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Oyetola
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Gov Adeleke**

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Makes 188 Seizures
Worth Over N600m

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media for support*

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May 29: North Convenes Round Table, Demands Senate Presidency, Reps Speaker

■ *Meets in Kaduna today*

■ *Communique expected to make fresh demands on Tinubu, APC*

■ *Rejects zoning of NASS leadership*

By; JACOB ONJEWU
DICKSON

Baring any last minute hitches, leaders of thought, political gladiators, professors and other key stakeholders would be converging on Kaduna today for a round table discussion after which demands would be made to give the region a bargaining advantage as Nigeria welcomes a new administration on May 29, which is just a couple of days away.

Our correspondent

gathered from a reliable source that already, participants of the round table discussion drawn from all over the country arrived Kaduna yesterday and have been accommodated in several hotels in the metropolis.

The source who was privy to a meeting held last night in one of the hotels, hinted that some of the demands that are expected to be communicated via a communique after the one day discussion, include demanding for leadership of the 10th National

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AATF's Next-generation Agricultural Technologies Excites Goodluck Jonathan PAGE 14



L-R: Dr. Canisius Kanangire, AATF Executive Director, Dr. Muhammadou Kah, member, AATF Board of Trustees (BoT), Dr. Dahlia Garwe Vice-Chairperson, AATF BoT, and Prof. Aggrey Ambali, Chairperson, AATF BoT, pose for a photo with the strategy document after the launch in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

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32 Ikorodu Women Join 250 Nestle's Rural Women Empowerment Project Beneficiaries

By; MATTHEW UKACHUNWA, Lagos

Thirty-two women from Ikorodu have joined the 250 beneficiaries of Nestle Nigeria's Empowering Rural Women in Nigeria Project.

Through the project Nestle is helping rural women in the country to build financial security to improve their standard of living.

"This is achieved through training, mentorship, and grants in form of Nestle products. Beneficiaries of the programme are female retailers in Nestle Nigeria's value chain," Corporate Communications Specialist of Nestle Nigeria, Bola Audu, stated on March 8, 2023.

Nestle Empowering Rural Women in Nigeria Project is aimed at helping beneficiaries scale up their businesses and sustain the new level of up to three times the size of their existing businesses.

"Each beneficiary receives a grant valued at 300 per cent of their monthly sales in form of Nestle products, business training and a three-month mentorship programme," the communication chief

explained. He added that each beneficiary is linked to a mentor for a one-on-one coaching over the three months in order to ensure their successes.

At the induction of the 32 new beneficiaries in Ikorodu, Nestle's Commercial Manager, Mr. Khaled Ramadan, said, "We are pleased with the success of the 250 beneficiaries of Nestle Empowering Rural Women in Nigeria Project and are delighted by the opportunity to include 32 more today."

Ramadan pointed out that with the addition, 282 women across five geopolitical zones of Nigeria have, at the present day, a unique opportunity to scale up their businesses by 300 per cent.

The commercial manager expressed confidence that the new beneficiaries will also transform their businesses by making the best use of the support Nestle is providing through training, mentorship and grants in form of Nestle products.

FDC Consults is the implementation partner of Nestle Empowering Rural Women in Nigeria Project.

Zango Kataf Crisis: We Are Working Towards Amicable Solutions - Council Chairman

By; AMOS TAUNA, Kaduna

Chairman of Zango Kataf Local Government Area of Kaduna State, Mr Francis Sani Zimbo has said the council and community stakeholders are leaving no stone unturned towards addressing the renewed attacks on residents in the affected areas with a view to finding lasting solutions.

Speaking while addressing newsmen in Zonkwa on Tuesday, the council chairman explained that stakeholders in the local government are taking necessary steps in ensuring that the killings come to an end and create a conducive atmosphere for development to flourish

and the sustenance of peaceful coexistence.

According to him, "The council is working with community structures like the community development associations, religious and community leaders to find lasting solutions to the security challenges in the affected areas with a view to ensure sanity for people to go about their legitimate businesses."

He lamented that the lingering insecurity had brought all development initiatives to a standstill, saying that as it, people hardly go to farm or go for business activities for fear of the unknown, stressing that these are things they are trying to make people understand in order to live a harmonious life.

He further lamented, "The situation has drastically affected agricultural production; people no longer go to the farm for fear of being killed. Just two weeks ago, some people were killed in their farmlands. Not in their houses. In their farmlands with hoes in their hands."

According to him, houses are being destroyed, food reserves burnt, agricultural activities brought to abrupt halt. Intergroup relations tainted with suspicion, adding that it is not good looking at how many grow up where people of different ethnic groups live together without any problem in the past.

The council chairman lamented that resources that would have been used

to bring about development in the local government were being channeled into addressing the fallouts of the crises.

He added that presently, more than 20 survivors of the attacks receiving treatment at Sir Patrick Ibrahim Yakowa Memorial Hospital, Kafanchan and Bingham University Teaching Hospital, Jos, saying that the victims are in dire need of help in order to come back to life.

He stressed that those whose houses and food items were destroyed by the attackers also need immediate help to rebuild their lives, appealing to the federal and Kaduna governments to come to their aid to cushion the effect of their present predicaments.

Demolished portion of land at Ajao Estate belonging to FAAN in Lagos. Photo: AKINOLAARIYO



Supreme Court: Oyetola Congratulates Gov Adeleke

**Says he remains committed to growth, development of Osun*

By; BAYOAKAMO, Ibadan

Ex Governor of Osun State, Alhaji Adegboyega Oyetola on Wednesday, accepted the Tuesday's ruling of the Supreme Court which upheld the election of Senator Ademola Adeleke as Governor of the State.

Alhaji Oyetola in a statement personally signed by him, said although, the verdict of the Apex Court was against the wishes of his party's members and supporters, he accepted it in the interest of peace and development of the state.

According to him, members of the All Progressives Congress (APC), his supporters and those who voted him during the July 16, 2022 governorship election, should accept the judgement as

the will of God and move on.

"I remain committed to the growth and development of Osun. I will therefore continue to work with well-meaning citizens of Osun, associations and institutions to facilitate development to our dear state. Similarly, I urge all citizens of Osun to continue to exhibit the Omoluabi ethos and uphold the dreams of our forebears for the State, irrespective of party affiliations", he said.

Alhaji Oyetola added, "To the Osun Governor, Senator Ademola Nurudeen Jackson Adeleke, I take this opportunity to congratulate you on your victory at the Supreme Court. While I pray for your tenure to be prosperous for our people and the State, I urge you to focus on delivery of good governance".

"Politics aside, time has come to let you know that the interest of the masses must be most paramount without any restriction or discrimination whether based on political persuasion, creed or religion. Whatever personal differences we have must give way to the advancement of our great State. The security of Osun people must be guaranteed regardless of their religious and political affiliations. I pray for peace and progress in your tenure,"

The former governor stressed, "we strongly believe we presented a good case before the Supreme Court but the Court thought otherwise and has given its verdict. While the outcome is against our wish and that of our party members and

supporters, we are all bound to accept it as law-abiding citizens".

Alhaji Oyetola noted "To our members and supporters across the State, I urge you all to accept the verdict of the Court and move on. The present situation is a win-win for us. It's both a loss and victory rolled into one. While we lost Osun technically, we gained Nigeria".

The former governor while asking the APC members and supporters not to feel sad and depressed over the decision of the Court urged them to brace up for the tasks ahead of the party.

Alhaji Oyetola appreciated the leadership of the party in the State and at the national level for their commitment and support throughout the period of the legal tussle.

Umahi Swears--In 4 New Commissioners, Commissions Projects

By; M K P U M A ENYINNA, Abakaliki

Governor David Umahi of Ebonyi State has sworn-in four new Commissioners into the State Executive Council and also commissioned some projects that have been completed in different parts of the state.

The commissioners who were screened last week by the State House of Assembly were sworn in on Tuesday at the Executive Council Chambers, Government House, Abakaliki.

The new Commissioners include, the former Senior Special Assistant to the

Governor on Local Government, Chieftaincy Matters and Rural Development, Enekwachi Akpa, former SSA to the Governor on Aviation and Technology, Mrs. Obianuju Aloh, former SSA to the Governor on Legal Matters, Mr. Emeka Nwode and a former SA to the Governor on Projects, Mr. Uchenna Nwankpuma.

Also inaugurated by the Governor was the committee members for the May 29 handover.

The governor charged the newly sworn-in Commissioners to use the little opportunity available to them to leave a legacy in

their services to the state and humanity.

Governor Umahi, during the Exco meeting, also received the newly recruited four hundred staff of the President Muhammadu Buhari International Airport, Onueke, Ebonyi State.

Speaking to the new employees, Umahi charged them to exhibit the highest level of commitment and patriotism in the discharge of their duties, stressing that the airport is one of the prime projects of the state.

"We feel very much fulfilled about that airport, and people have not

stopped talking about it.

"It was almost an impossible task.

"Please take very good care of that airport, it belongs to all of us.

"My last advice is that if you want to succeed in life, take care of public property the way you would do of your personal property.

"And even if man does not reward you, God will surely do".

Umahi congratulated the newly recruited staff and commended the Head of Service, the SSA on Aviation and all who facilitated the recruitment process.



Why We Withdrew Petition Challenging Tinubu's Victory - AA

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The Action Alliance (AA) has said that it withdrew the petition challenging Tinubu's victory at the Presidential Election Petition Tribunal in Abuja, because of unity of the nation, saying the party would not want to be the reason Nigeria will be thrown into another horrific experience similar to June 12, 1993 Presidential elections believed to have been won by late Chief MKO Abiola of the Southwest extraction.

The chairman of the party Honourable Adekunle Rufai Omo-Aje, disclosed this in a statement made available to the media in Kaduna on Monday May 8, 2023.

The party added that as active democrats in the democratic experiment, they shall not be used by proponents of the interim government to achieve their concocted agenda of taking over the government through the back door.

"Thirdly, our party believes in the three key principles of a healthy democracy, which are, equity, fairness and justice.

"The agitations around our country today are because part or all of these key principles have been relegated.

"We believe it is not fair, to abort ascendancy of a Southerner to the most exalted seat and position, especially after a Northerner has successfully sat on same for eight years.

"We do not want to be seen as being used as a vehicle for further relegation of these all-important principles of democracy.

"We also considered those who participated and won elections.

"We considered Senator Rabiu Musa Kwankwaso of NNPP, Prince Adewole Adebayo of the SDP, who is our very good brother and friend.

"These two men among others, had their parties winning positions in the elections, yet they never approached this Presidential Elections Tribunal, in spite of their party loses.

"For this also, we considered many other reasons as canvassed by some of our leaders, we see no sense in furthering on with this protest petition.

"One of the reasons advanced by some of our leaders as well, is the believe in the ability of Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu, being a proponent of restructuring, which has been one major reason why we have the barrage of agitations in our land today, to evolve a kind of policy that could engender resurgence of trust in our togetherness as a national entity.

"We need a personality that believes in policies that can repose trust in the aggrieved indigenous nationalities within Nigeria to reenact the loss of brotherliness among our diverse ethnicity.

With all the above stated reasons, we strongly believe that Nigeria is in better hands in competence, with Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu in the driver's seat.

"I want to mention and appreciate the intervention of my brother, Senator Iyiola Omisore, FNSE, CON, for his political wizardry and dogmatic faith in the unity of Nigeria.

"Also, I want to thank the leader of our legal team, Oba Maduabuchi SAN who had used and is still using his calling to provide redemption and justice for our party as its client. I salute you, sir, and say thank you.

Navy Hunts Illegal Security Maritime Outfits, Warns Against Enlistment

By; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

Authority of the Nigerian Navy have warned unsuspecting members of the public to shun the purchase of forms of fake security outfits and impostors currently ongoing.

The authorities asked that anyone with useful information about the impostors and illegal maritime outfits should be forwarded to the Nigerian Navy so as to facilitate the arrest of the miscreants".

The Navy listed some of the proscribed maritime outfits operating illegally in the nation as "Nigerian Merchant Navy, Nigerian Merchant Navy Coastal Defence Force, Nigerian Coast Guard, Merchant Navy Maritime Academy, Nigerian Merchant Navy Coast Guard Security and Safety Corps, Maritime Security Agency and Nigerian Maritime Law Enforcement Agency amongst

others".

Director of Naval Information, Commodore A.O. Ayo-Vaughan made the disclosure in a statement titled, 'Worrisome Activities of Impostors and Fake Maritime Security Outfits'.

It reads, "The Nigerian Navy (NN) has noted with dismay the unscrupulous activities of some impostors and self-acclaimed maritime security outfits who make use of naval uniforms and accoutrements including uniforms that resemble naval uniforms to deceive, harass, intimidate, and defraud unsuspecting members of the public.

"Some of these outfits go as far as selling recruitment forms to the public and even conduct secret recruitment exercises and training.

"The activities of these impostors and miscreants are observed to be on the rise notwithstanding the proscription order of the Federal Government

of Nigeria official Gazette No. 58 Vol 100 titled "the Dissolution and Proscription of Certain Associations Order, 2013" banning all such firms/outfits.

"The Order in Paragraph 2 states that "As from the commencement of this Order, the dissolved and proscribed associations shall not be formed into any new associations by whatever name or title, within the meaning of this Order".

"Suffice to state that the NN in the past had arrested and handed over for prosecution, members of some of these outlawed organizations.

"Nevertheless, their illegal activities have continued unabated in some parts of the country, particularly the South-South geopolitical zone.

"Pertinently, the proliferation of illegal maritime security outfits is worrisome and may worsen the scourge of insecurity in the country with likely grave impact

on national security.

