

# New NIGERIAN

"The Greatest Weapon is Truth"

Published since January 1, 1966

Vol. 3 No. 114

Monday 6th March, 2023

Shaban 13, 1444

**Buhari  
Departs  
Katsina  
For Qatar**

*Story on Page 2*

**Guber Polls:  
AIG Abdurrahman  
Storms Kaduna State**

*Story on Page 5*



**About 135m Africans  
Have Ear, Hearing  
Problems - WHO**

**Rivalry: ISWAP Kills 200 Boko Haram Terrorists, Wives, Children In Borno**  
*\*Several others surrender to Army* *Story on Page 4*

## Popular Islamic Cleric, Sheikh Gumi Loses Mother



*The suspect with false bottom bags for heroin*  
**NDLEA Uncovers Over 9.40Kgs  
Heroin Concealed In Travelling  
Bags False Bottom, 1.924kg Skunk  
In Cream Tube, Others At Lagos  
Air, Sea Ports** *Story on Page 4*

By: IBRAHIMADAMU, Kaduna.

**K**aduna based Islamic cleric, Shaikh Ahmed Abubakar Gumi has lost his mother who passed away on Sunday evening.

The bereaved Islamic scholar announced her death via his verified facebook page, adding that she would be buried at Unguwan Sarki Muslim Cemetery according to Islamic regulations.

The retired army officer and medical doctor solicited prayers for the deceased from his Facebook friends and followers.

The nonagenarian, New Nigerian learnt, died at about 5:30pm in the family home at Abakpa GRA in the state capital.



*Sheikh Gumi (left) with his late mother*



*L-R: Vice President- elect, Sen Kashim Shettima, Governor Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya, President-Elect, Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu and Sen. Danjuma Goje at the residence of the President-elect in Abuja on Friday.*

**GO-CARES:  
Governor Inuwa  
Grants N500m To  
Gombe Traders  
To Help Them  
Rebuild  
Businesses**

*Story on Page 6*

## Buhari Departs Katsina For Qatar

By; SULAIMAN AHMED MISAU, Katsina

President Muhammadu Buhari on Saturday afternoon, left Katsina for Doha, the capital City of Qatar.

The president would be at Qatar for an official working visit.

Katsina State Governor, Aminu Bello Masari in company of the All Progressives Congress

(APC) Gubernatorial candidate, Dr Dikko Umar Radda escorted the president, who boarded an aircraft from his home town Daura to Umaru Musa Yaradua International Airport, where he later boarded a Presidential jet, Nigerian Air Force (NAF) 001.

Alhaji Aminu Masari stayed for a while to see the take-off of the flight that conveyed the president.

## Election: Ex Adamawa SSG Congratulates Tinubu, Says Binani's Victory Is Next

*\*Enjoins voters to massively support only female candidate in Nigeria*

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The immediate past Secretary to Adamawa State Government (SSG), Dr. Umar Buba Bindir has said that it is a good omen for the people of Adamawa State and the All Progressives Congress (APC) that Senator Bola Ahmed Tinubu's has emerged the president-elect, which is a victory that will translate to Senator Aishatu Ahmed Dahiru Binani, the party's gubernatorial candidate's victory.

Buba, an APC stalwart who is from Yola South Local Government Area of Adamawa in an interview with this medium, said that the Tinubu/Shettima presidential ticket is what will give hope to Nigerians that every system can work for the common good for all.

Buba while congratulating Tinubu and Kashim, said he had no doubt of their winning chances at the last election, because of their proven records of both capital and human development in their respective

states.

He said Binani has the same record of development and winning the election to her is natural, because she is masses inclined and her political ideology is in tandem with the grassroots people.

He therefore, called on eligible voters to vote for Binani as the candidate that has what it takes to deliver on the masses' mandate.

"We in APC have a sellable candidate, she is the product that is easy to sell because of her goodness. I'm calling on everyone to vote for her next week Saturday," he said.



Senator Binani,

## Tinubu's Election As President Reflects Wishes Of Nigerians - Kolawole Babatunde

By: ADEBOYE ADO, Akure

Leaders of the All Progressives Congress (APC), in Ondo North Senatorial District have expressed satisfaction at the performances of the party in the just concluded Presidential and National Assembly Elections in the country.

The leaders expressed happiness at the victory of Asiawaju Bola Tinubu which was described as a reflection of the genuine wishes of Nigerians and the election of APC candidates to the National Assembly as a

demonstration of the commitment of people of the state to remain within the progressive ideological bloc.

The Director General, Campaign Council for Ondo North Senatorial District, Hon. Kolawole Babatunde, who is also the Special Adviser to the Ondo State Governor on Rural and Community Development said the quality delivery of dividends of good governance by the Arakunrin Oluwarotimi Akeredolu Administration inspired the electorate to vote massively for APC candidates.

"Our victory, as recorded on Saturday during the Presidential and National Assembly Elections, was attributed to our collective aspiration and aggressive actions matched with unrepentant commitment by all and sundry towards achieving excellence, yet, we made it.

"The spirit of this hardwork was invoked by our visionary Governor, Arakunrin Oluwarotimi Akeredolu, SAN, CON, we followed religiously and we made history", he said.

While applauding the collective aspiration and aggressive actions

matched with unrelenting efforts of party members at achieving the feat, Honourable Babatunde urged APC members in the state not to relent but scale up their efforts with greater zeal during the House of Assembly election in the state.

He equally appealed to the people of Ondo State to come out en masse and cast their votes for APC candidates in the coming State House of Assembly election.

The Director General assured that the APC controlled governments at the Federal and State levels will make life more meaningful for all citizens.



## C'River: Peter Obi, Asuquo Ekpenyong, Others Deserved Victory - IPAC

BY; VITALIS UGOH, Calabar

The Cross River State Chapter of the Inter Party Advisory Council (IPAC) has applauded the Labour Party Presidential Candidate, Peter Obi for winning the state.

The Council also commended the Senator-elect for Southern Senatorial District in the state Asuquo Ekpenyong and other winners for emerging victorious during the February 24 general election in the state.

Speaking, Comrade Anthony Bussing, the state chairman of IPAC disclosed this while reviewing the outcome of the just concluded elections in the state.

According to him, "the intention of the people was clear, the people went obedient and the result was loud".

"We congratulate Peter Obi, the Labour Party Presidential Candidate because the votes he polled rightly belonged to him and we endorse the outcome of the Presidential election."

"For Asuquo Ekpenyong, the senator elect for the southern senatorial district of the state, after our detailed interaction with our candidates, we found out that he was projected to win the election from our independent poll.

"We understand how visible he was in the field and his victory is not in dispute.

"Majority of parties in

IPAC have accepted the outcome of the elections in Cross River South and we congratulate him formally", he said.

He added that IPAC is happy for his election especially because he belongs to the younger generation and may likely emerge one of the youngest senators in the 10th Senate.

IPAC also commended other winners including Ekpenyong Akiba (Calabar Municipality/Odukpani), Alex Egbonna (Abi/Yakurr), Jarigbe Agom (Cross River North), Victor Abang (Ikrom/Boki) and many other winners saying their victory is not in dispute.

However, IPAC expressed reservations with the

senatorial elections for the Central Senatorial district of the state as well as that of Etung/Obubra Federal Constituency.

The senatorial elections produced the current speaker of the state house of assembly Eteng Jonah Williams as Senator Elect while Mike Etaba clinched a third term for the Obubra/Etung Federal Constituency.

He said the outcome of these elections is questionable and a good number of parties are resolved to meet the winners in court.

He also thanked INEC in the state for conducting a relatively free and fair elections and urged them to sustain the tempo during the upcoming elections.

## Accident Claims Four Persons Along Kaduna-Abuja Highway

By; AMOS TAUNA, Kaduna

Four persons on Thursday evening, lost their lives in a motor accident along Kaduna-Abuja highway. The accident involved a trailer and Hilux heading

to Abuja with six persons. Mr Yusuf Musa, who works with Olam Industry along Kaduna-Abuja road, said he was on duty at the company's main gate when he heard a loud bang, as dust covered everywhere.

According to him, "the trailer was parked along the road when the Hilux with six persons rammed into the trailer."

He said the Hilux was on full speed as it was heading towards Abuja, adding that four persons died while the injured was

immediately rushed to a hospital in Kaduna.

He said the dead were also evacuated and deposited at the hospital morgue.

The Kaduna Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) Sector Commander did not pick his calls for confirmation.



## Group Tasks Political Parties In Kaduna To Form Alliance With Labour To Displace APC

*\*Dismisses rumours of Asake's Withdrawal*

By; ALEX UANGBAOJE, Kaduna

A group, Think Tank for Quality Leadership and Good Governance, on Friday, called on political parties in Kaduna State to join forces with the Labour Party, to displace the All Progressives Congress (APC), in the March 11, 2023, Gubernatorial and State Assembly election. The group said the story that the party's Guber candidate, Hon. Jonathan Asake, has stepped down for the candidate of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) is a rumour from the pit of hell, as a result, should be disregarded by the public.

According to Leader of the Group, High Chief Christopher Geoman, at a press conference in Kaduna, Asake, is the best man for the Kaduna Governorship job based on his track records and will never step down for

any candidate.

"The story that Labour Party is forming a merger with the PDP, should be discarded as what it is, this is a rumour from the pit of hell. His Excellency, Jonathan Asake, has not stepped down for anyone and he is the best candidate, come March 11th 2023.

"We call on our supporters to come out enmass to pour out their frustration in the ballot box against the rubbery that happened at the presidential election.

"Asake, has been tested, trusted and the most qualified for the job. He remains the candidate of the Labour Party and has our support for the governorship election".

On his part, Chief Morrison Ikpeamaeze, Chairman, All Kaduna State LP Support Groups, appealed to the party's supporters not to relent in mobilizing for their candidate ahead of the

Guber election, despite the rumour.

Another member of the Think Tank, Daniel Ejembi, assures that the best thing that can come out of Kaduna state is Jonathan Asake.

"People should not be discouraged because the oppositions are already scared, that was why they are going round with the rumour that our principal has stepped down for PDP candidate, they are lying because they were threatened by the last election.

"The Obidient movement is an organic movement and our decision is applicable to all labour Party's candidate in the upcoming election." Ejembi said.

Don Olivera Idahosa, another member of the group, appealed to security agencies in the State to protect members of Labour Party, especially those in the Southern Part of Kaduna,

against harassment by members of other political parties.

"We appeal to security agencies in Kaduna State, to call members of opposition parties to order for their continuous harassment of our members in zone 3. After the presidential election last Saturday, we discovered the high level at which members of our party were being harassed, we think nobody should continue to harass our members in that manner.

"We are law abiding people as a group and as party and we are not ready to join issues with anybody. And we want to tell the people of Kaduna State, especially those of us that are Obidient, who want a better Kaduna State, to join forces together and make sure, we come out on 11th and vote for Labour in all positions without fear or intimidation, because we can never be intimidated." He noted.

*We Are Working For Success Of Gawuna - Kano LG Boss*

By; JABIRU A. HASSAN, Kano

The executive chairman of Dawakin Tofa

Local Government Council, Honourable Ado Tambai Kwa has disclosed that they are working seriously for the success of the All Progressives Congress (APC) Gubernatorial candidate and the Deputy Governor of Kano State, Dr. Nasiru Yusuf Gawuna in the forthcoming governorship elections.

He stated this in a chat with our correspondent in Kano, where he said that APC would emerge victorious at both governorship and House of Assembly polls scheduled to hold on March 11, 2023, adding

that Dr. Gawuna remains the best choice to succeed Governor Abdullahi Umar Ganduje.

"We are making all efforts to ensure that APC wins in Kano with wide margin and our governorship candidate, his deputy and all the House of Assembly candidates remain the people's choice because most of them are tested and trusted," he stressed. Alhaji Ado Tambai Kwa reiterated commitment towards ensuring better leadership in Kano State in order to promote continuity in a democratic process.

He thanked the people of Kano State for supporting APC and called on them to come out enmass and vote for Gawuna/Garo and all the APC House of Assembly candidates.



Kwa (left) with Gawuna

## Rivalry: ISWAP Kills 200 Boko Haram Terrorists, Wives, Children In Borno

**\*Several others surrender to Army**

By: SADIQ ABUBAKAR, Maiduguri

No fewer than 200 Boko Haram fighters including women, and children were killed by the Islamic State of the West Africa Province (ISWAP) in a deadly rivalry clash in Gudumbali local government area of Borno State.

It was gathered that the ISWAP insurgents targeted hundreds of the Boko Haram terrorists and their families at Choliye Village, located in the Northern part of the state while fleeing ISWAP attacks.

In the Lake Chad it has been reported how the terrorists fled their enclaves between February 26 and 27, 2023, amidst deadly attacks targeting their enclaves in Gaizuwa, otherwise known as Mantari, Gabchari, Kashimiri, and Maimusari in Bama Local Government Area of the state.

The source said that the sustained attacks had led to the dislodgement of hundreds of the fighters.

The sources said the Boko Haram terrorists, who scamped to safety, ran towards the Mandara Mountains in the Gwoza axis to seek refuge.

In contrast, others fled towards Konduga, Mafa, Dikwa, Gajiram, and the Lake Chad shores.

Some of the surviving Boko Haram leaders who fled the attack due to the ISWAP's superior fighting capacity, included Abbah Tukur, the Khaid of Mantari and Maimusari; Abu Isa, Khaid of Ngauri; Alhaji Ali Hajja Fusami, the newly appointed Khaid of Garin Abu Ikliima and Abu Ali, among others.

ISWAP, according to multiple sources, immediately mobilised more fighters to go after the fleeing Boko Haram, who were later intercepted at Choliye Village, where they opened fire and killed 200 of them including their family members mostly women and children.

The source said that the onslaught against Boko Haram continued in the Asinari, Ashanari, and Masarmari areas in Konduga, where scores of the fighters were killed in the attacks coordinated on March 1 by one Ba'ana Chingori of the ISWAP.

In Yale, a village in Konduga LGA, ISWAP Commander Modu Bashir Okocha led another team of ISWAP to attack another Boko Haram position and as a result killed 15 of them, seizing their weapons and motorcycles.

The fierce onslaught forced hundreds of the Boko Haram fighters and their families to surrender to the troops of Operation Hadin Kai in Mafa, Konduga, and other parts of the theatre while some of them managed to flee through Mafa to Dikwa, Abadam, as well as the Niger Republic in the Lake Chad region.

Some of the fighters escaped to the camp of Bakura Wulgo, a.k.a Abou Oumaymah, in the axis of Marte and Krenowa while others ran to the Mandara Mountains in Gwoza to seek refuge and protection from Ali Ngulde.

The ongoing rivalry clash between JAS and ISWAP seems unending as several efforts by the groups to merge forces against the Nigerian military and Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) appears impossible.

Both ISWAP and Boko Haram have, so far, failed to increase the manpower and equipment needed to sustain their nefarious activities as they continued to attack each other, inflicting heavy casualties among themselves.

On December 6, 2022, Boko Haram carried out one of the most devastating attacks, killing 33 wives of Islamic State West African Province (ISWAP) militants in Sambisa Forest.

On December 31, a faction of Boko Haram attacked an armory base of the ISWAP at Toumbum Allura Kurnawa and Kangar by the shores of Lake Chad. Bakoura led the attack, resulting in the killing of several ISWAP terrorists and the seizure of a large number of weapons.

It is against this backdrop that the ISWAP leadership led by its IMAM Abu Mosab Albarnawi fled Nigeria to Somalia, Mali, and Burkina Faso to seek the support of other terrorist partners to save their self-acclaimed Daula from collapsing.

The Boko Haram faction had been on the receiving end within the past few weeks due to its in-house leadership crisis. The sack of Mallam Ibrahim Shuwa, aka IKIRIMA, and the appointment of Alhaji Ali Hajja Fusami by Ali Ngulde as a commander did not go well with many fighters within Sambisa Forest who were believed to be undermining the JAS groups.

