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Kaduna Governorship Election Tribunal Assures Of Justice, Begins Sitting

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By: AMOS TAUNA, Kaduna

A 3-man panel of the Election Tribunal handling the petitions filed by the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and its gubernatorial candidate, Isa Ashiru, alongside other political parties has been inaugurated in Kaduna yesterday. The PDP had earlier

challenged the victory of the Kaduna state Governor, Senator Uba Sani of the All Progress Congress (APC), with the claims that the last governorship election in the state was manipulated in favour of the incumbent governor.

In his inaugural speech, the Chairman of the panel, Justice Victor O. Oviawe, promised to ensure that the

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Taraba Governor, Kefas Dissolves 16 Local Council Caretaker Chairmen

By; AMOS TAUNA, Kaduna

Agbu Kefas, the Governor of Taraba State has dissolved 16 local government areas caretaker committee chairmen (CTC) of the state. He gave the directive few hours after assuming office as governor of the state. Yusuf Sanda, the Chief Press Secretary to governor in a

statement, said, "The dissolution took effect on the 29th of May 2023."

According to the statement, the former CTC Chairmen have been directed by the Executive Governor to hand over all government property in their possession to the Head of Local Government Administration (HOLGA) of their respective councils with immediate effect.

Katsina Police Gets New PPRO

By; SULAIMAN AHMED MISAU, Katsina

Katsina State Police Command has announced the appointment of Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP), Abubakar Sadiq Aliyu as its new Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO).

The appointment of ASP Abubakar Sadiq Aliyu according to a statement from the Police command, follows the elevation and redeployment of its former Public Relations Officer, Chief Superintendent of Police (CSP) Gambo Isah to head the Zone 14 Public Relations Office (ZPRO), Katsina effective immediately.

The statement said until his posting as Katsina state Police Command PPRO, ASP Abubakar Sadiq Aliyu was the Deputy Public

Relations Officer of the command.

The statement explained that, ASP Sadiq Aliyu in his new role as the new PPRO of the Katsina State Police Command would be responsible for managing the command's public image and reputation, as well as developing and implementing communication strategies to enhance the command's relationship with members of the public.

ASP Abubakar Sadiq Aliyu is a graduate and member of the first Regular Course One (RC1) of the prestigious Nigeria Police Academy, Wudil in Kano State and hails from Kaduna State.

The statement appealed to public to give ASP Abubakar Sadiq Aliyu maximum cooperation and support to carry out his duties effectively.

Those Kicking Against Fuel Subsidy Removal Ignorant Of Economic Advantages - Kailani Muhammad

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

An energy expert and former staff of the Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), Engineer (Dr.) Kailani Muhammad has said that those kicking against the removal of fuel subsidy are either ignorant about the economic advantages or misguided by few selfish individuals.

According to him, the removal of fuel subsidy by President Bola Ahmed Tinubu is the best decision for Nigeria's progress and development.

President Tinubu in his inaugural address on Monday, declared an end to the era of subsidy payment, saying the 2023 budget made no provision for fuel subsidy, so further payment was no longer justifiable.

But this didn't go down well with the labour unions and some Nigerians who felt the decision is hasty.

Engineer Kailani Muhammad, who is also the National Coordinator of Confederation of All Progressives Congress (APC) Support Groups

in a reaction to news on the subsidy removal, said that it was high time NLC, TUC and other Nigerians face the reality of the

pronouncement of the President and decision of the national oil company, NNPC to support it.

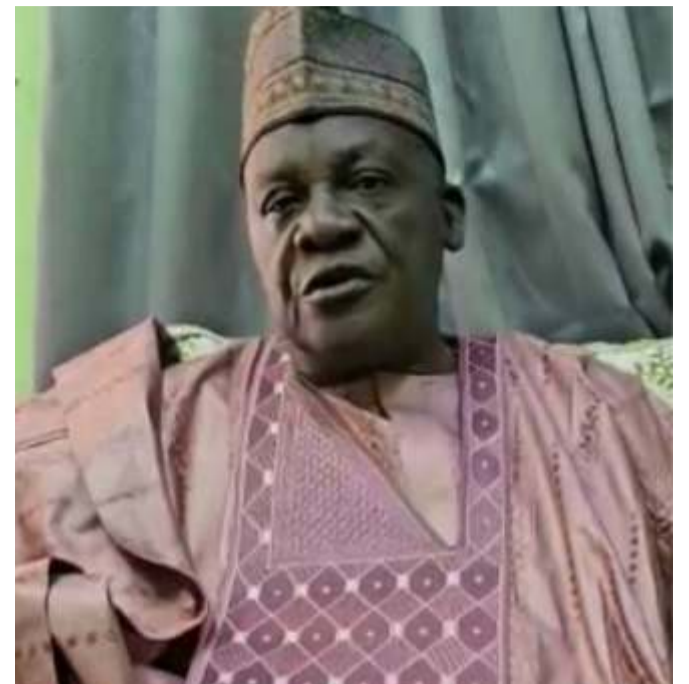
While commending President Tinubu for taking the bold step to remove fuel subsidy and Management of NNPC's position to accept it in good faith, noted that the subsidy era wrecked serious havoc on revenue generation and can't be retained under this harsh economic conditions.

