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Panic In Ibadan As Middle Aged Man Beheaded, Two Others Killed By Suspected Ritualists **Investigations ongoing - Police*



2022 Christmas Concert with the theme, "The Joyful News" presented by Apostolic Faith Church Choir and Orchestra held at the Campground Anthony, Lagos. Photo: AKINOLAARIYO

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

Suspected ritual killers on Monday, killed three young men on the new Ibadan/Oyo Expressway in Akinyele Local Government area of Oyo state.

It was learnt that one of the three men was beheaded by the suspected ritual killers, while some vital parts of the bodies of the other two victims were removed.

New Nigerian gathered that three young men met their untimely death early Monday around Office Bus Stop, after World Oil petrol station on new

Ibadan/Oyo Expressway in Akinyele Local Government

The lifeless bodies of the three men were said to have been sighted by motorists plying the route early in the morning with the drivers immediately raising alarm.

Sources said the killing of the three young men is presently creating fears in the area which was rocked by chains of ritual killings few years ago.

Contacted Oyo State Police Command Public Relations Officer, SP Adewale Osifeso said, "investigation is ongoing, Updates would be provided accordingly."

Atiku Disowns Fraudulent Empowerment Of Cash For Votes

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■ *Tasks security agencies to fish out source, peddlers of such messages*



Governor Mai Mala Buni in a tete-a-tete with the former governor of the Yobe Alhaji Ibrahim Gaidam at an APC gathering recently.

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AA Chairman Urges Nigerians To Show Love, Embrace Forgiveness



Omo-Aje

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The National chairman of the Action Alliance (AA), Dr. Adegunle Rufai Omo-Aje has urged Christians across the nation to show love and embrace forgiveness and reconciliation during the Yuletide season, in line with the spirit of Christmas.

He expressed this in his message to Christians on the celebration the birth of Jesus Christ.

Omo-Aje also enjoined Nigerians to seek divine guidance in choosing the right leaders for the country during the coming polls in 2023.

According to him, as the country moves into the election year 2023, there is one thing that all Christians and indeed all people of good will, must do and that is to pray for guidance in choosing the right leaders to lead them at different levels.

He stressed that the situation in the country is such that without the help of God, the people certainly are incapable of doing it by themselves.

The AA National Chairman assured Nigerians that if his party is voted into office in 2023, attention would be given to revamping the economy, addressing poverty and curbing insecurity, among other things.

He maintained that his party was ready to dismantle every platform of bad leadership and install good leadership.

Omo-Aje who described his party as the most popular and credible among the real progressive minded, urged the Nigerian electorate to liberate themselves with their voters cards in 2023.

He insisted that, "citizens should deliberately listen keenly and with a critical mind to what politicians have to say and even seek to know what is behind whatever it is they are saying.

"We must try and discern it because we need to really be well informed in order to be able to choose the right persons to lead us at this critical time of the country."

2023: Archbishop Ndagoso Tasks INEC On Free, Fair Elections, Says It's Sinful To Sell Or Buy votes

By; NICHOLAS DEKERA, Kaduna

As head of the 2023 general elections, Catholic Archbishop of Kaduna Archdiocese, Most Reverend Matthew Man-Oso Ndagoso has charged the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to do all within its powers to ensure that the forthcoming general elections are conducted in a free and fair atmosphere that enables all eligible citizens to exercise their franchise.

"In other words, no eligible voter should be disenfranchised for lack of access to his/her permanent voter's card (PVC) and polling stations. Votes selling or buying is not only illegal according to the Constitution, but a sin before God," he said.

Delivering his Christmas message on Saturday in Kaduna, Archbishop Ndagoso lamented that, "we celebrate Christmas in our country amidst fears, trepidation and anxiety caused mainly by continued acts of banditry that takes the lives of many of our compatriots on a daily basis, kidnappings for ransom, armed robbery, un-abating

farmers/herders conflicts, insurgency ritual killings.

"As if these were not enough, we are now faced with a very high cost of living affecting all aspects of life with more and more people in the land joining the ranks of those already living below the poverty line, in abject poverty."

"We all know the culprits: bad leadership that encourages mediocrity, nepotism and ineptitude which in turn breeds corruption and bad governance that have earned our country the unenviable position of the world capital of the poor."

Ndagoso appealed to all the faithful of the Archdiocese and indeed all people of goodwill to ensure that no matter how much sacrifice it requires, they should ensure that they have their PVCs collected.

"The distribution of the PVCs which is already in progress in INEC offices in LGAs since December 12, will last until December 22, 2022 and continue at the ward level from January 6 to 15, 2023 and revert to the LGA level from January 16 to 22, 2023, the distribution will continue in LGA offices," He added.

He however, challengef

Christians to trust in God and not to live in perpetual fear, even when they do not understand fully what the future portends for them, especially as they continue to struggle with insecurity, biting poverty, incessant kidnapping for ransom, killings and anxiety over the 2023 general elections.

"Like the shepherds we must have the faith and trust to face our future with confidence and determination, knowing that our God is with us all times, no matter how difficult and challenging our situation maybe," Ndagoso stressed.

On same faith tickets in 2023 general elections, he maintained that, "since ours is a multi-cultural and multi religious society anyone who aspires to lead this kind of society must be one with the capacity to manage these diversities.

"It goes without saying that no sensitive Nigerian politician would ever contemplate running a same-tribe-ticket at certain levels of our national life because of its implications for our national cohesion.

"In the same vein, one would have thought that given where we are with the fragile nature of

national cohesion, no considerate and sensitive politician would think of running a same-faith-ticket especially at the national level because of the threat it poses to our delicate national cohesion.

"One would have thought that prospective national public office holders at this point of our national existence, would be people sensitive enough to this delicate national issue and have the foresight and ability that will enable them to harness and properly direct the various gifts, talents, energies and resources of the different regions of the country for the common good of the nation.

"But as the Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria (CBCN) pointedly said in its communique at the end of its 2022 Second Plenary in Orlu: "While it is not our responsibility as religious leaders to dictate to political parties the choices of their presidential, vice presidential and other candidates, we have the duty to advise the citizenry to bear in mind the implications of these choices while electing the next set of leaders."

SDP's Adewole Adebayo Gives Christmas Message, Promises Better Lives for Citizens

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The presidential candidate of the Social Democratic Party (SDP), Prince Adewole Adebayo has promised his party will produce a government that will make provisions for families and protect families all year round.

This was contained in Prince Adebayo's speech to mark the Christmas day celebration on Sunday December 25, 2022, at his residence in Ondo State.

In the spirit of the season, he said under his government, the entire cities of Nigeria will become a happy family all together.

He said, "This is the season that we celebrate with family and we all come together as a



Prince Adewole Adebayo

community to commemorate the birth of Christ. It is a great gift given by God Almighty to

mankind leading eventually to Easter, the glorification of man who is created".

"We celebrate this season together and we share things together, we fellowship with one another, just imagine if we did this all round the year, just think about it, to have a government that makes provisions for family, protects families, and we come together to raise families for this country and the entire cities of Nigeria becomes a very happy family all together. That is the promise we make for 2023 and that's the new spirit", he said.

"We wish you, your family and your community and one dearly beloved by you merry Christmas and happy new year".

Prince Adebayo gave the speech together with his wife and his daughter on behalf of his entire family.

Only 6 Died From Zaria Electrical Incident - Kaduna Electric

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Contrary to reports quoting higher number of casualties, the Management of Kaduna Electric has said that its investigations so far revealed that six persons lost their lives in the unfortunate electrical incident that occurred in Zaria last week.

While sending its condolences to the families of the deceased, it said it has taken measures

to avert a reoccurrence.

A statement issued by the company's Head of Corporate Communication, Abdulazeez Abdullahi in Kaduna on Tuesday, said in the cause of its investigations, the company's officials visited Gwargwaje community and met with families of the affected persons on three occasions since the incident to mourn with them and gather relevant information on the

incident.

According to the statement, from the direct interaction with victims and community leaders, the fatalities recorded involved only six persons. It said five of the deceased persons lived on Kagoro Close, Gwargwaje except one person who resided in the Police Barracks. It said it had not received any information of more fatalities since its last visit to the community on Saturday.

The statement said it has

also gathered detailed information on all those who sustained injuries or lost properties. It added that it has been liaising with relevant security authorities and the traditional institution in Zaria to discuss next steps. Kaduna Electric said releasing the fatality figure has become necessary in view of the need to correct the erroneous information being peddled by a section of the media.



Christmas: Plateau Assembly Member Donates 50 Bags Of Rice, Cow, Goats, Others To Christians

By; BUHARI B. BELLO, Jos

The All Progressives Congress (APC) flag bearer and member, Plateau State House of Assembly, Honourable Adamu Aliyu, has put smiles on the faces of Christians of Jos North-North, as he donated 50 bags of rice, one cow, six goats, three bags of garri, tubers of yam to celebrate Christmas.

Honourable Adamu Aliyu, who was represented by his campaign DG, Honourable Kabiru Gangare, while presenting the items on Sunday, said that the gesture is to support Christians in the Jos North-North Constituency, particularly the less privileged, to celebrate Christmas with ease.

"I believe Christmas is a

season of love and sharing, particularly with those who don't have.

"Today, we are distributing 50 bags of rice and six goats, three bags of garri and several tubers of yam to the people.

"This may not be enough, but with this little, we believe it will go a long in supporting some families to celebrate Christmas well," he said.

He called on the people to use the period to pray for Plateau State and Nigeria at large, as well as make restitution with one another, to coexist in peace and prosperity.

The Christian leaders noted that Honourable Adamu Aliyu's kind gesture over the years, has silently wooed many in the opposition party in support of the government and his programmes.

Allow Oppositions Political Spaces To Freely Operate, Gov Bala Tells Council Chiefs

By; MOHAMMED KAWU, Bauchi

With the count-down to the 2023 general elections gathering momentum, Governor Bala Mohammed of Bauchi State, has urged local government administrations across the state to allow political spaces for the opposition to operate in a freely atmosphere devoid of hindrance or rancour.

He told the council chiefs, "Local Government administrations are hereby urge and directed to make sure they allow the political spaces for the oppositions to operate freely without any hindrance. This is the mark of democracy".

Speaking Saturday while swearing-in newly chairmen of Local Government Caretaker Committees, the governor said that the rule of the game must be adhered to, and anyone found wanting in this regard would incur the

full wrath of the law.

Senator Bala Mohammed therefore directed security agencies in the state to be watchful and apprehend any person or group of persons found to be engaged in unwholesome activity.

"As you know the 2023 general elections are fast approaching and electioneering campaigns are in full gear. I therefore, appeal to all political parties and their supporters to conduct themselves in an orderly manner, and eschew thuggery and other forms of malpractices".

He explained that the assignments given to the caretaker chairmen is a trust, as they have a duty to Allah (SWT) and obligation to their fellow beings, saying "One day you must give account of your stewardship. You should not therefore have tempted to abuse the trust bestowed on you. You should remember that you are to serve the people and

not to become their bosses.

He warned them not to be tempted to betray the confidence reposed in them while in their various duty posts to serve their people, stressing that his administration attaches great importance to probity, accountability and strict adherence to due process in governance as indicated by their actions since their coming on board as a government.

The governor also warned the new appointees that the present administration in the state has no place for corrupt, disloyal, indolent and incompetent officials, as they should also be absolutely loyal to the state and be totally committed to its objectives.

Mohammed similarly admonished the local government chairmen to be judicious in handling finances of their respective local governments, and be fair in their dealings with all

categories of people, shun bootlickers and rumormongers, and pay special attention to their internally generated revenues to complement what is being given them by the state government and from the federation account.

3. "Following the expiration of the tenure of elected local government councils in the state about two months ago, the need arose to fill the vacuum created in the leadership of the Local Governments. Due to the impending general elections, which would be conducted about two months from now, there is no time to conduct Local Government election" To this end, the governor said, the Bauchi state government has left with no option other than to appoint caretaker committees to run the affairs of the local governments pending the conduct of Local Government election.



L-R: Chairman Kwara State Sports Commission Alhaji Bolakale Magaji; Managing Director Ilorin Innovation Hub Mr Temi Kolawole; Commissioner for Communications Hon. Sadiq Buhari; Commission for Agriculture and Rural Development Mallam Abdullateef Gidado Alakawa; and Special Assistant to the Governor on Student Affairs Hon. Mubarak Salau Bello; during a press conference by subcommittee members of the 2022 Kwara State Merit Awards, in Ilorin, on Wednesday.

Yuletide: Umahi Felicitates With Ebonyians

By; MKPUMA ENYINNA, Abakaliki

Governor David Umahi of Ebonyi State has facilitated with the people of Ebonyi State on the Christmas season, saying that Christmas is a period set aside all over the world to celebrate the birth of our lord Jesus Christ by Christians.

The governor stated that the kingship and the glory of His Majesty are clear manifestation of the gains the birthday. He therefore, convey Christmas wishes to all our brothers and sisters both those spending their Christmas in the state and those celebrating the season outside the shores of the state.

"It is with joy of heart that I felicitate with the good people of Ebonyi State on this Christmas season, set apart by Christians all over the world to celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"Indeed, the inspirational times and life of our Lord Jesus on earth, the dominion of His sacred kingship and the glory of His majesty are manifestations of the gains of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ which we celebrate.

"The purpose of Christmas celebration is to commemorate the fact that God loves us and is with us all the time. Christmas is a time of spiritual reflection on the important functions of the Christian faith and a time of reconciliation and salvation. It is a time we demonstrate the significance of the love our saviour, Jesus Christ who was born to save the world from sin and sorrow.

"I therefore, commend you to the perfect purpose of Christmas celebration and urge you to use the opportunity of this season to share the joy of God's loving kindness to Ebonyi State, His mercies that led us thus far as a people and His grace that has kept us on track despite the challenges that confront our society today.

CBN Must Do More Enlightenment Campaign On New Naira Notes

- ABU Don

**Says religious, community, youth leaders should be recruited*

By: SANIALIYU, Zaria
Professor Ahmad Bello Daurawa of the Accounting Department, ABU Zaria has said the enlightenment campaign by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) is not enough to reach the grassroots.

Dogarawa stated this in a lecture he delivered at Tudun Jukun Juma'at Mosque on Monday.

He warned that unless the CBN does the needful in making the awareness more and more by engaging religious, community and youth leaders, government's efforts would be a waste.

He advised peoples to immediately open accounts in the banks and

deposit whatever is available to avoid losing the money to some fraudsters.

Professor Ahmad Bello Daurawa also used the period to remind the people on securing the new currency notes, which will be used to reduce serious losses by the people with less education.

He said, all commercial banks have been directed not to collect anything from depositors no matter the amount.

Dogarawa further explained that there is no going back on government policies, hence people should accept it or be left out.

Atiku Disowns Fraudulent Empowerment Of Cash For Votes

**Tasks security agencies to fish out source, peddlers of such messages*

By: ISAAC ODEH, Kaduna

The Atiku Care Foundation (ACF), a humanitarian component of the former Vice President, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, has disowned a viral message promising electorate N50,000 empowerments to vote their principal in the 2023 general elections.

