments. I feel sad and happy at the same time.

"But the important thing is to enjoy it. The team did an extraordinary job. We fought right to the end and I think we deserved it because we had more authority."

He is still yet to score at

Redemption for tearful Ronaldo at 'last Euros'



Ronaldo

Euro 2024 and was in the spotlight throughout the match, showing his emotions and frustrations as he missed numerous chances.

His entrance had been greeted with a huge roar from the Portugal fans - the same supporters who chanted his name when his penalty was saved by Oblak.

At the other end, Slovenian supporters jeered, let off flares, banged drums and celebrated each time his efforts missed the target.

Despite 20 shots on goal in the tournament - the most by any player - he is yet to find the net. To make matters worse, he has missed three of his nine penalties at major tournaments.

"We all know that Cristiano is the hardest worker," said goalkeeper Costa, who was the hero on the night.

"I understand how frustrated he is because he devotes all his time to this. It's a pleasure and an honour to be on the same team as him."

"We're a family, I really think this. I focus on making the best of these chances and I wanted to

help the team. This is the most important thing.

As his frustration grew through the night, Ronaldo fell to his knees, looking at the sky, pleading for luck to come his way.

He roared in frustration and air-punched the ground when crosses flew over his head, as he tried everything to become the oldest goalscorer at a European Championship.

With every free-kick that came and went, he has now scored just one of the 60 direct free-kicks he has attempted at major international tournaments, the desperation grew.

Later, he turned to supporters and waved his arms frantically, asking for more noise and praying for them to not give up.

When his spot-kick was saved, Portugal fans sang "Viva Ronaldo" after his emotional outburst was shown on the big screen in the Frankfurt Arena.

Former Scotland winger Pat Nevin reacted in disbelief on BBC Radio 5 Live: "He missed a penalty kick. He shouldn't be in tears." Courtesy BBC sport

France's 'luck' continues as Mbappe struggles with mask

FRANCE'S 'luck' continues as Mbappe struggles with mask

Appearing to adjust his mask a couple of times during France's last-16 win against Belgium, it was clear Kylian Mbappe is not yet comfortable wearing it.

BBC SPORT said that, but he is not the only one in France's forward line looking uncomfortable as the side once again failed to deliver in front of goal.

Instead it was a Jan Vertonghen own goal in the 85th minute, when Randal Kolo Muani's strike deflected off him, that was enough to send

Les Bleus into the quarter-finals of Euro 2024.

That took their tally in Germany to three goals, none of which their players have scored from open play.

France had 19 shots against the Belgians but just two were on target and ultimately it was a touch of fortune that saw them through.

Goals, or the lack of, has been an issue raised regularly in France press conferences after games in Germany, but once again boss Didier Deschamps was defiant when faced with criticism

of his side's efficiency in attack.

Football in its simplest form is entertainment, and scoring goals plays a big part in that.

Of the teams remaining in the tournament they are the lowest scorers with just three goals. That's seven fewer than hosts Germany who, rather than scraping through, seem to be building momentum with every game.

It was an Austria own goal that gave them victory in their first game of the tournament, an Mbappe penalty against Poland was their second

before Vertonghen's own goal became their third.

While Deschamps would not acknowledge it as a problem, he accepted it is something that needs to improv

But the 55-year-old knows that getting Mbappe comfortable with wearing a protective mask on his broken nose could help significantly.

The incoming Real Madrid striker has scored 48 goals in 82 appearances for France and an incredible 256 goals in 30 appearances at his last club Paris St-Germain.



Quest



writer

CLAM OLUWOLE

A time to pray and a time to work

IN the build-up to the 2015 presidential poll that led to the emergence of Muhammadu Buhari, the then Governor of Rivers state and Director-General of Buhari Campaign Organisation, Rotimi Amaechi, raised an alarm that the Jonathan Presidency doled out a whopping sum of N6bn to the leadership of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) for prayers and vote-catching. I deliberately maintained studied silence when the allegation was thrown up. This was because I did not want to be dragged into any controversy. Ordinarily, I could have risen in defence of the Body of Christ under normal circumstances. But this is Nigeria where all things are possible.

But then, I asked myself: Can the Presidency have the guts to tempt men of God with huge cash? Wouldn't they, save two of them that are super rich, faint at the mere mention of such a windfall talk less of seeing the cash?"

I had my doubts, trying to convince myself that the accuser was on a mission to tar the unblemished Body of Christ with Mammon brush so as to gain undue political mileage.

Many believed Rotimi Amaechi considering the intensity of the romance between the President, Dr. Goodluck Jonathan, and the pastors at the time. If churchmanship was a passport to heaven, the ex-President would qualify as an automatic entrant.