He however, described as unfortunate, the situation where petroleum marketers have within 24 hours of the pronouncement, hiked prices of Premium Motor Spirit (PMS) otherwise known as petrol at the filling stations to over 700 Naira per liter.

He further said, "Marketers hoarding: products should know that NNPC had said no going back on the withdrawal of subsidy."

"NNPC is doing its best to ensure adequate supply of fuel to douse the problem of panic buying." He expressed joy that the Mele Kyari led Management has already taken proactive measure to ensure constant fuel supply to avoid queues at filling stations.

Meanwhile, he asked Nigerians to embrace the



Engineer Kailani Muhammad

decision by President Bola Ahmed Tinubu to reposition the oil industry and create a purse for the proceed accrued from sales of PMS to be used for sustainable development.

"The idea of NLC and other labour unions threatening and demanding that the refineries must be working first before withdrawal of subsidy is retrogressive and far from economic reality," he stressed.

He urged marketers to do the needful by opening stocks and selling to the public with hope that market forces of supply and demand will determine pump prices of

petrol henceforth.

According to him, good marketers will capitalise on the advantages and buy and sell at competitive reasonable prices and make more profit on investments.

Eng. Kailani noted that all stakeholders in the oil sector must come together to fashion away out the crisis.

He however, called on Nigerians to support Tinubu-Shettima led APC government with assurance that Nigerians will enjoy sustainable growth and development across all sectors of the economy, adding, "Tinubu has good intentions for the country".

Institute For Agricultural Research Organises Refresher Training For Young Scientists

By; SANIALIYU, Zaria

The Institute for Agricultural Research (IAR), Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria has organised a one-day refresher training for young scientists at the institute.

Christened, "Towards Effective Research and Development in IAR", the training was declared open on Wednesday at Tanimu Balarabe Conference Hall, Institute for Agricultural Research, by the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Kabiru Bala.

Represented at the occasion by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic, Prof. Danladi A. Ameh, he described the training as timely and commended the research institute for putting together the event.

Prof. Bala, who stressed that

agriculture as a discipline remains the university's strength, explained that knowledge transfer to the younger ones is part of mentorship.

He said, it is appropriate for senior academics to mentor the younger ones through knowledge transfer at a training session such as this, noting that leadership without succession is a failure.

In his welcome address, the Executive Director, Institute for

Agricultural Research Prof. Muhammad Ishiyaku Faguji, who gave an insight into the training programme, observed that there is dwindling standard in the way academic activities are carried out.

Prof. Faguji stressed that the

academic delivery level must be raised if the younger academics are to benefit effectively from the wealth of experience of the older ones.

According to the Executive Director, the theme of the training was chosen to address

the mentorship lapses and boost the morale of the younger scientists, saying that the training would sharpen the skills of the scientists, especially in the area of research.

Also speaking, the Dean, Faculty of Agriculture, Prof. Mukhtar Mahmud, was of the belief that the participants would benefit immensely from the training, given the wealth of experience of the resource persons.

Some of the resource persons included Prof. Ado A. Yusuf, who spoke on "Sustaining Agricultural Development through Core Values: The Institute for Agricultural Research Perspective"; and Prof. E.B. Amans, who was picked to talk on "An Insight into the IAR-Faculty Relationship".

Others were, Prof. I.U. Abubakar, who spoke on "Developing Research Questions and Hypothesis"; while Prof. L. Aliyu and Prof. Y. Oseni discussed, "Selecting Appropriate Study Design.