This was contained in a statement signed by the National Director Media and Publicity, Atiku Care

Foundation, Okpani Jacob Onjewu Dickson, made available to newsmen in Kaduna on Tuesday December 27, 2022.

According to the statement, Atiku Care Foundation's Director General, Ambassador Aliyu Bin Abbas disowned the fraudulent messages being circulated on the social media by a phone number, 07085932887.

Ambassador Abbas said, "This is laughable and should not be taken

serious by any Nigerian.

"We disown the message in its entirety. Atiku Care Foundation is the humanitarian component of our 2023 electioneering campaign and we would not descend that low to do something which can best be described as "vote buying".

"All Nigerians are yearning for genuine change that will rescue the country from the shackles of poverty and misadministration being experienced, hence, we

don't need to induce voters," he said.

According to him, he suspects it is the handiwork of opponents who are beginning to see the handwritings on the wall that Nigerians will reject them or being pulled by mere fraudsters.

He therefore, charged Nigerians to ignore such messages.

Ambassador Abbas who is the SA Youth to Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, further charged security agencies to investigate and fish out those behind such messages.

Yuletide: Katsina APC Guber Candidate Donates Cash, 200 Bags Of Rice To Christians

By: SULAIMAN AHMED MISAU, Katsina

Gubernatorial Candidate of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in Katsina State, Dr Dikko Umar Radda has donated money and 200 bags of rice to Christians in the state to celebrate this year's Christmas.

A statement by the Director, Media and Publicity, APC Katsina State Campaign Council, Alhaji Ahmed Abdulkadir, said the donation was made through the Director, Diversity Committee of the Campaign Council, Prince Uche Okonkwo.

Alhaji Ahmed Abdulkadir reiterated that, "the 200 bags of the rice with money donation by Dr Dikko Umar Radda will be distributed amongst all

the Christians in the state."

Alhaji Abdulkadir emphasized that, the Diversity Committee is one of the 17 committees in the State APC Campaign Council.

"It comprises all non-indigenous people living in the state," he added.

The committee according to Alhaji Ahmed is working with other committees towards the success of the gubernatorial candidate at the 2023 general elections.

Alhaji Ahmed Abdulkadir explained that, Prince Uche Okonkwo expressed gratitude for the kind gesture and appealed to all Christians in the state to support Dr. Dikko Umar Radda during the forth coming election.



Here the Chief of Army Staff (COAS), Lt. General Umar Farouq Yahaya and Chief Air Staff (CAS), Air marshal Isiaka Amao celebrated the 2021 Christmas with troops of Operation Hadin Kai JTF at the Theater Command Headquarters, Maimalari Cantonment Maiduguri.

3 Fun Seekers Drown At Lagos Private Beach

By: RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

At least, three fun seekers have reportedly drowned at a Lagos private beach during the Boxing day celebration, New Nigerian Newspapers has learnt.

They were said to have crossed the red line while relaxing at the each identified as Baracuda, located around Abraham Adesanya axis of Ajah, Eti-Osa Local Government, Lagos State.

It was learnt that officials of the Lagos State Emergency Management Agency (LASEMA), commenced search and rescue operations to save their lives, an exercise which end in futility.

Our correspondent that the tragedy occurred on Monday when the fun seekers visited the beach as part of the activities to celebrate the yuletide season in the state.

Eyewitnesses at the beach narrated that two of the drowned persons were

trying to rescue the third person when they also went missing in the water. The Permanent Secretary, LASEMA, Dr. Femi Oke-Osanyintolu, confirmed the tragedy through a statement made available to newsmen on efforts made by the agency to rescue the victims.

According to the statement, on arrival at the scene of the incident, it was observed that two persons at the beach drowned inside the ocean at the aforementioned

location.

"Further investigation gathered revealed that two adult males were trying to rescue an adult male from drowning before the high tide of the ocean drowned the two adult males.

"In addition, the lifeguard at the beach reported that the victims swam beyond the red line which wasn't safe for them to engage in the rescue.

However, the agency's LRT and Paramedics are on ground. And search and rescue operation is still ongoing".

Governor Inuwa Receives Christian Community On Christmas Homage

**Preaches love, unity, understanding*



By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Governor Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya has received members of the Christian community, under the auspices of the Youths Wing of the Christian Association of Nigeria (YOWICAN), on a Christmas homage at the Government House, Gombe.

A statement signed by the Director-General (Press Affairs) Government House Gombe, Ismaila Uba Misilli, said that the governor described the visit as heartwarming, and one that fosters understanding and peaceful coexistence.

"The relative peace we enjoy in Gombe State could not have been realised without unity, understanding and trust among followers of different faiths in the state.

"Christians, Muslims and even Pegans have all agreed to live

peacefully and respect one another. I believe, It is on this backdrop that you paid me this important homage to strengthen the relationship and to share with us the joy of this season".

He called on christians to continue to preach the gospel of peace, love and kindness to the entire humanity, maintaining that "the main lesson behind Christmas is sacrifice.

"We all have responsibility to be our brothers' keepers and to pray for peace and development of our state and nation", he added.

"I extend my best wishes to you and all citizens of the country. This period reminds us of the need to uphold the virtues of love, selflessness and tolerance. I call on all of us, to reflect on the lessons of the season which presents an opportunity to love and to share".

Recall that in the spirit of Christmas and New Year

celebrations, Governor Inuwa had released over 75 million to the Christian community in the state as part of his gesture to enable Christians mark the Yuletide with ease considering the present economic hardship.

Apart from the funds, Governor Inuwa also ordered the distribution of 5000 bags of rice to facilitate a more joyous celebration.

The governor used the occasion to announce 11 million Naira gift dolled out by his confidant and APC chieftain, Dr. Umaru Kwarainga (Sarkin Fulanin Gombe) for distribution to the Christian community across the 11 LGA's of Gombe State.

Earlier in his remarks, the Chairman YOWICAN, Deacon Haske said they were at the Government House in company of all the YOWICAN LGA chairmen and representatives of other denominations to pay

homage to the governor and identify with his administration on the occasion of this year's Christmas festivities.

He explained that the visit was part of activities organised by the YOWICAN to engage the christian youths so as to take them away from satanic temptations at this important period of the year.

He assured that members of YOWICAN are solidly behind the governor owing to the youth-oriented policies and programmes initiated by his administration.

In their goodwill messages during the visit, Hon. Dauda Maaji Zambuk who was the Chairman of the Occasion, CAN Chairman, Rev. Fr. Joseph Alphonsus Shinga, Engr Tony J. Nakalai, General Manager ECWA Television International, commended the prudence and steadfastness of Governor

Inuwa Yahaya in churning out developmental projects that have direct bearing on masses especially youths, assuring of their support to him and his administration.

The ECWA Television International General Manager, particularly lauded the governor for taking the lead among his peers and declared his support for his reelection bid, saying " We need you to complete the good works you have started in Gombe and we shall push for your victory and pray for your success, in the mighty name of Jesus!".

Songs of praises were rendered by famous Gospel Artistes, including Autan Zaki, Jinan Ezra, Friday Jibo among others while special prayers were also offered for the peace and progress of Gombe State and Nigeria at large.



Nigerians Must Unite To Defeat Insecurity, Economic Crisis - US Based Cleric

**Says electorate should dig deep before voting leaders in 2023*

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The General Overseer of Kings Worship Chapel and Centre International, Sabo Kaduna, Rev Albert Samson who is based in the United States of America, has said that for Nigeria to break free of the twin evil of insecurity and economic hardship bedeviling the nation, citizens must come together irrespective of their tribal or religious affiliations.

The cleric expressed this while speaking to journalists in his church office shortly after giving his Christmas sermon to mark the birth of Jesus Christ on December 25.

He decried the incessant cases of killings in all parts of the country especially the North. Rev Samson recalled that the North used to be haven of peace, unity and love.

"The North that I used to know is the one which if your money falls on the ground without you knowing, the Hausa man would call you back, and hand over your money.

The North that I know, is the one which you can travel in the night but today, the situation in the North is dire, today there are killings in Zamfara, Katsina, Benue and Kaduna," he lamented.

Rev Samson condemned the killing of thirty persons in Southern Kaduna, a trend which he said, portends danger for the unity of the country.

He said, "It is almost a week that over 30 indigenes of Kajuru were killed, we have not seen or heard the Kaduna State Government say anything about the killings. I expect the governor of the state to swing into action, making sure that the perpetrators are arrested.

"The government needs to show that he is running an inclusive government."

On the issue of 2023 general elections, the US based cleric said that Nigerians should query the credentials of candidates who want to be governor or president, before they are voted into power.

"If anyone wants to contest for the post of the president or governor, we must look at his past, we must ask what he or she has done and we must make sure that such persons do not have records of failure," he advised.



Let's Reposition Nigeria, Vote For PDP In 2023 - Adagunodo

**Greets Nigerians on Christmas, congratulates Gov Makinde on 55th birthday*

By: BAYOAKAMO, Ibadan
The National Vice Chairman of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in the South West, Hon. Olasoji Adagunodo on Saturday, asked Nigerians to keep hope alive and join in the struggle to reposition the country by supporting and voting for PDP in 2023.

Hon Adagunodo who gave the task at a press chat held at the PDP Zonal office in Ibadan, also felicitated Christians and all Nigerians as they celebrate the Christmas and New Year festivities.

The PDP National Vice Chairman stressed that it is unfortunate that Nigeria is presently faced with challenges ranging from cases of kidnapping, ransom taking, unnecessary fuel pump price increase, forex disparity against the Naira, and fluctuating prices of commodities that have crippled people's means of livelihood coupled with epileptic power supply.

Hon Adagunodo listed other challenges to include incessant and unresolved ASUU strikes that deliberately appears like a programmed attempt to cripple the education sector of the country.

Emphasizing that "insecurity, inflation, poverty, and economic

woes respect no political affiliation", the PDP National Vice Chairman pointed out that the people and party that promised Nigerians heaven and earth instead brought let hell to lose and subject people to hardship

Hon Adagunodo while urging Christian faithful and Nigerians to see the season as a time to be more dedicated to God, said there is a lot for them to be thankful for, "having survived another year under the worst administration in the history of civil rules in our dear country."

Stressing that it takes the grace of God and His infinite mercy to survive the challenging situation in Nigeria, the PDP leader hailed Nigerians for being resilient and warned against voting people who are not in touch with current realities into power.

Congratulating Governor Seyi Makinde on his 55th birthday anniversary, Hon Adagunodo described the governor as an iconic administrator whose leadership style reflects the admirable attributes and sagacity of the late Sage, Chief Obafemi Awolowo of blessed memory.

The PDP National Vice Chairman stressed that Gov Makinde "is a passionate lover of the citizens of Oyo State and like Chief Awolowo, his pre-occupation is to make his people

and domain great and prosperous", saying, this is not only commendable but also well noted by every well-meaning Nigeria.

"The laudable projects, good road network across the 33 local government areas of Oyo State and the completion of uncomplicated projects by previous administrations in the state is replica of the road network during the era of Western Region which Chief Obafemi Awolowo championed.

"Beyond doubt, what we are witnessing in Oyo State to day is a replica of Chief Obafemi Awolowo's giant stride considering the infrastructural development going on in the State under the watch of the current government. The acquisition of and single state ownership of the Ladoke Akintola University of Technology, Ogbomoso, the continued funding and acquisition of other facilities for The First Technical University, Ibadan, the Polytechnic Ibadan, Emmanuel Alayande University and many others too numerous to mention are pointers to this.

"On the welfare of the people, notably the Oyo State Civil Service, Governor Makinde has been consistent with the payment of salaries of workers



Adagunodo

and emoluments of pensioners and retirees in the state as if it is not the same Oyo State that workers were owed several months salaries and other statutory allowances before Governor's emergence as the governor of Oyo State. In addition, the wisdom and knowledge with which Governor Seyi Makinde handles

knotty issues in the South West is also commendable"

Hon. Adagunodo then prayed to God to continue to give the amiable leader the needed wisdom to rule and direct the state and indeed the South West to a safe harbour and wish him many more years on earth with good health and wellness of the body.

Christmas: Rededicate, Remain Steadfast In Prayers For Oyo, Nigeria - Olooye Adegoke

**Felicitates Christians*

By: BAYOAKAMO, Ibadan
The Aare-Onibon Balogun of Ibadanland, Olooye Adegboyega Adegoke on Sunday, charged Nigerians to remain steadfast in praying for peace, security, unity and stability of the country.

Olooye Adegoke who is also the Chairman, Accord Campaign Council in Oyo State, gave the charge in a Christmas message personally signed by him, tasking all Nigerians to seize the opportunity of another Christmas celebration to rededicate themselves.

According to the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Adegboyega Adegoke Resource Centre (AARC), there is the need for the people of Oyo state and Nigerians as whole to inject

the healing and unifying spirit of love for their neighbours into the nation's consciousness this season.

"As a nation, we can achieve more if we stay united, extend hands of fellowship to one another and be law abiding. We must also rededicate ourselves to the virtues of faith in God, love for one another and make these virtues more evident and practical in our daily living", he said. Olooye Adegoke added "this period reminds us of the need



to uphold the virtues of love, selflessness and tolerance. I call on all Nigerians to reflect on the lessons of the season, which presents an opportunity to love and share".

"The message of Christmas is one of the unprecedented self-sacrifice to redeem humanity, so, it is the season of love, joy, generosity and forgiveness. Even as we celebrate with friends and

family, we should also spend time to pray for a more peaceful and prosperous nation"

He emphasized the need for the people to be intentional in thinking good thoughts and sowing even better actions to make Oyo state and the country at large better and greater today and for all times as the revival of the country's glory is everyone's responsibility.

"On this significant occasion of Christmas, I felicitate with people of Oyo State, Nigerians, particularly the Christian faithful on the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ. Christmas is a time of love, therefore, I call on all Nigerians to emulate the essence of this season and unite for the greater good of our dear state and the country".

Ajinomoto Expresses Worries Over Salt Intake Of Nigerians **Fighting faking of product*

By **MATTHEW UKACHUNWALagos**

Ajinomoto Foods Nigeria Ltd. has disclosed that its regulatory team is fighting to prevent the faking of its Ajinomoto seasoning brand.

A communication officer of the firm, Francisca Ikediasi, stated this in Lagos, while confirming that the product is approved by Nigeria's regulatory agencies like National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) and Standard Organization of Nigeria (SON).

"The fake of the product has been really where our problem lies and we are fighting it by our regulatory team," Ikediasi assured consumers.

She said Ajinomoto has been generally recognized as safe around the world.

The Ajinomoto chief said the composition of Ajinomoto seasoning is Umami, the essence of taste.

Ikediasi stated that Ajinomoto is a monosodium glutamate product, a form of Umami.