"It has therefore become necessary to notify the public and appeal for caution.

"Relatedly, information about these impostors and illegal maritime outfits should be forwarded to the NN so as to facilitate the arrest of these miscreants.

"Essentially, operatives of the NN in conjunction with other Maritime Law Enforcement Agencies will continue to maintain vigilance in order to locate, promptly apprehend and prosecute these miscreants in accordance with the laws of the land.

"The public are thus enjoined to report any suspected impostor or fake maritime security personnel to the nearest police station and/or naval base.

"In addition, the public are advised not to patronise or purchase entry/recruitment forms from these proscribed outfits.

"Report suspicious behaviour of any group of persons or organizations who claim to be personnel of the NN or who are found dressed in or in possession of naval uniforms and accoutrements or similar uniforms and accoutrements including those conducting fake recruitment and naval training.

"The Nigerian Navy does not sell entry/recruitment forms to the public as is the practice of some of these fraudsters.

"Hence, anyone selling recruitment forms is not naval personnel but an impostor.

"The perpetrators of these illegalities are warned that the Nigerian Navy as statutorily empowered, will leave no stone unturned in her bid to secure the maritime environment for enhanced security of lives and properties and for the conduct of legitimate maritime commerce and related economic activities.

NUT Commends Kaduna Govt Over Sacked Teachers Recall

By ; FUNMI ADERINTO, Kaduna

Kaduna State Chapter of Nigeria Union of Teachers (NUT) has commended the state government for reinstating 1,288 public school teachers that were earlier sacked after the competency test.

In a letter dated April 5, 2023, which had reference number NUT/GO/G7/Vol 4/732 and signed by state secretary, Adamu Ayuba Kaltungo, the union appreciated the "kind gesture extended to our esteemed members who were affected by this government policy."

According to NUT, the reinstatement will "go a long way in bridging the gap of the teacher-pupil ratio being experienced in the public primary school sector."

It would be recalled that Kaduna State Universal Basic Education Board (KADSUBEB) had sacked 2,357 primary school teachers over the competency test in June 2022, explaining that 2,192 teachers were dismissed for their failure to sit for the test, while 165 teachers were sacked for poor performance.

After written complaints, the board reviewed some cases, where some affected workers claimed that they were kidnapped at the time of the test, while some claimed that they were central administration staff and as such, were exempted from the exercise.

In April, KADSUBEB reinstated 1,288 sacked teachers, arguing that "having examined and verified their complaints, the state government approved the reinstatement of 392 teachers, who wrote and passed the test, and 515 central administration staff that were officially exempted from the test.

"Others are: 298 teachers, who were verified to be sick at the time of the test, as well as 61 teachers that were kidnapped or involved in accidents verified by their respective Education Secretaries.

"Also, 22 teachers, who were permanently removed from the payroll for unsubstantiated claims were equally reinstated, amounting to a total of 1,288 reinstated workers," KADSUBEB had explained.

May 29: North Convenes Round Table, Demands Senate Presidency, Reps Speaker

■ Meets in Kaduna today

■ Communique expected to make fresh demands on Tinubu, APC

■ Rejects zoning of NASS leadership

Assembly.

"The North would be demanding for leadership of the National Assembly, including the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

"The North has 68 per cent stake in Nigeria and would not be begging for appointment of positions like Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF), which can be fired at any time by the president

"The case of Babachir Lawal readily comes to mind. We will make our demands being the ones who produced the highest votes that produced the president," the source said. The insider who is one of the conveners of the meeting, pointed out that in 2011, the North voted Goodluck Jonathan and decided to vote him out and vote Muhammadu Buhari in 2015.

"In 2023, in the spirit of equity, we looked the other way against our kinsmen and gave Bola Ahmed



Tinubu the highest number of votes.

"We expect to demand positions in his government. Some of our demands would be that of Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) Governor, Minister of Finance and other positions taken at our meeting tomorrow," the source hinted.

He further explained that they want someone who understands the region and feels their pains to be the CBN Governor so that

some of the problems they are facing can be adequately addressed.

"Look at Yobe State for example, only two banks are operating there, one is the micro finance floated by the state government. Fifty million Northerners don't have bank accounts. How then would they transact business, but through cash. We want someone who understands that," he said.

He said that the CBN under Sanusi Lamido

understood that and issued licences to bureau de change operators and there was multiplying effect in the economy then.

He disclosed that a communique which will be well publicised would be issued at the end of the meeting, clearly spelling out the demands of the North which are expected to be met by the incoming administration.

"If they are not met, the North will decide to take its 68 per cent and invest elsewhere in 2027," he revealed.

Plateau Civil Servants Embark On Indefinite Strike Over Unpaid Wages, Other Demands

By; BUHARI B. BELLO, Jos

Civil servants under the umbrella of the Joint National Public Service Negotiation Council Plateau State Chapter, has announced the commencement of an indefinite strike action over unpaid wages and other demands.

According to the workers, effective midnight of Wednesday 10th May 2023, they are downing tools in order to press their demands presented to the Plateau State Government which according to them, are yet to be addressed.

This position was contained in a letter

addressed to the Head of Civil Service dated 10th May 2023 and made available to journalists in Jos the Plateau State capital.

The letter which is titled, "NOTICE OF INDEFINITE STRIKE ACTION", signed by Titus I. Malau and Timothy Gopep, Chairman and Secretary of the Workers Union respectively reads that "At the expiration of our four (4) days extension to the earlier seven (7) days ultimatum given to government to address the demands of workers in our letters dated 19th April 2023, 3rd May 2023.

"Also, following the

meeting of 10th May 2023 with the Head of Civil Service and the Secretary to the Government of the State in attendance, it is evidently clear that Government has not shown enough commitment to address the issues as presented in our charter of demands before its tenure expires as earlier presented," the union said.

The union disclosed that following a joint meeting between the Joint Council and NLC/TUC Leadership, it was resolved that an INDEFINITE STRIKE ACTION be declared from midnight of 10th May, 2023.

The union however, assured government that they are readily available for discussion even as the strike continues.

The workers are alleging that the Simon Lalong-led administration among other things, is owing months of unpaid wages, even though some claimed that they have been paid up to February 2023 salaries.

The state government is yet to work out who respond to this development as at time of filing this report.

Efforts to speak to the commissioner or information on this matter was not successful as he could not pick the repeated calls.

Bandits Kill Woman, Burn Houses In Zango Kataf

By; AMOS TAUNA, Kaduna

Suspected militias on Wednesday night again, attacked Runji (Sankwab) village, Atyap Chiefdom in Zango Kataf Local Government Area of Kaduna State and killed a woman.

Wednesday attack became the third in about three weeks, the first casualty was when about 33 persons were killed and about 40 houses completely razed down by the attackers.

A source from the village told New Nigerian that houses were also razed down and the Baptist Church in the area was not spared by the attackers.

According to the source, "The attackers came to the village in their numbers to carry out their mission but for the quick intervention of the military personnel, the situation was brought under control and as I am talking to you, a search is ongoing to ascertain the number of casualties suffered in the area."

He called on the Federal and Kaduna State governments to take proactive measures to avert the ugly incidences happening in Atyap land, saying that the inhabitants have witnessed incessant attacks, leading to the loss of lives and destruction of valuables.

Kaduna CP Visits Commander 453 Base Services Group, Seeks Synergy

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The Commissioner of Police Kaduna State Command, CP M.Y. Garba on Wednesday, paid a familiarisation visit on the Commander 453 Base Services Group Nigerian Air Force Base Kaduna. A statement signed by the Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), DSP Mohammed Jalige dated Wednesday May 20, 2023, said he was warmly received by the Commander, Air Commodore A.A. Adedoyin and his entourage. During the visit, CP Garba told his hosts that he was on a familiarisation visit and is committed to

strengthening the existing collaboration and synergy between the Nigerian Police and the Nigerian Air Force. He explained that such synergy would further ensure that criminal elements are promptly dislodged through information sharing and inter agency collaboration. In his response, the Commander 453 Base Services Group Nigerian Air Force Base Kaduna, Commander, Air Commodore A.A. Adedoyin welcomed the CP, while pledging to ensure synergy between both agencies. The CP was accompanied on the visit by some senior officers of the command.



President Elect Tinubu To African Youth: Put Your Best Foot Forward

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Nigeria President -elect Asiwaju Bola Tinubu has commended African youths for their positive impact in rewriting the history of Africa in a positive way.

Asiwaju Tinubu gave this commendation at the Commonwealth Youth and Students Summit held in Abuja.

The president -elect who was represented at the summit by the All Progressives Congress (APC) National Youth Leader, Hon. Dayo Israel, in a statement read on behalf of Tinubu, made available to the media, stated that, with the use of technology, the youth are rewriting the African script.

"You are promoting your communities, businesses and endeavours by telling your own stories. We live in a digital age, and technology is rapidly transforming the way we live, work, and communicate. The digital revolution has opened new opportunities for innovation, growth, and development. Africa is home to a vast youth population, and I am proud of what you have done with it so far."

Tinubu noted that Africa owes the youth a lot of gratitude for presenting the continent in a good light.

He said in the past, the focus of media was the negative things about Africa, creating the impression that there were no positive things coming from Africa.

Shedding more light on the theme of their summit, "Co-creating our common future leadership in the digital age in Africa" he noted that the topic speaks to the twin issues of leadership and technology as needed catalysts for development in Africa.

Asiwaju Tinubu charged them, that for them to actualise their potentials they must collectively work as a team to create a safe and secured environment.

"We must work together to create safe and secure environments for ourselves and our communities. We must reject violence and extremism and promote peace and harmony. We must also work to create a united front against external threats and challenges.

"Unity is crucial for Africa's success. We must work together to promote cooperation, collaboration, and solidarity. We must break down the barriers that divide us and build bridges of understanding and trust.

"We must also promote inclusivity and ensure that everyone has a seat at the table. We must set high goals for ourselves and work tirelessly to achieve them. We must also support and encourage each other in our pursuits. We must reject the limiting beliefs that hold us back and embrace our full potential."

The president -elect noted that globally, entrepreneurs are the driving force behind economic growth, hence there is the need for more young people to take on the challenge." I urge you to take



Tinubu

advantage of the resources available to you and to pursue your entrepreneurial dreams.

"Fashion and tourism are two industries that can help us showcase the beauty of Africa to the rest of the world. We must invest in these sectors and work to create unique and authentic experiences for tourists. We must also celebrate our fashion designers and support current efforts being put in to promote African fashion globally"

Tinubu reiterated that as young people, they are the future leaders of the continent.

"It is imperative that we develop strong leaders who can drive positive change and lead us into a brighter future. We must hold ourselves accountable and strive to be the best versions of ourselves.

"Leaders are not born; they are made. We must all work hard to develop our leadership skills and be willing to step up and take on leadership roles on our campuses, youth organisations, communities, associations, businesses, counties, parliaments, local, state and national governments.

"Armed with adequate data, information, and an understanding of the rules, must be ready to mix it with the older generation and challenge them.

"As young Africans, we must be proud of our culture, heritage, and history. We must celebrate our diversity and embrace our differences. We must work together to showcase the beauty of Africa and the resilience of its people. We must also reject the negative stereotypes and false

narratives that have been perpetuated about our continent.

"Remember that you what you answer to. When on social media, put your best foot forward. Do not allow peer pressure to push you into spreading the myth that nothing good can happen in Africa," Tinubu counselled the youth.

He explained that geria will continue to invest in her youth, nay African." We will unfold programs and initiatives that are beneficial to our youth in the areas of Youths Advisory Council, Presidential Fellowship Scheme, Business Incubation Centres, MSME Academy, Consumer Credit and Sports Revolution. Greater inclusivity in governance for our youth now is important for our future.

Adamawa Guber Debacle: Why Binani Must Be Arrested - CSO

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

A civil society group under the aegis of Concerned Civil Society Organizations, has given insights about why the gubernatorial candidate of the opposition All Progressives Congress (APC), in Adamawa State, Sen. Aishatu Dahiru Ahmed Binani must be arrested.

Rising from an emergency meeting in Kaduna on Sunday, the group's national coordinator, Ibrahim Mada said based on circumstantial evidences, it is clear that Binani is a willing partner in the attempted coup d'etat against democracy in Adamawa State.

Mada who commended the police for arresting the "rogue REC" also urged the police to extend the dragnet to Binani because she has a case to answer following her surreptitious acceptance speech.

"We must commend the police for arresting the rogue REC whose official

misconduct has given the electoral umpire a bad name and whose travesty will remain a reference point.

"We call on the police to extend its dragnet to Binani because it is apparent she played a critical role in the subversion of the will of Adamawa people, which is treasonable," he said.

It would be recalled that during the supplementary election for the governorship seat in Adamawa State, Mr Hudu Ari, the REC clandestinely moved to the governorship collation center in cahoot with some willing security operatives and announced Binani as the winner of the election in very controversial circumstances an action that nearly jeopardized the peace and harmony being enjoyed in the state.

Shortly after Hudu Ari's declaration, Senator Binani went on air and read a well prepared acceptance speech.

But in order to restore its hard earned

image, INEC later countered Mr Hudu Ari's declaration saying that he is not constitutionally empowered to declare Binani as Governor -Elect, as the electoral umpire noted that the function clearly rests with the Returning Officer.

Apart from rendering Hudu Ari's action inconsequential, INEC ordered the REC to return to Abuja for debriefing, an order he declined. However, the candidate, he declared as winner of the inconclusive poll, Binani went to the court to protect her mandate.