Then on Friday, February 20, 2015 precisely, one of the clergymen dropped a bombshell, accusing the association of collecting N7bn (not N6bn as Amaechi claimed) in order to campaign and/or pray for Mr. President. The cleric that opened the "CAN of worms" was Kallamu Musa-Dikwa, a former associate pastor with Enklesiyān Yan'ūwan A Nigeria or EYN Church stationed in Maiduguri between 2002



and 2004. At the time Kallamu dropped the bombshell, he was the executive director of the Voice of Northern Christian Movement (VNCM). He alleged that CAN collected the money on January 26, 2015 and disbursed N3m each to the 36 state chairmen of the umbrella body across the country, translating into a miserable sum of N108m. He also alleged that the beneficiaries of the largesse are browbeating their gullible followers to vote for Mr. President in the (rescheduled) presidential poll or the host of hell would be let loose on the entire nation as allegedly threatened by one high-profile Pentecostal Papa.

Expectedly, the public relations officer of the Northern CAN, Mr. Sunday Oibe, denied the startling allegations that could send the Tempter-in-Chief himself reeling with guffaw in his hellish kingdom. The allegations triggered off a chain of rebuttals from many quarters. But Christians were very worried about the mud being slung at the Church, rightly or wrongly. The CAN as an institution found itself in the eye of the storm since the

mantle of leadership was dyed in Pentecostal colour during the period. There was also a controversy that surrounded the seizure of raw cash amounting to over \$9m in South Africa intended to purchase weapons from the black market to fight the Boko Haram insurgents. The jet that was used to ferry the money to the former apartheid enclave allegedly belonged to the sitting CAN head, Pastor Ayo Oritsejafor. The CAN was battling to rescue their image being dragged in the mud when the fiery Anglican Bishop, Dr. Emmanuel Chukwuma, threw up more mud. He threatened to open the CAN of worms, and gave himself a deadline to do so. Curiously, the clergyman was unable to make good his threat until the mud dried up.

I know that our pastors love money which the Bible says is the root of all evil. I know that many so-called pastors are in the habit of charging various sums of fees in order to be prayed for. I will not want to proceed any further on this ugly spectacle because I have already been diagnosed as suffering from pastor aversion

syndrome (PAS). It is not entirely my fault. I am just obsessed with perfection in the Body of Christ. And the fact that he who comes to the pulpit must do so with clean hands. In any case, I have always frowned at prayers that are tied to cash. No such prayers are directed to God even if you are screaming His name to high heavens!

In 2015, while billions of naira were being doled out for prayers to secure electoral victory on the one hand, several billions were also flying around for prayers for victory over insecurity on the other hand. The huge cash was sliced from the gargantuan budget of the Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA) meant to procure arms and ammunition to fight the perennial Boko Haram insurgency.

One of the figures currently being thrown up is up to N4bn dispensed to mercantile clerics through a former governor from the Northeast to wage spiritual war against the rampaging criminal elements ravaging the axis and beyond. The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) has been

shunting from pillar to post trying to recover the prayer money. To be frank, more than 90 per cent of the spirituality booty would normally end up in the deep pockets of the facilitators.

Nigerians believe so much in prayers even though the Holy Writ tells us that faith without works will lead to zilch. Where they are supposed to act, they would go the way of the river and choose the path of least resistance...pray. Not long ago, a group of funny Nigerians ran a ring around a transformer damaged beyond repairs. Perhaps after failing to get it repaired or replaced, they turned to prayers, commanding Holy Ghost fire to fall on the transformer to come alive. Of course, no such miracle happened until they dispersed one after the other in anger, frustration and disappointment.

Those who brought the two major religions to this country have left us far, far behind. They are running theocracy. Their citizens work round the clock, Sundays inclusive. Their economies are vibrant, driven not by generators and they have kept corruption, the invidious crime that impoverishes the masses, at bay with harsh measures and laws. Today, billions meant for the welfare and benefit of Nigerian people are looted freely. And the looters are worshipped for their (criminal) efforts!

Also today and owing to the collapse of the power sector, many manufacturing firms have shut down or relocated to neighbouring countries. In their places, mega worship centres have sprung up and Nigerian youths troop there to pray for elusive jobs.

Our mentality towards prayers alone as panaceas to the myriad of problems bedeviling our country ought to change now or we will continue to wallow in the nether region of poverty and under-development.

FRAGMENT
"Activists have failed. We have seen activists that were given appointments, and yet they failed. When you were a senator, how did you perform? What was your performance as a senator?"
Nyeson Wike at the This Nigeria Lecture and Awards, held in Abuja recently.