"Umami is not sweet, not bitter, not sour, not salty, but delicious, the fifth taste." Basic taste is no longer four, it is now five, she

emphasized, adding that Ajinomoto is used all over the world to promote deliciousness. According to her, Ajinomoto, a flavour enhancer, is considered "a healthy alternative to taking salt" in meals.

The company also showed concern over excessive salt intake of Nigerians which exposes people to health problems.

According to Ikediasi, the flavour enhancer is a

monosodium glutamate product which is considered as a healthy alternative to the use of salt in food.

The Ajinomoto spokesperson expressed concern about intake of salt and the incidences of high

blood pressure (HBP).

Ikediasi declared, "The average salt intake of a Nigerian per day is over 80 grammes. And then what does WHO (World Health Organization) recommend - 5 grammes per person per day. So these are things that promote high blood pressure that doctors have been talking about."

She stressed that Ajinomoto is trying to provide solution to excessive consumption of salt.

Ajinomoto is produced from sugar cane fermentation and extraction of its juice, Ikediasi explained, and pointed out that there are naturally occurring vitamins in Ajinomoto.

Managing Director of Ajinomoto Foods Nigeria Ltd., Mr. Noriyuki Ogushi, was on 20th December 2022 conferred with an Award of Excellence by Health Writers Association of Nigeria (HEWAN).

The award is designed to recognize individuals and corporate organizations that have distinguished themselves in the health sector and have also supported the growth of health journalism.



From left: Provost, Cathedral Church of Christ, Anglican Communion, Diocese of Lagos, Very Revd. Adebola Ojofeitimi; Lagos State Governor, Mr. Babajide Sanwo-Olu; and his Wife, Dr. (Mrs) Ibijoke Sanwo-Olu, during Church Christmas service, held in Lagos. **Photo: AKINOLAARIYO**

Alleged Fraud: NPA Boss Threatens Legal Actions Against Media Houses

By; **RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos**

The Managing Director, Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Mohammed Bello-Koko has threatened legal action against any medium used to publish unsubstantiated reports about him. Bello-Koko, who raised an alarm over incessant blackmail against his person by unknown Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in the last two years, asserted that he will not succumb to their lies.

He said that the faceless individuals under the cloak of unknown CSOs in a desperate bid to defame and extort him have resorted to using the instrumentality of a section of the online media to push through their mischief and blackmail.

In a statement made available to journalists in Lagos, Bello-Koko stated that he does not have the opportunity to seek redress in court on the grounds of their rehashed and rehearsed lies, because they are faceless.

According to him, it is unfortunate that some online news media have lent their platforms to "these desperados" to ply their odious trade, noting that all the supposed assertions and innuendos in the report are nothing but spurious and malicious concoctions intended to cause a predetermined damage.

The NPA boss however, warned that henceforth, he will institute legal action against any medium used to publish unsubstantiated reports about him.

He said: "Having failed in their desperation to dent or hurt my integrity, they have resorted to a very cruel campaign of calumny against my person and my family.

"I need to reiterate that for all of my years as a banker and a public officer up till today, I have never been indicted or convicted by any court. And this fact is in the public domain. I'm also certain that my integrity as well as dedication and fidelity to the rules of public administration must have influenced the decision by the Federal Government of Nigeria to promote me from the rank of Executive Director (Finance and Administration) to Chief Executive Officer of the Nigeria Ports Authority.

"Resorting to writing to the UK Government, seeking visa cancellation and forfeiture of assets belonging to my wife and I, is not only malicious but also cruel and wicked. I have yet to understand why these evil machinations would be orchestrated against me. Is the offence that I committed my acceptance and readiness to serve my country to the best of my ability? This latest attack, in the series of sponsored blackmails targeted at me, which began in 2021 immediately after I was elevated from the position of Executive Director of Finance and Administration to the position of Managing Director of the NPA is intended to damage my reputation.

"Is there no limit to what vested

interests can do in their desperate pursuit of power and influence? In deceit, they have disingenuously claimed in the sponsored report that UK/Ireland Investigators were the ones that had written to the UK government after they had purportedly unearthed alleged criminal acts against me, bordering on money laundering activities, fraud, forgery, and tax evasion, which are all baseless figments of their malicious intent.

"Whereas, particulars cited in the report were the regurgitated allegations that they had sponsored and which had been doing the rounds in the media from the outset, this latest attempt is as spurious as their first attempt ever. Their claim that UK/Ireland Investigators, and not Metropolitan Police or Scotland Yard, are investigating me falls flat on its face and gives out the sponsors of the report- which is a piece of cheap blackmail-as desperate hustlers who are not civil and neither working in the interest of the society".

According to him, if the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) had been on the matter as indicated in the report, it is then unfair to suggest or claim that some questionable UK/Ireland investigators are now pushing for an exclusion order to ban him from ever entering the United Kingdom. While pointing out that there should be inter-agency collaboration in line with some bilateral or mutual agreements, he challenged the

conduit pipes of the malice to go ahead and mention the names and true identities of the CSOs and the investigators.

He explained further: "I had, on several occasions, stated that the NPA under my leadership is not aware of any secret foreign accounts and I could not have been a beneficiary of something that I am not aware of and, which I would like to emphasize is non-existent to the best of my knowledge.

"The UK property they mischievously mentioned was declared with the Code of Conduct Bureau (CCB) and purchased before I was appointed into public office. It is also important to note that the property was purchased on a 15-year mortgage payment plan.

"As NPA MD, I run an open administration that gives premium to due process in the execution of the agency's core mandates. Our performances have been recently validated by the Bureau of Public Service Reforms (BPSR), which adjudged the NPA on my watch as a Platinum Level Organization, consequent upon the deployment of its Self-Assessment Tool (SAT) in the NPA for the independent assessment, validated assessment and in-depth analysis of processes and practices of the agency. Flowing from the assessment, the BPSR had returned a verdict of "exceptional performance by the NPA with a performance level of 91.25 per cent".

Bello-Koko said that according to

the Director General of BPSR, D.I. Arabi, the NPA's performance far exceeded expectations due to exceptionally high quality of work in all essential areas of responsibility, resulting in an overall quality of work that is superior, exceptional or unique.

He highlighted that under his watch, the NPA has specifically, in terms of tangible achievements that the various publics can relate with, recorded some modest achievements and has generated the sum of N286 billion and remitted over N100 billion to the Consolidated Revenue Fund (CRF) account of the federation as of November 2022.

Bello-Koko, while reeling out other achievements of the Authority, said that it's committed efforts at advancing trade facilitation recently won it the award of "Best Maritime Agency of the Year 2022" by Daily Telegraph Newspaper.

"In the light of the above, I cannot afford to be distracted by the deliberate shenanigans of blackmailers and vested interests who are desperate to upset the appellation of my sharply-focused leadership that is committed to emplacing and bequeathing to the nation a transparent and accountable management of the NPA now and in the years ahead.

"In rounding off, I will, henceforth, institute legal action against any media house that publishes unsubstantiated and damaging reports about my person", he added.

Celebrating Governor Abdullahi Sule At 63

By: Samson Yaki, Lafia

The Governor of Nasarawa State, Engineer Abdullahi A. Sule, has clocked sixty-three (63) years of existence on earth. Born on December 26, 1959, in Gudi Station, Akwanga-West Development Area of Nasarawa State, Abdullahi Sule's selflessness in serving humanity, devotion to duty and sense of humour, made him beloved to his family, friends and all people, thereby making him attractive like a magnet. His father, Alhaji Sule, is the current traditional ruler, Sarkin Gudi, while his grandfather, Abdullahi Angulu, was the first traditional ruler of Gudi station. Abdullahi Sule began his education at the Roman Catholic Mission (RCM) Primary School, Gudi Station, in 1968, upon completion, he proceeded to the Zang Secondary Commercial School, Bukuru, in 1974.

In 1977, he passed his SSCE in Bukuru, before proceeding to Plateau State Polytechnic, Barkin Ladi and later Indiana State University, Terre Haute, Indiana, USA towards the end of 1980.

Through determination and hard work, he utilized a four-year scholarship to obtain both a BSc (1983) and an MSc (1984) degrees in Mechanical Technology respectively from the same Indiana State University, USA.

His work experience began in 1980 when he was offered employment by the Plateau Electricity Corporation, Jos, even before graduation in May 1980.

Upon graduation from government Technical College, Bukuru, he worked for about three months with the corporation before proceeding to Plateau State Polytechnic, in September 1980.

Engineer Sule, did his compulsory national service, NYSC, with the Plateau Utilities Board, Jos and later joined the Jos Steel Rolling Company Ltd in 1985 as a production engineer.

In 1987, he received accelerated promotion from GL9 to GL 12 in recognition of his performance and hard work. He later left Jos Steel Rolling Company as a principal production engineer in 1989 and returned to the United States.

On returning to the US, Abdullahi Sule went to Texas (San Antonio and later Houston) where he worked for the following companies: Lancer Corporation, San Antonio; OEM Components, Houston; Houston Engineering, Houston; Morgan Performance, Houston; Drill-Quip Incorporated, Houston and Osyka Corporation, Houston. He worked in various capacities from workshop engineer to computer numerical control (CNC) programmer, NCN operator, facility engineer, project/production engineer and finally the director of business development for Africa and the Middle East for Osyka Corporation.

He returned to Nigeria in the year 2000 and along with some friends, started a company called Sadiq Petroleum Nigeria

Limited in Lagos and was made the pioneer Managing Director/CEO.

Later that year, Sadiq Petroleum Company participated in the privatization of African Petroleum Plc and won the bid. Upon acquisition of the 30% ownership of AP in November 2000, Engr Sule, was appointed APMD/CEO on April 2, 2001.

He resigned in July 2006 to take up another job with an American Multi-national oil service company called Tetra international in July 2006 as a Director of Business Development/ country Manager.

While in AP as the MD/CEO, he also served as a Director in IMB International Bank Plc, Ulti-Care Pharmaceutical

and Chrismatel Holdings. He was also the chairman of AP Oilfield Service Ltd and Partner in star-AP Oilfield Services.

Sule was a director at the Dangote Group between 2010 and 2011. He was also the group managing director of Dangote Sugar Refinery Plc between 2011 and 2018 when he stepped down to contest the Nasarawa governorship election on the platform of the All Progressives Congress (APC).

In that March 9, 2019 election, Abdullahi Sule scored 327,229 votes to defeat his opponent of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) who scored 184,281 votes, while the All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA) candidate got 132,784 votes. He was sworn-in as Nasarawa



Gov Abdullahi

Governor on the 29th of May, 2019.

In his words, "I entered politics to serve and to make an impact in the lives of the people of Nasarawa State."

Engineer Sule, has shown that leadership is not just about self, but making decisions that bring growth and development to the people laced with good governance and 'Exceeding all expectations,' the coined blueprint of his administration.

In his last three and half years as the fourth democratically elected governor in the "Home of Solid Minerals", Engr. Sule has shown that he understands governance.

His administration has been transparent and accountable, responsive and inclusive, people oriented and human capital focused and above all, very compassionate about his people. Celebrating the people's governor, the management of Isa Mustapha Agwai I Polytechnic (IMAP), Lafia, showers its heartfelt felicitation.

In a statement, the Rector of the institution, Dr. Justina Anjide-Kotso, prayed for Allah's blessings, grace to continue to pilot the affairs of the state.

"We heartily felicitate with His Excellency, Engr. Abdullahi A. Sule Governor Nasarawa State and Visitor to the Polytechnic on your auspicious occasion of your 63rd Birthday Anniversary. May Almighty Allah (SWT) continue to grant you long life, sound health, happiness, and divine protections to continue to provide dividends of Democracy to the good people of Nasarawa State beyond 2023.

"I would like to also express very sincerely that our Polytechnic is proud to be associated with you and has remained grateful for your support to its growth and development", she added.

Gov Mai Mala Buni Condoles Dahiru Mangal Over Brother's Death

By: SANI GAZAS CHINADE, Damaturu

Governor Mai Mala Buni of Yobe State has condoled Alhaji Dahiru Mangal, over the death of his brother, Bashir Mangal.

In a statement, by his Director General Press and Media Affairs, Mamman Mohammed, Governor Buni described

the death of Bashir as a huge loss to the family, Katsina State and Nigeria. The governor said late Bashir was a very enterprising and progressively minded person with a passion for a united and prosperous Nigeria.

"We lost Bashir at a time when his expertise and wealth of experience is needed for the

development of the private sector and the National economy" he said.

The governor prayed to Almighty Allah to forgive his shortcomings and grant him Aljannatur Firdaus.

He also prayed to Allah (SWT) to console the family and grant them the fortitude to bear the irreparable loss.



The picture of Gov Buni And Dahiru Mangal

Otukpo Children Carnival: Blessing Mark Onuh Gifts Out Items Worth Millions Of Naira

By EMMANUEL OLOFU DICKSON, Otukpo

As part of activities marking the 15th edition of Otukpo Children Carnival, House of Representatives member representing Otukpo/Ohimini Federal Constituency, Honourable Blessing Mark Onuh has again, registered her mark as she doled out items worth several millions of Naira to her constituents.

This was doled out at her residence in Otukpo GRA on Monday December 26, 2022.

It included motorcycles and deep freezers to serve as empowerment, as well as food items, comprising bags of rice and vegetable cooking oil.

Blessing who is the candidate of the All Progressives Congress (APC) for the constituency in 2023 in her remarks, urged children to be of good behaviour. "Children, I hope that you would

be of best behaviour, I don't want you to struggle for anything, if you need anything, I want you to sit back, whatever you want, ask those guys in white t-shirts

She appreciated her family, her husband, Dr. Innocent Onuh and their three children for standing by her all through all these years, in ensuring they sustain the programme.

She also thanked her extended family members, as well as organisers of the event for putting it together.

Our correspondent reports that the politician who is known for her germane charity works, has also constructed bridges for Otukpo and Ohimini communities without roads, as well as sunk boreholes to communities lacking potable water.

She promised to do more meaningful projects if she is elected for second term.



Yuletide: Bishop Decries Increasing Number Of Orphans, Widows As Church Provide Succour

By; MKPUMA ENYINNA, Abakaliki

The Anglican Bishop of Abakaliki Diocese, Rt. Rev. Monday Chukwuma Nkwagu has lamented the increasing number of orphaned children and widows in Nigeria.

He attributed the continuously rising number to high incidents of insecurity, banditry, communal clashes and other criminal acts that abound across country.

Bishop Nkwagu raised the concern in Abakaliki, Ebonyi State capital, during a Christmas party for widows and orphans.

About 2,000 widows and orphans received Christmas relief from the church in collaboration with the diocesan Nongovernmental organisation, Anglican Diocese of Abakaliki Health and Community Development Initiative (ADAHCDI).

The packages including bags of rice, beans, garri, groundnut oil, noodles, canned tomato pastes and other condiments, were distributed to the beneficiaries on Tuesday at the All Saints Cathedral Abakaliki.

There were also unnamed

amount of cash donations to enable them meet other domestic expenditure during the Yuletide.

Nkwagu said, "Last year, 2021, the number was about 1,200 widows.