Based on these happenings, Mada opined that there is a connection between the actions of the disgraced INEC official and Senator Binani, which calls for critical scrutiny.

"How Binani knows that she would be declared winner and prepared a lengthy speech which she read less than thirty minutes after Ari's declaration, leaves much to be desired," he said.

The activist also wondered why Binani who is a lawmaker chose to ignore the facts on ground suggesting that the embattled REC actions were illegal and she went ahead to accept his poisoned chalice.

He added that as a lawmaker, Binani knows the implication of Ari's action but she along with him because she wanted to be the governor of the state.

Again, there are strong allegations making rounds that over N2 billion exchanged hands amongst some critical personnel of the commission to facilitate the illegal declaration of Binani as Governor of Adamawa State.

Mada noted that based on the foregoing, it is compelling on the federal government to take strong steps in unravelling what led to the attempt to subvert democracy in the state and who are the key actors in the civil version of a coup attempt.

Akwa Ibom HIV Anti-Stigma Bill: More Calls On Gov Emmanuel To Append Signature

By; PATRICK TITUS, Uyo

Concerned by the need to check HIV/AIDS prevalence in Akwa Ibom State and to ensure free and supportive environment for all, Governor Udom Emmanuel has been called upon to sign the HIV Anti-Stigma and Discrimination Bill into law.

This is in spite of the advocacy mounted by various concerned groups in the state, including the Association of People living with HIV/AIDS.

Speaking to our correspondent in Uyo, on Monday, the Coordinator Association of Positive Youths Nigeria, Akwa Ibom State chapter, Mr. Churchill Kingsley said assenting the bill into law will be a foundation for the state to leverage on fight against HIV/AIDS and reduce its prevalence.

"Advocacy has been made, lot of contributions, sacrifices and pressures have also been made. We are appealing to His Excellency, Governor Udom Emmanuel to do us this before he leaves office on May 29 to sign the anti-stigma bill into law so to be a foundation for us to leverage on fighting this HIV/AIDS and also reducing its prevalence in Akwa Ibom state because it is alarming and not supporting us." Churchill stated.

Also expressing worries

over the development and the need for the bill to be assented to by governor, the Coordinator of Association of Women Living With HIV/AIDS, Mrs Racheal Ignatius said the high HIV AIDS prevalence in the state owes its roots more to people who refuse to disclose their status.

According to Mrs Ignatius, Anti-Stigma and Discrimination Bill if signed into law, would be of great benefit to the state in addressing the HIV AIDS scourge.

"If the bill is signed into law by the governor, we will benefit, we will enjoy the reduction on prevalence that is number one (1). Number two (2), People will be free to come out of their closet to disclose their status and live comfortable, because without disclosure and we are talking about epidemic control, it will not be, it can't come to board and I am really pleading with my governor.

"I appreciate all what the governor and his wife have done to our community. With the sense of a father and a husband, seeing us crying for this law to be signed, he should do us a favour to sign the bill before he leaves the office," she appealed.

It would be recalled that the Akwa Ibom State House of Assembly had early last year, passed the bill, but

Ebonyi Council Chairmen Applaud Umahi's Developmental Strides

By; MKPUMA ENYINNA, Abakaliki

Some local government council chairmen have applauded the developmental strides and ingenuity of Governor David Umahi in Ebonyi State, saying that he has performed beyond the expectations of Ebonyians.

The council chairmen equally used the opportunity to congratulate Hon. Enekwachi Akpa for his new appointment as commissioner, stating that it is well deserved.

The chairman of Ohaozara Local Government Area, Hon. Chinonso Ajah and his Ikwo counterpart, Hon. Sunday Nwankwo expressed this during the civic reception of Hon. Enekwachi Akpa as a commissioner in Ebonyi State.

Hon. Ajah expressed gratitude to God for giving Ebonyi State a man of vision like Governor David Umahi to rewrite the history of the state. He noted that Umahi has performed beyond the expectations of Ebonyians in all aspect of human endeavor.

He also described the Governor elect, Hon. Francis Nwifuru as a committed and dedicated leader whom Ebonyians have chosen to take the state to the next level.

"I am very happy to be

part of this administration, and I remain grateful to God for giving us this kind of governor. He has performed well in all sectors which has restored back the glory of Ebonyi state in the comity of States. We remain grateful to Him.

"For they governor elect, Hon. Francis Ogbonna Nwifuru knows more than us, he is a committed and dedicated leader which is why Ebonyians have chosen

him as the next governor of this state because he will perform well.

"So, by the special grace of God, he is going to perform beyond our expectations. Let him continue from where Umahi stopped.

"Honestly, I am very happy for the appointment of Hon. Enekwachi Akpa as a commissioner because he is a hard working man, anyone that works so hard deserves to be appreciated, I am happy for him. I know that he will do well.



On his part, the council chairman of Ikwo Local Government Area, Barr. Sunday Nwankwo added that Umahi has changed the narrative of the state by putting fantastic infrastructural development across, which has impacted positively on the wellbeing of Ebonyians. He therefore, urged Hon. Nwifuru to consolidate on the achievements and legacies of Umahi. "I know that hard work pays at any point in time. I am sure is not like saying I recognized that you are

there.

"Umahi has fantastic achievements; in the infrastructure, he has done well, moral building, he has done well.

"He has touched every aspect of our lives. As you can see, he has changed the narrative, the next administration shall focus on consolidation and continuity which means they will be building on legacies already established. We expect higher accomplishments in the few months and years ahead," he said.



From left Chief Launcher, Dr. Gabriel Olowo. Publisher of the book, Mr. Wole Shadare, Chairman of the occasion, Dr. Diran Fawibe, Publisher of the book, Mr. Gboyega Adeoye, MD/CEO, Pathfinders International Ltd, Mrs. Nkechi Onyenso and General Manager, Public Affairs Nigeria Safety Investigation Bureau (NSIB), Mr. Tunji Oketunbi at the launching of a book "Nigeria's Aviation "Unsung Heroes & Heroines" at Providence Hotel. Photo: AKINOLA ARIYO

NUC Executive Secretary, To Deliver 2023 UNIFEMGA National Reunion Lecture

By: BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

The Executive Secretary of the National Universities Commission (NUC), Professor Abubakar Rasheed will on Saturday May 13, 2023, deliver the 2023 annual national reunion lecture of the Obafemi Awolowo University Muslim Graduates' Association (UNIFEMGA) at Ile-Ife, Osun State.

This was made known on Wednesday by the Chairman Planning Committee of the Reunion, Mohammed Buari and Samsudeen Adenopo, Public Relations Officer, in a statement made available to journalists.

According to the statement, in the three-day conference which would include the reunion lecture is to hold at Oduwa Hall, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Osun state from Friday May 12 to Sunday May 14, 2023.

Professor Abubakar Rasheed, the NUC boss, would speak on the theme of the day: "The Future of Higher Education in Nigeria, Emerging Trends, Challenges and Opportunities" while the Ooni of Ife, Oba Adeyeye Enitan Ogunwusi, Ojaja II, will be the Royal Father of the day.



Prof Abubakar Rasheed

The statement added that Mallam Yusuf Olaolu Ali (SAN), would chair the occasion on Saturday with Prof. Adebayo Simeon Bamire as the Host Vice-Chancellor.

UNIFEMGA said that there would be a networking dinner on Friday May 12, to be hosted by Alhaji Rafiu Ebiti, BOT Chairman of UNIFEMGA and

Pro-Chancellor Summit University Offa with Dr Akintoye Akindele as the Guest Speaker and Alhaji Munirudeen Animasahun as the Chairman.

The topic for discussion is "Entrepreneurship and the *Future* of Work".

The statement added that the dinner will hold at Ifelolu Hall at the OAU Ile-Ife from 9 pm.

The reunion activities will commence with a special Jumaat Service at OAU Central Mosque, inauguration of an ultra modern library donated to UNIFEMGA in memory of Alhaji Abdullahi Bello, the late Baba Adinni of OAU Muslim Community by his children at the mosque premises, a courtesy call on the new Vice-Chancellor

and a welcome reception for all the delegates.

Other lined up activities include the presentation of scholarship grant to students of the University, Annual General Meeting as well as BHQ AGM meeting, keep fit exercise, novelty match among the branches, family retreat and children visit to OAU National History Museum as well as Press Conference on Sunday.

Speaking on its uniqueness, Alhaji Abdulfattah Olanlege, UNIFEMGA National President said the 2023 reunion coincided with the month Nigeria is transiting from outgoing regime of President Muhammadu Buhari to that of Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu on May 29, as well as finding the lasting

solution to incessant crisis in the Education sector and a unique opportunity to take stock on how well UNIFEMGA have contributed back to the University and society at Large. Over 200 delegates from all the branches including those in the Diaspora have already registered to participate in the 2023 National reunion conference.

NYSC Contributing To National Unity - Akwa Ibom Coordinator

By: PATRICK TITUS, Uyo

The Akwa Ibom State Coordinator of the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC), Mrs Chinyere Ekwe has said the corps in its 50 years of existence, has contributed immensely to national unity and development. Ekwe made the observation on Monday in Uyo, after a road walk exercise by management, staff and corps members across major streets in Uyo metropolis. being part of the activities making NYSC's 50 years of existence

The State Coordinator added that in the last fifty years, NYSC has contributed its quota to the development of the nation in the areas of agriculture, education, healthcare, community development and economy, among others.

"I am most delighted to inform you and the general public that

NYSC is celebrating 50 years on May 22. NYSC is 50 and still counting. We are strong, united and have been developing the nation in so many ways and we will continue to do that by God's grace.

"NYSC has impacted on the nation in healthcare, education, agriculture, community service and in all facets of the economy. NYSC will continue to be there, the young men and women are doing great.

"We are all going to participate in this celebration because it is a thing of joy. The theme of the Golden Jubilee celebration is, "Five Decades of Fostering National Unity and Development", Ekwe said.

She added that NYSC should be celebrated for promoting national unity and integration, development of education, healthcare delivery, as well as social and infrastructure

development.

She said that during the celebration, corps members would be given opportunity to

showcase their skills on what they have produced through Skills Acquisition Entrepreneurship Development programme (SAED) to members of the public.

According to her, other activities lined up for the celebration includes, anniversary lecture, exhibitions, novelty football match, Jumaat Service, visit to orphanage home, NYSC Golden

Jubilee Award Night and a Thanksgiving Service.

It would be recalled that the NYSC scheme was established

in 1973 by former Head of State, Gen. Yakubu Gowon (rtd), to foster national unity and integration.



Bauchi Governor Flags Off 2023 Farming With 2bn For Purchase Of Raw-materials

**Announces sale of bag of 50Kg NPK Fertilizer at N15,000:00 as against N17,800:00*

**Prays for a bumper harvest this year*

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Governor Bala Abdulkadir Mohammed of Bauchi State on Tuesday, launched the sales of fertilizer for the 2023/2024 farming season with two billion Naira committed for the purchase of raw-materials to produce fertilizer for the farming season. This was disclosed in a statement signed by the Special Adviser on Media and Publicity to Bauchi Governor, Muktar Gidado, made available on Wednesday May 10, 2023.

It explained that at the launching of the sales of fertilizer for the farming season held at BSADP office in Azare, headquarters of Katagum local government area of the state, the governor said, already his administration has settled all the outstanding debt to the Nigerian Sovereign Investment Authority.

Governor Bala Mohammed said the state government has also committed some funds to the maintenance of the Bauchi Fertilizer Blending Company to ensure seamless production of the commodity.

According to him, the consistency in conducting annual sales of fertilizer and farming season is a clear manifestation of the desire of his government to invigorate the agricultural sector for the social and economic development of the state.

He said in an efforts to diversify the economy of the state and ensure food security, agricultural sector would continue to be

given the priority it deserves as agriculture is the main source of livelihood of the majority of the people of the state, especially those in the rural areas.

"It is to the glory of Allah (SWT) that we are gathered here today to launch the rainy season farming and flag-off the sales of fertilizer for the 2023/2024 farming season. The fact that we have never missed the launching of the farming season and annual livestock vaccination for a single year since we came on board as a government four years ago, is a testimony of our commitment to massive crop and animal production.

"It is however a matter of concern that the majority of our farmers have not embraced modern agricultural practices. There is therefore the need to deploy agricultural extension workers to required knowledge and skills to Indeed, the role of extension workers in any agricultural activity cannot be over emphasized.

"At this juncture, I want to draw the attention of our farmers to this year's Seasonal Rainfall Prediction (SRP) by the Nigerian Meteorological Agency which indicates that in most parts of the State, planting season is going to start towards the end of this month (May), and there may be flooding in some parts. I therefore want to urge farmers to make good use of this information to avoid planting in an area that is highly susceptible to flooding.

"It would also be recalled that at the beginning of last year's

planting season, we experienced outbreak of Army-worms in some parts of the State. Although concerted efforts were made to control the worms, little success was recorded due to the rapid spread of the menace. This resulted in the destruction of crops on many farms. In order to avoid a recurrence of the incident this year, the Ministry of Agriculture has been directed to immediately submit their requirements for the control of the Army-worm menace for approval."

The governor also said in an effort to address the inadequacy of extension workers in the state, the Ministry of Agriculture has been directed to forward proposal for employment of extension workers and other agric-related personnel to the office of the Head of Civil Service for onward submission to the Civil Service Commission.

He noted that, in the continued effort to provide farm inputs to teeming farmers this year, the State Government has through the Bauchi Fertilizer Company (BAFCO) blended 200 trucks of NPK 20:10:10 fertilizer and production of the commodity and directed the Ministry of Agriculture to ensure that the fertilizer is taken to each District and Ward in the state.