The task ahead of the newly elected president of Nigeria will focus on a full-time military offensive around the shores of Lake Tchad Sub-Region, including part of the Niger Republic and Cameroon.

## NDLEA Uncovers Over 9.40Kgs Heroin Concealed In Travelling Bags False Bottom, 1.924kg Skunk In Cream Tube, Others At Lagos Air, Sea Ports

By: RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

Several kilogrammes of assorted illicit substances have been intercepted by operatives of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), amongst them are a 9.40 kilogramms of Heroin and 1.924 kilogrammes of Skunk concealed in false bottom of travelling bags and cream tube respectively.

It was learnt that the over 9.40 kilograms of heroin concealed in false bottoms of his two travelling bags were recovered from a businessman identified as Kingsley Celestino at the Murtala Muhammed International Airport, Lagos.

According to reports, Kingsley, a business class passenger on Qatar Airline flight was arrested at Terminal 2 of the MMIA on Saturday, March 4, 2023 on his way to India.

Though a native of Nnewi South Local Government Area of Anambra State, the 49-year-old was travelling with a Guinean international passport.

The Director, Media and Advocacy of the Agency Femi Babafemi, in a release on Sunday said preliminary investigation revealed that the suspect frequently travels to India on business class tickets. He claimed he deals in clothing business between Nigeria and India.

He added that It was further established that the suspect obtained the Guinean international passport in Guinea Bissau, where he said his mother came from.

In the same vein, a 24-year-old passenger travelling to Oman, Etounu Monday, was intercepted at the Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport, Abuja on Monday,

February 27, during the outward clearance of Ethiopian Airline flight ET 950 while attempting to export 1.924kg of skunk concealed in cream tube, the NDLEA spokesperson also disclosed.

Giving a breakdown of other interception, Babafemi said, "At the Tincan seaport, Lagos, NDLEA operatives on Friday, March 3, recovered 244 parcels of Canadian Loud weighing 79 kilograms concealed in medium size wooden sound system speakers packed inside two out of four used vehicles in a container marked CRSU9258348 coming from Toronto via Montreal, Canada.

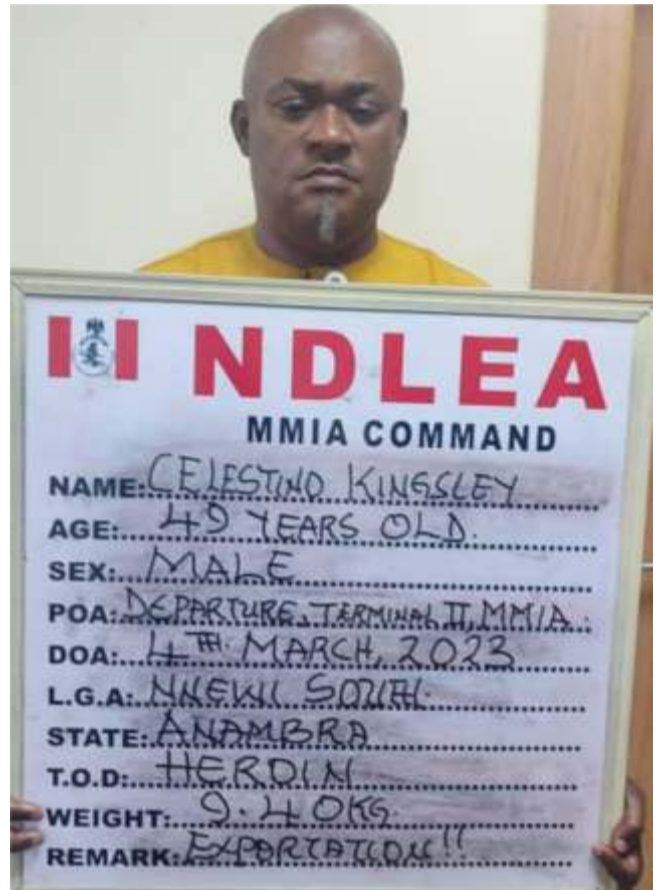
"The imported vehicles used as cover for the drugs are a 2009 Jeep Wrangler and a 2009 Honda Ridgeline.

"Similarly, NDLEA officers of the Directorate of Operations and General Investigation (DOGI) attached to courier firms in Lagos intercepted a consignment of nine parcels of methamphetamine concealed in native black soap, Dudu Osun, heading to Europe.

The statement further read: "No fewer than 778,190 pills of pharmaceutical opioids including tramadol and a drum of 270kg Methylene Chloride were recovered by operatives from a suspect, Eric Pepe Yohanna, 33, in Jalingo, Taraba state on Monday 27th Feb following credible intelligence. Also seized from him is a Daylong tricycle used in distributing the illicit substances.

"In Adamawa state, the house of a wanted notorious drug dealer, Mamudu Njobdi at Sebore, Gyalla road Dougada ward, Mubi was raided in the early hours

of Monday 27th Feb where estate, Ojodu Ikeja where 24



he was arrested and drug exhibits recovered.

"The 31-year-old suspect was earlier arrested on Wednesday 22nd Feb at his drug joint in Kolere water board but mobilized thugs to attack NDLEA officers and in the process escaped with exhibits.

"While a suspect, Geoffrey Okpani, 31, was arrested at Bukuru area of Jos, Plateau state with 27.45kg of cannabis, Ajayi Tope, 30, was arrested on Saturday 4th March at Area 5 Ile-Ife, in Ife south local government area of Osun state with 18kg of same substance.

"In Lagos, NDLEA operatives on Friday 3rd March raided De-Niche Hotel & Suites, Omole

suspects were arrested and different quantities of illicit drugs recovered from them".

The Chairman/Chief Executive Officer of NDLEA, Brig. Gen. Mohamed Buba Marwa (Retd) commended the officers, men and women of MMIA, NAIA, Tincan, Taraba, Adamawa, Plateau, Osun and Lagos Commands as well as DOGI for the arrests and seizures.

He charged them and their counterparts across the country to intensify the ongoing mop up operations to deny political thugs access to illicit substances ahead of the Governorship and House of Assembly elections this Saturday.

## About 135m Africans Have Ear, Hearing Problems - WHO

By: AMOS TAUNA, Kaduna

The World Health Organisation (WHO), has said that about 135 million people in Africa have ear and hearing problems.

Dr. Matshidiso Moeti, the WHO Regional Director for Africa, in a statement to mark this year's World Hearing Day, said, "At the current rate, it is likely that by 2050 there could be

over 338 million people affected by ear and hearing issues in Africa."

With the theme of this year's commemoration, "Ear and hearing care for all! Let's make it a reality", saying that inequalities disproportionately impacting marginalized populations as the burden of ear and hearing problems reflected significantly.

According to her, nearly 80 per cent living in low- and middle-income countries with over 1.5 billion people live with ear problems and hearing loss.

She lamented that the problems of ear and hearing have greatly impacts on the lives of those affected, their families, and their communities, alleging that they not know how

and where to find help or do not have access to the needed services.

She observed that there was the need for governments to prioritise ear and hearing care health programmes as part of their non-communicable diseases and universal health care agendas and increase their campaign, political and financial commitment with a view to curbing the problems associated with the disease.

# Guber Polls: AIG Abdurrahman Storms Kaduna State

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Following the directives of the Inspector General of Police, AIG Ahmad Abdurrahman, mni who was deployed to Zone 14 (Kaduna/Katsina) has arrived Kaduna on a working visit to the State Police Command.

A statement signed by the Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), DSP Mohammed Jalige, made available at the

weekend, said that he arrived on Thursday March 2, 2023 and had an interface with supervisory officers of the command and other critical stakeholders, with a view to ensuring the successful conduct of the upcoming Governorship/State Assembly elections in the 23 local governments Areas of the State come March 11, 2023,

He reiterated the IGPS call on all security agents to exhibit high sense of

professionalism and be non partisan in discharging their lawful duties during the election period.

AIG Abdurrahman further warned that the Police is fully prepared to protect the lives and property of the good people of Kaduna State, to provide conducive atmosphere for them to exercise their franchise.

The AIG who was warmly received by CP

Babaji Sunday alongside other senior officers on election duty, assured the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) officials and adhoc staff of their security across all the polling units in the state.

Meanwhile, he warned those who may be planning to cause mayhem during the period to have change of mind, as they cannot evade the eagle eyes of the force.



# GO-CARES: Governor Inuwa Grants N500m To Gombe Traders To Help Them Rebuild Businesses

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Governor Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya has flagged off the distribution of five hundred million Naira (N500,000,000) as support grants to various business groups in Gombe State to help them rebuild their businesses and overcome the effect of recession occasioned by the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to a statement signed by the Director-General (Press Affairs) Government House Gombe, Ismaila Uba Misilli, made available to our correspondent yesterday, this gesture is coming under the Gombe State COVID-19 Action Recovery and Economic Stimulus, GO-CARES, which is an intervention programme of the state government.

Speaking at the flag off ceremony, the governor said, his administration is fully committed to addressing socio-economic challenges affecting the people of the state which was the idea behind the domestication of the Nigerian COVID-19 Action Recovery and Economic Stimulus, NG-CARES of the Federal Government in Gombe State where more than 8.5 billion Naira was budgeted to support 288,700 households, farmers, small scale businesses across the nooks and crannies of the state to mitigate and cushion the adverse effects of COVID-19 pandemic which wreaked havoc on socioeconomic life of communities world over.

He said, since the flag-off of the programme in July last year, GO-CARES spent about 3.4 billion Naira through various interventions and relief packages reaching thousands of vulnerable families and businesses.

"So far, 147,666 indigenes of Gombe State have benefitted from the GO-CARES and many more will come

onboard as many packages are underway," he noted.

The governor presented a cheque of 500 million Naira to the representatives of over 100 business communities, assuring that the distribution starts immediately.

"Ours is a grant, not a loan, and the allocation of this huge sum is a proof of how important we take businesses owing to the role they play in the growth and development of our dear state".

The governor observed that the development agenda his administration is vigorously pursuing through intensive investment in infrastructures and human capital development has created a conducive atmosphere for businesses to thrive, citing the road network in the industrial cluster in Nasarawa and Gombe main market; installation of solar powered hybrid street lights, improvement in security among others.

"My government is a business-friendly government and our policies are geared towards benefitting the common man. We believe that the formal sector alone cannot support our economy and provide the needed prosperity to our teeming populace. Economic development is a two-way process involving both public and private sectors working together.

"It is against this backdrop that we are undertaking an 18 billion Naira project, the Muhammadu Buhari Industrial park in Dadin Kowa which will employ hundreds of thousands of youths and support numerous businesses within and outside Gombe State", he added.

Governor Inuwa urged the various business groups to vote for the APC candidates at the forthcoming Gubernatorial and State Assembly Elections in the state for the complete cycle of purposeful leadership which will pave way for the actualisation of



many developmental projects in the state including the long-awaited Kolmani Integrated Project.

He called on all the beneficiaries to make good use of the grants by supporting their respective businesses for the development of Gombe State, enjoining them and all people of Gombe State, in general, to conduct themselves peacefully as they go out next Saturday to vote, maintaining that peace is precious and preserving it is the responsibility of all.

Earlier in his welcome address, the Commissioner of Trade, Industry and Tourism, Hon. Nasiru Aliyu said, Inuwa-led administration would continue to provide a favourable atmosphere for businesses upholding its revered status of being No. 1 in the ease of doing business.

Also in his remarks, Commissioner of Youths Development, Hon. Abubakar Aminu Musa said GO-CARES has saved many families and businesses across the state through its various packages, urging the beneficiaries to support the continuation of the programme by reelecting Governor Inuwa Yahaya for the second term.

Responding on behalf of the benefiting communities, Alh. Sunusi Abdullahi

Mai Agogo; Chairman of Inter-Local Markets Traders Association, Alh. Uba Abdullahi; Chairman Women in Business, Dr. Eliza Danladi; Chairman Amalgamated Traders Association, Alh. Abba Bill Gates said Governor Inuwa has fulfilled promises he made to support business communities, saying that they are grateful for the gesture and will make good use of the grants.

They pledged their continued solidarity to the governor, promising to pay him back handsomely in the forthcoming elections for the sustainability of the interventions and the interest of Gombe State.

"Let's unite for Inuwa and champion his course for the good of our businesses and the good of Gombe State."

Other dignitaries present at the event included: The Deputy Governor, Dr Mannasah Daniel Jatau, Speaker Gombe State House of Assembly, Rt. Hon. Abubakar Mohammed Lugerewo, Secretary to the State Government, Prof. Ibrahim Abubakar Njodi, Head of Civil Service, Alh. Bappyo Yahaya, Commissioners, Special Advisers, and Leaders of various business communities, among others.



## Jigawa AFAN Congratulates Badaru For Delivering State To APC

By **JABIRU A. HASSAN, Dutse**

The Jigawa State Governor, Muhammad Badaru Abubakar has been commended for delivering the state to the president-elect, Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu in the February 25 general

elections.

In a statement signed and issued to newsmen in Dutse, the state All Farmers Association of Nigeria (AFAN) chairman, Alhaji Idris Yau Mai Unguwa Jaga said that Governor Badaru is a real democrat and a patriotic citizen who

always wishes the country well.

"We are certain that Governor Badaru Abubakar is one of the recognised Nigerians, whose ideologies remain for national development. In this regard, we thank his excellency and his lieutenants for keeping

the APC flag flying and wish the newly elected president a successful tenure," he said.

Mai Unguwa Jaga called on the people of Jigawa State to vote for Malam Umar Namadi Dan Modi as the state governor for the betterment of the people under the most formidable continuity.



Gov. Badaru Celebrating Tinubu/Shettima victory alongside other APC governors

## Unlawful Prosecution: Court Orders Akwa Ibom Government To Pay Inmate N2m

By **PATRICK TITUS, Uyo**

A High Court sitting in Ikot Ekpene, Akwa Ibom State has ordered the state government to pay N2m for the rehabilitation of a 28-year-old man, Idaraobong Sunday Dickson, for making him to suffer in prison for eight years, over allegation of armed robbery and rape, which he knew nothing about.

The Court, presided over by Justice Ntong Ntong, gave the order on Friday in its judgment in a case between the State against Idaraobong Sunday Dickson and three others standing trial since 2015 on a six-count charge of conspiracy to commit felony, robbery, armed robbery and rape.

Justice Ntong, who

discharged and acquitted Idaraobong Sunday Dickson, having found him not guilty, however convicted and sentenced the two other defendants, Nsikak Godwin to 20 years in prison and Christopher Sunday, 16 years in prison, with jail terms to run concurrently from June 22, 2015.

In a one hour judgement, the court also ordered the "Nigeria Police Force to apologize to Idaraobong Sunday Dickson either in a national newspaper or privately in a special letter addressed to the defendant for unlawful arrest."

Justice Ntong said the evidence before the Court shows that, Idaraobong Sunday Dickson, a native of Ikot Ada Utor in Midim, Abak Local Government Area, has no case to answer, as there was no

evidence linking him with the commission of the alleged offences.

The court advised "Akwa Ibom State Government, particularly the Attorney General of the State and the Director of Public Prosecutions, to always supervise the activities of lawyers in the Attorney General's Office and the Nigeria Police Force to caution its officers to treat civil populace with dignity and respect."

According to the Court, "the Police or the state, prosecuting a person suspected of committing a crime, ought to be diligent and sure of their facts, before charging the person to court."

Justice Ntong wondered how, "the life of Idaraobong Sunday Dickson, a phone battery charger and recharge card

seller in Ikot Ekpene, who was toiling day and night to make ends meet, is truncated by Police shoddy investigation."