"You saw this time that the number increased.

"Everywhere, because of violence, killings, communal crises, a lot of children are left orphans and women widowed.

In a homily, Nkwagu admonished the widows and orphans to place their faith ultimately in God, pledging that the Church would continue to make them prominent beneficiaries of its welfare schemes.

In an interview, Rev Chukwuebuka Umeokafor, the Project Manager of the Anglican Diocese of Abakaliki Health and Community Development Initiative, explained that the NGO in collaboration with the Diocese officially instituted the welfare scheme since 2012.

He stated that there were over 2,000 widows as well as orphans profiled in its database, and commended the Bishop for his passion, which he noted, has continued to inspire the organization from inception.

"We are motivated by the



passion and vision of the Bishop, Rt Rev'd Monday Nkwagu.

"He had served in remote areas as a priest and understands fully what the widows and orphans are going through.

"So, when he was elected the Bishop, he took the commitment to ensure that we institute a programme towards the end of the year, through which the widows and other vulnerable group could be taken care of, so they don't feel inferior when others are celebrating Christmas.

"We have been doing this since 2012, and we have over 2,000 widows in our database.

"We also have children of some of these Widows and the orphans under educational scholarship from our NGO up to the university level.

"Currently, we have up to 30 of these children in various higher institutions across the country" Umeokafor explained.

The programme coordinator and wife of the Bishop, Lady Nwanyieze Nkwagu and one of the widows and orphans coordinators in the Church, Evangelist Mrs Ifeyinwa Ochebiri, admonished the widows to eternalize the life of piety so as to continue to attract God's providence.

Ochebiri commended the Bishop's wife for the zeal and Godly wisdom with which he handles the affairs of these vulnerable group.

Some of the beneficiaries who bared their minds said the annual event always offer them hope and joy as well as strengthen their faith in God.

One of them, Mrs Ijeoma Nweke said: "We are highly delighted that from our remote communities, we are always remembered. It has been many years they do this.

"I pray God to bless all those who have contributed in any way to give this succour to us."

HOODLUMS KILL 2 KOGI OFFICERS, OTHERS INJURED

By; ADAMA JOHN, Lokoja

The Kogi State Police Command has lost two of its personnel to hoodlums while several others sustained various degrees of bullet wounds midweek on Agbaja Road, following gun battle between the two camps.

The command said that the gunmen ambushed the police patrol team and suddenly sprang up from their hideout and attacked the patrolling team when they were sighted by the marauding beasts.

In a press release made available to journalists in Lokoja, the Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), SP William Ovyé Aya, said the Police received the unfortunate report of attack on the Police patrol team along Agbaja Road, Lokoja.

"However, the Command lost two of its personnel

during the gun duel with the hoodlums as they fled before the belated reinforcement team arrived", the command spokesman said.

The statement further disclosed that the Commissioner of Police, Kogi State Police Command, CP Akeem A. Yusuf immediately deployed a team of tactical operatives to the area with a view to trailing and apprehending them.

"He further directed the Deputy Commissioner of Police, Investigation to commence investigation into the incident," the press statement said.

The Commissioner of Police also used the medium to call on the people of the area to assist the Police with credible information on the identity of the hoodlums to enable the command curtail their criminal excesses.

Imbibe Virtues Of Jesus Christ, Gov Bala Tells Bauchi Christians

By; MOHAMMED KAWU, Bauchi

Bauchi State Governor, Bala Abdulkadir Mohammed has stressed the need for Nigerians irrespective of political, cultural and religious differences to learn to harmoniously live with one another, while imbining the spirit of love and togetherness.

He expressed this in a message marking this year's Christmas celebration, pointing out that the period should also be used to strengthen existing friendships and establish new ones, as he called on Christians in particular to exchange visits among themselves and adherents of other faith during the Christmas period.

The governor appealed to the Christians to use the occasion to pray for peaceful elections in 2023, reiterated his call for mutual respect and peaceful co-existence among our citizenry, saying Jesus Christ had throughout his lifetime preached peace, honesty, love for one another and above all the fear of God.



"It is these virtues that people irrespective of their religious belief are enjoined to imbibe and put into practice. While we celebrate the event with meditation and happiness, we should also reflect seriously on our routine and spiritual deeds in the last one year and pray to God for better and prosperous years ahead".

Senator said, "It is with great pleasure that I, on behalf of myself, the government and

the entire people of Bauchi state extend my warm and sincere message of goodwill to all Christians on the occasion of the 2022 Christmas celebration". Mohammed recalled that the annual celebration of Christmas is in commemoration of the birth of Jesus Christ who paid the supreme price in order to save the lives of his disciples and followers, as he joined millions of Nigerians in

congratulating our Christian brothers and sisters on this year's Christmas celebration.

He explained that the primary objective of any responsible Government is to ensure security of lives and property of its citizens, hence his government is collaborating with security agencies in the state to address real and perceived threats to security of lives and property of the citizenry.

"The provision of infrastructural facilities and social amenities is aimed at stabilizing and strengthening the economic status of the state to become one of the states that has strong economic base in the country. We shall therefore continue to work relentlessly towards the realization of this noble objective".

He said that the state government is aware of all the people support since its inception, the reason why it is striving as much as possible to reciprocate the gesture by embarking on policies and programmes that have direct bearing on the lives of the people.

NANS Calls For Immediate Passage Of NARICT Bill

By: AMOSTAUNA, Kaduna

The National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS), has appealed on the National Assembly, to ensure the passage of the bill establishing the National Research Institute of Chemical Technology (NARICT), Zaria for proper functioning.

The students said the establishment of NARICT is what Nigeria needs at this material time to reposition the country in the face of the world and give Nigerians a sense of belonging in its development.

The students believe that the establishment of National Research Institute of Chemical Technology would give the nation a development direction and channel to improve on the much needed desire in science and technology that is missing in the country.

NANS noted that a lot of opportunities would be made if the bill is passed into law to place Nigeria amongst advanced

countries of the world, saying that a Bill if passed into law would enable the country progress technically and scientifically, pointing out that it would offer many Nigerians the opportunity to showcase their potentials and move the country forward in all spheres of life.

NANS made the call during a courtesy visit to the research institute on Thursday, adding that, democracy advocacy group under the umbrella of Partnership for Legislative Agenda, (PLAN) also made similar call in Abuja last week, citing opportunities available in the chemical industry as what is missing in moving Nigeria forward for it to self-reliant.

Comrade Usman Baba Kankia, National Secretary of NANS assured that the bill would enhance productivity and give Nigeria an edge to compete with other advanced countries, saying that the country has what it takes to be a pace setter in the production of chemicals and

petrochemical products as initiated by the House of Representatives Member, Jos East/South constituency, Musa Dacchung Bagos.

He explained, "The effort of the Jos south/Jos East Federal House of Representatives member, Hon. Musa Dacchung Bagos and Senator representing kwara North Zone, Senator Umar Sadiq towards sponsoring this bill is commendable and should be applauded."

He added that the bill intends to develop the nation and place Nigeria amongst the top advanced countries in chemical research, stressing that the Bill seeks to establish and provide a globally competitive and environmentally friendly research and innovation in the processing and conversion of indigenous raw materials into valuable chemicals and petrochemical products for the development of chemical, biochemical and man-made fibre technologies for industrial

applications in Nigeria.

Enumerating the benefits of conducting chemical research in Nigeria on the economy, the National Secretary of NANS maintained that very soon Nigeria would no longer be importing certain basic chemicals which the country has comparative advantage in producing them but will be exporting like the advanced economies of the world.

"Very soon, Nigeria will be at par with countries like Singapore and others in the production of chemicals and petrochemical products which are essential to our lives and living such as ethylene, benzene, medical resins popularly used in medical and pharmaceutical companies, medical plastics, preservatives for our vast agricultural produce and a host of others," he assured.

Commending NASS for their efforts during the first reading of the Bill, he called for more funding to NARICT to enable it deliver in its mandate as the

world leading Institute for chemical research.

The students commended the first reading of the Bill on the floor of the House of Representatives and called on other senators to emulate senator Umar and Hon. Bagos to ensure this bill is passed successfully without further delay as it will help us as nation for global competition in research and development.

NANS then called on the office of the head of service to grant approval to the Institute to recruit more specialised staffs in readiness for the task ahead of making the country depends in all that is produced within.

The students assured that as soon as the bill establishing it is passed into law and more funding made available, it would no doubt produces a world class Institute like NARICT that requires world class scholars and researchers to make it compete favourably with other advanced countries.

Oyo PDP, Gov Makinde Want To Compromise 2023 polls, APC Alleges

**Asks INEC, EFCC, ICPC, others to beam searchlight on Oyo State*

By: BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

Oyo State chapter of the All Progressives Congress (APC) on Friday, alerted that it has uncovered an alleged move by the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and Gov Seyi Makinde to compromise the 2023 general elections.

APC in a statement in Ibadan by its Oyo State Publicity Secretary, Olawale Sadare stated that PDP and Gov Makinde are allegedly moving towards compromising the standard of free, fair and credible election expected from the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) in the conduct of 2023 general election.

According to Oyo APC, the ruling PDP in the state and Gov Makinde are already putting in place what it described as clandestine plots to compromise the desired standard of free, fair and credible election expected from the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) in the conduct of 2023 general election.

It pointed out that the fresh alarm came " on the heels of allegations of vote-buying plot, sponsorship of violence to prevent opposition parties from

carrying out their electioneering campaigns and planned compromise of some INEC officials all in the bid to forcefully secure an 'unmerited' second term for Gov. Makinde".

The party in the statement frowned at " Gov. Makinde's scripted gesture of benevolence as being displayed in recent times to include Greek gifts to political leaders, religious bodies and others who he had abandoned to their fate since assumption of office in 2019".

"It is highly imperative for us to alert the public, INEC and the security agencies about certain steps being taken by the governor and some of his agents to perpetrate vote-buying and other sharp practices in their bid to compromise the forthcoming general election in the state in favor of the candidates of the PDP." it said.

APC added, " The truth of the matter is that Gov Makinde has got enough money from the treasury of the state to prosecute his mission to influence voters and other critical stakeholders before, during and after the gubernatorial election in particular. The sloppy manner in which Oyo PDP under Gov. Makinde carries out its



campaign activities has suggested to the discerning minds that the governor and his people do not place their hope of second term in office on decent electioneering and credible electoral process."

"Up till now, the ruling Oyo PDP

has not held a single political rally in any part of the state after more than 90 days when INEC had lifted ban on open campaigns in the build up to the 2023 general election.

Rather than engage the electorate and give an account of stewardship in the last 42 months with a view to retaining the confidence of the people", APC stressed further, "Gov Makinde has commissioned a good number of foot soldiers to negotiate for votes with dole out of crumbs and financial inducement. A good reference is the hijack of federal government's social scheme whereby citizens are being paid varying sums of money to cushion the effects of economic meltdown".

" We have it on good authority that Oyo state government has taken possession of the cash distribution as they compel beneficiary to produce their individual permanent voter card which they collect and scan before releasing the cash incentives.

"Another set of foot soldiers now move round some parts of the state capital and other major cities in the state to obtain phone contact and bank account details

of prospective voters who have PVC and willing to cast their votes in the forthcoming general election. Early this week, the governor sent a proxy (who is also a PDP candidate for the House of Representatives poll) to deliver some items packaged as Christmas/New Year gifts to some officials of INEC in a clear case of inducement ahead of the conduct of the 2023 poll.

According to APC, "all these are in addition to baits of contract bazaar, illegal allocation of government land, SUV gift among other things being packaged to woo some identified political gladiators, traditional rulers, religious leaders, civic society organizations, trade unionists, student bodies and influential personalities who have been established to be against Gov. Makinde's reelection bid on account of his poor first term performance.

It is on this note that we urge INEC, EFCC, ICPC, Code of Conduct Bureau and other relevant agencies of government to beam their searchlight on Oyo State and ensure that unscrupulous elements who are bent on disrupting the 2023 poll do not have their way".

Tribute To Ebonyi Founding Fathers As Governor Umahi Confers State Honours On Deserving Citizens

By; MKPUMA ENYINNA, Abakaliki

E Ebonyi State Government has conferred State Honours on its deserving citizens in recognition of their various contributions to the growth and development of the state.

Governor Umahi administered the honours on the beneficiaries on Tuesday at the Christian Ecumenical Centre, Abakaliki.

The event was the first segment of the state government's initiative to celebrate state and national figures who have impacted positively in success story of the state.

Addressing stakeholders and the honoured, Governor Umahi said its essence was to reward those

founding fathers of the state who remained undaunted by the intimidations and persecutions against their struggle for identity and self-determination.

"If you cast your mind back to where we would have been without the creation of Ebonyi State, you will understand.

"That is why we set aside today to celebrate our Founding Fathers.

"Our founding fathers suffered deprivation, humiliation and disenfranchisement in the struggle for the creation of our dear State.

"When they were reminded that this part of the country would not sustain itself, they said, 'don't worry, we are a people of contentment; we will manage with the little we have'

military era to his predecessors in democratic governance for laying solid foundation for the transformation of the State.

He seized the opportunity of the event to further reiterate his strong belief in rotation of power among the three senatorial districts in the State, vowing to continue to fight for equity and justice in and out of office to ensure that the governorship position is rotated simultaneously across the three zones of the state.

"Anyone vying for Governorship from Ebonyi South where I come from, or the Central is a joker.

"The South must stoutly stand for Ebonyi North because the North stood for the South amidst all betrayals in 2015."

Governor Umahi expressed pride over his administration's achievements in the State for the past seven and half years, and appreciated all Ebonyians who have supported his visions one way or the other.

He identified his love for God and passion for mankind as the underlying secret behind the achievements, adding that in the midst of his human frailties, God's grace has continued to sustain and drive actualization of his dreams for the state.

"Tonight I want to say that I am very proud of you; I am very grateful to you all.

"Let us as a state continue to be grateful to God for it is not by power or might.



Comrade Uchenna Inya receiving a state merit award of excellent performance (SMA) from Gov David Umahi

"The secret is that I love God" he declared.

In an opening remark, the Deputy Governor and Chairman of State Awards Committee, Dr Eric Kelechi Igwe, explained that the event was conceptualized by the Governor as a reward mechanism to encourage excellence and hard work in the State.

He noted that the awards were categorized into three, Commander, Ebonyi Hall of Fame CEHF; Member Ebonyi Hall of Fame (MEHF) and State Merit Award (SMA)

"The essence of these awards are to institute a reward mechanism for those who have distinguished themselves in the service of the State in their various present and former capacities.

"It is also an encouragement for Ebonyi citizens who have made the State proud in various areas

of endeavor as jinx breakers.

Igwe applauded the governor for touching all sectors of governance and carrying all segments of society along in his administration.

The Deputy Governor also congratulated the honour recipients and charged them to continue to remain worthy ambassadors of the State.

Among those honoured by the Governor was the State Correspondent, New Telegraph Newspapers, Uchenna Inya, who received State Merit Award (SMA) for impacting humanity variously through his profession as Journalist.