Governor Bala Mohammed who announced the sale of a bag of 50Kg NPK 20:10:10 (Dan Bauchi) Fertilizer at N15,000:00 as against the cost of production of N17,800:00, said government will provide fertilizer on loan to



interested civil servants in the state to be paid on instalments through deduction from source.

"As a government, we are worried about the low level of farm mechanization in the State. Consequently, we have arranged for the supply of 70 units of tractors and implements. The decision to prioritize farm mechanization in the State is aimed at minimizing human labour in crop production. We will henceforth be committing more resources for the development of this sector.

"It may please you to know that I have given an anticipatory approval for the allocation of at least 10% of the total budgetary

allocation of the State for the development of agriculture. The Honourable Commissioner of Agriculture is therefore directed to forward the approval Assembly for ratification.

"We are very much aware that our price for a bag of fertilizer is below the price tag by most of our neighbouring States. There is therefore every tendency that middlemen would take advantage of the subsidy to sell the commodity at higher cost. Ministry of Agriculture is therefore directed to collaborate with law enforcement agencies to apprehend and deal with such middlemen according to the law."

Why Yari Is Unstoppable As Senate President - Dambatta

Nasir Dambatta is the President of the North West Progressives Forum. In this interview with newsmen, he explained why former Zamfara State Governor, Abdulaziz Yari should be the Senate President of the 10th National Assembly. Excerpt:

Why are you rooting for Senator Abdul'Aziz Yari when the APC has reportedly already decided on Godswill Akpabio?

First, Yari is a candidate from the North West, with vast executive cum-legislative experience. Secondly, the North-West is on record to have provided the highest percentage of votes of over 30%, over and above every other geopolitical zone in the country.

Let us not forget that the president-elect scored a total of 8.79 million. That was how the North West emerged tops with 30.0% votes cast in the entire presidential elections. Even Tinubu's immediate Constituency of South West came second with 25.9%.

The North Central came third, with 20.0%, while the North East came fourth with 13.5%. The South South came fifth with 9.10%, while the South East came a distant sixth with a mere 1.45%.

On the scale of electoral fortunes in that election, Yari's Northwest beats all. That is why our North West Progressives Forum cautioned president-elect not to support the underperformed geopolitical zone in the presidential elections.

We still think Yari is the best among all the people in the race. Our position is not with prejudice to the stand of the All Progressives Congress (APC) because the ruling party is also entitled to their opinion in a democracy, though massive protests against APC's choice of Senate Presidency and Speakership are still raging in the media. I saw South West governors from Tinubu's immediate Constituency, rejecting the APC stand. I saw Coalition of Northern Groups (CNG) warning against what they see as direct imposition on the National Assembly.

The story is no less different at the House of Reps too, as some newspapers alleged underground moves to deal blows on current leadership under Rt Hon Gbajabiamila. It is

now very difficult to conclude that the APC's final decision is popular enough.

On what premise do you think Yari is a comparatively better choice for the Senate President slot than say Akpabio or Orji Uzor-Kalu?

It is on record that Yari has been in the APC for many years, and his membership predates the merger that led to the formation of the APC itself. Let us not forget that Yari was a powerful force since the era of ANPP.

He was once a party secretary that handled many internal crises in Zamfara State when democratic space was seriously overheated.

He neutralized opposition and brought the party back to its feet. He calmed frayed nerves and made the party even stronger than it was before the internal wrangling. Please check your records and tell me when Senator Akpabio joined the APC; exactly how long? When did Senator Orji Uzor-Kalu join the APC? You see, in politics, you cannot overlook how much input a loyal party member has made into the success of the party. I dare say that Yari has spent hundreds of millions to support party activities and remains a one-man squad against hunger and poverty in Zamfara State, even after his exit as governor of the state.

He was very generous to the poor people of his immediate constituency, and that is why he won the Senatorial election fair and square. I doubt if there is a strong basis of comparison between Yari and the duo of Akpabio and Uzor-Kalu.



Dambatta

What facts do you have at hand to justify Yari's suitability when he is just a first-time senator?

The issue of first-time Senator being a back-bencher has since been demystified by some senators in the outgoing Senate. Look at how a so-called first timer, Senator from Kaduna Central, moved several motions and initiated over 30 bills in less than two years. Look at how his bill on repeal of old banking laws became the first bill ever, to be signed into law by President Buhari.

There are many first time Senators who made giant strides in their legislative activism. Most importantly, Senator

Tambuwal from Sokoto, for instance, is first-time Senator today, but he was once a Speaker in the House of Representatives. Again, our most-favored contestant ---Abdul'Aziz Yari was a Honorable member of the House of Representatives and he is therefore, not new to legislative business. That's why our group remains unperturbed by the infantile argument of first-timer and old-timer Senators.

Don't you think having Yari as Senate President would amount to another same-faith executive and legislative arms combination?

Well, as a group, we are looking at what the constitution says as

opposed to sentimental arguments of faith-based affinities. No where in the entire Nigerian Constitution has religious affinity been mentioned as a point of consideration for any elective office. No political or even appointive office in Nigeria has anything to do with which religion you profess. What is abundantly clear in the Constitution is what geopolitical zone you belong to. There is no mention of Muslim or Christian affinities as a basis for the electoral contest.

How do you think a Yari-led Senate would be different from what we have been seeing since 1999?

Our group forsee a dogged fighter for democratic and social justice. We forsee a more harmonious legislative and executive relationship with Yari as Senate President because he served both ways and acquired the requisite experience. In terms of screening of competent nominees of the incoming president, we forsee the Senate adept at the grilling of nominees and end of the era of bow-and-go screening of presidential nominees (laughter).

When did Senator Orji Uzor-Kalu join the APC? You see, in politics, you cannot overlook how much input a loyal party member has made into the success of the party.

WPF: Freedom Of Expression Must Be Regulated - Oyo Correspondents' Chairman

**Says regulation will prevent provocation, disruption of peaceful co-existence*

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

The Chairman of Correspondents' Chapel of Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) in Oyo State, Comrade Adebayo Raji has advocated regulation on freedom of expression particularly on social media.

Comrade Raji who made the call on Wednesday while delivering a paper at the 2023 World Press Freedom Day organised by the National Association of Seadogs (Pyrates Confraternity) Webinar, said this is necessary to avoid unnecessary provocation, disruption of peaceful co-existence.

Speaking on the topic, "Press Freedom and Nation Building: Prospects and Challenges", the Correspondents' Chapel Chairman said press freedom, which can also be referred to as freedom of expression is a right that can't be restrained or repealed by human laws, but must be put into check to avoid abuse being experienced on social media.

Emphasizing that freedom of expression is guaranteed by Section 39 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended), Comrade Raji cautioned the citizens to know that there is no absolute freedom of expression anywhere in the world, particularly, in Nigeria.

"The press freedom, which we can also be referred to as freedom of expression is a right that can't be restrained or repealed by human laws, sometimes it is called natural rights, but it must be regulated to avoid unnecessary provocation, disruption of peaceful coexistence and other forms of disunity", he said.

Comrade Raji added, "It is the right to express views publicly through various means of mass communications. It can be through public protest and demonstrations, or through published articles, books or leaflets; television or radio broadcasting; works of



Comrade Adebayo Raji

art; the internet and social media.

"The law also provides and protects the freedom to receive information from other people by being part of an audience or reading a magazine or newspaper, listening to the radio, watching television, reading information on social media and so on. But the way some people are operating social media in form of propaganda, misinformation and disinformation is alarming and needs to be put to check by regulation"

Comrade Raji stressed, "The Freedom of Expression is guaranteed by Section 39 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (As Amended).

Section 39 (1) of the 1999 Constitution, Federal Republic of Nigeria provides inter alia that "every person shall be entitled to freedom of expression, including

freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information without interference'.

He urged media practitioners to get in touch as a kind of reaction from the person or people or organisations involved in the information they want to disseminate to get more facts or the other side of the story.

"We should also note that there is no absolute freedom of expression anywhere in the world, particularly, our dear country, Nigeria. This will lead us to Section 37 of the 1999 Constitution, which provides that: The privacy of citizens, their homes, correspondence, telephone conversations and telegraphic communications is hereby guaranteed and protected."

"At this point, what can we do not to fall victim against Section 37 of same Constitution. We need to verify and double check

that the information we want to disseminate to the public is fact. We should get in touch as a kind of reaction from the person or people or organisations involved in the information we want to disseminate to get more facts or the other side of the story".

Capon, Jolly Rogers Deck, National Association of Seadogs, Olufemi Adesope in his welcome address, said the webinar was organized as part of citizens' summit objectives and that the event was organised in order to interface with the public.

"To interface with the public and advance our core agenda on humanitarianism and public advocacy for citizens rights and improved welfare condition – targeted towards a just society built on strong institutions, peace and responsible governance," he said.

Gov Makinde's Reforms Of Oyo State Chiefs Law, Long Overdue - Group

**Says Ibadan Mogajis, Baales, traders, others happy*

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

The Convener of Oyo Renaissance Forum, a Socio-cultural group, Chief Adeola Areago on Monday, declared that the planned move by Governor Seyi Makinde to reform the Oyo State Chiefs Law is long overdue.

Chief Areago in a statement, said the news of the planned review of the Chiefs Law of Oyo State is already being applauded by all stakeholders, including Mogajis in Ibadan, Baales, traders and others.

According to him, Ibadan Mogajis, Baales, market men and women, Chiefs and others are happy with the Governor, Engr Seyi Makinde over planned move to reform the Oyo State Chiefs Law, saying they believed that once the bill becomes law, it would allow for the wearing of beaded crowns by Senior chiefs in the State especially Olubadan In-Council and some notable Baales of ancient towns and villages.

"As a potential beneficiary including other Mogajis, Senior Chiefs and Olubadan-in-Council members, everybody is happy with the Governor. The planned review of the law to allow for the wearing of beaded crowns by a number of qualified chiefs shows the Governor of the State as a responsible and responsive leader committed to ensuring a better Oyo State and Ibadan in particular", he said.

Chief Areago added, "Many of our senior citizens; the elites whose legendary Baales in ancient communities deserve beaded crowns to become more respected in the comity of other monarchs across the State, are also happy with His Excellency"

"The State lawmakers should also be commended for its move to fast track the passage of this bill. Their names would be etched out in history alongside His Excellency for making the long-awaited dream a reality." The United Kingdom based historian and scholar tasked Gov Makinde to show more commitment to the executive bill on the matter currently before the State House of Assembly and ensure timely passage of same in order to make the long-awaited reform of the State Chiefs Law a reality.

"I have seen various statements supporting the proposed amendment of Chiefs law by the Governor. This is highly commendable. The governor should go ahead with his

action for now. He should ignore critics. It is normal. Once it becomes law. Law is Supreme. And everybody would just have to re-adjust to the new reality in Ibadan and Oyo State in general.

"It is therefore, a thing of joy that the new law would give the Governor the power to be the prescribing authority on all chieftaincy matters.

Not only that," another source who is in the know of Obaship issues, explained, "this bill, if passed into law, empowers the Governor as the sole appointing authority for Obas and Chiefs without any recourse to the Council of Obas – thereby removing all checks and balances.

It would be recalled that the state's Attorney-General and Commissioner for Justice, Prof Oyelowo Oyewo disclosed that many of the requests to the state governor by traditional leaders known as Baales to wear beaded crowns at different domains across the state have remained pending for so long because of the inability of the council of Chiefs to meet.

He noted that the absence of the state Council of Chiefs which ought to interface with the governor before granting approvals for such requests have not also been able to sit for necessary deliberation over a long period of time.

The Attorney General added that these factors necessitated the proposal by the state executive council headed by governor Makinde to amend section 28 of Oyo state Chiefs Law in order to further improve the process and that the proposed amendment, when fully effective, will empower the state Governor as the sole authority without consultations with the Chiefs to grant approvals for wearing of beaded crowns.

Oyo state Commissioner for Local Government and Chieftaincy Matters, Barrister Olanrekanmi Olaleye, while shedding more light on the proposed amendment bill said, "the state executive council deliberated on section 28 sub section 1 of the Chiefs Laws of Oyo state.

"The law as it is today is that the Governor can only approve application for beaded crown after consultations with Oyo state Council of Obas and Chiefs but we all know that Council has not met for a very long time now and we have a lot of applications for approval of beaded crowns. So, that section 28 of the law has now been amended to give the governor sole authority to approve application for beaded crown in Oyo state without consultations."

Customs FOU Zone B Makes 188 Seizures Worth Over N600m

**Thanks sister agencies, media for support*



By; **JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON**

The Nigeria Customs Service Federal Operations Unit (FOU) Zone 'B' has made a total of 188 seizures worth over six hundred and twenty-eight million Naira. This was disclosed by the Comptroller FOU Zone B, Musa Ibrahim Jalo at a press briefing held at the zone's headquarters in Kaduna yesterday, where he said the feat was recorded between March and April, 2023. He said the success was recorded, following the marching order handed over to their operatives under his command.

"It is my pleasure to welcome you all to this media briefing, meant to furnish you with information on the anti-smuggling activities of the Federal Operations Unit Zone 'B' of the Nigerian Customs Service between March and April 2023.

"Gentlemen of the press, you may recall that during the

handing and taking over of the mantle of leadership of the Unit on 27 January 2023; I tasked the operatives of the Unit to work hard to suppress smuggling activities in the Zone which led to series successes.