Benue: Idoma Journalists Task Gov Alia To Sustain Ortom's Tempo On Fight Against Insecurity

**Demand fair representation on appointments*

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The Congress of Idoma Journalists, (COIJ) has congratulated Governor of Benue State, Rev. Father Hyacient Alia on his inauguration and assumption of office as the sixth executive governor of the state.

The journalists body also tasked Rev. Father Alia to ensure he sustains the fight against insecurity in the state to meet up with his predecessor, ex Governor Samuel Ortom.

The group made the call in Kaduna yesterday, while reacting to Alia's inaugural address on Monday, where he said that he would review the anti-open grazing bill put up by the immediate past Governor, Samuel Ortom.

In a statement jointly signed by the President and General Secretary of COIJ, Okpani Amos Ebute and Comrade Mike Odeh and made available to journalists in Kaduna, the forum said that although the administration of Ortom is believed to have performed below average, yet the love for Benue people in the area of

speaking out against insecurity was massively felt.

The watchdogs further stressed that the need to improve the security architecture of the state with the view to prevent further loss of lives and properties in the state can never be overemphasized, even as the protection of lives and properties remain the primary function of government as enshrined by the Nigeria's 1999 constitution, amended.

While expressing belief that the incoming administration would be an improvement on the outgoing administration, the Forum insisted that lives of Benue residents are sacrosanct and therefore it is paramount that the new Governor do all he can to prevent further bloodshed in Tiv and Idoma land as a result of the activities of herdsmen.

The forum called on Father Alia to ensure that his administration provides conducive environment that would enable the creation of employment opportunities for people within the state



Gov Alia

as this will enable Benue sons and daughters to look towards the direction of home to contribute all they have got for sustainable growth and development. They congratulated the governor on his election to serve the good people of Benue state for the next four years and urged him to use the principle and the

doctrines of Christ he has got over the years to lead the people to their promised land.

The group also tasked him to be fair in terms of appointment, stressing that brilliant Idoma sons and daughters should be given equal opportunities like their Tiv counterparts.

Tinubu Would Unite Nigeria, Restore Economy, Security - APC-IGG

By; JABIRU A. HASSAN, Kano

President Bola Ahmed Tinubu would use his political experience to unite Nigeria and restore mutual understandings between the entire people across the six geo-political zones for national development.

This was expressed by the national President APC Initiative For Good Governance (APC-IGG), Ambassador Musa Mohammed Tsoken in an interview with our correspondent shortly after the President's inauguration ceremony on Monday.

He stressed that President Bola Tinubu's long term political practice remains the backbone of his leadership style, where his experience is becoming more beneficial to the people without bias, especially in a democratic dispensation.

Ambassador Tsoken announced that, "APC Initiative For Good Governance has been

working day and night to ensure that the party retains power in order to actualize continuity, therefore we would do our best as support group to ensure that Tinubu administration transform at both levels."

The national president reiterated that APC-IGG is determined to ensure the betterment of this great nation with optimum result, and called on the well meaning citizens to support the new dawn.



Tsoken

Governor Umo Eno To Unveil Blueprint For Public Discourse Soon

By; PATRICK TITUS, Uyo

The new governor of Akwa Ibom State, Pastor Umo Eno has said that his administration's blueprint predicated on the ARISE agenda would soon be unveiled for public discourse and contributions.

Eno who stated this while swearing in the new Secretary to the State Government (SSG) on Wednesday at Government House, Uyo explained that the blueprint would reflect all aspects of development in the state.

"The blueprint of my administration which is predicated on the ARISE agenda will soon be unveiled for a public discourse and contributions that will reflect all aspects of development in the state."

The governor, who reminded the people of the of a golden era assured of integrating competent hands that will add value to his administration, called for all round support to consolidate on the achievements of his predecessor.

He described the appointment of the new SSG, Prince Enobong

Uwah as a merited reward for dedication, hard work and selflessness made towards the emergence of the government as well as for the growth and development of the state.

The governor congratulated Prince Uwah for the appointment, charged him to use

his wealth of experience and bring to bear innovations that will enhance the operations of government unhindered by bureaucracy.