Highpoint of the event was the unveiling of the glyph for the institutionalizing of David Nweze Umahi Lecture and Award series as an annual event to be commemorated in the state.



who have played crucial role in the creation and development of the state from all sectors.

He recalled the deprivations, neglect and humiliation suffered by the the people before the state was created, and paid tributes to the resilience and bravery of the

"That contentment gave birth to the present Ebonyi State that is first in sustainability index in the Country today.

"The intention here is to be grateful to God." Governor Umahi applauded the previous leaders of the state from the

Masari Appoints Ida Chancellor Of Yar'adua University

By; SULAIMANAHMED MISAU, Katsina

Governor Aminu Bello Masari of Katsina State has approved the appointment of Wazirin Katsina, Senator Ibrahim Ida as new Chancellor of the state owned Umaru Musa Yar'adua University.

A statement by Director Press of the Secretary to the Government of the state, Alhaji Abdullahi Aliyu Yar'adu said the appointment was based on power vested on the Governor by the provisions of the first scheduled of the University's establishment Law No 7 of 2006.

Alhaji Aliyu Yar'adu said the appointment of Senator Ibrahim Ida was in recognition of his enviable track records of service to humanity and to the government and people of Katsina state.

Alhaji Abdullahi Aliyu Yar'adu said in the appointment signed by the Secretary to the Government of the state, Madugun Katsina, Alhaji Mukhari Lawal, Governor Aminu Bello Masari expressed optimism that, the new Chancellor Wazirin Katsina, Senator Ibrahim Ida would bring his sense of duty and enormous wealth of experience to bear in this new task for the overall development of the University.

Alhaji Abdullahi Aliyu Yar'adu explained that, Governor Aminu Bello Masari Congratulated the Wazirin Katsina, Senator Ibrahim Ida and wish him Allah's guidance on the well-deserved appointment.

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

A Chieftain of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in Oyo State, Engineer Oyedele Hakeem Alao on Monday, asked the people of Oyo State to rescue democracy and the state with the forthcoming general election.

The APC Chieftain stated this in a message issued by his Media Office to congratulate Christians and the entire people of Oyo on the Christmas and New Year festivals.

Engineer Alao emphasized that the 2023 general elections provides an opportunity for the people to make judicious use their Permanent Voter Cards (PVC) to elect credible individuals that would move the state and

2023: Rescue Democracy, Oyo State - Engr Alao

**Congratulates Christians @ Christmas*

the country forward."

He maintained that "it is important for the people to make it part of their New Year resolution that they will play their constitutional roles to ensure that there is a peaceful, credible, free and transparent election in February and March 2023".

Engineer Alao added, "The coming election provides an opportunity for the people to make judicious use their Permanent Voter Cards (PVC) to elect credible

individuals that would move the state and the country forward."

He then urged the people of Oyo state to reflect on the basic tenets of Christianity which harkened on perseverance, faithfulness, determination and peace.

"Irrespective of our religious affiliations, we can draw immense strength and inspiration from the enduring legacies of the life of Jesus Christ who sacrificed his life for the redemption of our

souls," he said.

The APC Chieftain charged Christians to use the festive occasions to pray for unity, peace and prosperity of the state as the forthcoming general election provides the people with the opportunity to rescue democracy and the state.

"I wish the people of the state a merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year. I want to call on Christians, in particular, and the entire people, to emulate the virtues of Christ, who through self-sacrifice brought salvation to humanity.

Lagos Govt Disburses N750m Equity Funds As Free Insurance Coverage For Vulnerable Residents

By: MATTHEW UKACHUNWA, Lagos

No fewer than 230,000 indigent and vulnerable residents of Lagos State are currently benefitting from free health insurance coverage from state government.

Beneficiaries include members of elderly and orphanage homes, vulnerable persons living with HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, sickle cell anaemia, and victims of domestic and sexual violence, spread across the 57 local government and local council development areas of the state.

The free health insurance coverage is sponsored by the State Government through the Eko Social Health Alliance (EkoSHA).

Speaking on Wednesday at the media launch of the Eko Social Health Alliance (EkoSHA) held at the Providence Hotel, GRA, Ikeja, the Commissioner for Health, Prof. Akin Abayomi explained that EkoSHA, an initiative of the Lagos State Stat Government coordinated through the Lagos State Health Management Agency (LASHMA), is an alliance of private institutions, public institutions, development and multilateral partners and individuals seeking the good of all residents of Lagos.

He said: "The initiative is designed to mobilize adequate funds to help the identified vulnerable residents of Lagos state access the health insurance through the Ilera Eko Social Health Plan under the Lagos State Health Scheme (LSHS). EkoSHA will also provide access to social welfare empowerment programs so that beneficiaries do not only have health insurance but are provided opportunity and support that will gradually lift them out of poverty".

Abayomi who was represented by the Director, Medical Administration, Training and Programs in the State Ministry of Health, Dr. Funmilayo Shokunbi further explained that the alliance,

in addition to mobilizing more funds to help the identified vulnerable Lagos state residents access health insurance, will also collaborate with different departments and agencies engaged in social welfare empowerment and poverty alleviation programs so that beneficiaries do not only have health insurance but are provided opportunity to enhance their ability to attain sustainable livelihood.

"EKOSHA will collaborate with Social Welfare and Empowerment MDAs/ Organisations to provide a means of livelihood for these beneficiaries such that they do not remain dependent and can eventually afford to pay health insurance premiums for themselves", he said.

Abayomi noted that the Governor of Lagos State, Mr. Babajide Sanwo-Olu graciously approved 1% of the State's Consolidated Revenue Fund (CRF) as equity fund to pay for residents who cannot afford to pay health insurance for themselves in order to ensure that Lagos State residents, including its vulnerable population, have access to the state health scheme.

He said: "The Lagos State Government continues in giant strides towards the Sustainable Development Goals and especially the Universal Health Coverage (UHC) journey of the State. This is evident in the various empowerment schemes especially through the agricultural sector, the housing schemes, the health sector improvement, transportation and other infrastructural development under the leadership of Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu".

The Commissioner disclosed that since the commencement of access to care for the vulnerable residents on the ILERA EKO Social Health Plan in 2020, a total of N750 million has been disbursed as equity fund in addition to the Basic Healthcare Provision Fund (BHCPF), and sponsorships from a few individuals and organizations; to

provide health insurance for the vulnerable residents of the State.

While noting that the media launch programme is intended to raise the level of public awareness for EkoSHA initiative to stir up a positive reaction in the minds and hearts of well-meaning Lagosians and Nigerians to raise funds to pay for the health insurance coverage of millions of vulnerable residents of the State, Abayomi

called on philanthropists, well-meaning people and organisations to key into the alliance and contribute their quota in their various capacity.

"This is a laudable one and we must not relent till the goals and objectives of EKOSHA are met. It is also our aspiration that these efforts will improve the health indices of Lagos State. As an administration, we will be unrelenting in pushing the frontiers of innovative financing for healthcare in Lagos State till we build a healthcare system that works for all", he said.

Speaking in the same vein, the Permanent Secretary, Lagos State Ministry of Health, Dr Olusegun Ogboye who was represented by the Director, Diseases Control, Dr. Rotimi Agbolagorite noted that the objective of the EkoSHA initiative is anchored on mobilizing additional funds through a strategic alliance with suitable financial institutions leveraging on a crowdfunding financing model to provide more funding options for the health care of the vulnerable residents of Lagos.



A beneficiary, having his hair cut.

According to him, other objective of the initiative include, urging funding partners and facilitators like banks, local and international donor agencies, corporate bodies, religious organizations, NGOs and high net worth individuals register for the adoption of vulnerable residents by paying premiums for their healthcare coverage and providing social safety net for beneficiaries through access to the state's numerous empowerment programs.

Ogboye explained further that the initiative targets the vulnerable and indigent persons as defined by in the LSHS Law which include members of the Lagos State Social Register (LSSR), vulnerable persons living with special conditions such as Tuberculosis, HIV/Aids, Sickle Cell Anemia and Lupus, victims of sexual and domestic violence, teen moms, members of Destitute, Orphanage and Elderly Homes as well as other vulnerable groups as determined by LASHMA.

While commending the the Governor of Lagos and the First Lady of Lagos State, Dr. Ibijoke Sanwo Olu for their passion and commitments in ensuring that indigents, domestic and sexual abuse vulnerable live a good and healthy life, the Permanent Secretary stated that the State government is always open to collaborations from everyone who has the interest of the vulnerable and indigent people at heart and can partner with the government to sponsor beneficiaries in any of the three EKOSHA ACE Model of adoption, crowd funding and events model designed to raise additional funds for the healthcare of the vulnerable and indigents in the State.

He noted that that interested members of the public can make enquiries to participate in EKOSHA initiative by contacting LASHMA or through <https://ekosah.org/> www.lashma.com or email ekosha@lashma.com or through phone call on 0800ASKLASHMA (0800275527462).

"I would like to commend the

Governor of Lagos State, Mr. Babajide Sanwo-Olu, who aside from ensuring that the vulnerable and indigents in the State enjoy ILERA EKO, also personally enrolled some of the vulnerable in the State. Similarly, I commend the First Lady of Lagos State, Dr. Ibijoke Sanwo-Olu, for her passion and commitments in ensuring that the indigents, domestic and sexual abuse vulnerable live a good and healthy life". He said.

General Manager, LASHMA, Dr. Emannuella Zamba in her remarks assured that the agency remains committed to ensure that equal opportunity is given to those who cannot afford to pay the ILERA EKO premium in line with Section 20 of the LSHS Law, which stipulates that the Agency should ensure the availability of alternative sources of funding to the health sector for improved services.

"Let me buttress that EkoSHA was formed to increase vulnerable coverage on the Lagos State Health Scheme to complement Government effort and resources as well as collaborate with Lagos State MDAs and organizations in charge of skill acquisitions, social welfare and empowerment programmes so that apart from enjoying ILERA EKO, they can equally acquire skills, stand on their own and become employers of labor. This, of course, will go a long way in making life meaningful to the vulnerable and indigents in our society", She said.

Zamba appreciated various donors and developmental partners, organizations, political leaders, Nigerians in diaspora, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and eminent personalities who have contributed in no small measure to help achieve the objective of EkoSHA.

"We also appreciate our collaborative MDAs which have supported us in this journey of ours. I implore Gentlemen of the Press to please publicize our contact details as this is a service to humanity. We will also invite you next year for our EKOSHA Fund Raising Event", the General Manager stated.

Kogi To Stand Still As Buhari Commissions Projects

By: ADAMA JOHN, Lokoja

The Kogi State Government has declared Thursday, December 29, a public holiday to enable indigenes of the state receive President Muhammadu Buhari as he is expected to commission unspecified legacy projects.

The state Commissioner for Information and Communications, Mr. Kingsley Fanwo in a statement said the public holiday on Thursday, is intended to enable Kogites give a rousing reception, first of its kind, to Mr. President in the capital city,

Lokoja.

Fanwo urged the people of the state to troop out in mass to receive the President and display the hospitality the state is known for in the past.

He also urged all labour unions and security agencies in the state to ensure full compliance with government's directive.

"The President and Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of Nigeria, His Excellency, President Muhammadu Buhari, GCFR, shall be visiting Kogi on the this day to commission legacy projects across the state," the statement said.

He said that it is in view of the hilarious welcome to Mr. President culminating in a hitch free commissioning exercise, that government wishes to announce that Thursday, December 29 be declared as a public holiday.

"The decision is to enable the people of the state receive our President" Fanwo said.

While urging labour unions and security agencies to ensure full compliance, the commissioner is optimistic that the people of the state will be better for it for the commissioning of life-touching legacy projects across the state.

NEDC Trains Security Agents, Volunteer Groups On Combating Insecurity In North East

By: SADIQ ABUBAKAR, Maiduguri

North East Development Commission (NEDC) in collaboration with Abubakar Tatari Ali Polytechnic Bauchi on Monday, organized a 3-day training workshop from Monday, 26 to Wednesday December 28, 2022 at Dujima International Hotel Maiduguri for registered private security agents and personnel of volunteer security groups in combating insecurity in the North East of Nigeria.

The North East Training Programme Coordinator, Abubakar Tatari Ali Polytechnic Bauchi, Dr. Mohammed Suleiman Awwal in his welcome address, said the training was organized for the targeted informal security agents and volunteer security personnel groups involved in combating all types of crime in the society, towards providing adequate peace for meaningful development in the zone.

He added that the training Programme is aimed at exposing the informal security personnel to the nitty gritty of security and crime prevalence with a view to creating awareness and imparting knowledge on the participants to be more vigilant, committed and effective in complementing the efforts and sacrifices of the formal security agents at the local and state levels and region at large.

According to him, the programme is being held in all the six states of the North East, namely, Adamawa, Taraba, Gombe, Yobe, Bauchi and Borno states.

He also assured that the technical team is fully prepared and equipped with resource persons that have been delivering on crime and security, having trained similar organizations or groups in the past.

The Training Programme Coordinator explained further that the training workshop's theme is, "The role of informal security operatives in combating insecurity in the North East of Nigeria", while papers by resource persons on terrorism, insurgency, international relations and diplomacy, citizenship, migration, mass media and national security among others would be presented.

Other papers include, religious misconceptions, criminal litigation, crime, drug abuse, justice system, counter terrorism measures and other issues towards combating insecurity in the North Eastern Nigeria.

The rest of the paper presentations include how to solve or address security challenges through intelligence gathering and sharing, protection and assistance of victims of insurgency and policy implications and strategies on security.

North East Development Commission (NEDC), Borno State Coordinator of the Training Programme, Engr Mohammed Uma in his remarks, urged all the participants to count themselves lucky and appreciate the efforts of NEDC to blend them the technicalities of security challenges, terrorism, insurgency and other crime in the society with a view to grooming them to become more professional and effective in the provision of security and respective discharge of their responsibilities to the society towards restoration of peace in the North East,

Engr. Mohammed further charged them to be attentive, dedicated and committed to the training programme by embracing the training as a great opportunity to learn much about security, insecurity, challenges, implications, contemporary issues on terrorism and insurgency, crime and homicide, among others, as well as the guiding rules and regulations of their respective informal security operations.

He also charged them to comply with the principles and techniques of private security agents and personnel volunteer groups in the North East Zone, while stressing that the theme of the training workshop is apt and in line with the prevailing security challenges in the North East.

The coordinator pointed out to stakeholders that it is important they know their role in the society as informal security operatives in combating insecurity in the North East of Nigeria can never be over emphasized.

Few participants that spoke to our correspondent in Maiduguri, said the training is an eye opener and they have the high expectations that they would be exposed and it will create a kind of knowledge and awareness on security issues and operations, which will go a long way in assisting and guiding their operations.



Wase Group Slams Prophet El-Buba Over Comments

By: **BUHARI B. BELLO, Jos**

A group called Wase Patriots in Plateau State, has debunked what they described "as the traded mischief of Isa El-Buba" against their traditional ruler, HRH the Emir of Wase, Alhaji Sambo Haruna, President Jama'atu Nasril Islam, Plateau State Chapter.