Justice Ntong said a situation whereby the accused is made to suffer unjustly is tantamount to unjust treatment of an innocent citizen who has wasted his youthful years in prison for an offence he did not know.

The Court held that, "if the State Officials and Officers of the Nigeria Police Force had done due diligence in their investigation, the ugly situation would have been duly averted."

Justice Ntong said he is "emboldened to make the order by virtue of his inherent powers pursuant to section 6 (6) of the 1999 Constitution.

# Tinubu/Shettima Victory Well Deserved - Amb Balla

### \*Congratulates President-Elect

By **JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON**

All Progressives Congress (APC), senior member and a critical stakeholder in Adamawa State, Ambassador Fatima Balla has said that the Tinubu/Shettima candidature's victory is a ticket well deserved. She is therefore, congratulating all Nigerians for the victory of Senator Bola Ahmed Tinubu and Senator Kashim Shettima as president and Vice President elect under APC. "I truly believe Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu deserves to be congratulated by all Nigerians. It is a victory very well deserved," she said.

According to her, the 2023 elections is so far the greatest election ever in Nigeria and the hero and winner is no other person than Asiwaju.

She praised Tinubu for being a leader with uncommon traits of leadership, whose experience made him to grow above political tantrums and attacks.

Bella recalled how despite all the hurdles thrown on his path, Tinubu remained

calm, consistent and resolute until the end.

"There was never a bad word nor anger. He maintained a state manly statute to the finishing line," she said.

While congratulating him, the powerful woman politician maintained that, "As the problems were multiplying, his voice was added to the voices of our elder statesmen in asking his followers, Lagos his state that was taken over by the Labour Party and all APC members to remain calm and maintain peace.

"Asiwaju's acceptance speech in itself was a masterpiece, the best acceptance speech so far in Nigeria. He was magnanimous in victory, by calling on his fellow contestants to join him to build a greater Nigeria. All his words were that of a great statesman, who knows what he is doing and who seems to already know what his country needs to move to greater heights.

"The APC is lucky to have him and so in Nigeria. We will continue to pray to God to give him the wisdom and strength to do what is right for our dear country," she said.



Fatima Balla

# Be Loyal, Dedicated To Nigeria, Arebgesola Charges Corrections Service Officer-Cadets

By; IBRAHIM ADAMU, Kaduna.

Nigeria's Minister Of Interior, Rauf Aregbesola has enjoined newly passed out Assistant Superintendents of Corrections Service to be loyal, faithful and dedicated to country and all efforts of keeping the nation safe.

Aregbesola gave the charge in Kaduna, while reviewing Passing Out Parade (POP) for Course 28 of Assistant Superintendents of Nigeria Custodial Service at Corrections

Training Facility in Kaduna on Friday.

The Minister urged the 117 officer-cadets to avoid any injurious acts capable of harming the integrity and peace of the country, adding that interests of the nation should be paramount in the cause of discharging their regimental duties as custodians and managers of inmates and facilities.

He reiterated resolve of the federal government to equip, train and provide state of the art facilities for personnel to

make the job of rehabilitating inmates to becoming responsible members of the society after serving terms easier.

He disclosed that new residential quarters had been built and old ones renovated across the country for comfort of officers and men of the service.

"The present administration is dedicated to improving service condition of all personnel of the corrections service so they can give in their best for the job of managing inmates and inculcating discipline and skills

into them as they serve their terms.

"It is in this light that officers have been promoted to next ranks to encourage them and give sense of belonging to deserving and dedicated men in the service.

"I am excited and satisfied with quality of training, knowledge and discipline impacted on these 171 cadets being passed out today.

"I bring you the best wishes of the president who asked me to send his regards and hopes that you will reciprocate gestures of the Nigerian people who find

you worthy of managing inmates so that they could be responsible members of the society and above all, keeping the country safe.

"Promoting community safety is paramount and an important function that cannot be compromised which I believe you are chosen by virtues of your profession to be vital actors.

"This ceremony is coming at a time the service is unveiling its new uniforms to conform with transitioning from prison to correctional centres to keep up with time and democratic convince," he said.





# Presidential Election: Nigerians Are Winners - Senator Girei

*\*Calls on Atiku, Obi to accept defeat*

*\*Says it is God's will expressed by Nigerians, congratulates Tinubu, Shettima*

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Senator Abubakar Girei, the Sardauna Girei has said that the victory of the All Progressives Congress (APC), as the political platform that won the just concluded presidential election with Senator Bola Ahmed Tinubu as its Presidential candidate is a victory for all Nigerians.

Girei availed his statement to our correspondent on behalf of his family and his constituency, congratulating the President Elect, Senator Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu and the Vice President Elect, Kashim Shettima for winning the election against all odds.

"I wish them a very successful tenure as they unfold their Renewed Hope Agenda intended to Transform our dear Nation to greatness. I have no doubt Nigerians will see better days ahead and our future generations will witness more peace, unity and prosperity," Girei said.

He called on H.E. Atiku Abubakar and H.E. Peter Obi, the PDP and LP presidential candidates to accept defeat as the



Girei

election loudly expressed God's will by Nigerians. "They should congratulate the winners and support them in order to allow

peace to reign. By so doing, they stand a better chance of being appreciated by Nigerians as true democrats.

"Once again I congratulate all Nigerians and thank the Almighty Allah for seeing us through this major event in our rich history,"

# 18m Nigerian Children Not in School, UNICEF Laments

By; MATTHEW UKACHUNWA, Lagos

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Nigeria has expressed displeasure that in Nigeria, primary education is officially free and compulsory, but 18 million of the country's children aged five to 14 years are not in school.

UNICEF also disclosed that only 61 per cent of six-year olds regularly attend primary school in Nigeria.

UNICEF Nigeria stated

this in a news release made available by its Communication Officer, Blessing Ejiofor, in commemoration of year 2023 International Children's Day of Broadcasting.

"The 2023 International Children's Day of Broadcasting (ICDB) comes up on Sunday 4th, March 2023.

"The ICDB was launched by UNICEF in 1991 to encourage broadcasters worldwide to create awareness on children's issues.

"It's a day broadcasters allow children to be part of the programming process, to talk about their hopes, dreams and exchange ideas with their peers on issues affecting them," UNICEF explained.

The theme for this year's celebration is, "More Money for Primary Education".

The UN agency said that adequate funding of primary education will create an enabling environment for increased demand for qualitative

education which is the bedrock of enhanced knowledge, improved behaviour and personal growth of the children.

"We therefore, enjoin broadcasters to open airwaves to the children for this year's celebration and throughout the year and also to produce documentaries that highlight the plight of children in Nigeria," the international authority on children's well-being said in the news statement dated March 1, 2023.

# Arewa Youth Condemn Reps Member, Ado Doguwa's Action In Kano

By; AMOS TAUNA, Kaduna

The Northern Youth Council of Nigeria (NYCN), has condemned the alleged action of a member, House of Representatives, Ado Doguwa of mobilising thugs and weapons by burning, shooting and killing innocent people for political differences in Kano State.

The lawmaker was allegedly involved in a violent confrontation between members of the New Nigeria Peoples Party (NNPP) and the All Progressives Congress (APC) that led to the killing of three people and the burning of a campaign office of the opposition party in the Tudun Wada Local Government Area of Kano State.

Abdullahi Kiyawa, the police spokesperson in the state, explained that the lawmaker was arrested and charged with murder for allegedly killing three persons.

According to Isah Abubakar, the National President, Northern Youths Council of Nigeria, in a statement issued, "We cannot be idle at times when the right, privileges, freedom and peace of the North is concerned, at times like this, we must all come out in full force to put a stop to a long time tyranny and rape of democracy demonstrated by the unscrupulous

dishonourable Ado Doguwa over the years."

As a voice of the oppressed to support justice, equity and political fair play, the youths explained that reports have shown how Ado Doguwa illegally mobilises thugs, weapons especially gun, incumbency power, wealth, and abuse his position by burning, shooting and killing innocent people just because of a political difference, thereby forcibly imposes himself to be declare winner in an election characterised by vote buying, voters intimidation, refusal to use BVAS devices at certain areas and tactical stealing of ballot papers during distribution before voting commences.

The statement further explained, "His (Ado Doguwa) arrest has shown the power of the law over any other power, and has also brought an end to era of fear, intimidation and all kind of abuses of political power."

The youth prayed that he (Ado Doguwa) be fully prosecuted according to the crime committed, and let the voice of the people matter in the election be clearly heard.

"We shall keep vigilant on the whole prosecution to monitor how the judiciary play their role in sanitising our political system," the youth explained in the statement.



Ado Doguwa

# NEDC To Upgrade Borno Eye, Dental Hospitals

By; SADIQ ABUBAKAR, Maiduguri

The North East Development Commission (NEDC) is set to upgrade the structures, quality of facility, equipment and services to International standard as post insurgency health and medical interventions as part of its mandate.

The Managing Director, NEDC, Alhaji Goni Mohammed Alkali stated this on Friday, when he was conducted round the two hospitals by the Chief Medical

Director (CMD) Eye, Dr. Falmata Kyari who took him and his team round the eye hospital on inspection and assessment of the its facilities, equipments and building comp;ex.

While the Chief Medical Director (CMD), Dental, Dr. Bukar Gana took the MD NEDC and his team round the Dental Hospital for the assessment of dental buildings, facility and equipment.

Fielding questions from, journalists after the inspection and assessment tour, the CEO of

NEDC said, " Although, the facilities have been functional and very busy at all times, it is better for us to come and see for ourselves rather than being told. We will try to take note or stock of the hospital's needs to enable us know actual areas and what we are actually going to intervene.

"We normally have as part of our mandate interventions in health and medical areas towards improving the livelihood and living condition of the people of the North East.

'Yes, apart from my renovation of just the building structure, we are also going to replace all the 20 to 30 years obsolete and grounded equipment with new and ultra-modern and sophisticated equipment and machines," Alkali said.

The Managing Director further explained that the rehabilitation works includes other buildings such as staff quarters generating set ,warehouse, office equipment, medical and laboratory equipments among others.

He added that as part of the interventions meant for the hospitals, training and retraining of the hospital's staff from nurses, to medical doctors and others are all inclusive in order to meet up with the international requirement and standard.

The Managing Director was accompanied by the commission's executive members, management and the media department of the commission, led by the Head of Media, Malam Abba Musa and others.



# Guber Polls: Hold PDP Responsible For Any Breach Of Peace In Kaduna - APC

By; FUNMI ADERINTO, Kaduna

The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) should be held responsible for any breach of peace in Kaduna State before, during and after the gubernatorial election and one of its spokesmen should be invited by security agents to shed more light on the looming breakdown of law and order that he had earlier warned against.

In a petition to security agents, the Assistant Director Public Affairs of its Kaduna State chapter, had raised an alarm over possible violence today, "like what happened during juma'at prayers in Katsina last week," when PDP members protested the use of "Islamic clerics."

A statement by the Directorate of Strategic Communication All Progressives Congress (APC) Campaign Council, Ibraheem Musa made available to newsmen on Friday, said the petition whose excerpts have gone viral, is somewhat ambiguous and lacks clarity, so

security agents should ask the PDP spokesman to share his intelligence with them.

"For example, he should mention the people who will be using Islamic clerics during today's Jumma'at prayers, and in what ways and manner they will do so. Above all, the spokesman should reveal how the reaction of PDP members will lead to violence.

"Failing to give a satisfactory answer, the spokesman should be charged to court under extant laws of Kaduna State, for giving false information or concealment, defamation and public incitement.

"Ironically, rather than try to win the people's support, given its locust years in office which citizens of Kaduna State rejected in 2015, PDP is trying to blackmail its way to office by intimidation, raising the spectre of violence and dragging our respected Islamic clerics into the murky waters of politics, in its desperation to grab power during the March 11 gubernatorial election.

"The residents of Kaduna State will not forget the 16 wasteful years of the PDP government in a hurry, when they had nothing to show for the huge statutory allocations that it had received from the Federation Account, in terms of development.

"Instead, the last PDP administration left behind huge debts and pension liabilities, a state divided along ethno-religious lines and a subnational with very low Human Development Indices.

"Upon assuming office in 2015, the Malam Nasir el-Rufai government reversed these negative parameters, by revamping education, overhauling the health sector and improving human capital in general.

"In particular, the APC administration has introduced free and compulsory education from primary to secondary levels, sacked incompetent teachers and employed versatile ones, built more schools and classrooms, renovated existing ones as well as provided

furniture to public schools. The exercise is ongoing.

"The result of this reform is evident from the performance of our students who have been sitting for external examinations that are being conducted by the West African Examination Council(WAEC) and NECO.

"In 2014, only 34% of our students who sat for WAEC passed with five credits and above when PDP held sway but in 2021, 81.87% got at least five credits, including English and Mathematics.

"In addition, the present administration has built or refurbished a Primary Healthcare Centre in each of the 255 wards of Kaduna state and has put machinery in place to complete the 300 bed hospital that was abandoned by the PDP government.

"Besides, the el-Rufai administration inherited less than 150 doctors when it came on board but right now, it has about 337 of them working for Kaduna State Government,

excluding 54 House Officers at Barau Dikko Teaching Hospital.

"The United Nations Deputy Secretary General, Amina Mohammed, has described Kaduna State Government as a trail blazer in its efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals(SDGs). Similarly, the Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning has commended it as the leading state in SDGs attainment in the country.

"These strides in human development and the unprecedented infrastructural upgrade that the present APC administration has achieved in the last eight years, have surpassed the 16 years of PDP's misrule.

"By the Grace of God and with the support of the good people of Kaduna state, Distinguished Senator Uba Sani, the APC Gubernatorial Candidate, will sustain this positive trajectory when elected governor," the statement assured.

## Don't Upset Nigeria's Peace With Utterances, Actions - Laosun

*\*Says no weapon of enemy fashioned against Nigeria shall prosper*

By; BAYOAKAMO, Ibadan

A former African Action Congress, (AAC) Governorship candidate in Oyo State, Engineer Akinwale Laosun has advised candidates in the last Saturday Presidential election to watch their utterances and actions.

Engineer Laosun gave the advice in a statement made available to journalists in Ibadan over the February 25 Presidential and National Assembly elections.

The former AAC governorship candidate said the candidates should bear in mind that lives and well being of the electorates are precious to the economy of the state or the country.

"I am quite disturbed by the utterances of some elders, the

allegations of the candidates and the parties who have lost the election. I know it could be painful, for no one possibly would venture into the political space as a candidate if there was no possibility of winning except you are a political jobber or gamer", he said.

Engineer Laosun added, " it is more disturbing that these aggrieved parties or individuals have been part of the faulted electioneering processes in their party primaries and some of these parties have been accused of rigging elections in the past".

"Fellow Nigerians, we must all be grateful to God for the recently concluded Presidential election. Having run in an election before, it is important for candidates to understand that there is only

one seat available hence there will be one winner and many losers".

Engineer Laosun stressed, " it is important for candidates to understand that there is only one seat available hence there will be one winner and many losers.

Secondly, we must understand that the lives and well being of the electorates are precious to the economy of the state or the country hence we must be guided about our utterances and actions whether we win or loose"

The former governorship candidate stressed " Thirdly, we must salute this electioneering umpire and the processes involved; for it is an improvement on previous elections. All political parties and candidates must

understand that Rome was not built in a day"

According to Engr Laosun, " if anyone has any evidence of electioneering malpractices, by now we all know the channel to pursue to right the wrongs we believe have been committed. No one should try to upset the peace of the country or set the youth on an evil mission to disrupt or doubt our democratic process".