"I made it very clear that we will reward hard work, and this first appointment is our resolve to keep to our words. Let me on

behalf of the people of Akwa Ibom state congratulate you the SSG most heartily on your appointment and subsequent swearing in as the Secretary to the State Government. Your appointment is a product of merit, hard work, of fidelity and faith in the continuous growth

and development of our state"

"As the engine room of government, you are expected to deploy your organisational skills in managing our vast bureaucracy which is undergoing e-governance processes.

"I am confident of the choice we have made in you, go there, get the job

done for our state and for our people and after you get the job done we will have the happy hour". He admonished.

Fielding questions from journalists shortly after the inauguration, Prince Enobong Uwa, expressed appreciation to God for the appointment and thanked Pastor Umo Eno for deeming him fit to be appointed as Secretary to the State Government.

He assured of his determination to bring to bear his wealth of experience to ensure the success of the new administration.

Prince Enobong Uwah who is the 16th Secretary to Akwa Ibom State Government, was until his appointment, the Executive Chairman of Uyo Capital City Development Authority, UCCDA.

He is a consummate public servant with deep administrative and organizational proficiencies. Prince Enobong Uwah holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Geography and Regional Planning from the University of Cross River State, now University of Uyo and a Masters in Public Administration, also



Akwa Ibom state governor, Pastor Umo Eno (left) with immediate past governor Udom Emmanuel during their handing over exercise on Monday



Gov Abba Kabir

Revert To Old Price Of Petrol, Kano Govt Appeals To Marketers

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

His Excellency Alhaji Abba Kabir Yusif, the governor of Kano state, has urged petroleum marketers to reinstate the previous prices for petroleum goods in order to lessen the current hardship experienced by the general public.

According to a statement signed by his Chief Press Secretary, Sanusi Bature Dawakin Tofa, made available yesterday, the governor said he is aware that the marketers still had old products in stock that were supposed to be sold at the previous pricing.

"To reduce the needless hardship on the state's citizens, the marketers should exercise some restraint and quickly reopen all filling stations

with available products in stock to sell at the former price.

"As a concerned Governor, I am disheartened to see our dear People of Kano suffering as a result of an unjustified fuel hike, and the situation must be stopped right away," the governor said.

Kano, according to Governor Abba Kabir, is the commercial hub for the country's Northern Region as well as certain countries in West Africa, and its bustling populace continues to enjoy favorable business conditions.

The governor urged the citizens of Kano State to maintain their composure and uphold the law because the government is always prepared to make sure that people are doing their affairs conveniently.

Kaduna Governorship Election Tribunal Assures Of Justice, Begins Sitting

- Chairman says Tribunal will be just, fair, in interest of public
- PDP optimistic of justice
- APC assures of cooperation

Tribunal upholds and works within the ambit of the provision of the constitution.

According to Justice Oviawe, "the Tribunal will be just, and fair and do the right thing in the interest of the public."

Speaking further, Justice Oviawe sought the cooperation of the Bar to enable the court to timely

deliver in line with the provisions of the Electoral Act.

In his remarks, the Chairman of the Nigeria Bar Association (NBA) Tajudeen Muhammed, assured the panel of the NBA's support, adding that the Bar would give utmost cooperation to the Bench throughout the process of the case.

Other members of the panel are Justice D.A Damulak and Justice N. Nonye.

The Tribunal also said it would be sitting daily to ensure it completes its task within the stipulated time.

The leading counsel to Governor Uba Sani, Bayo Ojo, assured of their cooperation throughout the sitting of the tribunal and to defend their client

appropriately.

The leading counsel to the PDP gubernatorial candidate in the 2023 election, Samuel Atung, said the they have been assured by the tribunal at its inaugural sitting that there would be justice, saying that as members of the Bar, they have abiding faith in the tribunal that justice would be served.

Hajj Reporters Deploys Team To Monitor Pilgrims' Officials, Service Providers In Saudi Arabia

By; JABIRU A. HHASSAN, Kano

The Independent Hajj Reporters (IHR) has set up a 5-man team that will monitor the activities of appointed hajj officials and service providers to Nigerian pilgrims in Saudi Arabia.

A statement signed by IHR National Coordinator, Ibrahim Muhammed, said that the team will work with the Inspectorate and Evaluation Committee of the National Hajj Commission of Nigeria (NAHCON), the IHR National Coordinator Ibrahim Muhammad said in a statement on Thursday.

The not-for-profit civil society organization said the team was set up to ensure that all officials

carry out their assigned tasks as spelled out in their schedule of duty.