Addressing the press at the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ), secretariat in Jos, Alhaji Sanusi Muhammad called on security agencies to investigate the activities of El-Buba, whom they said, was a notorious Maitasine member before his conversation to Christianity

"In his desperation for recognition beyond the cave he operates, he went on a wild goose chase that may soon attract him a legal battle despite his day dream of being a prophet, although, he may be a prophet of doom in his own right". The group said.

According to them, El-Buba said in the referred video that went viral, "I sent a text message to a particular governor day before yesterday, and he asked me a question on why are you not supporting this candidate. I said I give you a reason on why I am not supporting because the one that is the brain I thought he will repent and change and that's why I gave room for all these period but the key sponsor of the killer men, the key sponsor of Miyetti Allah, the key sponsor of these killer men that are slaughtering our people in the villages, is this man (pointing at the inserted photo of Kashim Shettima, APC Vice-presidential candidate).

There are things I won't say here where the meetings took place, himself and one of the Emirs in this state, Wase"

According to them, "From the quoted statement of El-Buba, Plateau State and indeed the respected religion of Christianity, is no doubt, heading steadily to another quagmire of extricating themselves from the maniac stranglehold of some demented self-appointed preachers and their sundry co-travelers, determined to turn the state into another mine field in which blood must flow to water their insatiable quest to position themselves for undue recognition and for pecuniary gain, albeit irresponsibly."

According to the group, "we watched from a dignified distance the dangerous antics of some mischievous self-appointed preachers in both

religions of Islam and Christianity who have arrogated to themselves a questionable holier-than-thou-attitude, calling to question the integrity of some respected Nigerians based on wild, unsubstantiated and reckless allegations and generality pandering to the whims and caprices in a diabolical desire to libelously slander the revered traditional ruler and the religion of Islam"

They said Isa El-Buba, allegedly, "a disciple of Muhammadu Marwa Maitatsine and the harbinger of evil, would have realized the folly of his past and refrain from it for the good and development of our dear Plateau State now piloted by an Apostle of Peace and a respected technocrat, His Excellency Simon Bako Lalong Esq.

"We are mistaken as rather than see reason and take the path of honour by putting a stop to his childish and dangerous hallucinations, which he perfected in the past for pecuniary interest at variance with the teachings of Christianity; the self-ordained prophet with shallow understanding of what the respected religion of Christianity entails, having lost it all and having watched his usual dreams going up in flames, took his infamy to a very ridiculous level, when he maliciously accused the Emir of Wase, His Excellency, Kashim Shettima and a former Governor of Central Bank of Nigeria of yet another rotten garbage of no substance other than his devilish imagination that gives him sleepless nights if peace is not breached.

"In the said uncouth statement of claimed preaching, the same lowly character went haywire with a tinge of insomnia and desperation in his one-man riot squad to further malign those respected personalities ostensibly for recognition. As always, he has ended up cutting the pitiable picture of amateurish nonentity who has clearly failed to justify his evil intention.

"El-Buba left no one in doubt that he was indeed on a character assassination mission while watching his house of lies crumbling very fast like a pack of cards.

He said Isa El-Buba should be reminded of the fact that before his arrival on the Plateau for asylum, there has been Christianity in the hands of committed Christians of respect.

"There was no misunderstanding or disrespect between Muslims, Christians

and believers of traditional religion until the surfacing of his type on the Plateau.

"In the whole of his worthless and baseless insinuations, there is no single place where he exposed himself as a coward, dullard and brainless as on the issue of claiming that he could not voice out certain things.

"As a committed and sincere priest as he claims, what stopped him from vomiting all the garbage he stomached to serve as a launching pad for security operation?"

"It is easy to make allusions but very difficult to prove. We have beyond any doubt in the course of this press conference, reasoned that Isa El-Buba who goes about trading in mischief with no clear coherence or mission, thinks he is an expert at manipulating and ridiculing people at will.

"The truth is that Isa El-Buba is desperate as everyone can see in his usual failure to achieve his diabolical aims, which has frustrated him so much and made him a drowning clown that can do anything including preaching from his brand of the Bible and beating about the bush and doing the untoward in his rush to make his kill".

They further said his intention is, "to cause chaos and maximum character damage to both the traditional ruler, All Progressives Congress (APC) Vice presidential candidate and the former Governor of the Central Bank, whom he cowardly refused to mention his name and the people unmistakably insidious.

"From the imagination of Isa El-Buba, HRH the Emir of Wase, His Excellency Kashim Shettima and the unnamed former Governor of the Central Bank are unworthy of associating with even though they are leaders globally recognized through their respected stewardship to nation building and peaceful co-existence.

"El-Buba hinged his reasons on myopic, primitive and petty reasoning as a pedestrian clown.



Prophet El-Buba

There is no doubt that at a time like this, Nigerians usually witness the sprouting of religious nonentities, opportunists and criminally-minded demagogues walking the streets with daggers in hand on the lookout for reputations to chop off, for pecuniary interest of course.

"The intention of this press conference is not to join issues with a lowly rated devil garbed in the attire of a priest for fear of equalization, but to strengthen the records for posterity. Ours is not intended to provide a shield of protection to anyone found wanting no matter how highly placed, but to strengthen the records, challenge Isa El-Buba to prove his allegations with facts and to encourage peaceful co-existence for the good of Plateau State and Nigeria.

We are compelled to address the press with this rebuttal in our quest for permanent peace on the Plateau, no matter whose ox may be gored.

"We hereby challenge Isa El-Buba to prove those his allegations against HRH the Emir of Wase and Chairman Jama'atu Nasril Islam Plateau State chapter, His Excellency Kashim Shettima and the unnamed former Governor of

the Central Bank with those facts he claimed to be at his disposal.

"We are not requesting for any apology to those he targeted or retrieval of the statement in question, but prove to facilitate further action against those who are breaching the peace and slaughtering El-Buba's people in the villages.

"His failure is an encouragement to seek redress in the relevant court of law. In this case, ignorance seems to be more deadly than scientifically identified deadly diseases.

"To the serial mischief maker and allegedly a disciple of slain Muhammadu Marwa Maitatsine, we make bold to let him know that we are equal to the task to causing his repentance to the path of honour. Government and Wase traditional council have their own ways of checkmating his excesses while we also have ours.

"We have tolerated enough of the insanity from Isa El-Buba that originated from a curse and we shall not fold our arms to watch a rabble rouser threaten the peace of Plateau State for a selfish interest under the cover of a respected religion," they submitted.

COAS, CAS Celebrate Christmas With Troops, Over 200 Terrorists Killed In Bama

**Service chiefs present awards to distinguished officers, soldiers, media*

By; SADIQ ABUBAKAR, Maiduguri

The Chief of Army Staff (COAS), Lt. General Umar Farouq Yahaya and Chief Air Staff (CAS), Air Marshal Isiaka Amao celebrated the 2021 Christmas with troops of Operation Hadin Kai JTF at the Theater Command Headquarters, Maimalari Cantonment Maiduguri.

They appreciated the troops efforts and commended the commanders for their bravery in the counter insurgency fight, having recorded lots of achievements through intelligence and complementary efforts of the joint task force of the Nigerian Army, Air Force and other security agencies under the Operation Hadin Kai JTF North East for the remarkable successes and achievement recorded so far in the counter insurgency operations of the theater command headquarters.

According to the COAS and CAS, there have been lots of improvement in the security situation in the North East Zone, due to the ongoing renewed efforts and strategies adopted in the operations, while urging the officers and troops to continue putting in their best towards ensuring restoration of peace in the North East by ensuring complete eradication of all the notorious elements who have refused to surrender.

The duo expressed profound gratitude and appreciation to the gallantry of the troops and assured of their continuous support on the troops welfare packages and improvement on provision of operational tools and equipment to the troops to end the war.

They declared serious war on the insurgents in their hideouts in the bushes of Sambisa forest, stressing that joint task force will continue to launch missiles from the air for the ground troops to clear them from their hideouts to give peace a chance as the Nigerian military will not relent in its efforts to professionally achieve its mandate.

The colourful celebration also witnessed parade of 16 officers and soldiers from the Nigerian Army, Nigerian Navy and Nigerian Air Force comprising a Brigadier, lieutenant colonels, sergeants, private, seamen, squadron leader, flying officer and flight officers, who were presented with awards by the COAS, Theater Commander and GOC.

While the Deputy Governor of Borno State, Hon. Umar Usman Kadafur and distinguished combatant journalists from various media organizations based in Maiduguri, Borno State, were also presented awards for their efforts and sacrifices.



However, military sources have revealed that three kingpins of the Boko Haram terrorists, namely, Khaidis Abbah Tukur, Maimusari, and Bakura Jega, were killed by the joint military patrol team on operations launched through heavy airstrikes by NAF and

clearance operations by the ground troops in Bama axis last week Tuesday.

It was gathered that the three wanted Boko Haram insurgents were neutralized at Mantari in Gezuwa area of Bama Local Government Area of Borno State, along with some

insurgents numbering about 75 terrorists.

Military intelligence sources said the operation which resulted in the killing of Jega, Maimusari and Tukur, along with other Boko Haram terrorists, was carried out based on early intelligence of the



assembly of the terrorists last week Tuesday.

“The airstrikes by our NAF aircraft was authorized after it was revealed that a Boko Haram terrorist Commander, simply known as Ikirima, stationed his fighters and gun trucks at Mantari village, alongside other Boko Haram terrorists from other locations who assembled at the location, on motorcycles and gun trucks.

“Subsequently, the authorization for an airstrike was given, leading to the elimination of several Boko Haram terrorists and ISWAP members terrorists and their structures in the area,” the sources said.

The military intelligence sources in Bama said that after the first airstrikes, some surviving Boko Haram terrorists could not bear the airstrikes and resulted in returning back to the scenes of the strikes to evacuate bodies of their members to another location, which will also be neutralized as they were being tailed.

“This thus provided an opportunity for a follow-up strike on the same location which has been confirmed very successful as over 200 terrorists were neutralized with dozens said to be in critical conditions,” he added.

One of the leaders of CJTF in Bama also said that the ISWAP members and Boko Haram insurgents planned to resume attacks during the Christmas and forthcoming general elections, but added that, they are ready to counter them whenever they launch any attack.

“The intelligence we received on their plans, especially their attempt to attack soft targets in Bama LGA energized us to be on alert, coupled with the successful airstrike which has reduced their number despite their regrouping and attacks,” the source added.

It would be recalled that, unfortunately, the incident was at the time that the Chief of Army Staff, (COAS) Lt. Gen. Umar Farouq Yahaya, and the Chief of Air Staff (CAS), Air Vice Marshal Isiaka Oladayo Amao, were in Maiduguri to celebrate with the troops of Operation Hadin Kai on Sunday at Maimalari Barrack Theater Command Headquarters Maiduguri.

Highpoint of the event included, luncheon with the troops including wounded troops, presentation of awards of recognition of excellence and drama/comedy entertainment, group photographs among others.

SDP Presidential Candidate, Prince Adebayo Urges Christians To Condemn Injustice, Corruption

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Prince Adewole Adebayo, the presidential candidate of the Social Democratic Party (SDP) has advised Christians to call out injustice and corruption as a way to make the society better.

He made this known on Sunday December 25 when speaking during the Christmas concert organised by Apostolic Faith Church Ondo State, at his residence.

Prince Adebayo said when public offices steal funds, the church should not encourage them by keeping silent but condemn it, as that is the only way God will have mercy upon Nigeria.

"My only advice to the church is, when they see people in public offices who have stolen fund, they

shouldn't say God has blessed you. When someone does injustice in politics, the church should cry out and say this is injustice. If the church does this, God will have mercy upon Nigeria and truth and justice will come", he said.

The SDP presidential candidate, while commending what the church is doing in the state, said he will provide more infrastructure in the state.

"The most important thing is power is useless. Purpose is more important. And everything that is kept in your hand is a trust from God. Even our own life is a trust. It doesn't belong to you. If you live for 50 years and 100years it's not because you have the best doctor. Is because God has a mission for you, He wants

you to fulfill. I talk to my friends running for office. Those of yesterday have gone. The most important thing is, when you are here, make mark. We are here just like a shadow. Then we should do our best.

"We'll do all the roads, as for the lights we have enough lights, the 615 solar lights we earlier commissioned is just one third, more will come. There's no part of Ondo you will go and there will be no light".

On her part, wife of the SDP presidential candidate, Queen Lilian Adebayo thanked everyone for gracing the event, while expressing hope that with God's help and the vote of the people of the state, Prince Adebayo will emerge a winner at the polls.

She said, "It is a great

privilege having the church here, I want to thank you all, especially for the playlet by the children which inspires me, it shows that man has no power, it is God who will do the choosing for us even for the position my husband is aspiring for.

"I know people will have to go out to vote but I know that God will do it".

The highlight of the event was when gifts were presented to Prince Adebayo by different persons, and also the exchange of gifts between himself and little Ondo children.

Members of his entourage were - Chief Silas Alani, SDP southwest chairman, Mr Patrick Anethua SDP member Edo north, Godwin Osigbeme, Ambassador Rufus Aiyenugba SDP National Publicity Secretary.



The SDP presidential candidate, while commending at a church service beside him his family members.

AFAN Hails Buhari's Courage In Signing NADF Law

By; SANI ALIYU, Zaria

The Chairman Board of Trustees of All Farmers Association of Nigeria (AFAN) Senator Abdullahi Adamu and National President of the association, Architect Kabiru Ibrahim have expressed appreciation to President Muhammadu Buhari

for signing into law, the National Agricultural Development Fund (NADF).

A statement signed by the National President, Arc. Kabiru Ibrahim said, the law will give agriculture the impetus to truly become the backbone of Nigeria's economy.

He said the law will bring about the required prosperity to the over

70% of Nigeria's population currently engaged in small scale production/small holder farming (SSP/SHF).

Senator Abdullahi Adamu added that taking the promise over 100,000,000 Nigerians out of poverty by the All Progressives Congress (APC) administration is a reality.

They wished all

Nigerians a Merry Christmas and a prosperous 2023.

They urged all Nigerian farmers to take advantage of the seamless implementation and administration of the NADF to continue the work towards the attainment of SDGs 1 and 2 (No poverty and Zero hunger respectively).

Lawyer Murder: Sanwo-Olu, IGP Usman, CP Alabi Condemn Act, Assure Speedy Trail, Justice

By; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

Lagos State Governor, Babajide Sanwo-Olu, the Inspector General of Police, Usman Baba Alkali and the Lagos State Commissioner of Police, Abiodun Alabi have condemned the gruesome murder of a lawyer by a police personnel in Lagos.

The deceased, a female lawyer identified as Mrs. Bolanle Raheem was allegedly shot dead by an errant police officer on Christmas day in Ajah area of the state.

According to report, the cop, an Assistant Superintendent of Police attached to Ajiwe police station shot the victim, while with her family were on their way out for Christmas Day celebration.