"During the period under review, our operatives made a total of One Hundred and Eighty Eight (188) seizures of Seventeen (17) different prohibited items with a total Duty Paid Value (DPV) of Six Hundred and Twenty-Eight Million, Two Hundred and Eighty-Six Thousand, Six Hundred and Sixty Naira and Sixty-Two Kobo (N628, 286, 660.62K) only at different locations in the Zone.

"Notably among the seizures are as follows:

"On 6th April 2023, the Operatives of the Unit while on credible intelligence intercepted One (1) Used Mitsubishi Canter with Registration Number AKR 10 XG conveying Sacks of Cannabis Sativa otherwise known as Marijuana concealed with Bags of Cassava flakes

(Garri) and Sawdust along Bungudu-Tsafe Road in Zamfara State.

"After physical examination, the vehicle was found to contain 46 sacks of Marijuana, with a street value of Two Million, Sixty Nine Thousand, One Hundred and Forty-Four Naira and Forty Kobo (N2, 069,144.40K)," he said.

According to him, "similarly, on 23rd March 2023; our operatives arrested a suspicious white illegal narcotic substance together with Two (2) male suspects and One (1) locally made pistol in the course of our anti-smuggling operations at Maigatari axis of Jigawa State. The suspected illegal substance together with the male suspects was brought to the Office for further action.

"The Officials of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) Kaduna State Command were invited to carry out a test on the suspected illegal substance to determine its true nature. The test further proved

the illegal substance to be OPIUM Substance with a total weight of Four Hundred and Forty-Two grams (422g).

"The street value of the OPIUM substance is Thirty-One Million, Eighteen Thousand, Five Hundred and Sixty-Eight Naira and Ninety Eight Kobo (N31, 018,568.98K) only.

"The 422 grams of Opium Substance together with the suspects and 1 locally made pistol were handed over to the NDLEA Kaduna State Command on 30th March 2023 for further investigation," he explained.

Comptroller Jalo said that in a related development, on 25th April 2023 at about 1130hrs, their operatives while on stop and search operations, also arrested One (1) Used Volkswagen Golf driven by a Nigerian citizen along Jibia-Katsina Road.

"During the operation, the patrol officers observed and identified a sack in the vehicle that was later opened, and assorted

Military camouflaged shirts, trousers, and T-shirts were found.

"After further examination and interrogation, the driver was identified to be a Nigerian Citizen and the suspected uniforms were to be delivered to an unknown person in Katsina.

"The Uniforms were counted to be Twenty-Two (22) pairs of Foreign Tactical Military Camouflage Shirts and Trousers and another Twenty-Five (25) pieces of Military Camouflage T-Shirts," he said.

He noted that the seized items (Foreign Tactical Camouflage Clothing) together with the suspect have been handed over to the Directorate of Security Services (DSS) in adherence with the collaborations between the two agencies for further investigation and possible prosecution.

He pointed out that their eagle-eyed officers likewise impounded 140 Jerry cans (25 litres each) of Automotive Gas Oil (Diesel) with DPV of Two

Customs FOU Zone B Makes 188 Seizures Worth Over N600m

**Thanks sister agencies, media for support*

Million, Seven Hundred and Forty-Six Thousand, Six Hundred and Thirty-Nine Naira (N2,746,639.00). "Similarly, the Unit Intercepted 1, 147 Jerrycans of Premium Motor Spirit (25 litres each) worth Two Million One Hundred and Sixty-Seven Thousand Six Hundred and Fifty-Seven Naira Ninety-Five Naira, (N2,167,657.95). "In line with the extant laws and guidelines as directed by the Customs Headquarters, the PMS and the Diesel that were seized have also been auctioned and the proceeds remitted to the coffers of the Federal Government," he explained.

Giving a breakdown, he said that other items seized during the period under review include: "Thirty-Seven (37) Units of Used Vehicles, Five (5) Units of Vehicles (Means of Conveyance) *"2,109 bags of Foreign Parboiled rice (50kg each) and 69 bags of Foreign Parboiled Rice (25 KG each) "8 Jerrycans of Foreign Refined Vegetable Oil (25 Litres each) "1,241 cartons of Foreign Spaghetti and Macaroni." According to him, other items are 39 bales of foreign secondhand clothing, 30 sacks of foreign second hand shoes, 14 cartons of foreign fruit juice, 21

cartons of foreign pomade, 80 pieces of foreign car batteries and one carton of foreign milk. "In line with the cordial relationship between the Nigeria Customs Service and the National Drugs Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), the 46 sacks of Marijuana together with means of conveyance would be handed over to the Commandant NDLEA Kaduna State Command for further action. "I am happy to inform you that our renewed effort has been recognised by the Comptroller General of Customs, Colonel Hameed Ibrahim Ali (Rtd) CFR and his management team by

giving the Unit a Letter of Commendation to the Unit. This would go a long way in boosting the morale of the Officers and Men of the Unit. "At this juncture, I wish to reiterate my commitment of enforcing the Federal Government Fiscal policies in accordance with Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) as our operatives are battle-ready to carry out our mandate effectively. "I am also using this opportunity to solicit with host communities around the border areas to continue to provide us with useful information that will assist our operatives to impound

prohibited goods in the interest of the nation. "Finally, let me use this opportunity, to first, commend, the Comptroller General of Customs, Colonel Hameed Ibrahim Ali (Rtd) CFR and his management team, for their logistics support to the Unit, our sister agencies, namely the Police, DSS, Military, NDLEA, Standards Organisations of Nigeria (SON) among others, for their collaborations, as well as the media, for its support and being objective in disseminating our efforts in the fight against smuggling," he said.



AATF's Next-generation Agricultural Technologies Excites Goodluck Jonathan

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Africa Agricultural Technology Foundation (AATF) has unveiled its new strategy for 2023 to 2027, that outlines an ambitious plan to enhance technology development and commercialization for farmers in Africa.

With focus on Scaling for Impact, the strategy aims to achieve a prosperous, resilient, food and nutrition-secure Africa. The strategy complements key commitments to agricultural transformation as envisioned in the African Union Agenda 2063. A key plank of the new strategy is the deployment of Next Generation (NextGen) agricultural technologies and a renewed focus on effective scaling to achieve transformation.

His Excellency, Dr. Goodluck Jonathan, former President Federal Republic of Nigeria and AATF Ambassador for Agriculture Technology in Africa, expressed pleasure with AATF's goal of a food-secure and economically vibrant Africa. He emphasized agriculture's role in meeting the food needs of a growing global population in Africa that is estimated to reach 1.8 billion by 2035.

In a recorded speech to participants, Dr. Goodluck said he looks forward to spreading the message on the benefits of technology for Africa's farmers, particularly smallholders.

"The long-term vision and objectives outlined in the AATF

Strategic Plan 2023-2027 will build on our continental and global commitments to end hunger and poverty on this continent," he observed.

Speaking at the launch of the strategy in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in May 2023, Dr Aggrey Ambali, the Chairperson, AATF Board of Trustees, noted that the organisation will place emphasis on improving existing technologies and transforming them into super NextGen technologies capable of effectively addressing the many challenges faced by African farmers due to emerging challenges in the region.

"The launch marks an exciting moment for AATF as it re-energises for the future with learnings from the past and promises to ensure African farmers get a better, brighter future through results-based approaches," said Dr Ambali.

He reaffirmed AATF commitment in intensifying efforts to forge partnerships with like-minded organizations including governments, political leaders, scientists, development agencies, and farmers alike, to harness the latest advancements in Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI) for the promotion of sustainable agricultural transformation across the continent.

According to Dr. Canisius Kanangire, the AATF Executive Director, the organization will contribute to changing Africa's agriculture through a three-tier approach of diversifying

agricultural technologies and expanding frontiers for NextGen products in Africa; acceleration of commercialization and scaling of agricultural technologies; and promotion of a functional enabling environment for increased uptake of agricultural technologies and efficient markets. Dr. Kanangire said the new strategy demonstrates

AATF's renewed commitment to work closely with partners to continue providing farmers in Sub-Saharan Africa with practical technology solutions to overcome farm productivity constraints. The new strategy also expressly focuses on increasing the participation and benefits for youth and women in agriculture.

While delivering his goodwill message at the launch, Hon. Dr. Belete Molla, Cabinet Minister, Ministry of Innovation and Technology, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, noted that Africa is no longer in the era of talking about embracing technologies, but rather choosing modern technologies that have been proven to transform economies.



L-R: Dr. Canisius Kanangire, AATF Executive Director, Dr. Muhammadou Kah, member, AATF Board of Trustees (BoT), Dr. Dahlia Garwe Vice-Chairperson, AATF BoT, and Prof. Aggrey Ambali, Chairperson, AATF BoT, pose for a photo with the strategy document after the launch in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

"Africa should aggressively invest in STI to cushion the continent from ravaging poverty that is still affecting most countries in the region," said Dr. Molla, adding that an Africa-led organisations such as AATF, is practically working to respond to agricultural challenges through technology and ultimately creating wealth for farmers in Africa.

In the last two decades, AATF has dedicated itself to promoting innovative agricultural technologies that address farmer productivity constraints, working with partners across the continent to access 24 innovative and cutting-edge agricultural technologies worth over US\$650 million spread across 24 countries and reaching 4.8 million smallholder farmers with

new interventions during the last five years.

Founded in 2003 to address Africa's food security prospects through agricultural technology, AATF believes that the agricultural sector is a key foundational pillar as Africa consolidates its economic growth and carves out its new position as a major global economic powerhouse and the next growth market in the world. It was formed in response to the need for an effective mechanism that would facilitate and support negotiation for technology access and delivery and formation of appropriate partnerships to manage the development & deployment of innovative technologies for use by smallholder farmers in Sub Saharan Africa (SSA).

Supreme Court: Gov Adeleke's Victory Remarkable, Well-deserved - Ooni

**Lauds judiciary, praises Oyetola*

By: BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

The Ooni of Ife, Oba Adeyeye Enitan Ogunwusi has congratulated Governor Ademola Adeleke on his victory at the Supreme Court on Tuesday.

Ooni Ogunwusi in a congratulatory message yesterday, signed by Director, Media and Public Affairs, Ooni's Palace, Otunba Moses Olafare, described the victory of Governor Adeleke as, "remarkable and well-deserved victory".

The royal father also saluted the former governor of the state, Alhaji Isiaka Gboyega Oyetola for patiently pursuing his case through the judiciary, without heating up the polity.

Ooni Ogunwusi tasked Governor Adeleke to "work tirelessly to fulfill the aspirations and dreams of citizenry", saying, "Your passion for public service, your vision for progress, and your unwavering dedication to the welfare of the people will undoubtedly guide you in

the path ahead".

"The House of Oduduwa is thrilled to extend her heartfelt congratulations to you on your remarkable and well-deserved victory as declared by the esteemed Supreme Court of Nigeria. This momentous ruling is a triumph for democracy and the will of the Good People Of The State Of Osun", he said..

Ooni Ogunwusi added, "Your journey has been nothing short of extraordinary, showcasing your resilience courage, and commitment to the service of the people of your people. Throughout the legal process, you have demonstrated exemplary leadership and a steadfast belief in the principles of justice and fairness".

"Your perseverance has finally resulted in the realization of your rightful mandate, bringing hope and inspiration to countless individuals who believe in the power of democracy. The people of the state have placed their trust in you, and we have no

doubt that you will work tirelessly to fulfill the aspirations and dreams of citizenry. Your passion for public service, your vision for progress, and your unwavering dedication to the welfare of the people will undoubtedly guide you in the path ahead".

Ooni Ogunwusi stressed, "Now that you have been finally affirmed as our Governor, you are urged to develop a robust partnership with the Federal government in the interest of our people. We have full confidence that you will be magnanimous in victory and also, lead with integrity, wisdom, and compassion. Your tenure is an opportunity to bring about positive change, uplift communities, and foster an environment of inclusivity, progress, and development".

"Osun people are confident that under your leadership, the State will experience unprecedented growth and prosperity, and the lives of our people will be transformed

for the better. Without mincing words, we beseech you to spread the dividends of democracy across the nukes and crannies of The State Of Osun by allowing the son of nobody to become somebody without knowing anybody.

"Once again, congratulations, Governor Ademola Adeleke, on this historic victory. May your tenure be marked by remarkable achievements, profound impact, and the betterment of the lives of the people of Osun State. The challenges ahead may be great, but with your leadership and the support of the people, we are confident that you will lead Osun State towards a brighter future.

"Wishing you every success in your tenure as Governor and saluting the former governor; Alhaji Isiaka Gboyega Oyetola to have equally to have patiently pursued his case through the judiciary without heating up the polity."

NSCDC, CISLAC Sign Pact On Protecting Civilians During Armed Conflict

By ; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

The Lagos Command of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) and the Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Center (CISLAC) have signed an agreement to jointly protect the civil populace from all forms of criminalities, armed conflict and others.

The pact was signed during a courtesy visit by executive of CISLAC on the Commandant of the Corps Usman Ishaq Alfadarai at the Command's Headquarters, in Alahusa, Ikeja.

In his remark, Alfadarai assured the Government and the good people of the State, of the Corps' commitment, to protect all civilians and civil spaces, from all forms of crimes and criminalities that may be organized, to cause high volatility and complexity such as armed conflict and others.

This was contained in a statement by the Public Relations Officer, Lagos State Command of the Corps, DSC Abolurin Oluwaseun made available to journalists on Thursday.

According to the release, Alfadarai also pledged to ensure adequate protection of civilians, before or whenever social, socio-economic, political and psychological issues and so on escalate, to a full blown crisis.

" More so, following the mutual understanding between the

Corps and the Center, capacity building has been keenly noted, as parts of the most potent strategies, that can be deployed, to strengthen Advocacy, Accountability and Local Engagement towards improving Early Warning and Early Response Mechanisms (EWER), to enhance protection of Civilians in Nigeria.