On the President elect, the former AAC governorship candidate said " sincerely, Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu has won this election. He is a worthy Yoruba leader and the smartest politician in this modern day Nigeria", saying, " I want to use this medium to congratulate Asiwaju Tinubu. My prayers are with you and Nigeria sir. Congratulations"

"For Nigerians, it is the progress and development of the country that must be most important to all and not anyone's personal ambition. Instead of causing chaos, which many of these leaders have used to their advantages, it is time to be civil enough to accept defeat. Defeat in itself, is not a bad notion for it gives the opportunity to assess failed strategies and re-present the solution being proffered.

While appealing to the youths not to " go on any protest except the children of your party leaders are with you. Do not let anyone use you as a blood sacrifice", Engineer Laosun said, " I pray for Nigeria today that no weapon of the enemy fashioned against the country shall prosper - Amen."

# Nigeria's Presidency Should Rotate Constitutionally Among North, South - Wike

## \*Commissions projects in Ibadan

By: BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

The Rivers State Governor, Barrister Nyesom Wike on Friday, said that Nigeria's Presidency should be constitutionally rotated among the two main regions of North and South by all political parties.

Speaking at the commissioning of the 3.2 kilometres dual carriage Ibadan Airport Road named after Dr. Victor Omololu Olunloyo and the 500,000 Litres Aviation Fuel Storage and Dispensing Facility located within the Ibadan Airport, Alakia, the Rivers State Governor said this will give room for equity and fairness in the country.

According to Governor Wike, at present, Nigerians are aware that when power finishes from the South it will go to North. When it finishes from the North, returns back to South.

"I'm happy that Gov Makinde is one of those making history by making sure that power shifts to the South. I have told people that those who fight for change, those who fight for revolution, may not be the direct beneficiaries of that fight," he said.

The Rivers State Governor added, "But today history has it that all of us now are aware that when power finishes from the South it will go to North. When it finishes from the North, it will go to South"

"It doesn't have to be in the constitution before it can be implemented. I thank Nigerians for standing firm to see that this

issue materialised."

He however, declared that Gov Makinde has shown that he has the capacity and that, "he has shown he is a man you can depend on. He has shown that he is a man that will not tolerate complete slavery."

"Let me on behalf of my entourage, thank you for according us this opportunity to commission this important project. I am not surprised with the performance of Seyi Makinde."

Speaking further, Gov Wike said, "he can only belong to the G-5 standing on their feet. It is those who are afraid and have nothing to offer that cannot stand firm and be bold and take a decision and say that. We must put this right, it doesn't matter who is involved."

"Seyi is doing quite a lot of things. Somebody has said here that you (Makinde) are humble, your own humility is infectious but you are very dangerous. He is very humble. He doesn't talk like us, but he is very dangerous. Somebody who is not talking when you see him in action, you will say is this Seyi really,"

The Oyo State Governor, Engineer Seyi Makinde in his remarks, disclosed that the completion and commissioning of the 3.2 kilometres road and the Aviation fuel tank projects were fulfillment of the promises he made to the people of the state.

Governor Makinde declared that the commissioning of the Airport Road is part of his vision to turn the surrounding areas



Gov Nyesom Wike commissioning a project in Ibadan on Friday

of Ibadan Airport into an aerotropolis and that all the projects and policies of his government have ensured that Oyo State economy continues to grow.

"You are all welcome to the commissioning of the Dr Victor Omololu Olunloyo Ibadan Airport Road, which is part of our vision of turning the surrounding areas of Ibadan Airport into an aerotropolis. They have explained to us the other projects attached to it but history is being made here today because after the speeches here, for the first time, an aircraft will be fuelled at Ibadan Airport," he said.

Stressing that, "those who are saying all the projects we have been carrying out are audio, they will see the video of the aircraft being fuelled here", the governor called on the people of Oyo State to re-elect him on March 11, so that the state could move onto Omituntun 2.0, which is about the sustainable development of the state.

The governor stressed that his administration will continue to serve the good people of the state till the last day of his first tenure in office and that it will continue to honour heroes and leaders, who have served the state diligently.

# Kaduna Guber: APGA Candidate Shuns Asake, Declares Support For PDP's Ashiru

By: EMMANUEL AGBO, Kaduna

The Kaduna State gubernatorial candidate of the All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA), Dr. Andrew Duya has announced his decision to step aside from the Kaduna guber race, slated for March 11, 2023 by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC).

Duya during interaction with newsmen in Kaduna on Saturday, said his decision became imperative considering the realities on ground that he cannot win the election.

He said after due consultation, he has come to the conclusion that both the People's Democratic party, (PDP) and other political parties who mean well for the state should team up together and send the All Progressives Congress (APC)

packing for the good of all.

Asked why the choice of Ashiru Isa Kudan, Duya disclosed that the people of southern Kaduna have a long way to go in politics, adding that it is not ripe to have a Southern Kaduna governor yet, even as the zone could not be able to come out with a consensus candidate.



Dr. Duya

He said, "There are three phases of politics. The politics of ground of inducement as

deception, emotion and reality. What we have mostly is that of deception where people gather around you to get what they can get from you. But the reality is that I discovered there is no how I can win.

"Even Asake cannot win because when you look at the number of registered voters in our zone, it is nothing compared to that of zone 2 and 3. So I can tell you that southern Kaduna people are not ready yet to be at the affairs of the number one position in Kaduna state."

Speaking on the

possible reason for his decision, Duya disclosed that he did not collect a dime from anybody before taking his decision, adding that the decision was birthed on the ground of patriotism for Kaduna state on the need to collectively support candidate that will be able to protect the interest of the southern Kaduna people and that of state at large.

He urged the good people of Kaduna state as well as his supporters to come out en masse and vote for PDP who has a good strategy of salvaging Kaduna state if elected in office.

He lamented that the APC government has brought upon the people of Kaduna State, a lot of negative consequences and as such, the need to sacrifice his personal ambition for the prosperity of Kaduna State is in the right direction.

## 3 Division Assures Of Commitment To Adult Skills Acquisition Training, Education Of Children

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

The Chairperson Nigerian Army Officers' Wives Association (NAOWA) 3 Division Chapter, Mrs Bilkisu ZB Ibrahim has assured youth and barracks women of their commitment to skills acquisition training and improved education for troop's children in Maxwell Khobe Cantonment Jos.

The Chairperson NAOWA made this known on Friday, when she led other members of the association on a courtesy visit to Headquarters 3

Division, Maxwell Khobe Cantonment Jos.

Mrs Ibrahim noted that NAOWA 3 Division under her leadership will ensure the up-scaling of skills acquisition training for adults.

She also pledged her resolve to renovate and upgrade the Salamatu Yahaya Skills Acquisition Centre to higher standard for a more effective service delivery.

She further assured them of her commitment to giving a facelift to N A O W A Nursery/Primary School in Maxwell Khobe Cantonment Jos to

enhance the standard and quality of education for personnel children.

While disclosing her plans to improve infrastructure and learning facilities at NAOWA schools in Jos, the Chairperson reiterated her determination to empower women and youths in the barracks in the area of fashion design, catering and hair dressing among others.

She noted with gratitude the support NAOWA continued to enjoy from the Nigerian Army and solicited for more.

Responding, the General Officer Commanding (GOC) 3 Division and

Commander Operation SAFE HAVEN (OPSH), Major General Abdulsalami Ibrahim revealed his passion and committed to upgrading and uplifting the standard of Army Children schools in 3 Division, noting that, children of officers and soldiers deserves the best of education and healthcare services required for a happy family.

He commended NAOWA for their complimentary roles in education, healthcare and taking care of the needy. General Abdulsalami further pledged to support the noble association in realizing its objectives.



## Troops Neutralize One, Rescue 14 Kidnapped Victims In Kaduna

By; **AMOS TAUNA, Kaduna**

One bandit was killed after engaging in a fierce battle with soldiers attached to troops of Sector Four of Operation Whirl Punch, and Special Forces of the 167 Battalion in Chikun Local Government Area of Kaduna State.

The hoodlums were forced to flee in disarray following the superior fire power of the troops.

Samuel Aurwan, the state Commissioner for Internal Security and Home Affairs, who disclosed this on Saturday, also disclosed that 14 kidnapped victims, comprising nine men and five women were rescued by the gallant troops and destroyed the bandits' hideouts (camps).

According to him, "The Troops of Sector Four of Operation Whirl Punch, and Special Forces of the 167 Battalion have cleared a bandit hideout during a fierce encounter in Kaduna State."

He added that the troops embarked on a long-range fighting patrol to Tukuruva general area of Chikun local government area, engaged and overpowered the outlaws, neutralizing one, with others fleeing in disarray.

He further explained that the troops during the operation rescued 14 kidnapped victims, comprising nine men and five women, stressing that the victims were moved to a secured location for debriefing and examination before being reunited with their families.

In the course of the battle, the Commissioner stated that the troops destroyed several camps and recovered two motorcycles during the operation.

He pointed out that Governor el-Rufai commended the troops and praised the leadership of the Major General T.A. Lagbaja, the GOC One Division and Force Commander of the Operation Whirl Punch.

## Election: Aggrieve Persons Should Seek Redress In Court, Arewa Group Advises

By; **AMOS TAUNA, Kaduna**

The Concerned Northern Forum (CNF), has called on those who feel aggrieved in the presidential and National Assembly elections to approach the law courts, follow the laid down procedures and lodge their case to avoid creating tension and causing disaffection amongst Nigerians across tribal and political divides.

The forum noted that sponsoring protests and making inflammatory comments is unacceptable and a direct call for anarchy and enjoined all stakeholders to refuse to be used to cause unnecessary crisis in the country.

Briefing newsmen in Kaduna on Friday, the spokesman of the forum, Abdulsalam Moh'd Kazeem, congratulated Senator Bola Ahmed Tinubu on his well-deserved victory as the President-elect and Nigerians

for ensuring a peaceful conduct of the elections last Saturday in most parts of the country.

The forum saluted the courage of the Chairman, Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Prof Mahmud Yakubu for making history and delivering an impeccable election despite the aggressive work of saboteurs and enemies of democracy in Nigeria.

The spokesman said, "What Prof. Mahmud Yakubu has done by maneuvering through all the hurdles and giving a worthy election deserves commendations and not condemnation."

He stated that despite widespread fears bothering on insecurity, kidnappings and the judgment of many analysts that elections would not hold in many parts of the country, he added that INEC under Mahmoud Yakubu delivered a successful world class election

all over the country including flashpoints of violent extremism and terrorism such as Borno and Zamfara states as well as the Naira redesign and fiscal policy of the Central Bank of Nigeria, INEC manage to conduct the presidential and National Assembly elections.

He added that the facts are there for everyone to see, saying that insinuating that the just concluded elections is not free and fair is laughable because, for the first time in the history of Nigeria, Lagos state voted against Bola Ahmed Tinubu and Buhari lost elections in his state.

He also added that about seven (7) serving Governors lost their senatorial elections, wondering that if the elections were not free and fair, how come all the contesting political parties won in areas that were not their strongholds and even had elected representatives?

Abdulsalam noted that those hanging onto the issue surrounding the upload of results on the INEC portal should note that the Electoral Act did not state that results should be uploaded in IReV, pointing out that it was just part of INEC guidelines that cannot be seen to supersede the law.

He noted that those calling for the cancellation of the election are enemies of Nigeria and must not be given a listening ear, saying that calling for the cancellation of an election that has been conducted in the most peaceful and orderly manner across the country are simply mischievous and a call for the abortion of democracy.

He alleged that last Saturday presidential and National Assembly elections were the best Nigeria ever had and cannot be compared to the 1993 or even 1999 elections, stressing that even in developed

democracies, elections are never completely without challenges.

As with all human setups, he explained that it would be a lie to deny that the human elements and technology employed in the conduct of elections all over the world are perfect and called on INEC to continue the good work they have already started by consistently working towards fixing the anomalies discovered in the past elections. "The success gained through the use of the Bimodal Voter Accreditation System (BVAS) should be sustained with the inclusion of other technologies such as blockchain to keep hackers and other criminals away from tempering with the people's mandate. To call for the cancellation of this election is to downplay the tireless efforts of the Commission and the resources expended so far to give Nigeria the best elections in Africa and the world at large," he explained.

## Right Of Women, Girls To Inherit Property Of Late Parents Equal With Men - Imo Lawmaker

*\*NAWOJ, over 30 women groups, CSOs brainstorm*

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

The lawmaker representing Oru West Constituency in Imo State House of Assembly, Hon. Dominic Ezerioha has declared that a bill for the right of women and girls to inherit property of their late parents was part of the constitutional provisions of equal rights between man and woman.

Hon Ezerioha said this while speaking at a town hall meeting organized by Imo chapter of Nigeria Association of Women Journalists NAWOJ in collaboration with Imo State House of Assembly together with over 30 women groups and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to brainstorm on the recent enacted law on right of women to inherit property.

According to the lawmaker, the bill will also among others is to ensuring the rule of law, ending intimidation of the woman and encouragement to the pride of the woman.

He stressed that the other part of the bill is that since both female and male are classified as children under the law, what should be given to a man should also be given to a woman as equality before the law.

Hon Ezerioha pointed out that where a woman commits a murder, as in section 238 that talks about manslaughter and section 239 of the constitution that talks about murder, the woman goes to the same jail term as a man that commits murder, wondering " why a woman should be deprived of the thing that is supposed to come to her simply because she is a woman".

Speaking, the Imo State

NAWOJ Chairperson, Dr. Mrs Dorothy Nnaji said the recent development is a very welcome one for the female child.

The NAWOJ Chairperson disclosed that the programme was organized as a town hall meeting of heads of different groups who would get the information across to the women and target audience.

Dr. Nnaji expressed satisfaction with the Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) law, and the right of females to inherit property which would enable parents with only female children to have relief that their daughters will be taken care of after their demise.

Addressing the participants featuring different organizations like Human Rights Commission, Caritas International, Catholic Women Organization of Holy cross and Assumpta Cathedral, Daawah Foundation and Orphanage, Anglican Women Guild, National Council of Women Society (NCWS), Virgin Heart Foundation, Honourbirth Foundation, Women in Labour (NLC), Nigerian Bar Association Women Forum, Association of Nigerian Female Students among others, the Imo state Chairman of the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ), Comrade Ifeanyi Nwanguma in his remarks, lauded the state House of Assembly, particularly the sponsor of the bill, Hon. Dominic Ezerioha, Oru West lawmaker for enacting the law and urged that the women groups use to programme to reflect on political, economic and social equality among others issues.

## Police Apprehends 6 Suspected Notorious Armed Robbers In Lagos, Recovers Firearm, Operational Motorbike

By; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

The long arm of the police has caught up with six suspected armed robbers in Lagos, New Nigerian Newspapers has learnt.

A locally made gun, one operational motorcycle and mobile phones suspected to have been stolen were reportedly recovered from the suspects.

Our correspondent reliably gathered that the suspects are members of a notorious robbery gang terrorising Alaba Rago in Ojo Local Government Council and Ajegunle in Ajeromi areas of Lagos.

It was gathered that the suspects were arrested during separate operations while dispossessing victims of their valuables.

The Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO) of Lagos State Command, SP Benjamin Hundeyin confirmed the arrest in a statement made available to journalists on Saturday.

He identified the suspects to include Chukwuemeka Emmanuel, 21, Chukwuebuka Innocent, 24, Umaru Isah, 21, Emmanuel Ita, 19, Olayitan Ayinde, 18 and Moshood Ayinde, 25.

The statement reads, " Detectives of the Lagos State Police Command

have arrested six armed robbers belonging to two different gangs, notorious for bdispossessing unsuspecting victims of their valuables within Ajegunle and Alaba-Rago areas of Lagos State.

"The arrest followed swift investigations into reports of activities of the robbers in the areas.

" The suspects : Chukwuemeka Emmanuel 'm' aged 21, Chukwuebuka Innocent 'm' aged 24, Umaru Isah 'm' aged 21, Emmanuel Ita 'm' aged 19, Olayitan Ayinde 'm' aged 18 and Moshood Ayinde 'm' aged 25 were arrested in different areas of the state,

while efforts are being intensified to arrest other fleeing members of the gangs and recover other weapons.