"The team will also ensure that service providers engaged to serve Nigerian pilgrims in areas of accommodation, transport, feeding, sanitation, tents in Muna and Arafat live up to expectation by providing quality services to Nigerian pilgrims.

"The team will be headed by the IHR National Coordinator Ibrahim Muhammad, to be assisted by the Secretary General Nuruddeen M. Abdallah, Head of Publications Sani Tukur, Jidda Abubakar, and Mustapha Hodi," it said.

The statement said, "over the years, we have observed that some officials, especially adhoc ones, abandon their duties

once they get to Saudi Arabia. This ugly trend affects the quality of services that was expected to be offered to our dear pilgrims."

The CSO said, "some officials even go as far as personally demanding to be served instead of serving the pilgrims, which is the primary reason they are appointed."

"Hajj officials from other countries are always in uniform for easy identification and are at the service of their pilgrims 24 hours. Most of them don't perform hajj because they consider their primary responsibility of serving their respective pilgrims weightier than any other secondary issue.

"We are going to obtain the comprehensive lists of

all states and NAHCON-appointed hajj officials and monitor their performance throughout the hajj," the statement said.

Mr Muhammad said the committee will particularly work with the Inspectorate department in monitoring the officials and service providers in Jeddah, Makkah, Madinah, Muna and Arafat.

"The committee will compile its observations in a form of a report which will be forwarded to all relevant officials for further actions and to serve as a guide towards recruitment of adhoc officials in subsequent hajj exercise," the statement said.

Lack Of Nutritional Practices Has Devastating Effect On Human Growth, USAID Warns

By; MKPUMA ENYINNA, Abakaliki

In order to broaden the knowledge base of members of the public on the importance of nutritional practices in human body for proper growth and development of the people, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), has organized a One--Day Workshop in Afikpo LGA of Ebonyi State with a call to always eat nutritional foods that will keep them well nourished and healthy.

The workshop which had the

presence of selected stakeholders from Edda and Afikpo took place at Afikpo Local Government Council Hall.

The Executive Chairman of Afikpo Local Government Area, Hon Uchenna Nnaji for Ibiem commended USAID for the proactive steps they have taken to deepen people's knowledge on the imperatives of good nutrition in the Body System assuring of his commitment in promoting strategies that would advance the welfare of his people

The council boss who was ably represented by his Vice, Hon

(Mrs) Josephine Chinwe Nwogo, urged the people of the two local government areas to embrace the habit of eating nutritional foods for quality growth and healthy living even as he called on relevant stakeholders to join hands to end malnutrition and undernutrition in the society.

Speaking, the State Coordinator of the Programme, Hon Uchenna Onwe disclosed that the essence of the workshop is to broaden the knowledge base of members of the public on the importance of nutrition to the body, adding that lack of proper information on

nutritional practices has devastating effects on the growth of the people both physically, mentally and otherwise.

He explained that the programme is in line with the directives of the Federal Government that every local government area must have a committee on food and nutrition to be headed by vice chairmen of the councils, while LGA desk officer of the programme will serve as the secretary.

He therefore, charged members of the committee in Afikpo and Edda local government areas to be proactive in the discharge of

their duties.

Responding on behalf of the members of the food and nutrition committee, its chairman for Afikpo Local Government Area who is also the vice chairman of the council, Hon (Mrs) Josephine Chinwe Nwogo thanked USAID for finding them worthy to serve in such sensitive committee and assured of their preparedness to justify the huge confidence reposed on them.

The workshop which ended on a very happy note, had in attendance the principal officers of the council and traditional

Uba Sani Pledges Logistics Support To Security Agencies

By; **FUNMI ADERINTO, Kaduna**

Governor of Kaduna State, Senator Uba Sani, on Wednesday, pledged commitment to providing logistics support to security agencies in order to enable them carry out their duties effectively. He made this known during his maiden State Security Council Meeting with heads of the relevant security agencies comprising Nigerian Army, Nigeria Police Force, Nigerian Air Force, Department of State Services, Nigerian Navy School of Armament Technology and Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps held at Sir Kashimu Ibrahim in Kaduna.

According to a statement by the Chief Press Secretary to the Governor, Muhammad Shehu Molash, "the meeting was convened to get up to date overview of the security situation in the state for the purpose of addressing some perceived security challenges arising from pockets of banditry activities, kidnapping and communal dispute relating to lands and farms in Zangon Kataf Local Government Area.