" Therefore, the Lagos State Commandant of the Corps, Usman Alfadarai has also made necessary responsive and humanitarian arrangements, to ensure the full participation of the Corps in the one - day capacity building workshop of CISLAC, scheduled, to be held, today, Thursday, 11th May, 2023, at Ikeja, GRA.

" The workshop is expected, to gather field experts, to conduct training and build capacity of relevant stakeholders, including the NSCDC, across levels to advance good practices that will further aid reduction in violence and conflict in Nigeria.

" The Programs Co-ordinator, Peace and Security Bertha Ogbimi who led the team, said the collaboration between the Corps and the Centre, in Lagos was also mainly purposed, to achieve but not limited to the followings; improve Coordination, Collaboration and Communication among civilians and Security Institutions, to better improve protection of civilians in the State and Nigeria. " Other notable purposes



The NSCDC Commandant and members CISLAC.

include, to support the activities of Early Warning Community Observers, who will be trained, to engage, monitor and report Early Warning threat signals under the project, through active participation in Early Response, as activities unfold in the state.

" On the Early Warning and Early Response system, by leveraging verifiable information and data that will be generated in Early Detection and Early Warning effort to prevent

or de-escalate crises.

" Alfadarai re-assures the good people of Lagos State and the teeming populace, of the Corps' historical and continuous responsibility, in the protection of lives and property of civilians, since its establishment, in our dear nation.

" Finally, Commandant of Corps UI Alfadarai, also seized the opportunity, to appreciate the CISLAC group, for their proactive measures, in identifying early signs of insecurity and key solutions, to

mitigating the challenges that may attempt to overwhelm communities and the society at large.

" Having recommended, amongst others more capacity building exercises, he also further promised to draft strategies that will prevent full blown crisis, which often cause heavy casualties, increase in mortalities, injuries, loss of innocent lives and destruction of valuable property", the statement reads.

AGRA Kaduna State Consortium Trains CBS On Digital Farming

By; SANIALIYU, Zaria

The Executive Director National Agricultural Extension Research and Liaison Services (NAERLS/ABU) Zaria, Professor Emmanuel Ikani has said that the institute is collaborating with AGRA to train farmers on digital farming that will benefit them.

He stated this while declaring open a sensitization training of Community Based Advisors (CBS) on how to use AGRA Smart Phone which consist of all information regarding its activities, which was held at NAERLS Ultra Modern Hall.

Represented by the Assistant Director, Extension Training and Outreach, Professor Muhammad Musa Jaliya, he said, as the world is changing to digital operations, agriculture is not left out.

Professor Ikani charged the CBS to listen attentively, so that they can go back to their communities and train others.

He expressed hope that the training will be very useful to the participants.

In her remarks, the Agricultural for Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) Programme Officer, Kaduna State Dr. Esther Ibrahim said she was encouraged with the number of CBS female, mostly youth at the training. Dr. Ibrahim said with this development,

female will train females as against male training them.

According to her, agriculture is having a paradigm shift and that of the digital age.

The Programme Officer added that AGRA Kaduna Consortium will continue to deliver good results to agricultural development.

Also speaking Barrister Hadiza Kabiru of NAERLS, said the large turnout of women as CBS is encouraging and transformation in agriculture is making progress in Nigeria. Hadiza Kabiru commended AGRA for sustaining its core mandate and the women encouraged to venture into agriculture business is highly commendable.

Giving an overview of the programme, the Programme Manager AGRA Kaduna State Consortium, Professor C.K Daudu said that they are building small holders farmers resilience and reaching vulnerability in the maize based system in Kaduna State.

Prof. Daudu said through strengthened market participation, extension and regenerative agricultural consortium, results are being achieved.

According to him, AGRA has now moved farmers from analogue to the digital world by providing cell phones that have applications which contain all its activities.

Federal Executive Council Approves New Auto Policy

**To enforce patronage of locally produced vehicles by govt, companies*

By ; IMRANA ABDULLAHI, Kaduna

The Federal Executive Council on Wednesday, approved the new National Automotive Industry Development Plan, 2023.

The memo for the plan was presented to the FEC by the Honourable Minister of Industry, Trade and Investment, Otunba Niya Adebayo.

In attendance was the DG, NADDC, Jelani Aliyu.

The NADDC developed the new plan to aggressively build on the successes that have been achieved so far in the Nigerian Automotive industry.

The new NAIDP would strategically provide outstandingly competitive



Jelani Aliyu

fiscal and non fiscal incentives needed by automotive industry manufacturers/producers, investors, developers and all relevant stakeholders. The new approved NAIDP is aimed at enabling the exponential increase in the local production numbers of vehicles, reaching 40

per cent local content, attaining 30 per cent locally produced electric vehicles, generating one million jobs, enforcing patronage of locally produced vehicles by government and companies working on government contracts, and also boosting R&D and technology transfer.

Afenifere Leader, Pa Fasoranti A Revered Yoruba Leader - Ooni

*Congratulates him at 97

By: BAYOAKAMO, Ibadan

The Ooni of Ife, Oba Adeyeye Enitan Ogunwusi yesterday, congratulated the leader of Afenifere, Pa Reuben Fasoranti, as he clocks 97th of age.

Ooni Ogunwusi in a message by the Director, Media and Public Affairs, Ooni's Palace, Otunba Moses Olafare described Pa Fasoranti as a revered Yoruba leader,

He emphasized that the Afenifere leader's unwavering commitment and visionary leadership have left an indelible mark on the political landscape of Nigeria, particularly in terms of ideology. saying, " Pa Fasoranti, a revered Yoruba leader, has dedicated his life to the pursuit of justice, equality, and progress for our great nation".

Ooni Ogunwusi maintained that throughout his distinguished career, Pa Fasoranti has been a beacon of hope, an astute of sacrifice particularly when he sacrificed the Gubernatorial ticket of Ondo State thereby distinguishing him as an epitome of selflessness.

"Pa Fasoranti has fearlessly championed the cause of the Yoruba people and the larger Oodua race, while tirelessly advocating for unity and oneness of Nigeria. His deep understanding of the complexities of our nation's political fabric has guided his efforts in fostering a more

inclusive society, one that embraces diversity and values the richness of our cultural heritage", he said.

Ooni Ogunwusi added, " One of Pa Fasoranti's most significant contributions lies in his unwavering commitment to ideological and community development. He has been a staunch advocate for a progressive and equitable Nigeria, rooted in the principles of democracy, justice, and good governance. His steadfast belief in the power of ideas and the need for a clear ideological framework has inspired countless individuals to engage in meaningful political discourse and work towards a better future for our country.

"Baba, your exemplary leadership has been instrumental in shaping the Yoruba political landscape. Through his guidance and mentorship, he has nurtured a new generation of leaders who share his passion for nation-building and the pursuit of a just society. His commitment to empowering the youth and fostering their political participation has paved the way for a more inclusive and dynamic political environment". The royal father stressed, " Beyond his role as a political leader, Pa Fasoranti has consistently demonstrated his unwavering commitment to the well-being and progress of his people. His philanthropic endeavors have touched the lives



Composite picture of Pa Fasoranti (left) with Ooni

of many, providing educational opportunities, healthcare facilities, and economic empowerment to those in need. His selflessness and dedication to the betterment of society will always serve as a shining example for all Nigerians".

" Today, as we celebrate Pa Fasoranti's 97th birthday, let us reflect on the immense sacrifices and contributions he has made to

our nation's political landscape. Let us be inspired by his unwavering belief in the power of ideology, the importance of unity, and the pursuit of justice. May his legacy serve as a guiding light for future generations, reminding us of the transformative potential within each of us to shape a brighter and more prosperous Nigeria.

"Baba! Your wisdom, vision,

and tireless dedication to the ideals of justice and progress will forever be cherished and remembered. May you be blessed with good health, happiness, and continued strength as you inspire us all to strive for a more united Oduwa race and a better Nigeria. Happy 97th birthday, Pa Reuben Fasoranti, the Leader of Afenifere!!!

Nasarawa Assembly Passes Executive Bills To Establish Two Agencies

By: SAMSONYAKI, Lafia

The Nasarawa State House of Assembly (NSHA), has passed two executive bills for the establishment of Nasarawa State Erosion, Watershed and

Climate Change Agency (NASEWCCA) and the Nasarawa State Social Investment Agency (NASSIA).

Speaker, Ibrahim Abdullahi Balarabe announced the

passage of the bills during plenary in Lafia on Wednesday.

Speaking on NASEWCCA, Balarabe said when established the agency reduce the vulnerability of soil to

erosion in targeted sub-catchment areas, prevent and reverse land degradation in the state.

On the second bill, the Speaker said that the agency would tackle poverty and ensure equitable distribution

of resources and economic growth for the overall development of Nasarawa State.

He therefore, directed the clerk of the House to produce clean copies of the two bills for Governor Sule's assent.

Paving Way To Lugard House With Justice, Equity And Fairness: Okeme And Call For Inclusiveness

By: ABUBAKAR HARUNA

The great Confluence State of Kogi is on the march again, seeking a worthy and an inclusive Governor as the Alhaji Yahaya Bello era winds down in a few months. This time the challenge before the people of Kogi State is the call for a broad-based Kogi where Christians are given a sense of belonging as well as Muslims and people of other religious bent.

Our Dear State is a Multi-ethnic, Multi-lingual and a Multi-religious one. It is the melting-pot of all that defines the Nigerian State. It is the first political capital of Nigeria, and by Jove should set the pace for genuine inclusiveness in governance.

We have witnessed a plethora of debate ranging from how many Igala people have governed Kogi to how many Ebira people or Okun people have governed Kogi. Sadly this debate has left unaddressed the major issues of Faith and Religion.

Yes the Okun people have a valid call for a shot at the Governorship, but even more compelling and challenging is the fact that no Christian has ever been elected Governor of Kogi State.

Kogi as a multi-religious state must now live true to what it says on paper. It is time for Kogi to give to her Christians a true sense of belonging, and it is time for Kogi stakeholders and the political class to give to the Christian population a hand of fellowship.

Our call is not only about religious inclusiveness, it is about sustaining the present trajectory of Youths in governance, and above all about competency, capacity and commitment to the common good.

To the great people of Kogi we



present an effective and efficient Igala son, an erudite Lawyer, and very importantly one who has the competency, the capacity, the compassion and the requisite commitment necessary to turn Kogi State around for good.

Barrister Okeme Adejo is the choice of the broadest class of the Kogi demography, the Youths, he connects with Muslims, Christians and Traditionalists being the scion of one of the most effective Women Leader in the history of Kogi State. Okeme combines a great strength of character with a deep sense of humility and

respect for Elders.

Okeme holds the Labour Party Governorship Ticket, he is a foremost Obidient and a Leader in every sense of the word. Barrister Adejo Okeme is not only an Igala, he is an illustrious son of Kogi committed to building a Kogi State where all ethnicities have a true sense of brotherhood and belonging. He is a devout Christian with huge commitment to building a great Kogi where the freedom of worship is sustained and members of various faiths given the opportunity to reach their fullest potentials. Okeme is the question-mark on

the conscience of a State that must do right. He is the olive-branch ready to truly unite a State replete with people of variegated tendencies. He comes with an uncommon cord of brotherhood and love, and he will create a great Kogi where inclusiveness is of primacy. To all well-meaning and progressive minded Kogites we present Barrister Okeme Adejo.

We shall in due course present to our Dear people of Kogi State the laudable agenda and Manifesto of Barrister Okeme. We hereby call on the high and the mighty, the low and the

struggling, the women and our mothers, the Young and the old to join hands with us as we accelerate the call for the next Governor of Kogi to be a Christian of Igala descent, and above all one with great competency, character, capacity, compassion and commitment to the common good.

To Kogi State and a nation in dire need of Justice, Inclusiveness and oneness, we present Barrister Okeme Adejo.

Abubakar Haruna is of the Concerned Citizens For Justice And Inclusion In Kogi

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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

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TECHNICAL DATA

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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
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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

Uniuyo Gets New Three Arms Lecture Theatre

By: PATRICK TITUS, Uyo

Hope came alive for the Faculty of Environmental Studies, University of Uyo in Akwa Ibom State with the taking over of three arms Lecture Theatre, courtesy of the Federal Government through the Presidential Needs Assessment Intervention Programme.

The facility has six lecture halls with each designed to carry no fewer than 100 students, eight offices and a courtyard for natural ventilation and lighting.

At the handing over/taking over of the three arms block building located at the main campus of the university yesterday, Vice Chancellor, Prof Nyaudo Ndaeyo commended the federal government for the intervention. Prof Ndaeyo said, the management of the University of Uyo is deeply grateful to the federal government for the project, noting that bit would go a long way in addressing the hitherto challenge faced by the faculty.

Ndaeyo also praised the contractors, Fens Properties Nig Ltd for setting standard in quality, timely and cost effective delivery of projects in the institution.

The Vice Chancellor who challenged other contractors handling jobs in the University to emulate Fens Properties, expressed satisfaction with the company's capacity to independently set and reach targets with minimal supervision and without calls for variation.

"Fens Property as a company is doing very well. I can boldly describe you as a faithful servant. You have been able to work with little or no supervision, you have not made us your slave-masters. We thank God for having this kind of contractors to work with.

"I want to encourage other contractors who have been given the privilege to work for us to emulate this company, Fens Properties. I say so because even in the face of the challenges they faced, they never one day asked for extension. I salute you.