"One unregistered TVS motorcycle, one locally made gun, one Infinix Note 7 and one Iphone 7 were recovered from the suspects. Suspects will be arraigned at the end of investigation.

"The Commissioner of Police, Lagos State Command, CP Idowu Owohunwa, charges Lagosians to promptly alert the police to suspicious happenings in their localities to further enable the police rid the state of crime and criminality".



The suspects

## Nasarawa West Senator-Elect, Wadada Is New Barayan Gudi, As Youth Who Trekked For Victory Get Motorcycles, N40k Gifts

By; SAMSON YAKI, Lafia

The Sarkin Gudi, HRH Alhaji Sule Bawa on Friday, conferred the title of Barayan Gudi on the Senator-Elect of Nasarawa West District, Alhaji Ahmed Aliyu Wadada.

A delegation of the 3rd-class monarch led by the Sarkin Yakin Gudi, Alhaji Khalid Yusuf Sule made this known when they paid the Senator-Elect a congratulatory visit at his residence in Keffi.

The delegation congratulated him on his landslide victory at

the just-concluded Presidential and National Assembly election held on February 25.

In his remarks, Wadada thanked the monarch and his council for finding him worthy of the title and pledged to justify the confidence reposed on him.

He also thanked the delegation for the visit and assured of quality representation at the National Assembly.

Wadada, a former two-term House of Representatives member, also holds the traditional title of Sarkin Yakin

Keffi among others.

Meanwhile, two youth who trekked from Kwatan Guto to Keffi in celebration of Ahmed Aliyu Wadada's victory in the just-concluded senatorial election of Nasarawa West District have been gifted a brand new motorcycle and ₦40,000 cash.

The youth simply identified as Soldier and Ogala, were presented with the gifts by the victorious candidate of the opposition Social Democratic Party (SDP) at his residence in

Keffi.

New Nigerian Newspapers (NNN) reported that the youth had embarked on the solidarity trekking from Kwatan Guto in Nasarawa LGA of Nasarawa State on Tuesday February 28 and arrived Keffi, Keffi LGA on Thursday March 02, where they were received by the Senator-Elect.

Kwanta Guto is a community in Nasarawa LG sharing boundary between Nasarawa and Kogi States with a distance of over

100km.

Wadada scored 96,488 votes to defeat his closest rival and candidate of the All Progressives Congress (APC), Architect Shehu Ahmad Tukur to emerge winner of the election in the results declared by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC).

Tukur the preferred candidate of a former Senator of the district and current National Chairman of APC, Senator Abdullahi Adamu, scored 47,717 votes.

# Timi Frank Hails Judiciary For Overruling Buhari On Legality Of Old Naira Notes

*\*Urges them to save democracy by siding with the law in 2023 election petition cases*

*\*Says Nigerians heartbroken, agitated, angry, frustrated because INEC raped, murdered democracy*

By; JACOB ONJEWU  
DICKSON

Former Deputy National Publicity Secretary of the All Progressives Congress (APC), Comrade Timi Frank, on Sunday, commended the Supreme Court for overriding President Muhammadu Buhari on the legality and validity of the old Naira notes of N200, N500 and N1,000.

Frank in a statement in Abuja, however called on the judiciary to leverage the same patriotic courage it demonstrated in reversing the ban on old Naira notes in dispensing substantial Justice in the several election petition cases to be brought before them soon.

He said Nigerians are heartbroken, agitated, angry and frustrated because INEC raped and murdered democracy in the country on February 25, 2023.

He lamented that some of the rulings emanating from the judiciary, especially the Supreme Court in recent times brought shame to the entire country.

According to him, "Some of the Supreme Court's ruling in recent time have made Nigerians to lose hope in the judiciary especially the one that awarded Senatorial tickets to Akpabio and Lawan who never participated in senatorial primary in their respective constituencies.

"How can Senator Godswill Akpabio and Senate President Ahmad Lawan be made candidates overnight by the apex court and today they claim to have been elected as Senators?" Frank who is the United Liberation Movement for West Papua (ULMWP) Ambassador to East Africa and Middle East,



reminded the Judiciary that Nigerians have since lost hope on them as they believe they already know how the courts will rule on the various post-election cases to be filed before them.

He called on the judiciary especially the Supreme Court to rise up from its ashes of partisanship and servile disposition to the APC and seize the opportunity by the present political conundrum to reset its image and do the needful courageously.

He urged the Judiciary to know that this is not the time to again sell justice to the highest bidder, saying, "they must redeem their image by ensuring that justice is

done and seen to be done to the election petition cases now being brought before it."

He urged the Judiciary to note that even the National Chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Prof. Mahmood Yakubu, admitted that issues of logistics, election technology (BIVAS), the behaviour of some election personnel at different levels, marred the Presidential and National Assembly elections.

He insisted that this a clear indication that INEC failed woefully in its duty to deliver credible elections nor use the Bimodal Voter Accreditation System (BIVAS) to conduct the elections in line with its

guidelines.

He said: "This is the justice that Nigerians are asking for. INEC has failed and we urge the judiciary to so hold that INEC violated its own guidelines and did not comply with the Electoral Act and its guidelines." He insisted that the present case is unique in the sense that Nigerians have continued to cry out that their votes have been stolen and their mandate denied. "Both international and local observers have agreed with them that the election was marred by massive irregularities and rigging. They equally berated and scored INEC low for not adhering to the law and its own guidelines.

"It is equally obvious that INEC failed to follow its guidelines and promise to transmit election results from the polling units to its server in real time.

"All over Nigeria, evidence abound in video, audio and hard copy formats showing how the results of the elections were falsified to favour the ruling APC.

"We believe that Nigerian Judges and Justices of the Appeal and Supreme Courts were in this country when the Presidential and National Assembly Election was conducted.

"Besides, we believe that Nigerian Judges and Justices read newspapers and listen to news on radio and television, therefore, they cannot claim to be unaware of Electoral heist that was perpetrated during the last election.

"It now behooves on the judiciary to review the facts that would be presented before them by aggrieved political parties, sift them to determine the truth and rule to uphold Justice, stability, peace and democracy in the country.

"Now that the cases will be coming before them, Nigerians are hopeful that they will use the same patriotic courage to rule in favour of the over 30 million Nigerians who voted during the last election in order to make their votes count.

"We saw how the Judiciary in Kenya rose up and sided with the yearnings and aspirations of the people when it annulled a rigged presidential election and ordered for a fresh one.

"We are calling on the Nigerian Judiciary to equally be courageous enough to declare the actual winners of the just concluded Presidential and National Assembly elections as duly elected."

## Bandits Kill DPO, 2 Others In Zamfara

By; AMOSTAUNA, Kaduna

Divisional Police Officer in Maru town, Maru Local Government Area of Zamfara State, SP Kazeem Raheem, has been killed by bandits.

The Divisional Police Officer, was killed by the bandits

alongside a yet to be identified police sergeant and a vigilante.

A source from the community told New Nigerian that the bandits were in the area purposely to Kidnap Alhaji Ilisayu, a businessman.

The bandits had, according to the source, kidnapped Alhaji

Ilisayu's brother, who was reportedly freed after ransom was paid, saying that they (bandits) came back to kidnap him but managed to escape, while his wife was abducted.

He explained, "The DPO foiled the attempt by mobilising his officers against the criminals to

kidnap the businessman but lost his life in the gunfight."

He added that it was a terrible experience as he woke up at the sound of heavy gunfire around 2am, explaining that Maru town has been under constant attacks by the criminals and several

people were kidnapped in the past one year.

SP Muhammad Shehu, the spokesman of the state Command, could not respond when contacted as his phone lines were switched off.

# Pentecostal Bishops Forum Congratulates Tinubu, Calls For Calm

*\*Says INEC must redeem image*

*\*Urges aggrieved candidates to approach court*

By; JACOB ONJEWU  
DICKSON

The Pentecostal Bishops Forum, Kaduna State Chapter has congratulated the President elect, Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu of the All Progressives Congress (APC) and all other winners in the just concluded Presidential and National Assembly elections.

This is even as the clerics averred that the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) needs to redeem its image of being an unbiased umpire by living up to expectations, sequel to lots of concerns raised over the February 25 elections.

Addressing a press conference at the Seat of God ministries headquarters of the forum in Kaduna State, the Chairman of the forum, Bishop Ademola Idowu Tinuoye who read the text of the briefing and flanked by no fewer than 15 bishops, called for peace and calmness in the face of the various concerns raised.

According to forum, "We acknowledge that the just concluded Presidential and National Assembly election could be conducted and managed better by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) as there were avoidable errors and failed promises on the procedures. Imperfection is in nature of mortals, yet basic standards are expected to be met and surpassed in other for losers to be gallant in vanquish and winners to be humble in victory".

The bishops however, said, the uproar that followed after the collation and announcement of the final result as declared by the Electoral body, INEC calls for deep concern.

"It is evident and crystal clear that tension has built or is rather building and emotion stirred for imaginable and unpredictable consequences and revolt – a situation if not tamed and properly managed can easily split over into National chaos and calamity. God forbid.

"It is for this reason therefore, that we the

Christian Leaders of this Forum as Spiritual fathers and mothers of the land, deemed it necessary and fit to issue a Communiqué to make our position known under the prevailing circumstances, especially considering the fact that Kaduna State is always pivotal and usually known to be a hot spot of crises in Nigeria, in the distance and recent past".

After extensive deliberations on the political state of the nation, the Forum resolved as contained in a 7-point Communiqué signed by the Chairman of the forum Bishop Tinuoye, the forum appealed to the citizens particularly, the body of Christ to exercise restraints considering the delicate peace we have in our dear state.

"This is penultimate and necessitated by the peculiarities of our dear state, Kaduna; situation whereby protests no matter how intended to be peaceful were easily hijacked and mis-presented as sectarian and religious. We cannot afford to breach the peace we currently albeit delicately enjoy under any



circumstance.

"That if peace has not brought about any good, violence can definitely not be the solution. "violence is never a conquering virtue" The solution to a bad marriage is not a new marriage. In the wake of this reality therefore, we're strongly appealing to the Body of Christ in Kaduna State, all our followers and teeming Christian Youths across denominational barriers, not to take laws into their hands, but to tow the path of wisdom and give peace a chance.

"We should not engage in any act of violence that will inflict on the fundamental right of other citizens, thereby hampering the fortune and development of the state. That in the face of the present heat and perceived dissatisfaction of the outcome of the general election, we are of the position that legal redress should rather be sought in the court of competent jurisdiction, while we congratulate the President-elect, Senator Bola Ahmed Tinubu as declared by

INEC.

"That, relegating the experience of the just concluded Presidential election to the background, we urge our followers, congregants, all and sundry to shun all forms of Voters apathy and troop out enmass in the forth coming Gubernatorial and State House of Assembly Election on Saturday the 11th of March, 2023 to vote the candidates of their choice without fear and intimidation. This way, we shall be making a statement, not just locally but to the International Community that we are coming of age, on course toward getting it right (Politically) and for a better Nigeria.

"That as a Forum, we are calling on the State Government and its machineries to provide the enabling environment for peace to thrive in Kaduna State as we remain committed in our resolve to partner with the State and its leadership toward the accomplishment of this noble goal and objective across board.

"To this end, we will remain

committed in our responsibilities and obligation as Clergies and Fathers of Faith in the land as bridge builders to uniting all ethnic groups and religious bodies for the common good and development of all. We are relentless in prayers to the Almighty God for His Grace and empowerment in this regard.

"At this juncture, the General Overseers, presiding Bishops, Pastors and Leaders of Denominations, inter alia, are required to rise above personal feelings and guide members to be objective and proactive in electing leaders without parochial sentiments as they go to vote in the Gubernatorial and State Assembly elections.

Fear of God, competence and experience should be considered in making our choices as Kaduna State needs leaders who will be fair to all without bias in governance and leadership. 'If there is government, there should be governance'. "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem, those who love it shall prosper" (Psa. 122:6) in this context, Kaduna State and Nigeria at large".





# Who Wins Not as Important as Credibility of Our Elections and Electoral Processes

By Atiku Abubakar

FELLOW Nigerians, it is with a heart full of sadness that I address you today. I have in the last three decades devoted my life to the battle to birth and deepen democracy in our country.

It was a battle that started during the military era. It was a struggle that nearly caused me my life and that of my son, Adamu, in Kaduna. I survived the assassination only by the mercies and grace of God.

Following that attack, I was forced into exile. But that attack claimed the precious lives of some police officers. That was not all; my businesses were nearly crippled and my signature business was eventually appropriated by the maximum ruler of that era.

My commitment to enthroning democracy ensured that I joined forces with other compatriots. As a leader of the defunct Social Democratic Party (SDP), we fought and won the 1993 presidential election, which was acclaimed as the fairest and freest election in our history. Sadly, Chief MKO Abiola, who embodied that hope for the birth of a new Nigeria, paid the ultimate price.

Our fight to enthrone democracy continued. Indeed, the motivating factor for the birth of the Peoples Democratic Party was to force the exit of the military from government and their permanent return to the military barracks.

Following the exit of the military and the advent of democratic rule in 1999, I did not rest on my oars. I deployed the same level of commitment to advance and deepen our democracy. I did this because our democracy was bought at a huge price of human lives.

My mentor and true Nigerian hero, who this venue in which we are gathered this evening is named for, was one of those who paid the ultimate price in that battle. So, also was Chief Alfred Rewane, Chief MKO Abiola and his dear wife, Chief (Mrs) Kudirat Abiola.

It was also for this reason that I sacrificed my political aspiration and fought against the actualisation of Third Term. Whether during the military or



*Alhaji Atiku (right) and his running mate, Okowa.*

civilian era, I have, no matter how inconvenient, pitched my tent with the people against dictators. During the military regime, it nearly cost me my life and the near decimation of my businesses. In the civilian administration, it had serious adverse implications on my political life. But I have remained undaunted because I was, and still convinced, that the only reason why I am in politics is to work in tandem with other compatriots in the advancement of the wellbeing of the people.

The 2023 presidential election presented our nation and its people the greatest opportunity for a reset. We had everything going for us: a legal framework in the 2022 Electoral Act and the BVAS technology. The enthusiasm of Nigerians to turn out and in large numbers was an added bonus.

However, the dreams and aspirations of Nigerians who braced all the challenges to go and cast their votes on Saturday, 25th of February, 2023, were shattered by the conduct of the Independent National Electoral

Commission (INEC), which failed to live up to expectations. The weekend election was neither free nor fair. Preliminary assessments indicate that it is the worst conducted elections since the return to democratic rule. The manipulation and fraud that attended this election was unprecedented in the history of our nation.

I can still not understand why the electoral umpire was in such a hurry to conclude collation and announcement of the result, given the number of complaints of irregularities of bypassing of the BVAS, failure of uploading to the IREV, and unprecedented cancellations and disenfranchisement of millions of voters in breach of the Electoral Act and the commission's own guidelines. It was indeed a rape of democracy. Having consulted with leaders of our party and Nigerians from different walks of life, I have come to the conclusion that the processes and outcome of the Presidential and National Assembly election of last Saturday was grossly flawed in

every material particular, and as such must be challenged.

This has been attested to by both local and international observers. I want to believe that this was not the legacy that President Muhammadu Buhari had promised. For President Buhari, it is not too late to make amends for the good of our country and the future generations and indeed to assure his legacy.

This battle to right the wrongs of Saturday is not about me. It is a continuation of my battles to deepen democracy and for a better life for our people. It is about the future of Nigerian youths.