Sanwo-Olu in a statement by his Chief Press Secretary, Gboyega Akosile, condemned in strongest terms, the alleged shooting and death of the lawyer.

The governor expressed shock and sadness over the mindless shooting of, "an armless citizen" by a police officer whose primary function is to protect the same citizen.

Sanwo-Olu sympathized with the family, friends and associates of the late Bolanle Raheem, pledging the state government's full support and cooperation with the police authorities in their investigation to unravel the remote and immediate cause of the shooting, that led to the untimely death of the innocent citizen, with a view to ensuring that justice is served.

He said, "I have studied preliminary reports on the matter and have instructed the appropriate government officers to immediately get on it. We must ensure a speedy justice for the late Bolanle. Our government cannot sit back and watch our citizens killed by the same law enforcers that should ordinarily protect them.

"I'm aware that the Lagos State Police Command have arrested, disarmed and detained the police officers involved in the shooting incident. I can assure you that the accused persons will have their day in court and nothing will be spared under the Laws of Lagos State, until justice is served adequately. We will ensure that it is done speedily because justice delayed is justice denied."

Governor Sanwo-Olu however, appealed to residents to remain calm and not take the law into their hands on the matter, assuring Lagosians that the government will live up to its responsibilities and get justice for the late Bolanle Raheem.

The governor prayed for the repose of the late Bolanle Raheem's soul, asking God to grant her immediate family and friends the fortitude to bear the irreparable loss.

Similarly, the Inspector-General of Police, IGP Usman Alkali Baba, condemned the shooting and killing of Mrs Omobolanle Raheem, describing the incident as unfortunate and sad.

He has ordered speedy investigation and prosecution of the officers responsible for the ugly and unprofessional act, which doesn't portray the Nigeria Police Standard Operating Procedure and core values.

In a statement by the Force Public Relations Officer Olumuyiwa Adejobi, the IGP commiserated with the family, friends, and colleagues of the deceased as he prays for the repose of her soul.

He further assured the general public of justice in the case while he warns officers and men of the Force to be professional and people-oriented in the discharge of their duties and operate within the ambit of the law, as the Force's leadership will not condone any inappropriate or unprofessional acts.

In the same vein, the Commissioner of Police, Lagos State Command, CP Abiodun Alabi, has expressed heartfelt condolences to the family, friends and colleagues late lawyer.

In a statement by the Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), of the command, SP Benjamin Hundeyin, the Commissioner of Police has ordered that the errant officer be taken into custody alongside his team members.

"The CP has equally directed that the case be transferred to the State Criminal Investigation Department, Yaba for in-depth investigation.

"This has become one too many, especially bearing in mind that a similar incident occurred at the same location less than three weeks ago. The condemnable incident is against the standard operating procedures (SOP) and rules of engagement of the Force, and to say the least is embarrassing.

Christmas: Lalong Urges Compassion, Love, Hope

By; BUHARI B. BELLO, Jos

Plateau State Governor Simon Bako Lalong has joined Christians in Plateau State, Nigeria and around the world in celebrating Christmas, the birth of Jesus Christ, which he said is significant because of the message of hope, love and compassion it carries.

Governor Lalong in a Christmas message, said the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ gave hope to mankind and restored humanity from destruction.

He said Christmas celebrations should therefore, be a period where Christians demonstrate the attributes of Jesus Christ to the world and live up to his teachings by their conduct.

While rejoicing with Nigerians, he said the celebrations should not be overshadowed by

challenges that the nation is passing through because there is light at the end of the tunnel.

Lalong advised Christians to extend their love to those who are underprivileged or persons of different faiths just as Jesus did during his earthy Ministry which earned him reverence and honour that is still being celebrated today.

He called on Nigerians to unite and focus on living sacrificially as well as working for the general good rather than being selfish, which is contrary to the lifestyle and teachings of Jesus Christ.

The Governor while wishing Nigerians peaceful celebrations, called for vigilance against criminals who might be planning to use the Yuletide period to cause chaos and engage in activities that endanger peace and security of citizens.

Yuletide: NACHPN Greets Christian Community

By; SANIALIYU, Zaria

The National Association of Community Health Practitioners of Nigeria (NACHPN), Kaduna State Chapter has congratulated Christian community as they celebrate Christmas and New Year festival.

Comrade Aliyu Abdulrasheed Umar in a statement issued to New Nigerian in Zaria, said, "we should dedicate our lives to giving our all for the salvation of human kind, especially as our nation takes final steps into the election year proper".

Umar also said, "we should fill the environment with mutual love, care and concern for each other, we should give respect, understanding, love, and tolerance to especially people who share opinions that are against our opinion, faith

that is different from ours and believes that contradict our believes".

According to him, Jesus Christ-like life of giving peace where there is trouble, joy where there is sorrow, comfort where there is despair, happiness where there is sadness, should be adopted, as that is the only way we can most effectively speak Christ to the hardened heart.

Comrade Umar reminded Christians, not to let this season pass by without giving something to someone in need and make "Christ live always in you by keeping the virtue of giving even after the festive season."

While wishing the entire Christian community a merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year ahead, he as well urged them to keep away from evil acts in the name of celebration.

2023: No Going Back On 95% Votes For Tinubu In Oyo State - Chairman Media Committee

**Lauds Engr Sanusi's support for Tinubu*

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

The Chairman, Media and Publicity Committee of the All Progressives Congress (APC) Presidential Campaign Council, Oyo State, Alhaji Kehinde Olaosebikan has said the committee is leaving no stone unturned in winning over 95 per cent of the total votes in the state for Asiwaju Bola Tinubu.

Alhaji Olaosebikan stated this in a statement to acknowledge efforts of the Chairman of Ilaji Hotels and Sports Resorts, Engineer Dotun Sanusi in mobilising support for the APC presidential candidate, Asiwaju Tinubu.

He stressed that with the situation in Oyo State presently, the entire people of the state would vote for Asiwaju Tinubu in the 2023 general elections with the efforts of Engr Sanusi, a business mogul, philanthropist and non-partisan Nigerian which have been very impactful.

According to Alhaji Olaosebikan in the past few weeks, Engr Sanusi has hosted over 20,000 people in his resort in Akanran, mobilising and soliciting individuals' and groups' supports for Asiwaju Tinubu, saying the effect of the mobilisation activities of the Ilaji Resorts Chief Executive Officer were

already being felt across Ibadan and its environs, as Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu continued to enjoy greater support and love in both the urban areas and the grassroots.

He maintained that overwhelming majority of the people in Ibadanland and Oyo State had fully embraced the candidacy of Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu, saying with the increase in the tempo of the campaign expected from the first week of next year, it had become certain that the entire people of Oyo State would vote for Asiwaju Tinubu.

"It is inspiring and quite encouraging to see what you're doing. Without any partisan interest, no expectations of either direct monetary or material benefits, yet, you choose to expend so much time, energy, effort and funds into mobilising support for Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu, just because of your conviction that he is the best option Nigeria has now", he said.

The Media Committee Chairman added, "we thank you most sincerely for all your result-driven voluntary activities without any expectation for the candidate being done only because of your belief in the competence, readiness and capacity of Tinubu to take Nigeria to the promised land".

"Let me assure you that

the campaign committee in Oyo State, under the leadership of Senator Teslim Folarin, is leaving no stone unturned, not only in winning, but also in winning over 95 per cent of the total votes in Oyo state."

Alhaji Olaosebikan noted, "so far, Engineer Sanusi had hosted over 10,000 members of Odu'a People's Congress (OPC), Agbekoya Solidarity Movement and Landlord Volunteers, thousands of Islamic clerics and Imams led by the Chief Imam of Ibadanland, Sheik Abdul Ganiy Agbotomokekere; over 1,000 representatives of Christian groups across the 11 local government areas of Ibadanland; all the Ibadan compound and village heads known as Mogajis and Baales and the highly respected leadership of the Central Council of Ibadan Indigenes (CCII) all in support of Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu's presidential bid,".

He emphasized that activities of Engr Sanusi were already known, acknowledged and appreciated by the Coordinator of the APC Presidential Campaign Council in Oyo State, Senator Teslim Folarin, who is also the gubernatorial candidate of the party in Oyo State and campaigning vigorously for the success of Tinubu

and all the candidates of APC at the polls, saying, with what we all know of Tinubu as a visionary and caring leader who has made the greatest contributions to human and material development in Nigeria, the APC Presidential Candidate would accord Oyo State a pride of place in his developmental plan which would definitely include the dualisation of Olorunsogo road to the Ogun State border.

Commending Engr Sanusi for turning around the fortunes of Akanran and Ona Ara Local Local Government Area as a whole with the establishment of the world-class Ilaji Hotels and Sports Resorts which has now given Akanran a global spot in world tourism, sports and entertainment, Alhaji Olaosebikan said only last Friday, "the business mogul who is also the Mogaji of Olugbade compound and Apesinola of Ibadan, mobilised hundreds of youths, women and students for a house to house, street to street campaign from Olorunsogo to the boundary of Ogun State in an unprecedented political mass movement to canvass support for the presidential candidate of Bola Ahmed Tinubu in the February 25 presidential election."



L-R: National President IEDPU, Alhaji Aliyu Otta Uthman; Sariki Salama, Alhaji Ayuba Gabari; Governor Abdulrahman Abdulrazaq; Emir of Ilorin, HRH Alhaji Ibrahim Sulu-Gambari; and Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Interior; Dr Shuaib Belgore; during 57th Annual National Conference & Fund Raising for the completion of Ilorin Emirate Skills Acquisition Centre, in Ilorin Kwara State, **Photo: AKINOLAARIYO**

Death Sentence On Abduljabbar UnIslamic, Would Be Appealed - Bauchi Clerics

By; MOHAMMED KAWU, Bauchi

High level Clerics in Bauchi State under the under the auspices of an Islamic organization 'As'habul Kahfi Warraqeen' have condemned in totality and rejected what it called un-Islamic, wrong and so-called death sentence recently delivered by Judge Ibrahim Sarki Yola on Sheikh Abduljabbar Nasiru Kabara for alleged blasphemy.

"The purported un-Islamic, so-called judgment by Ibrahim Sarki Yola is totally wrong and un-Islamic, we therefore reject it because the judgment was negatively manipulated from the beginning to the end, said the organization public relations officer, Abdullahi Musa.

The 'As'habul Kahfi Warraqeen' Public Relations Officer said in a statement in Bauchi Monday that the judgment was politically processed by Governor Abdullahi Umar Ganduje because Sheikh Abduljabbar was a critic to Governor Ganduje's corrupt tendencies which he vehemently kicks against. "We notice that some of the sects who now ganged up to eliminate Abduljabbar were the ones who committed series of blasphemies in their preaching, but nothing was done to them, as they continue to practice their religion without hindrance".

Musa allegedly



Sheikh Abduljabbar Kabara

enumerated these blasphemers to include Qaribu Kabara, Abdulrazak Yahya Haifan, Abbas Jega, Jalo Jalingo, Ahmad Gumi, Abdulwahab Abdullah and Sani Rijiyar Lemo, saying "But because they are close to people in power, they went scot free while our spiritual leader who is innocent is now facing persecution".

"First of all, we are not satisfied with the judgment, because we believe it was influenced by the Kano state Governor, Abdullahi Ganduje and some clerics in the state who are known to be at logger heads with Abduljabbar for a long time. They therefore ganged up against him and labeled false allegations of blasphemy against him in order to smear him and

eliminate him through the court", PRO said.

According to him, the allegation of blasphemy against Sheikh Abduljabbar is nothing but campaign of calumny and character assassination by his detractors including Governor Ganduje and some clerics who feel threatened by Abduljabbar's increasing popularity.

Malam Abdullahi Musa explained that the detractors purported an allegation of blasphemy to give Abduljabbar a bad name, and have justification for their evil plan to exterminate his life, hence the Bauchi clerics resolve to appeal against the judgment in a higher Court of law to quash this unsatisfactory judgment and impose his

fundamental human rights.

Musa stated that through the appeal at a higher competent Court of law, the Bauchi clerics would impose Sheikh Abduljabbar fundamental human rights, especially those of freedom of religion and thought as enshrined in the Nigerian constitution (as amended). The Clerics called on Human Rights Commission, Amnesty International, National and International Human Right Organization and Human Rights lawyers like Mr. Femi Falana, respected human rights activist, Ahmad Isa, and others to join them counter the unfair and unjustified gang up against their leader by providing legal aid to him.

2023: Don't Elect Leaders Without Good Manifesto - Most Rev Lamido

By; SANI ALIYU, Zaria

The Most Rev. (Dr) Ali Buba Lamido of Church of Nigeria Anglican Communion, Wusasa Diocese Zaria, has warned Nigerians not to elect politicians without good manifestos that will bring succour to them in the forth coming general elections.

Lamido gave the

warning in his Christmas message to Nigerians, saying that a lot of lies have been told in the past and it is time the electorate rethink and make no mistakes in electing leaders in 2023. He also warned those trying to use tribalism, religious differences and other means to distract the election to stop, as God will not allow them to succeed.

Rev. Lamido used the

occasion to call on the Federal Government to make sure that issues of banditry, kidnapping, terrorism and other criminal activities become history by eliminating them completely.

In a related development, the Bishop, First Baptist Church, Rev. Isaac Gbadero has appealed to Nigerians to unite and bring the nation back to

peaceful coexistence, irrespective of any inclination.

Rev. Gbadero lamented how some politicians stock money in their homes, leaving the general people around them in hunger and poverty.

He said God will see Nigeria through after the general elections and it will be very successful and peaceful.

Christmas: Ochor Preaches Peace To Constituency, Deltans

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The Deputy Speaker, Delta State House of Assembly, Rt. Hon Ochor Christopher Ochor, has urged members of his constituency, and Deltans to use the birth of Jesus Christ, to cultivate the act of peaceful living.

Ochor who is also the representative of Ukwuani State Constituency, gave the charge in his Christmas message, signed by his Press Secretary, Mr. Emmanuel Enebeli on Saturday December 24, 2022.

He stated that there is nothing more than peacefully living with neighbours, as it allows for an atmosphere of creativity and positive development, stating that the celebration of the birthday of Jesus Christ is a feast that gives mankind the opportunity to reflect on the advantages of a peaceful society.

He charged them to reflect on the spiritual benefits of Christmas, and use the period to pray for Ukwuani and Delta State, for the existing peace in the state to be sustained, which will help boost their social and economic needs.

"As we celebrate the birth

of Jesus Christ, I urge you to use the opportunity to create and improve the existing peace among you. Christ was born to bring peace into our lives and communities. And peace has many advantages as it offers us an atmosphere for creativity, positive planning and development.

"Let us therefore, reflect on the spiritual purpose of the feast of Christmas and use it to pray for our constituency, and Delta State, so that the existing peace will be sustained."

He also urged the people to use the celebration, to pray for the success of the 2023 elections, for victory at the polls for all the candidates of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), and for a peaceful poll.