"They took over this site on the 13th of September last year, and by my mathematics, it's not up to eight months. But some contractors have been given contracts for three years, some since 2014/2015 and they are still on site.

"I hope and pray that when Fens will have another opportunity to work with us, they would not develop cold feet. I am happy with them because they made

use of good, seasoned consultants who will go to look for what is wrong and not what is right.

"Their engineers are those that can stand the test of time anywhere, nationally and internationally. That is why when I drive pass some of these roads constructed by HENSEK, I feel fine that Nigerian engineers can do things. You don't need to go and bring in people to come and work for you. That is why they were trained.

"I am using this opportunity to encourage other institutions and even the government to make use of Nigerian engineers so that they can deliver and gain experience in the process," he stated.

He tasked the faculty of Environmental Studies to move into the fully finished and equipped facility on or before May 15, with a further task on the facility to maintain and ensure durability of the facility for future generation.

Earlier, the Managing Director, Fens Properties Nig Ltd, Mr Michael Udofia who said the project was awarded September 13, 2022 with a six-month delivery mandate, attributed the successful and timely delivery of the project to the decision making policy of the company,

prioritization of worker's welfare and project management capacity of the company.

Udofia however, expressed satisfaction that the initial challenges posed by both soil test and cash crunch could not rob the company off its policy of delivering quality, timely and cost effective projects to its clients.

The managing director appreciated the University of Uyo for the opportunity to serve and promised not to take future opportunities for granted.

"I want to say the completion of quality, timely and cost efficient projects are in our DNA and I still look forward to serving Nigeria in this capacity. We constructed the University of Uyo Filling station and the Law Faculty- the biggest building in this campus," he said.

Giving a breakdown of the project, one of the Directors of Fens Properties Nig. Ltd, Engr David Umoette said the three arms Lecture Theatre has six lecture halls with each designed to carry no fewer than 100 students, eight offices and a courtyard for natural ventilation and lighting.

In his remarks, the Secretary, Budget Monitoring of the Presidential Needs Assessment Intervention, Barr Otu Etukudo



announced that the project was first to have been completed and delivered on record time on the intervention programme.

"We thank the contractors for not

putting the University to shame. We sincerely hope that the project would be effectively used". He said.



Muhammad Nami: Double Honour For The Nation's Tax Czar

By: **NKEM PRECIOUS Esq**

The aphorism that there is no hiding place for the golden fish was practically manifested last week when the Executive Chairman of Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Muhammad Mamman Nami deservedly bagged double awards from reputable organisations. The nation's number one tax collector at separate events was named winner of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN) Merit Award and the winner of the BusinessDay Excellence in Public Service Award.

Since his assumption of office as the Executive Chairman of the FIRS in 2019, Mr Muhammad Nami has been going about his duty with uncommon zest, focus and vigour. Within the relatively little years of his stewardship as the helmsman of the nation's biggest tax agency, he has raised the bar of leadership at FIRS by posting many remarkable strides in office.

The FIRS Executive Chairman's latest meritorious garland was bestowed on him at the 2023 annual awards of ICAN which took place at the Monarch Event Centre, Lagos, on Saturday 6 May, 2023. Muhammad Nami who was honoured in the non-members category at the event, was described by the President of ICAN, Mr Tijani Musa Isa, as a self-effacing and humble achiever who has steered the FIRS to excel in the national and international tax circle despite global economic downturns.

While eulogising the nation's number one tax chief for achieving several milestones in revenue collection, the ICAN President said the Merit Award is in recognition of Muhammad Nami's positive impact in the society stressing that he has made significant contribution to the institute and to Nigeria. "The governing board deemed it fit to acknowledge the role you (Nami) have played and your outstanding achievements," Isa emphasised.

Muhammad Nami's virtues as a leader imbued with exemplary and rare professional moral fibre were further captured in the citation read at the ICAN event, in which he was aptly described as "a go-getter and an ingenious leader."

The impactful reforms which he is implementing at FIRS did not escape the attention of the Institute as they were acknowledged as eloquent

attestations to his dexterity, visionary leadership and patriotism. The citation took cognitive note of the fact that under his visionary leadership, the FIRS in 2022 achieved an unprecedented revenue collection of N10.1 trillion, the highest tax collection ever made in the annals of the country.

At a similar event two days earlier in the same week, the FIRS boss was named the winner of the BusinessDay Excellence in Public Service Award 2022. The event took place on Thursday 4 May, 2023 at the BusinessDay States Competitiveness and Good Governance Awards.

BusinessDay Newspaper explained that it named him the winner of the award for his "visionary and leadership qualities [that] have brought tremendous change to the FIRS."

It underscored Muhammad Nami's landmark achievements by transforming the tax administration and compliance landscape in Nigeria. Prominent on the checklist of his strides in the transformative aspect is the introduction of the revolutionary TaxPro Max which is FIRS' home-grown digital platform for tax administration. The hugely successful digital platform allows taxpayers to register, file returns and pay their taxes easily from any location other than their respective tax offices. TaxPro Max has proved an effective antidote of the delays and frustrations usually associated with the labyrinthine wholly manual process of the past that often lent itself to leakages, delays and frustrations.

BusinessDay commended Muhammad Nami for repositioning the operations and staff of the FIRS, as well as introducing technological tools to institute more transparency, accountability, and effectiveness, which in turn has translated into increased capacity to deliver on the mandate with outstanding results.

The Executive Chairman's response after receiving the ICAN Merit Award captured his professional trajectory from a humble beginning through the rungs to the higher rungs of professional excellence. He summed his professional odyssey this way: "Since I left the university, over 32 years ago, I have had the privilege and luck to be directly and indirectly associated with ICAN members:

from the PKF, to Manam Professional Services, and now I am working directly with well over 3,000 members of this Institute as the Executive Chairman of the FIRS."

He went on to dedicate the award to his alma maters (from primary to tertiary levels), his former colleagues at the Presidential Committee on Audit of Stolen Recovered Stolen Assets, members of the Tax Advisory Committee of the FIRS, all taxpayers, FIRS board members, management and staff of the FIRS plus his family members.

A rundown of Muhammad Nami's rich profile reveals a man who is properly trained and horned in the fields of tax, accounting and management. He is a thoroughbred professional with highly rated qualifications and practicing licenses from relevant professional bodies.

An accountant, management professional, tax administrator and public officer, Muhammad Nami has more than three decades of practical working experience in auditing, tax management and advisory as well as management services to clients in the banking, manufacturing services and public sectors in addition to non-profit organisations.

He is an expert in rendering advisory support services to investors in respect of new businesses. He has also continuously rendered outsourced services to clients in both trading, service and manufacturing sectors of the nation's economy.

A fellow of Chartered Institute of Taxation of Nigeria and Association of National Accountants of Nigeria, the FIRS boss is also an Associate Member of the Nigerian Institute of Management (Chartered) and Chartered Institute of Stockbrokers (CIS) as well as a graduate member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN).

Like the great oak that grew from little acorns, Muhammad Nami started his career with PKF in 1993 and rose to the position of a senior consultant in charge of tax management and advisory services. From October, 2018 to



Mohammed Nami

December, 2019, he also served as the Managing Consultant of Manam Professional Services, a Chartered Tax Practitioners and Advisers firm that had offices in Kaduna, Abuja and Minna.

He is the current President of the Commonwealth Association of Tax Administrators (CATA). He is the Chairman of the Joint Tax Board (JTB), a statutory position he holds as the Executive Chairman of the FIRS. He is the immediate past Chairman of the African Tax Administrators Forum (ATAF). These roles have invariably conferred on him the need to contribute to the growth and development of Nigeria, Africa and the commonwealth nations.

As a proactive and innovative leader, he has since proved bookmakers right that he is more than equal to the task. The reforms he is implementing at FIRS attest to his dexterity, visionary leadership and patriotism. Under his visionary leadership, the FIRS in 2022 achieved an unprecedented revenue collection of N10.1 trillion, which is the highest tax collection ever made in the history of the country.

Recently, he earned accolades for audacious deployment of technology as well as the introduction of unprecedented reforms in Nigeria's tax administration including data mining and strategic intelligence gathering for improved revenue generation.

His sterling leadership and

impressive scorecard have earned him and the FIRS several other awards. For instance, in October 2022, President Muhammadu Buhari conferred on him the Excellence in Public Service Award for Fiscal reforms at the FIRS while he also received the Leadership Newspaper Public Servant of the Year Award for 2022.

Muhammad Nami's exemplary leadership style has greatly helped to galvanise and motivate the management and entire workforce of the FIRS to be disciplined and amenable to basic etiquette of the Service.

The fact that he is a man driven by ideas and positive results is attested to by the regular on-the-job trainings and brainstorming sessions he organises at the FIRS. He is a modern era leader that is never weary of updating and introducing result-yielding innovative ideas and techniques.

Among other contributory factors to the astounding success of Muhammad Nami at the FIRS are his humble and honest attributes. Beneath the veneer of his gentle mien is the steely quality of a leader who does not compromise integrity and value in the discharge of duty. Certainly, the FIRS under the clear-headed, confident and chivalrous leadership of Muhammad Nami is primed for more plumage of honours and awards in future.

Nkem Precious is an Abuja based lawyer

Obaro Ikime: The Intellectual as Hostage

By Owei Lakemfa

GENERAL Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida, the Dean of Coups in Nigeria, finally staged a coup for himself on August 27, 1985. The veteran coup plotter could sniff coups years away. On December 17, 1985, he rounded up over 100 military officers for allegedly conceptualising a coup. Some, including his childhood friend, Major General Mamman Vatsa, were sentenced to death.

When it was announced that the ruling military junta was to meet in the evening of March 5, 1986 over the death sentences, Nigeria's famous literary triumvirate: Wole Soyinka, John Pepper Clark and Chinua Achebe, rushed to meet Babangida in the morning. The dictator vowed to them: "I wish to give you my word of honour – I shall go into the crucial meeting determined to do everything in my power to save them. I assure you, I shall not be party to their execution. That I can promise you."

"The case proffered against Ikime was that he provided the intellectual basis for the Orkar coup, including campaigning for a religious upheaval and ethnic division which saw Orkar purporting to excise part of the country. In 1990, Ikime who was the chairman of a committee on the Chapel of Resurrection, had read a communiqué to the church in which he warned those talking about dipping the Quran into the ocean in Lagos, advised against religious war and entreated the church to pray against it. The prosecution brought some members of the church, including an organist, to testify; but once they came face-to-face with Ikime, they buckled, and the case collapsed."

But as soon as the trio left, the meeting was convened so that by the time Soyinka got to his Abeokuta home, Vatsa and the other military officers had been executed. So, when on Sunday, April 22, 1990 an actual coup attempt, called the 'Orkar Coup' was carried out, Babangida and his gang went into frenzy. Hundreds of military officers were arrested with an unknown number murdered before they could get to trial. The junta also used the opportunity to shut-

down some newspapers and detain 19 senior journalists, accusing them of participating in the coup.

It then turned on lecturers whom Babangida for years had accused of "teaching what they are not paid to teach". The Gestapo on May 2, 1990 descended on the Obafemi Awolowo University. But the philosopher, Dr Dipo Fashina, escaped the dragnet. Then they abducted Professors Toye Olorode and Idowu Awopetu. As the convoy sped off, the alert students of the campus gave chase, caught one of the abductors, a secret service officer, whom the students detained for 12 days despite threats by the regime to invade the campus.

The Gestapo also went to Ibadan where they abducted famous historian, Professor Obaro Ikime, of the University of Ibadan. While the OAU lecturers were unapologetic radicals, Ikime, who was also a well-known sports administrator and Anglican priest, had no such inclinations. So, his abduction came as a surprise.

In Lagos, Olorode was detained at the Security Service detention centre on Awolowo Road; Awopetu at the centre on Kingsway Road; and surprisingly, Ikime was taken to the notorious Inter Centre, built into the Ikoyi Cemetery where the most 'dangerous' elements and many of the alleged coup plotters were kept. In the 95 days he spent in detention, he was allowed to wear just a pair of clothes.

The three professors were reunited at the Military Tribunal chaired by Brigadier Rufus Modupe Kupolati where they were charged as conspirators in the Orkar Coup. Olorode and Awopetu were jointly charged. The 'evidence' against them were that a conference against the World Bank was planned for the day of the coup attempt and that the duo belonged to a radical organisation called the Ife Collective which had produced a publication on 'Alternative to SAP' (Structural Adjustment Programme). Both defenders said they were opposed to coups and did not believe in replacing one set of coup plotters with another. Rather, they wanted the military's exit from politics and the enthronement of 'Peoples'



Power'.

The case proffered against Ikime was that he provided the intellectual basis for the Orkar coup, including campaigning for a religious upheaval and ethnic division which saw Orkar purporting to excise part of the country. In 1990, Ikime who was the chairman of a committee on the Chapel of Resurrection, had read a communiqué to the church in which he warned those talking about dipping the Quran into the ocean in Lagos, advised against religious war and entreated the church to pray against it. The prosecution brought some members of the church, including an organist, to testify; but once they came face-to-face with Ikime, they buckled, and the case collapsed. In order to avoid this type of collapse, the prosecution in the case of inciting ethnic hatred and conflict, decided to use Ikime's published works against him. It produced his Keynote Address delivered at the National Seminar on the National Question held in Abuja on August 4, 1986. In the paper titled: "Towards Understanding the National Question", Ikime had submitted that Hausa, Yoruba, Ijaw and other such nationalities did not exist before the 17th century, so they were recent creations. Secondly, that unlike Islam and Christianity, traditional religion often serve as integrative forces and were accommodative.