I know that Nigerians, especially the youth, are traumatised by the developments, but I want to urge them to conduct themselves peacefully. Like I have done over the years, I assure you that I will commit the rest of my life in ensuring that true democracy, which affirms the supremacy of your votes and your will, will take firm footing and guarantee a stable, prosperous and peaceful Nigeria. This is more so as

Nigeria represents the hope of Africa and the Black World.

It is my hope that the judiciary will redeem itself this time around and rise to the society's expectation as the last HOPE. In the end, who wins is not as important as the credibility of our elections and electoral processes.

I call on all men and women of goodwill to join hands with us in the vanguard to defend our constitution from the brigandage of anti-democratic forces.

Finally, I urge Nigerians to remain vigilant and resolute. You have the constitutionally guaranteed right of freedom to choose your leaders. We will not sit idly by and watch your rights taken from you.

Your voices will be heard. May God bless you, and may God bless the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Being the texts of a press conference by Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, the presidential candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in reaction to the declaration of Bola Tinubu as winner of the 2023 presidential election.

# New NIGERIAN

"The Greatest Weapon is Truth"

Published since January 1, 1966

CORPORATE OFFICE:  
AHMADU BELLO WAY  
KADUNA

Advert e-mail: joenibro@gmail.com || joe\_ibro@yahoo.com  
FOR ADVERT BOOKING AND PLACEMENT:  
Kaduna: 08033118023, 08028784378  
Lagos: 08033257282, 08117876009

## ADVERT RATES FROM JANUARY 1, 2022

SPACE	COLOUR			BLACK AND WHITE		
	RATE	VAT	TOTAL	RATE	VAT	TOTAL
FULL PAGE	395,176.32	29,638.22	424,814.54	323,433.00	24,257.48	347,690.48
HALF PAGE	248,970.00	18,672.75	267,642.75	203,175.00	15,238.13	218,413.13
QUARTER PAGE	164,670.00	12,350.25	177,020.25	94,724.44	7,104.33	101,828.77
10" x 6 Col	364,320.00	27,324.00	391,644.00	245,005.20	18,375.39	263,380.59
10" x 5 Col	333,960.00	25,047.00	359,007.00	224,588.11	16,844.11	241,432.22
10" x 4 Col	242,880.00	18,216.00	261,096.00	163,336.80	12,250.26	175,587.06
10" x 3 Col	182,160.00	13,662.00	195,822.00	122,502.60	9,187.70	131,690.30
9" x 6 Col	327,888.00	24,591.60	352,479.60	220,504.68	16,537.85	237,042.53
9" x 5 Col	273,240.00	20,493.00	293,733.00	183,753.90	13,781.54	197,535.44
9" x 4 Col	218,592.00	16,394.40	234,986.40	147,003.12	11,025.23	158,028.35
9" x 3 Col	163,944.00	12,295.80	176,239.80	110,252.34	8,268.93	118,521.27
8" x 6 Col	291,456.00	21,859.20	313,315.20	196,004.16	14,700.31	210,704.47
8" x 5 Col	242,880.00	18,216.00	261,096.00	163,336.80	12,250.26	175,587.06
8" x 4 Col	194,304.00	14,572.80	208,876.80	130,669.44	9,800.21	140,469.65
8" x 3 Col	145,728.00	10,929.60	156,657.60	98,002.08	7,350.16	105,352.24
7" x 6 Col	255,024.00	19,126.80	274,150.80	171,503.64	12,862.77	184,366.41
7" x 5 Col	212,520.00	15,939.00	228,459.00	142,919.70	10,718.98	153,638.68
7" x 4 Col	170,016.00	12,751.20	182,767.20	114,335.76	8,575.18	122,910.94
6" x 6 Col	218,592.00	16,394.40	234,986.40	147,003.12	11,025.23	158,028.35
6" x 5 Col	182,160.00	13,662.00	195,822.00	122,502.60	9,187.70	131,690.30
6" x 4 Col	145,728.00	10,929.60	156,657.60	98,002.08	7,350.16	105,352.24
6" x 3 Col	109,296.00	8,197.20	117,493.20	73,501.56	5,512.62	79,014.18
6" x 2 Col	72,864.00	5,464.80	78,328.80	49,001.04	3,675.08	52,676.12
5" x 5 Col	151,800.00	11,385.00	163,185.00	102,085.50	7,656.41	109,741.91
5" x 4 Col	121,440.00	9,108.00	130,548.00	81,668.40	6,125.13	87,793.53
5" x 3 Col	91,080.00	6,831.00	97,911.00	61,251.30	4,593.85	65,845.15
5" x 2 Col	60,720.00	4,554.00	65,274.00	40,834.20	3,062.57	43,896.77
4" x 6 Col	145,728.00	10,929.60	156,657.60	98,002.08	7,350.16	105,352.24
4" x 5 Col	121,440.00	9,108.00	130,548.00	81,668.40	6,125.13	87,793.53
4" x 4 Col	97,152.00	7,286.40	104,438.40	65,334.72	4,900.10	70,234.82
4" x 3 Col	72,864.00	5,464.80	78,328.80	49,001.04	3,675.08	52,676.12
4" x 2 Col	48,576.00	3,643.20	52,219.20	32,667.36	2,450.05	35,117.41
3" x 3 Col	54,648.00	4,098.60	58,746.60	36,750.78	2,756.31	39,507.09
3" x 2 Col	36,432.00	2,732.40	39,164.40	24,500.52	1,837.54	26,338.06
2" x 2 Col	24,288.00	1,821.60	26,109.60	16,333.68	1,225.03	17,558.71
1" x 1 Col	6,072.00	455.40	6,527.40	4,083.42	306.26	4,389.68

TERMS OF ADVERT PLACEMENT	
1.	All adverts are expected to be prepaid in cash or bank draft in favour of New Nigerian Newspaper's Limited.
2.	Series discount is subject to the stipulated number of insertions, and it is payable only at the end of a campaign (to be deducted from balance pay).
3.	<b>COPY DATE:</b> for all the Title Heads is two working days for the North and three working days for the South.
4.	Cancellation of previously booked advert will be accepted in writing within four working days notice, less than 24 hours to the date of publication will attract 50% surcharge.
5.	Advertisers/Agencies are to provide their Camera ready artwork in electronic copies, in e.g. PDF, or JPEG format.
6.	Advertisers will be surcharged 20% of the applicable rate where artworks are not provided.
7.	Adverts may not be published if the visuals given are considered too poor as to affect the reproduction.
8.	Alterations to original order should be conveyed in writing at least 24 hours to desired alteration date.
9.	Colour guides are to accompany coloured adverts.
10.	The management of New Nigerian Newspapers Limited reserves the right to reject an advert or any publication in any of its titles where such materials are considered distasteful for public exposure or libelous.

### TECHNICAL DATA

#### 6 COLUMNS

Depth	38.1 (CM)	Depth -	15 (Inches)
Width	25.4 (CM)	Width -	10 (Inches)

### POLITICAL RATE

SPACE	RATE	VAT	TOTAL
FRONT PAGE MAST HEAD EAR PIECE	461,622.86	34,621.71	496,244.57
FRONT PAGE SOLUS	787,474.29	59,060.57	846,534.86
FRONT PAGE STRIP	787,474.29	59,060.57	846,534.86
BACK PAGE EAR PIECE	420,889.54	31,566.72	452,456.26
FULL PAGE (COLOUR)	465,967.54	34,947.57	500,915.11
FULL PAGE (BLACK AND WHITE)	364,037.14	27,302.79	391,339.93
HALF PAGE (COLOUR)	303,285.71	22,746.43	326,032.14
HALF PAGE (BLACK AND WHITE)	247,500.00	18,562.50	266,062.50
QUARTER PAGE (COLOUR)	203,877.14	15,290.79	219,167.93
QUARTER PAGE (BLACK AND WHITE)	111,692.74	8,376.96	120,069.70

### LOOSE INSERTS

S/NO	SIZE	RATE	VAT	TOTAL
1	Handling for the first 40 copies	120,000.00	9,000.00	129,000.00
2	Per 1000 Copies (1 Page)	28,000.00	2,100.00	30,100.00
3	Per 1000 Copies (Magazine 2-8 Pages)	50,000.00	3,750.00	53,750.00
4	Per 1000 Copies (Magazine above 8 pages)	80,000.00	6,000.00	86,000.00

### CLASSIFIEDS

S/NO	POSITION	SIZE	RATE	VAT	TOTAL
1	Registration of Trustees	3" x 2 Cols	6,857.14	514.29	7,371.43
2	Loss of Documents	2" x 2 Cols	4,400.00	330.00	4,730.00
3	Change of Name	Per Box	2,000.00	-	2,000.00

### SPECIAL POSITION

SPACE	RATE	VAT	TOTAL
FULL WRAP AROUND	6,750,000.00	506,250.00	7,256,250.00
HALF WRAP AROUND	4,500,000.00	337,500.00	4,837,500.00
PAGE 2 OR 3	400,000.00	30,000.00	430,000.00
PAGE 4 OR 5	375,000.00	28,125.00	403,125.00
PAGE 6 OR 7	325,000.00	24,375.00	349,375.00
FRONT PAGE MAST HEAD EAR PIECE	225,000.00	16,875.00	241,875.00
FRONT PAGE SOLUS	312,500.00	23,437.50	335,937.50
FRONT PAGE STRIP	375,000.00	28,125.00	403,125.00
BACK PAGE EAR PIECE	200,000.00	15,000.00	215,000.00
BACK PAGE STRIP	250,000.00	18,750.00	268,750.00
CENTRE SPREAD (COLOUR)	837,500.00	62,812.50	900,312.50
DOUBLE SPREAD (COLOUR)	700,000.00	52,500.00	752,500.00
CENTRE SPREAD (BLACK & WHITE)	575,000.00	43,125.00	618,125.00
DOUBLE SPREAD (BLACK & WHITE)	550,000.00	41,250.00	591,250.00
FRONT PAGE (10" X 6)	3,250,000.00	243,750.00	3,493,750.00
ROP STRIP (COLOUR)	125,000.00	9,375.00	134,375.00
ROP STRIP (BLACK & WHITE)	85,000.00	6,375.00	91,375.00

### PROPERTY AND IT, VACANCY, AGRIC, AND EVENTS/EDUCATION RATE

SPACE	COLOUR			BLACK AND WHITE		
	RATE	VAT	TOTAL	RATE	VAT	TOTAL
7 X 3	108,571.43	8,142.86	116,714.29	62,857.14	4,714.29	67,571.43
6 X 3	102,857.14	7,714.29	110,571.43	57,142.86	4,285.71	61,428.57
6 X 2	45,428.57	3,407.14	48,835.71	32,285.71	2,421.43	34,707.14
5 X 3	53,428.57	4,007.14	57,435.71	37,428.57	2,807.14	40,235.71
5 X 2	42,571.43	3,192.86	45,764.29	24,857.14	1,864.29	26,721.43
4 X 3	47,714.29	3,578.57	51,292.86	30,571.43	2,292.86	32,864.29
4 X 2	33,142.86	2,485.71	35,628.57	21,714.29	1,628.57	23,342.86
3 X 3	34,571.43	2,592.86	37,164.29	23,142.86	1,735.71	24,878.57
3 X 2	22,857.14	1,714.29	24,571.43	14,285.71	1,071.43	15,357.14
2 X 2	16,000.00	1,200.00	17,200.00	9,142.86	685.71	9,828.57
2 X 1	7,714.28	578.57	8,292.85	4,975.71	373.18	5,348.89

# Governor Buni And The Parable Of One Good Turn

By; HASSAN GIMBA

**M**ai Mala Buni, the Governor of Yobe State, is one of the most promising visionary nationalists, bridge-builders and democrats we have in this country.

I am not speaking of, nor would I dwell on, how he brought back the All Progressives Congress (APC) from the brink of disintegration two years ago. No, everyone knows that. Everybody is aware of how he stabilised the party and made it grow in numbers. He attracted the grassroots, who trooped into the party in numbers as well as the high and mighty who could make things happen.

Still, I am not going to talk about the three governors and tens of national and state assembly members attracted to the party by Governor Buni. No, people are aware of that.

What I want to talk about is how he did his best to bring peace and unity to the country. He doused a lot of tension wherever he went in the course of his assignment as the interim national chairman of the APC Extraordinary Caretaker Committee.

Buni was there to give maximum support to the Nigerian Military in procuring sophisticated weaponry to fight insurgency and banditry in both the North East, North West and North Central parts of the country. The relative peace and security we now enjoy has his signature input.

There was a time when the Shiites were on our streets every day of the week, demanding the release of their leader. Such protests came with the attendant collateral damages; many of them and even innocent bystanders lost their lives. There was an instance where a Deputy Commissioner of Police even lost his life. The damage to life and property was unacceptable. Such unfortunate altercations pull our development back.

Now you do not see them on the streets, and you do not hear them protesting. This has released our security agencies and agents to go after criminals so that we may sleep with our eyes closed. Mai Mala Buni, the governor of Yobe State, is instrumental to this newfound peace that has enveloped our country. I may

come out with the story one day, God willing.

In Yobe, he has performed his primary assignment creditably well. According to data made available by his senior special assistant on digital and strategic communications, Yusuf Ali, Governor Buni had, among many others, already flagged off the construction of an ultra-modern market in Geidam town to further stimulate economic activities in addition to the ones already built in Nguru, Gashua, and Damaturu with some commissioned. Work on others in Potiskum, Ngelzarma, Gulani, Fika and Buni Yadi is on-going.

The governor has also set aside ₦40 billion to begin the construction of major roads across the state for the growth and development of the state by opening up areas. He will flag off the event on Tuesday.

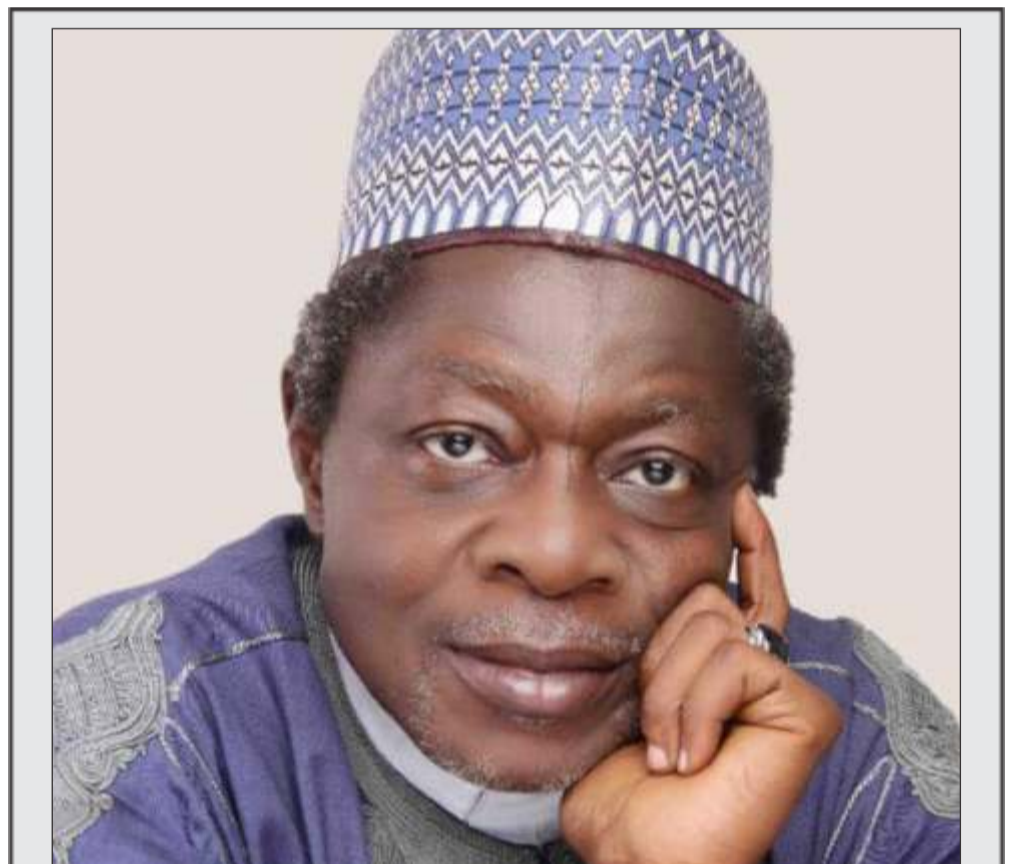
In his quest for economic empowerment, job creation and self-reliance for the citizens, the governor has launched arguably the largest empowerment support for business owners, widows, and vulnerable persons by any state in the federation worth ₦5 billion.