"The year 2023 will be a watermark in our country and state. It's the year that the country will go to the polls to vote for its new leaders. Let us also remember the country in our prayers, to have a peaceful election at all levels, and for the victory of our party, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP). Pray for all our candidates at all levels, so that with victory, we can reset, rescue Nigeria, and provide more for Deltans." He noted.

Christmas: APC Chieftain Calls For Renewed Hope In God

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

As Christians all over the world celebrates this year's Christmas, a chieftain of the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC), Comrade Edwin Uhara has called on Nigerians to renew their hope and trust in God.

In his Christmas goodwill message, the party stalwart who admitted the suffering in the land, urged Nigerians not to give up their trust in God nor allow the harsh economic predicaments of the moment to cause them to derail their faith in the unity of the country, saying the symbolic birth of Jesus Christ who is the cornerstone of the celebration should encourage us to rekindle our hope and strengthen our collective resolve to overcoming the current challenges faced by the nation.

Noting that the task of nation building is not the work of one man or one political party but a collective effort and determination by the citizenry to change the landscape of their country and enthrone a better society through good citizenships.

The party chieftain who was full of praises for President Muhamadu Buhari and his team for strengthening the nation's democratic institutions which he described as the bedrock of any democracy, urged Nigerians not to relent in their prayers and supports for the administration as it gradually winds down.

While wishing Christians merry Christmas and prosperous new year, the party and administration defender advised them to always be security conscious throughout and after the festive seasons because life has no duplicate.

Alleged Fraud: NPA Boss Threatens Legal Actions Against Media Houses

laundering activities, fraud, forgery, and tax evasion, which are all baseless figments of their malicious intent.

"Whereas, particulars cited in the report were the regurgitated allegations that they had sponsored and which had been doing the rounds in the media from the outset, this latest attempt is as spurious as their first attempt ever. Their claim that UK/Ireland Investigators, and not Metropolitan Police or Scotland Yard, are investigating me falls flat on its face and gives out the sponsors of the report- which is a piece of cheap blackmail-as desperate hustlers who are not civil and neither working in the interest of the society".

According to him, if the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) had been on the matter as indicated in the report, it is then unfair to suggest or claim that some questionable UK/Ireland investigators are now pushing for an exclusion order to ban him from ever entering the United Kingdom.

While pointing out that there should be inter-agency collaboration in line with some bilateral or mutual agreements, he challenged the conduit pipes of the malice to go ahead and mention the names and true identities of the CSOs and the investigators.

He explained further: "I had, on several occasions, stated that the NPA under my leadership is not aware of any secret foreign accounts and I could not have been a beneficiary of something that I am not aware of and, which I would like to emphasize is non-existent to the best of my knowledge.

"The UK property they mischievously mentioned was declared with the Code of Conduct Bureau (CCB) and purchased before I was appointed into public office. It is also important to note that the property was purchased on a 15-year mortgage payment plan.

"As NPA MD, I run an open administration that gives premium to due process in the execution of the agency's core mandates. Our performances have been recently validated by the Bureau of Public Service Reforms (BPSR), which adjudged the NPA on my watch as a Platinum Level Organization, consequent upon the deployment of its Self-Assessment Tool (SAT) in the NPA for the independent assessment, validated assessment and in-depth analysis of processes and practices of the agency. Flowing from the assessment, the BPSR had returned a verdict of "exceptional performance by the NPA with a performance level of 91.25 per cent".

Bello-Koko said that according to the Director General of BPSR, D.I. Arabi, the NPA's performance far exceeded expectations due to exceptionally high quality of work in all essential areas of responsibility, resulting in an overall quality of work that is superior, exceptional or unique.

He highlighted that under his watch, the NPA has specifically, in terms of tangible achievements that the various publics can relate with, recorded some modest achievements and has generated the sum of N286 billion and remitted over N100 billion to the Consolidated Revenue Fund (CRF) account of the federation as of November 2022.

Bello-Koko, while reeling out other achievements of the Authority, said that it's committed efforts at advancing trade facilitation recently won it the award of "Best Maritime Agency of the Year 2022" by Daily Telegraph Newspaper.

"In the light of the above, I cannot afford to be distracted by the deliberate shenanigans of blackmailers and vested interests who are desperate to upset the appellation of my sharply-focused leadership that is committed to emplacing and bequeathing to the nation a transparent and accountable management of the NPA now and in the years ahead.

"In rounding off, I will, henceforth, institute legal action against any media house that publishes unsubstantiated and damaging reports about my person", he added.

Yobe APC Empowers 2,500 Ward Executives With N20,000 Each



By; SANI GAZAS CHINADE, Damaturu

The All Progressives Congress (APC) State Executive has embarked on empowering 2,500 ward executives with N20,000 each in Yobe State preparatory to the 2023 general election.

The party ward executives empowered were from the Damaturu, Gujba, Gulani, Fika, Fune, Nangere and Potiskum areas of the state.

The State APC Chairman, Mohammed Gadaka was among the APC State Executives that witnessed

and went around the respective local government areas for the disbursement of the empowerment package, aimed at boosting their financial capability.

Speaking in Potiskum and Fika local government areas, Muhammad Gadaka said that the empowerment is meant to assist the ward executive who have immensely contributed in one way or the other towards the victory of the party in the State.

The chairman further charged the executive to come out in large numbers

during the 2023 general elections and cast massive votes for Governor Buni, Tinubu/ Kashim and all other APC candidates in the state at large.

"I'm calling on all APC eligible members who are yet to obtain their Permanent Voters Card (PVC) to do so without further delay. It is by so doing that you could ensure the party's victory at the polls," Gadaka said. He assured the APC members that many empowerment packages are coming up, especially for the women, as according to him, Governor Mai Mala Buni

is set to empower 8,000 women in the state.

Gadaka however, described the gesture as, "unprecedented and very timely" while expressing joy and hope that the empowerment given to them would make the desired positive impact on the living conditions of members.

They also pledged to vote for Governor Mai Mala Buni and the APC Presidential candidate, Asiwaju Bola Tinubu/Kashim Shettima and other APC candidates in the state during the forthcoming general elections.

Plateau Lawmaker, Sunnah Hospital Partner Surgeons To Provide Free Medical Outreach

By; BUHARI B. BELLO, Jos

Over three hundred people are to benefit from free medical outreach courtesy of a partnership between member representing Jos North-North Constituency, Ibrahim Baba-Hassan and other stakeholders.

The gesture according to the member representing Jos North-North Constituency in the Plateau State House of Assembly and All Progressives Congress (APC) standard flag bearer of the Jos North Bassa Federal House of Representatives in 2023 general election, aimed at bringing succour to indigent members of the society, is in collaboration with Sunnah Hospital and Northern Nigeria Surgeons.

The free medical outreach is currently holding at the Sunnah Hospital Ungwan Rimi in Jos North Local

Government Area.

The doctors drawn from Plateau, Bauchi, Jigawa, Gombe, Katsina, Borno, Sokoto, Yobe, Kaduna and Adamawa states, are on ground attending to different ailments affecting the people.

Addressing beneficiaries, sponsor, Ibrahim Baba Hassan said the decision to embark on the free medical outreach is necessitated by the need to provide healthcare services to the people at the grassroots, especially the indigent, who are not financially stable to take care of their medical needs.

Baba Hassan explained that the inhabitants of Jos North Local Government Area are very dear to his heart, hence the need to partner the medical experts in conjunction with Sunnah Hospital to provide succour to the people.

The lawmaker further noted

that similar gesture will be extended to other parts of Jos North and Bassa local government areas.

He informed people of his constituency of the readiness to work closely with the people at the grassroots to understand their needs and look for possible ways of mitigating their plight.

Councilor representing Ungwan Rogo /Rimi Ward, Suleiman Sultan who could not hide his joy over the gesture, appreciated the candidate of the All Progressives Congress for Bassa/Jos North Federal Constituency for coming to the aid of his people

Adam Musa who spoke on behalf of the management of Sunnah Hospital, expressed gratitude to Ibrahim Baba Hassan for his understanding to partner with the management to minimize the medical challenges of citizens.

Head of the medical team,

Abdulbasi Umar, explained that the doctors were assembled from all parts of Northern Nigeria with aim of alleviating the plight of the people, noting that his team will perform hernia and hysterectomy repairs, as well as appendicitis surgery among other diseases.

Doctor Umar appreciated Ibrahim Baba Hassan and the management of Sunnah Hospital for the partnership and for providing them with the enabling environment to carry out the surgeries.

Some of the beneficiaries expressed gratitude to Ibrahim Baba Hassan and the management of Sunnah Hospital as well as the medical team for coming to their aid.

As at the time of filling this report, over one hundred and twenty patients were screened different for surgical operations.

Buratai Academy Wins 5th Zaman Lafya Cup



Political Tussle: 3 Confirmed Dead, APC Chairman's House Burnt in Ebonyi

**Umahi orders arrest of culprits*

By; MKPUMA ENYINNA, Abakaliki

Ebonyi State Police Command has confirmed the killing of three persons in Ekoli-Edda over a political tussle between the State All Progressives Congress (APC) chairman, Chief Stanley Okoroemegha and the former LGA chairman of the council, who is the House of Representatives candidate of APC, Barrister Eni Uduma Chima.

As a result of this, Governor David Umahi has ordered for the arrest of both of them, pending investigation into the matter.

According to the press release issued by the State Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), SP Chris Anyanwu, the incident occurred on Monday at about 16:30hrs, when a distress call was received that sporadic shootings and killings were going on at Ekoli-Edda between Ebubeagu operatives who accompanied their boss, Chief Stanley Okoro Emegha, the State's Chief Security Consultant, and another group of men purported to be loyalists to the immediate past Council Chairman, Hon Chima Eni, who is also the APC flag-bearer for National House of Representatives in the area.

He further stated that, "Ebonyi State Police Command is presently investigating a case of murder, arson and malicious damages to government property and individuals' resulting from apparent struggle for supremacy and who controls the area politically among two notable political stalwarts in Ekoli-Edda, Afikpo South LGA of the state.

"It was gathered that the open shoot-out was not far-fetched from previous grudges existing among the two factions. In the

process, a youth leader identified as Eseni Kalu Egwu was fatally wounded, later rushed to a neighboring hospital at Ohafia, Abia State, where he was confirmed dead.

"Angered by his death, the youth of the area mobilized and went on rampage, killing Eme Orji, a younger brother of Chief Stanley Okoro Emegha and an Inspector of Police attached to the Special Protection Unit (SPU). The irate youth equally set ablaze the village house of the Security Consultant, his Toyota Hilux van and a Toyota SIENNA space bus belonging to the Police Command's Tactical Teams.

"When the Tactical Teams were despatched to Ekoli-Edda to take control of the situation, they were ambushed by the youth of the area at the village entrance. However, the operatives were unhurt.

"The bodies of the three deceased persons have been evacuated and deposited at different morgues. A total of eight suspects were arrested among the irate youth while others are still at large.

"Also, the two political gladiators at the middle of the whole imbroglio, who happen to hail from the same community, have been placed on protective custody to douse the tension in the area, while a scrupulous investigation has been activated by the Deputy Commissioner of Police in-charge of SCIID here in Ebonyi State.

Also, Governor David Nweze Umahi has directed the immediate arrest and prosecution of the State APC Chairman, Chief Stanley Emegha and Candidate for Afikpo North/Afikpo South Federal Constituency, Chief Eni Uduma Chima for their roles in the murder of three persons in Ekoli Edda.

Agbakoba Moves To Challenge Powers Of EFCC In Court

By; MATTHEW UKACHUNWA, Lagos

Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN), Dr. OIISA Agbakoba, has announced his intention to go to court to pray for a declaration on the exact scope of the powers of Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC). Agbakoba's decision is as a result of his concern that the EFCC often exceeds its powers in the investigation and prosecution of alleged offenders of Nigeria's criminal laws. He said that he had held a media conference to express his concerns,

which he does occasionally on several national issues.

He said that he felt that the EFCC exceeded its powers in what it considers to be its public duty in the war against corruption in Nigeria.

"The EFCC issued a response stating that I was wrong to take the view that it sometimes acts outside the scope of its powers vested by the EFCC Act.

"The EFCC referred to some cases, but I would say that in a very recent decision, Dr. Joseph Nwobike SAN vs The Federal Republic of Nigeria FRN SC/CR/161/2020, the

Supreme Court drastically limited the scope of powers of the EFCC, as it recognized that the EFCC being very powerful could not be allowed to run amok.

"I am not a court. Neither is the EFCC. I will proceed to the court for a declaration on the exact scope of powers of the EFCC, especially in relation to states of the Federation. A declaration by a Judicial authority is the most valid process to authenticate if am right or wrong with respect to my position that the EFCC often acts contrary to the law.

"I am not in any way

against the EFCC on the fight against corruption. As admitted by the EFCC, I have always supported the fight against corruption.

"My concern is that the EFCC, in its undoubted statutory powers to stamp out corruption in Nigeria must strictly conform to the prescriptions of the law.

"EFCC must not in the fight against corruption, undermine the rule of law. So to the courts, I go," Agbakoba narrated, stressing that the scope of the powers of EFCC will be tested by the courts.

2023: COAS Tasks Troops On Neutrality, Professionalism

By; SANI GAZAS CHINADE, Damaturu

The Chief of Army Staff (COAS) Lt. General Farouk Yahaya has charged all personnel of the Nigerian Army to remain apolitical in the discharge of their professional duties as the 2023 general elections draw near.

The Chief of Army Staff made the plea in a goodwill message to officers and soldiers of the Nigerian Army on the occasion of Christmas for Year 2022 and New Year 2023 celebrations held at the headquarters of sector 2 Operation Hadin Kai, Damaturu Yobe State.

He was represented by the Commander Sector 2 Operation Hadin Kai Joint Task Force, Major General KA Isoni.

"Let me also seize this opportunity to remind all Nigerian Army personnel to remain apolitical as we approach the 2023 general Elections. You are to remain professional at all times and strictly abide by the Code of Conduct and Rules of Engagement throughout the electioneering period.

"Furthermore, I implore



you to maintain the spirit of patriotism and continue to give your best in the discharge of assigned duties and responsibilities. We must not rest on our oars as it is pleasing to note that we are recording giant strides in defeating all detractors towards bringing lasting peace to our Fatherland. Our collective sacrifices in the various theatres of operations are well appreciated by well-meaning Nigerians both home and broad as well as

allies of Nigeria worldwide," he said.

He further said, "I would also like to use this unique opportunity of this Yuletide season to once again, express our profound appreciation and unalloyed loyalty to the President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, President Muhammadu Buhari GCFR for his continuous support to the Nigerian Army.

"The least we can give

back is to remain committed, determined and focused towards defeating all adversaries in every nook and cranny of our great country in line with the directives of Mr President. It therefore behoves on every Nigerian Army personnel to remain loyal, unwavering, patriotic and committed to preserving Democracy in Nigeria. I wish you all a Merry Christmas Celebration and Happy New Year 2023 in advance," he said.