"Ikime's solution was that in a federation, there must be equal ownership and greater equity for all. In the argument before the

tribunal, the intellectual took the prosecutors to the cleaners. On August 1, 1990, Ikime was released but compulsorily retired on October 15, 1990. Professors Olorode and Awopetu were similarly treated. Their retirement was illegal and they challenged it in court. But the state approached them informally that if they withdrew the cases and appealed to Babangida as the Visitor, they would be recalled. While Ikime seemed to have fallen for this ploy, Olorode and Awopetu refused and Justice Moni Fafiade ordered them recalled." Thirdly, that while Islam brought Islamic culture and made no separation between the state and region, Christianity brought Western European culture and education and secularism. So, while the Jihad created a religious and political entity in the Sokoto Caliphate resulting in a greater Northern togetherness, there was no such cohesion in the South.

Fourthly, that the colonialists in 1939 deliberately broke the South into two regions but left the North intact, thereby not just creating Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa-Fulani majorities, but also giving the impression that the North was larger than the South and awarded it double the seats than the South. He argued that if it were based on population – there was no national census until the controversial 1952/53 – the East and the West would not have been awarded equal number of seats. This colonial legacy, he said, led to politics being

conceptualised as largely a trade-off among the three, while the other nationalities were "treated as mere pawns".

Fifth, that contrary to Bala Usman's claims that the lines between the Hausa and Fulani had become blurred, the Hausa elites are conscious that following the Jihad, they lost the top political positions to the Fulani.

Sixth, that in appointments, lower qualifications were required from candidates from the North rather than promote greater equity.

Ikime's solution was that in a federation, there must be equal ownership and greater equity for all. In the argument before the tribunal, the intellectual took the prosecutors to the cleaners. On August 1, 1990, Ikime was released but compulsorily retired on October 15, 1990. Professors Olorode and Awopetu were similarly treated. Their retirement was illegal and they challenged it in court. But the state approached them informally that if they withdrew the cases and appealed to Babangida as the Visitor, they would be recalled. While Ikime seemed to have fallen for this ploy, Olorode and Awopetu refused and Justice Moni Fafiade ordered them recalled. Thus, the country lost the active services of a father historian who still had 26 years in the university where retirement for professors is 70.

On Thursday, April 25, 2023, at 86, the mobile African library departed on a one-way flight.

UFA's Spray Drones

Best Way For Plants Pests Control

By; BALAB. BITRUS

Many farmers in Nigeria have over the years been at the mercy of the voracious Red-billed Quelea birds, grasshoppers, and the various types of worms which decimates crop fields speedily year in and year out. Quelea bird is a small sparrow-like bird but very destructive. A single bird can eat 10 grams of grains in a few hours. While worms are small creepy pests whose larvae feed on all types of green leaves and grasses and destroy crops within minutes. Usually, at the early stages of cereal crops such as maize, rice, cowpea, beans, peanuts, millets, sorghum, and all grasses, these creeping worms appear on farmlands, especially at the early onset of the rains and destroy the plants.

Quelea birds surface mostly during the pre-harvest seasons. These birds, in great numbers, flock on croplands to devour the maturing crops within days.

Plants pests that put farmers' crop fields and vegetation at great risk include the notoriously ravenous armyworms, the gregaria, the cutworms, locusts, and the Quelea birds, etc which are deleterious pests capable of devouring entire crop fields within weeks.

These pests as perennial invaders which attack farmlands ferociously, are known to be causing great losses to many farmers annually and they impoverished many farmers in Nigeria.

Such plants pests have remained grave threats and nightmares to farmers, crop fields, and the government's trajectory and policy on agriculture and food production.

But with the coming of the new agriculture spraying drone services by Union Farms of Africa to Nigeria, the search for the fastest remedial solution to the



menace of worms, locusts, and the Quelea birds' invasion of farmlands, the troubles, pains, and quest for a more efficient solution may have come to a good bus stop.

UFA has a large stock of matchless DJI Agras T. Series including the AgrasT30 and the T10 drones, and many others of different calibrations.

Supplies of these specialized unmanned aircraft have spread to over a hundred (100) countries and still counting.

Nigerian farmers can now

have a good reason to be happy. UFA has customized drones for an immediate sweeping counter-offensive against plant pests.

The Union Farms of Africa, with its wide range of agricultural services, is now in Nigeria and willing to do business and go into partnership with governments, companies, and individual farmers who are desirous to avail themselves of the services of the organization.

The organization has an array of these unmanned aircraft

that have huge comparative advantages over conventional aircraft sometimes deployed by governments to fight pests and especially Quelea birds on farmlands where they invade.

These agri-spray drones can fly for hours and at very low heights (altitudes) and spray affected crop fields with exact precision and accuracy.

Drones are electric-powered remote-controlled, and are technically manageable, maneuverable, and controlled by an unboarded pilot. They are all weatherproof, and easy

to operate.

The Union Farms of Africa has branches in seven African countries including Cameroun, Kenya, Rwanda, Ghana, Liberia, Niger, Chad, Nigeria, and it is also in India.

In Nigeria, its temporary office is in Kaduna at No. 20A, Bank Road, behind the Old Singer Building Roundabout, off Ali Akilu Road.

Bala BITRUS is an agricultural enthusiast. He writes

from Minna, Niger State

Burkina Faso Send Golden Eaglets Out Of AFCON, World Cup

By; AYO OJEDOKUN, Lagos

Burkina Faso's Young Etalons took the few opportunities that came their way to defeat Nigeria 2-1 in a gritty Africa U-17 Cup quarter-final duel in Algiers yesterday.

Defeat meant elimination from the tournament, and end to a FIFA World Cup ticket ambition, for the five-time world champions who created far more opportunities but were either denied by the sticks or by the brilliant goalkeeper Isidore.

Charles Agada, who scored Nigeria's first goal against South Africa in their last group phase in Constantine on Saturday, wasted an opportunity as early as the second minute, and Abubakar Abdullahi, another scorer from the 3-2 defeat of South Africa, hit a scorching shot that rocked the crossbar with seven minutes gone.

Agada also hit the upright from a tussle inside the box on the quarter-hour, and was then denied by the opposing goalkeeper with seven minutes left in the

first period.

In the 40th minute, Jeremiah Olaleke saved the Eaglets' blushes by heading the ball away on the goal-line with goalkeeper Richard Odoh stranded, but the same player was culpable when his howler inside the box, after Odoh had parried an inswinger, let in Aboubacar Camara to put Burkina Faso ahead on the dot of half-time.

Eleven minutes into the second half, the Young Etalons were further ahead when Camara slotted past Odoh from the

penalty spot following a foul on Souleymane Alio—the player who scored two goals against Cameroon to dump out the Cup holders and get the Burkinabes to the last eight.

Abubakar Abdullahi pulled one back for Nigeria in the 67th minute, after good work from the left by Favour Daniel and Emmanuel Michael. But it all proved a bridge too far as the Burkinabes held on to claim a famous victory, and a place in the AFCON semi-finals and the FIFA World Cup.



Onwuegbu, Shabi Emerge Top In Maiden BON Classic Golf Tourney

By; AYO OJEDOKUN, Lagos

Olaitan Shabi playing with handicap 27 has won in the men's category of the maiden BON Classic Golf Tournament after returning with the best scores of 74, while the CEO of BON Sports Promotion that sponsored the event, Mrs. Bose Ngozi Onwuegbu emerged winner in the women's category with 72 net.

Olayinka Ojo of Tiger Golf Club who doubles as the Chairman of the Planning Committee for the event, emerged with the best gross scores and 88 net in the men's category, while Okunnola

Rasheed and Aodonwase ended as first and second runners up respectively.

In the women's category, former Lady Captain of both Tiger Golf Club and Ibadan Golf Club, Mary Okunola recorded 74 net scores to emerge as the first runner-up, while Sala Oise playing handicap 28 with net scores 79, ended as second runner-up in the unique tournament that came to an end on Saturday at the Tiger Golf Club, Fajuyi Cantonment, Ojo Ibadan.

The sponsor, Mrs. Bose Onwuegbu who was the former Lady Captain of Dolphin Golf Club Lagos in her remarks expressed joy for the huge success

recorded at the end of the event, saying the theme of the event is 'Empowering the less privileged', hence proceeds from the tournament will be used to support the less privileged in the society.

"I want to thank all and sundry that had played big roles in making this event a success, but I must specially thank my husband, Navy Commodore MJI Onwuegbu for his constant support and understanding as well as the former managing Director of Polaris Bank, Innocent Ike that came down to Tiger Club Ibadan for the first time to be part of this event.

"Let me also extend my

gratitude to the former Captain of Ikoyi Club Golf section, Dr. Innocent Okoro who hugely supported this dream and my uncle, Hon. Wale Williams. I must also thank the leadership of Tiger Golf Club, led by the Captain, Tunde Salami and the lady captain, Patience Ekwere for their big support", said Onwuegbu who is also a South West zonal representative on the board of the Nigeria Golf Federation.

The respective winner in the BON Classic Golf Tourney, Olaitan Shabi, (right) and Bose Ngozi Onwuegbu.

Tiger Golf Club Appoints Yomi Ojo As Head Publicity

By; AYO OJEDOKUN, Lagos

In a bid to create more feasibility, the prestigious Tiger Golf Club has appointed Otunba Yomi Ojo as the head of publicity committee of the club through a letter signed by the secretary of the club, Olumuyiwa Omitowoju and made available to New Nigerian Sports.

Yetunde Opadokun and Adeniyi Adejuyigbe were chosen according to the letter, as members of the committee, while Otunba Yomi Ojo popularly known as Fiwajoye in golfing circle, was appointed as the chairman of the committee that was saddled with responsibility to be creating awareness for the golf club that is situated inside the Adekunle Fajuyi Cantonment, Odogbo Barracks, Ibadan.

Yomi Ojo in his reaction to the appointment, pledged to do his best in boosting the image of the great golf club, considering his robust relationship with member of the press in

Nigeria, saying "publicity committee which is crucial to ensuring the success and growth of the club, will not let down the executives of the club, because of the confidence they have in all the committee members.

"The game of golf is challenging and part of my plans is to be creating educational materials that will help in promoting golf teaching, while also advertising the knowledge of your teachings through the professionals will further help the image of Tiger Golf Club", said Otunba Yomi Ojo.

The task before the committee according to the letter, is to create improved awareness for Tiger Golf Club, effective management of all social media accounts of the club, developing publicity materials and organising events and tournaments by working closely with the competition committee and be responsible for organising and promoting all club's events, tournaments and social gatherings.



Burkina Faso Send Golden Eaglets Out Of AFCON, World Cup

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Students Stranded As NASUU, SANUU, Others Shutdown Ebonyi State University

*Staff demand payment of salaries, allowances

By; MKPUMA ENYINNA, Abakaliki

Ebonyi State University has been totally shutdown by Non Academic staff Union of Universities (NASUU) and other unions like SANUU, among others, who closed down the university over non payment of salaries, allowances and

diversion of pension contributory fund.

Most students were stranded over this development as academic activities were grounded by the unions.

The leaders of the union jointly shutdown all academic activities and the school gate was also closed down to drive home their demands.

Speaking to newsmen about the matter, the Chairman of NASUU in Ebonyi State University, Comrade Okoro Basil and counterparts from other unions, said that they embarked on the protest and shut down the school because their salaries and allowances have not been paid as at when due.

They lamented that the last time

they received salaries was in the month of February 2023 and further lamented that the contributory pension scheme they are deducting from their salaries are being diverted and not remitted appropriately. They stated that the school will remain closed till they meet up with their demands.

Some students like Ifeanyi

Ugwu, Akam Solomon, Emilad Oke, among others, expressed surprise over the recent issue.

As at the time of filling this report, many students were seen hanging around, while some were stranded over the unexpected closure of the school.

Church Building Demolition In KASU, Court Fixes Date For Ruling

By; AMOS TAUNA, Kaduna

Chief Magistrate Court, Kaduna has fixed May 31, 2023 to rule on whether or not it has the jurisdiction to entertain the case of alleged demolition of church building at Kaduna State University (KASU). The case was instituted by Rev. John Joseph Hayab and Dr E. D. Monday against Mr Ismail Umaru Dikko and Mr Yusuf Abdullahi.

The matter came up yesterday for hearing for the complainants to present their case before the Court but an objection was raised to say that the defendants are public officers.

Counsel to the complainants, Barrister Gloria Mabeiam Ballason stated that the defendants were suit in their personal capacities and not as public officers.

After listening to the arguments of both parties, the Chief Magistrate, Stephen Hassan, fixed 31st May to rule on whether or not the court has the jurisdiction in the matter.

The complainants had

approached the court that on the 6th June, 2022, at about 1:45pm, in the premises of the Kaduna State University main campus, Tafawa Balewa Way, Kaduna, a heavily armed security agents and operatives of a bulldozer, the defendants, without authorization and approval, demolished and defiled the only Church-in-building structure in the University premises and thereby committed the offence of failing a place of worship, contrary to section 179 of the Panel Code Laws of Kaduna state, 2017 and punishable under the same section.

According to complaints counsel, "That the officers of the complainants had mobilized for construction which was ongoing, but to their amazement, the 1st and 2nd defendants interfered with the progress by bringing in a bulldozer and armed security operatives to demolish the ongoing structure, intimidate, harass, assault and terrify the complainants and labourers and workers working on the building site and further destroyed evidence of their illegal actions."



Speaker House of Representatives, Rt. Hon. Femi Bajabiamila (right) with other members during the Joint Tax Assembly meeting at Transcorp Hotel in Abuja. Photo: BASHIR BELLO DOLLARS