Already, the governor has approved ₦500 million in agriculture loans for 4000 teachers in the state through the state microfinance bank to enable the chalk pushers to engage in agricultural activities to contribute their quota to food safety and security.

He has built and equipped at least one primary health care in the state's 178 wards as well as constructed and equipped to international standard the largest maternity centre in the country at the Yobe State University Teaching Hospital in Damaturu.

He has built special baby care units in Gashua, Potiskum and a diagnostic centre at the Yobe State University Teaching Hospital in Damaturu, and officers' quarters there as well as 150-bed capacity dormitories for medical students and a 200-bed capacity hostel at the school of nursing, Damaturu.

Governor Buni also expanded and upgraded Kumaganam hospital in Yusufari Local Government Area, revived Buni Yadi Hospital with new buildings after they were burnt to the ground by Boko Haram insurgents,



## Hassan Gimba *Monday Column*

distributed new ambulances to various hospitals in the state and created the Contributory Health Care Agency, which continues to distribute free drugs in the state hospitals and clinics.

After declaring a state of emergency on education, he has so far constructed seven mega schools with 30 classrooms each and a student capacity of 1,200, and seven smaller ones with 12 classes each with a capacity of about 800. He has already embarked on building eight more girls' senior secondary schools to reverse girl-child school drop-out numbers and renovated about 50 others. He has also sponsored about 300 students to study abroad, as well as making arrangements for a holistic

sponsorship of those studying locally at home.

In partnership with a European Union-funded project, Brice Mercy Corps, his government has enrolled 5,321 youths in various economic skills which include carpentry, plumbing, tailoring, welding, brick making, bag making and modern agricultural production among others. Such life skills help to keep youths away from the attraction to crime that idleness stimulates in the region. Some of these investments show a governor committed to improving the living standards of the people today and in the future.

Hassan Gimba is the Publisher and Editor-in-Chief of Neptune Prime.

# Five Truths About the Nigerian Presidential Election

By Jibrin Ibrahim

“For all these reasons, many candidates have good reason to feel these elections were rigged against them. Some of them have already indicated that they will go to court and they should.”

ON Wednesday, Bola Tinubu was declared the winner of Nigeria's presidential election by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) Chairman, Mahmood Yakubu. Tinubu of the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) party garnered a total of 8,794,726 votes, or about 35%, defeating his two main rivals: Atiku Abubakar of the main opposition Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), who secured 6,984,520 votes, or about 29%; and Peter Obi of the Labour Party, who received 6,101,533 votes, or about 25%.

The three leading candidates won in one third of the states with twelve each, although the twelfth for Obi is the Federal Capital Territory. This election tells the essential truth about Nigerian elections – the history of Nigeria's electoral geography is clear; no hegemonic party can emerge in a credible election. This was the situation in all of Nigeria's foundation republican elections in 1959, 1979 and 1999.

Following these elections, the ruling parties abused their powers of incumbency to make themselves hegemonic in subsequent elections through rigging. Those dismissing the current election and calling for its cancellation are doing great disservice to the efforts made by political parties and citizens to disrupt incumbency powers and re-establish the truth of Nigeria's electoral geography as the victories by opposition parties in Lagos, Kano, Kaduna, among others, show.

“The third truth about the February 23 election is that the leadership of INEC is guilty as charged for eroding the credibility of the election by proposing an integrity test for the elections – INEC Result Viewing Portal (IReV) and failing to deliver on it. The main technology innovation, BVAS, would ensure that only those eligible to vote participate and additional “votes” cannot be added subsequently.”

The second truth about Nigerian elections is that there is always a variable level of fraud, which can upturn outcomes in a number of constituencies. Nigerians are politically perceptive; they see it and the story of rigging would normally be the defining narrative of every election even if there is insufficient evidence to show the overall outcome would have been

different. The 2007 election is notorious for being one of the most heavily rigged election in Nigerian history but there is no evidence that Buhari would have defeated Obasanjo had the election been free and fair. 2007 is also the main example in which the national leadership of the Electoral Commission was implicated in the organisation of electoral fraud.

The norm is that elections are actually organised at the operational level by the 774 electoral officers at the local government level, sometimes coordinated by Resident Electoral Officers at the State level but the blame is always on the INEC Chairman, who as the leader of the Commission takes all the blame. When we scholars orient ourselves towards studying what happens to elections at the local government level, more light would arise on what the results mean.

The third truth about the February 23 election is that the leadership of INEC is guilty as charged for eroding the credibility of the election by proposing an integrity test for the elections – INEC Result Viewing Portal (IReV) and failing to deliver on it. The main technology innovation, BVAS, would ensure that only those eligible to vote participate and additional “votes” cannot be added subsequently. Recalling the 2019 debates, there cannot be fabricated votes subtracted or added by any INEC server. At the end of voting in each polling unit, the results would be counted in the presence of voters and written into the poster EC 60E which will be posted on the wall. It is this result that was to be captured through a scan and sent through BVAS directly to the INEC viewing portal that all citizens and voters can see live.

This transparency means everyone will be seeing the results as they come in and citizens, candidates and parties can cross check that the results on the portal reflect what was compiled at the polling unit. Citizens would have therefore all participated in confirming that the portal results replicate what was counted at the polling units. The IReV component of the integrity test failed and therefore the credibility of the election was lost using the definition of the integrity test crafted by INEC itself. This failure for me is really catastrophic because it created the basis for loss of confidence of citizens in INEC and its processes.

The fourth truth about the election is that voter suppression is the underlying reality. There are 93,469,008 registered voters in Nigeria but only 23,377,466



turned out to vote given a voter turnout of only about 27% which continues the downward trend of voter engagement as apathy deepens. This was however the election that had the vocation to turn the tide of voter apathy.

“The final truth about the election is that even without naira, vote buying occurred through bank transfers, offer of food parcels and yes, distribution of the scarce new currency. While citizens could not access cash from their banks and businesses, politicians could and did even if there was less of it than was the norm.” In the lead up to the election, 9.46 million new voters had registered, 70% of them youth between the ages of 18 and 34. They showed a lot of enthusiasm about the elections, campaigned and were ready to vote. Many could not vote due to violence and ethnic profiling, late commencement of elections, malfunctioning of technology and lack of transport money to their polling units due to the naira scarcity. In other words, voter suppression worked.

The final truth about the election is that even without naira, vote buying occurred through bank transfers, offer of food parcels and yes, distribution of the scarce new currency. While citizens could not

access cash from their banks and businesses, politicians could and did even if there was less of it than was the norm. EFCC reported someone in Lagos with 32.4 million naira and another in Rivers with USD 500,000 for vote-buying. Denying citizens access to their own money with the hope that politicians cannot bribe voters needs a lot of naivety to think it would be effective.

For all these reasons, many candidates have good reason to feel these elections were rigged against them. Some of them have already indicated that they will go to court and they should.

The Nigerian police needs to rise to the occasion and arrest actors who organised violence and electoral fraud because such behaviour continues to mar our elections due to lack of accountability. People who are involved in criminal activity almost never get arrested and prosecuted for their crimes so they continue. We must learn to stop them.

Ibrahim is a professor of Political Science and development consultant/expert, and Senior Fellow of the Centre for Democracy and Development. He is also the Chair of the Editorial Board of Abuja-based online newspaper, PREMIUM TIMES.

# The International Politics of Observing Elections

By Owei Lakemfa

**T**HE 2023 Nigeria presidential and National Assembly elections were contentious and controversial with some calling for outright cancellation. While we all have our views, none of which should be discounted, I find it curious that some quote the reports of international election observers as if it were the gospel truth. As someone who has officially and unofficially observed elections in Africa, Europe and Latin America, I suggest to those relying on such reports, to do so with the consciousness that observing elections is not value-free.

“Generally, there are security implications in observing elections because accredited persons would have access to voting areas and possibly, collation centres where a people would be defining or determining the future of their country.”

International election monitors or observers are not tourists interested in wildlife, sunbathing or visiting historic or iconic sites; they are politically conscious people on a mission. They are educated people who can observe the same events but have different interpretations and conclusions depending on their motives.

Sometimes, as in the Nigerian election, some observers behave like active actors who feel entitled to magisterial declarations and actions. For instance, the European Union Election Observation Mission which had 110 observers from 25 Member States, Canada, Norway and Switzerland, suggestively, titled its preliminary report: “Elections held on schedule, but lack of transparency and operational failures reduced trust in the process and challenged the right to vote.” It virtually wrote off the elections for alleged “lack of transparency.”

Internationally, national electoral bodies announce election results which are the only results permissible unless otherwise decided by the courts. In emphasising this a day after the elections, the Chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Professor Mahmoud Yakubu, said on television that all organisations should “draw their figures (election results) only from the official results released by the commission as the only body constitutionally responsible for releasing official election figures.”

But the EU would not obey such a basic rule. One day after Yakubu's statement, and two days before INEC's official results were announced, the EU in its public report announced that: “Yiaga (a local observer group) is conducting a parallel vote tabulation for the presidential election.”

In line with this announcement, YIAGA announced its own Presidential Election results different from that of INEC. After INEC announced that the All Progressives Congress, APC candidate, Bola Ahmed Tinubu, scored 36.6 per-cent or 8.79 million votes, the Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP) candidate, Atiku

Abubakar, scored 29.1 per cent or 6.98 million votes, and the Labour Party (LP) candidate, Peter Obi, scored 25.4 per cent or 6.1 million votes, YIAGA cheekily announced its own results. In it, it declared that: “Yiaga Africa's statistical analysis shows that the All Progressives Congress, APC, should receive between 34.4 per cent and 37.4 per cent of the vote, Labour Party, LP should receive between 24.2 per cent and 28.4 per cent of the votes, the New Nigeria People's Party, NNPP, should receive between 4.6 per cent and 6.4 per cent of the vote, Peoples Democratic Party, PDP, should receive between 28.3 per cent and 31.1 per cent of the vote, while no other political party should receive more than 0.3 per cent of the vote.”

The Commonwealth Observer Group, led by former South African President Thabo Mbeki, followed a different approach from the EU. It said: “Notwithstanding the shortcomings identified in these elections, Nigerians were largely accorded the right to vote. ... We call on all those with grievances to address disputes through prescribed legal channels.”

“We should ask ourselves why countries or organisations would decide to invest in our elections. Perhaps the AU coming to observe Nigerian elections would be like some peer review mechanism. It can be understandable for the ECOWAS to send an observer team as solidarity with the Nigerian state. But why would numerous observers travel from across the world to observe Nigeria's elections; as guardians of democracy?”

In contrast to the Commonwealth, the joint report of the American International Republican Institute (IRI) and the National Democratic Institute (NDI), were blistering attacks: “the elections still fell well short of Nigerian citizens' legitimate and reasonable expectations. Failures of logistics, challenges with voter registration and voter card distribution, inadequate communication by INEC, lack of transparency in the publication of election data, and unchecked political violence before and during the elections overshadowed incremental administrative gains achieved in the pre-election period, and impeded a substantial number of citizens from participating in voting.”

The joint report of the AU and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) are a contrast to the Americans. They called on: “political parties and their candidates to settle electoral disputes through peaceful means and dialogue, in accordance with the law.”

These reports remind me of the 2002 Presidential Elections in Zimbabwe in which I was part of the AU Election Observer Team. Daily, we went out with other international observers and in the evenings, compared notes. We all had the same reports which showed that there was no voter intimidation, no violence, the elections were smooth and reflected the



will of the Zimbabwean people. Where the opposition felt that there were some voters left out, it went to court in the evening of the elections and a judge added one extra day of voting with which the electoral body complied.

“We should also be curious why countries like China and India who make up 36 per cent of world population are not so active in observing elections, at least in Africa. International observers come, make their observations and fly out leaving the locals to their fate; many are birds of passage who perch for some days and fly away to other areas of interest.”

The AU report reflected what we witnessed in the field. So also did that of the Nigerian Electoral Mission headed by former Head of the Interim Government, Chief Ernest Shonekan. But the report of the Commonwealth Observer Mission headed by former Military Head of State, retired General Abdulsalam Abubakar issued a contrary report. It was a report that must have been written before the elections in accordance with the Commonwealth decision to use it as an excuse to expel Zimbabwe from the Commonwealth. Reading the body language, Zimbabwe, under President Robert Mugabe, decided to leave the Commonwealth.

Generally, there are security implications in observing elections because accredited persons would have access to voting areas and possibly, collation centres where a people would be defining or determining the future of their country.

So, should countries like Nigeria simply stamp the passports of election observers or would it be democratic to screen them and decide which should be given visas and whose visa applications should be rejected?

We should ask ourselves why countries or organisations would decide to invest in our elections. Perhaps the AU coming to observe Nigerian elections would be like some peer review mechanism. It can be understandable for the ECOWAS to send an observer team as solidarity with the Nigerian state. But why would numerous observers travel from across the world to observe Nigeria's elections; as guardians of democracy?

Why would they spend huge sums of money funding multiple local groups to observe the same elections they are coming to observe? It cannot be that they do not trust the locals they are funding.

We should also be curious why countries like China and India who make up 36 per cent of world population are not so active in observing elections, at least in Africa.

International observers come, make their observations and fly out leaving the locals to their fate; many are birds of passage who perch for some days and fly away to other areas of interest.

Africans should welcome international election observers, but not as missionaries like in the pre-colonial days, but as interested parties from whom we have nothing to hide.

# It's About Our Lagos State, Stupid!

By: JK Adebola

I chose to title this piece in line with the famous phrase, "it's about the economy, stupid" due to the prevalent situation in the country and the shock of All Progressives Congress (APC) losing Lagos State to the Labour Party at the Presidential election with the existential threat to the chances of Sanwo-Olu's second term bid as the Governor of Lagos State.

It was James Carville who uttered the famously statement "It's the economy, stupid!" Carville was an elections strategist for then-Governor Bill Clinton of USA and he helped Clinton beat President George H.W. Bush in 1992 in the midst of a recession that left many Americans out of work and in debt.

The Presidential election result of Lagos State as announced by INEC leaves a bitter taste in the mouth of many lovers of Lagos State including yours truly who is not even a Lagosian but has a special affinity to the state since Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu governed the state and stood toe to toe, eyeball to eyeball with the tyrannical leadership of OBJ who in his usual obstinate manner chose to defy a Supreme Court ruling by denying Lagos State its LG monthly allocation for many years.

Perhaps being a firm believer in the school of thought that the quality of our life and living is predicated upon the choices we make, Jagaban made a choice at the time to rise above the circumstance he found himself in which was a result of his conviction of getting governance closer to the people by creating more local authorities consequent upon which the feudal lord at the center decided to "punish" him for his audacity. This prompted Asiwaju to put on his thinking cap and began to think outside the box in a typical fashion synonymous with true manager of resources.

Necessity they say is a master of invention, this, I believe also led Jagaban to assemble a group of seasoned think tankers to create The Lagos State Development Plan which is built around 4 strategic pillars: Thriving Economy, Human-Centric City, Modern Infrastructure and Effective Governance – and focuses on 20 strategic areas that will drive his vision. He also ensured that he diligently monitored its implementation through successive Governors for which he has been labelled the godfather of Lagos politics. The rest as they say is history.

Asiwaju is famous for mentoring many Nigerians from both sides of the Niger irrespective of their religion and ethnicity which makes the result of the last Presidential elections which centred on the hatred for the man because of the so-called Muslim/Muslim ticket and the roles played by certain prominent personalities in that regard grossly misplaced. The man is married to a Christian whom instead of converting to Islam like others did, he supported to become a Pentecostal Pastor. His children are all Christians and his Son is married to an Igbo lady. He also confessed publicly that on Sundays, he is often left alone at home when everyone in his household went to church. How more liberal do you want the man to be to believe that he is neither a religious bigot nor an ethnic biased leader? That says a lot and belies the falsehoods sold to you about Jagaban being a religious bigot and an ethnic biased leader.

Fast forward to today and take a deep look at Lagos of present time and the efforts and contributions of Governor Babajide Sanwo-olu to that development plan especially against the backdrop of the fact that his predecessor was ousted after just one term, and the reasons for it.

In the last 4 years of Governor Babajide Olusola Sanwo-olu's

tenure he has successfully keyed into the development Master plan and brought further development to the state in critical areas in infrastructural development like the Blue and Red lines rail system, the health sector by providing more health centres to the grassroots as well as free health policy for children and adults below 18 and above 65 years of age respectively. There are other transformational infrastructural projects like the Lekki-Epe-Ibeju Road expansion; the Lekki-Oniru Traffic circulation; the commissioning of BRT lane in Oshodi-Abule Egba and the rehabilitation of inner-city roads in 57 local council development areas amongst many others too numerous to mention.

Lagos State is today adjudged the fifth largest economy in Africa – some argue it is the fourth, but in between the two lays the true picture. Either way, the fact remains that Lagos is unarguably the most valuable state in Nigeria. This is all down to Sanwo-olu's conscious efforts in continuing with the Master plan of the state.

Another prevalent reality of the Lagos story is the fact that many of the policies that emanated from Lagos State are today being replicated in other states and even at the federal level. The Single Treasury Account is one of them, so also is the introduction of digital technology to the business of government. Lagos is also the first port of call for foreign direct investors. There are many more achievements too numerous to mention. Lagos is simply a pace setter bar none.

All these laudable achievements are now at risk given the concerted efforts of the opposition parties, especially the Labour Party buoyed by its performance in last Saturday's Presidential election which I suspect was made possible due perhaps to

voter's apathy or complacency on the part of the usual Lagos electorates.

Report has it that Lagos State has about 7 million registered voters but a paltry 1.5 million came out to vote in the Presidential election. Where are the remaining 7.5 million voters?

The social media is awash with various videos with series of accusations and allusions real and/or imagined being bandied by some Lagosians as the reason(s) behind the shock result as recorded last Saturday. This makes it evident that the stakeholders in Lagos took their eyes off the ball. Now is not the time to ask of the whys and hows, it is a matter for another day. What is of paramount importance for now is winning the gubernatorial and House of Assembly elections on 11th March 2023.

It'll be a monumental disaster if (God forbid) Lagos falls into the hands of the opposition at a time when the man who started the development of Lagos is now the President elect. It will mean that Lagos State will be in the opposition to the government at the centre. This is not an appealing scenario for Lagos State and its citizens.

Right now, Governor Sanwo-olu's second term chances and most especially Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu's legacy in Lagos State are at stake and in danger of being eroded with the unpalatable attendant possible demolition of all the gains made in the last 22 years when Asiwaju became the governor of Lagos State and set it on the road to progress and prosperity. Me thinks the leaders of thought and the stakeholders in Lagos State must as a matter of urgency go back to the drawing board and map out a plan, a strategy, whatever, to remedy the situation to ensure victory at the gubernatorial and state house of assembly elections coming up on 11th March 2023. The stark choice before Lagosians at the next

gubernatorial election is simply to make an objective assessment of the successive developmental strides achieved by Lagos since 1999 to date which is borne out of The Lagos State Development Plan that brought the state out of near bankruptcy to being the fifth largest economy in Africa and still growing - which is a certainty as against voting for an uncertain future under the governorship of an inexperienced and untested candidate of the opposition.

All the Traditional Rulers in Lagos State must do the needful in galvanising the real Lagos electorates to come out en-masse and return Babajide Olusola Sanwo-olu and Femi Hamzat as Governor and Deputy Governor respectively as well as all members of the house of assembly to vote and return Babajide Olusola Sanwo-olu and Femi Hamzat as Governor and Deputy Governor respectively as well as all members of the house of assembly to continue the prosperous trajectory of the State. Lagos State is too precious to be allowed to fall into the hands of the opposition. Certainly not now that the man who engineered the prosperity is now the President elect and the attendant benefits it would bring to Lagos State is Governor Sanwo-olu is returned on 11th March 2023.

The traditional Lagos State electorates MUST be wooed, cajoled, lured etc. The leaders of thought and all stakeholders must do whatever it takes to get them to come out en-masse to vote for APC to ensure that Eko B'aje Ti.

To do otherwise may spell disaster for the state that holds an enviable place in Yoruba land, Nigeria and Africa.

JK Adebola MNIM; MCICN is the Chairman, APC UK Interim National Working Committee (NWC)

## 2023 FIFA U-20 World Cup: SESC Chieftain, Dagana Congratulates NFF Over Flying Eagles Qualification

By: AYO OJEDOKUN, Lagos

Following the Flying Eagles passage to the semi-final at the on-going 2023 Africa U-20 Cup of Nations which has secured them a place at the 2023 FIFA Under-20 World Cup, the Chairman of the Bayelsa State Chapter of Super Eagles Supporters Club (SESC) Dr (Barr) Johnson A. Dagana has expressed happiness and congratulated the

President of the Nigeria Football Federation (NFF), Alhaji Ibrahim Musa Gusau.

Barr. Dagana made the call in a statement issued after the Flying Eagles achieved both feats of beating the Hippos of Uganda 1-0 in their quarter-final clash at the Suez Canal Stadium, Ismailia on Thursday night.

Chairman of Chairmen for the Super Eagles Supporters Club described

the qualification as a commendable feat for the Ladan Bosso tutored Flying Eagles, while urging the team to go for the ultimate prize of the competition which is to win the 2023 Africa Under-20 Cup of Nations. "Congratulations to the NFF boss and the Nigerian football family and our Flying Eagles, who have guaranteed a spot in the Under-20 World Cup in May, as well as being through to the semi-finals

of the U-20 AFCON," Dagana said in a statement.

The Flying Eagles will face the winner of the quarter-final tie between Gambia and South Sudan in the semi-final on Monday 6th of March.

Dagana also appreciated and congratulates Alhaji Musiliu Alao who won the Orange Fan of the match award, an award from CAF for best supporter and also representing SESC in Egypt.

## Ayade Mourns Archbishop Calabar Diocese, Condoles Catholic Church

By: VITALIS UGOH, Calabar

Cross River State Governor, Sir Ben Ayade has expressed deep shock and sorrow over the death of the Archbishop Emeritus of the Catholic Archdiocese of Calabar, the Most Reverend Joseph Edra Ukpo.

In a condolences message signed on his behalf by his Chief Press Secretary/Special Adviser Media and Publicity, Barrister Christian Ita, the governor who is a knight of the Catholic church, described Archbishop Ukpo's passing as a "personal loss to me and my family."

The news of Archbishop Ukpo's demise, he said, "came with a profound pain of loss of such a great treasure of the Church and humanity at large."

According to him, the late Archbishop was "a source of wisdom and counsel who was always there to lend a shoulder."

The governor said his son-father relationship with the late Archbishop Ukpo makes his demise a personal loss to him and a



Late Archbishop of Calabar

void which will be too difficult to fill.

"This is a personal loss and a void that cannot be filled because he was a father to me. I cherished the moments of all my encounters with him and I wish him a safe journey and eternal repose in the bosom of the Father."

Ayade lamented that the cleric's demise has robbed the Catholic church of a true teacher and promoter of the faith.

"He was compassionate and exceptionally generous, gave hope and succour to many people and touched so many lives positively."

"Archbishop Ukpo was a special son of our Blessed Mother, Mary, he was full of pastoral zeal, a great teacher of the gospel and ardent promoter of vocations, both to the priesthood and religious life who promoted and stood for the authentic teachings and practices of the Church.

"He was a meticulous minister of the Sacraments, an ecclesiastical prelate who led the people through collaboration and listening to the people of God", the statement quoted the governor as saying.

He extended condolences to the Catholic Archdiocese of Calabar, the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) and the Ukpo family, assuring them that "at this trying moment the prayers and thoughts of the government and people of Cross River are with you."

"Archbishop Ukpo's memory is our keepsake with which we will never part. God has him in his keeping while we have him in our hearts", the governor further said in the statement"

## Lagos SWAN Congratulates President-elect Tinubu On Election Victory

By: AYO OJEDOKUN, Lagos

Sports Writers Association of Nigeria (SWAN), Lagos State chapter has congratulated the President-elect, Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu over his victory in the just concluded 2023 presidential election.

Tinubu, the flagbearer of All Progressive Congress (APC), was said to have defeated Atiku Abubakar of People's Democratic Party (PDP), Peter Obi of Labour Party and other contestants to win the presidential poll, according to a result declared on Wednesday by the Independent Electoral Commission (INEC).

Chairman of Lagos SWAN, Olatutu Oladunni said in statement on Wednesday, that members of the association rejoice with Tinubu over the victory, adding that the development of sports when the President-elect was the Governor of Lagos State speaks volume of what he would do for sports as the president of Nigeria.

Oladunni noted that with the presidential election

over now, the task of governing the country lies on the shoulders of Tinubu.

"It is our believe that the people have spoken with their votes that led to this desired victory.

"We also want to appeal to other opponents in this election to join hands with Tinubu to take this country to the next level," Oladunni said.

The chairman said Lagos SWAN wants better attention and commitment of Tinubu's federal government to sports sector, "and we believe under him sports sector in Nigeria will be better and also add productive value to the Internal Generated Revenue (IGR) of the country while boosting the tourism industry.

Oladunni said: "The Lagos SWAN wishes him well and I pray his tenure shall bring a realistic fulfilled purpose of positivity for sports sector and citizens of Nigeria. We also appeal to him to remember our sports heroes who have written Nigeria's name in gold across the world in time past."



Tinubu

## Olubadan To FG: Ease Pains. Tension In Nigeria, Obey Supreme Court Judgement On Naira

at the same time. Even when fuel seemed available and the queues reduced, at what price? And when people were ready to buy at whatever price, where was the money?

Stressing that "all these almost stretched the masses beyond the limit and that's why the Supreme Court judgment was a balm that

could sooth the pains", he noted that the judgment brought personal relief to him as an individual.

"Seeing people in distress without ability to help out makes me weak and unhappy and so, with the judgment, I'm elated. The FG is advised to as a matter of urgency give effect to the judgment without any delay".

The Olubadan however, lauded

Nigerians for their resilience and perseverance while the trauma lasted and more importantly, for not allowing the problems to prevent them from performing their civic responsibility by coming out to vote in the last Saturday presidential and National Assembly election and then urged them to also demonstrate the same patriotism come next week when the gubernatorial and State Assembly election would be held.

## AGRA Kaduna Consortium Project Distributes Water Pump To Dry Season Farmers

By: SANIALIYU, Zaria

The AGRA Kaduna Consortium Project has distributed five sets of water pumps and accessories to selected farmers in Kaduna State in its efforts to improve productivity and increase resilience for smallholder farmers.

Dr. Esther Ibrahim, the AGRA State Programme Officer said, the objective of this initiative is to equip farmers with the necessary resources to enhance their productivity and yields, improve their resilience and efficiency and create avenues for generating supplementary income.

She said, AGRA Kaduna State Consortium Project, which is supported by the Alliance for A Green Revolution in Africa, distributed water pumps to dry season tomatoes farmers.

In his remarks, Prof. C. K. Daudu, who is the Lead Researcher of the project said, around 200 cooperative members are projected to gain

from the scheme and become well-equipped to exploit business opportunities in the rental services of water pumps within their respective communities.

According to him, the water pumps are projected to be used for 36 hours a week, with a 12:24 hours operation model adopted for the farms and rental services for the next three months of the remaining dry season tomatoes production.

Mr. Goni, the Project Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, said this undertaking is projected to have a beneficial effect on the production and output of 600 farmers in the dry season farming communities across the three local government areas of Kudan, Zaria, and Sabon Gari, which is expected to boost their production and output.

The event, which was conducted in NAERLS /ABU Zaria, equipped participants with the skills of water pumps calibration, maintenance,



JK Adebola pix for the opinion It's About Our Lagos

operation and management demonstrations.

Prof Emmanuel Ikani, the Executive Director of NAERLS, said the distribution of water pumps represents a significant effort aimed at empowering

small-scale farmers and enhancing their productivity.

Prof. Ikani said the initiative is anticipated to bring about favourable outcomes for the livelihood of the recipients and their local communities.

Personalities in attendance were, NAERLS management, farmer groups, representatives of Kaduna State Agricultural Development Agency and EXAF Africa, field extension agents amongst others.

## Jigawa Farmers Congratulate New Emir Of Dutse

By: JABIRUA. HASSAN, Kano

The All Farmers Association of Nigeria (AFAN) Jigawa State Chapter, has congratulated the new Emir of Dutse, Alhaji Hameem Nuhu Muhammad Sanusi on his staff of office presentation by Governor Muhammad Badaru Abubakar on Saturday.

In a statement signed and issued to our correspondent in Dutse shortly after the presentation of the staff of office, the AFAN chairman, Idris Yau Mai Unguwa Jaga, described the new Emir as a good leader who would follow the footsteps of his late father without bias.

"On behalf of the members of our great association, I congratulate Alhaji Hameem Nuhu Muhammad Sanusi for receiving a staff of office from our dynamic governor in a colourful event, and we are certain that his leadership would continue to promote unity and progress in Dutse Emirate, Jigawa State and the traditional institution at large".

Mai Unguwa Jaga said that the new emir would use his leadership experience in transforming Dutse Emirate to enviable heights.



New Emir of Dutse

## Olubadan To FG: Ease Pains. Tension In Nigeria, Obey Supreme Court Judgement On Naira

By: BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

The Olubadan of Ibadanland, Oba Lekan Balogun on Friday called on the Federal Government to the ease the pains and tension in the land by obeying the Supreme Court judgement extending the legality of old currency notes till the 31st December this year.

Oba Lekan Balogun in reaction to the Supreme court judgement made available to journalists by his Personal Assistant (Media), Oladele Ogunsola said in obeying the court judgement, FG should bring succour to Nigerians and release money to the populace

According to Oba Lekan Balogun, with the Supreme Court judgement, Federal Government should allow

people to access their funds in the banks so that many crumbling businesses can rise up again

"It is a great opportunity for the FG to bring succour to the people by releasing money to the populace. The last couple of weeks were too traumatic for the people and it is hoped that the Supreme Court judgment would be a platform to lean on by the government to ease the pains in the land", he said. The Olubadan added, "the current policy putting a ceiling on how much an individual can get from his/her account in the banks should be reviewed and allow people to withdraw as much as they want depending on the fatness of their accounts".

"It is a great opportunity for the FG to bring succour to the people by releasing

money to the populace. The last couple of weeks were too traumatic for the people and it is hoped that the Supreme Court judgment would be a platform to lean on by the government to ease the pains in the land".

Emphasizing that Federal Government should allow people to access their funds in the banks so that many crumbling businesses can rise up again, Oba Lekan Balogun said "the current policy putting a ceiling on how much an individual can get from his/her account in the banks should be reviewed and allow people to withdraw as much as they want depending on the fatness of their accounts".

"I felt deep pains seeing people queuing up at filling stations and banks

Continued on Page 23