"As well as recurring cases of phone snatching along Kawo bridge axis, gang fight (sara suka) and of recent, the looming threat of fuel shortages due to subsidy removal on premium motor spirit and the prolonged

power outage in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria".

The governor expressed concerns and reiterated the fact that safety and security is a major priority of his administration's seven-point agenda.

He pledged commitment to providing logistics support to security agencies in order to enable them carry out their duties effectively.

He urged Heads of Security Agencies to facilitate and or organize an all - inclusive SECURITY SUMMIT with a view to promoting community engagement and creation of public enlightenment on public safety and security.

The Heads of Security Agencies

assured the governor of their total commitment to the restoration of peace in troubled areas, particularly the 8 frontline Local Government Areas and beyond, while sustaining deployments across the state.

They informed the governor of the robust synergy that exists among the security agencies in the areas of intelligence gathering and operations.

The Security Council Meeting resolved as follows:

(a) To use the Mandate Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) to intensify citizens engagement so as to sensitize the public on the fuel subsidy removal.

(b) Government to engage the labour unions like NLC, TUC,

PENGASSAN, IPMAN and Tanker Drivers on the fuel subsidy removal.

(c) The State Government to mediate and bring about amicable resolution of the lingering power issue between Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and KEDCO to ensure peaceful and conducive learning environment.

The governor thanked the Heads of Security Agencies for the hitchfree inauguration ceremony and state dinner.

He expressed appreciation for the support and cooperation accorded his administration thus far and urged them to intensify efforts towards ensuring lasting peace in the state.



Jigawa Governor Would Actualize Good Governance - Optimistic

By; JABIRU A. HASSAN, Dutse

Youth in Jigawa State would support the administration of Malam Umar Namadi for the successful implementation of its excellent policies of development.

This was expressed by Malam Basiru Optimistic Kafin Hausa in an interaction with New Nigerian in Dutse, shortly after the inauguration of the new governor.

He assured that youth remained the backbone of development at all levels and would contribute their quota.

He was optimistic that Jigawa State would become an exemplary home under Malam Umar Namadi, because he is a leader who understands most of the issues that

retard the progress of the state as a result of his general knowledge about the problems affecting every sector.

"I am optimistic that our governor would work selflessly towards the rapid development of Jigawa State and we would contribute immensely for the successful implementation of his policies that are meant for socio-economic growth for better livelihood at both rural and urban settlements," he stressed. Basiru Optimistic commended the people of Jigawa State for voting Malam Umar Namadi for real continuity that would certainly facilitate progress, and used the opportunity to congratulate all those who contributed to actualize APC's victory in the state and national level.



Jigawa Governor, Namadi

We Back President Tinubu, NNPC On Fuel Subsidy Removal - CGGED

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Coalition for Good Governance and Economic Development (CGGED) has said that as a group of concerned Nigerians fuel subsidy should be removed to allow the market forces of demand and supply to determine pump price of petroleum henceforth. This was contained in a statement signed by the National Coordinator, Coalition for Good Governance and Economic Development, Comrade Usman Abdulkadir, made available to our correspondent.

"Our decision to support the removal of fuel subsidy is because, we discovered from our findings that advantages of removing the fuel subsidy far outweighs the disadvantages business and economic development.

"We have also discovered that failure on side of previous administration to take decisive steps to stop importation of Premium Motor Spirit (PMS) and outright removal of subsidy is highly responsible for recurring scarcity and fuel queues at our filling stations across the country," the group said.

They stated categorically that with dwindling economy and paucity of funds to run government, Nigeria cannot afford to

continue to pay 1.2 trillion Naira monthly as fuel subsidy, arguing that opening the market and removal of subsidy will help save money that would be used for sustainable development and quality service delivery.

"It is on this note that we are backing the pronouncement made by President Bola Ahmed Tinubu and the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited (NNPC) on the removal of fuel subsidy.

"It is no longer news that Nigerians woke up watch and listen to shocking pronouncement by the President, in his inaugural address on Monday May 29, 2023, where he openly declared an end to the era of subsidy payment, saying the 2023 budget made no provision for fuel

subsidy, so further payment was no longer justifiable.

"If there is provisions made for fuel subsidy in the budget, how do we expect the current administration to pay for what is not appropriated for? Any attempt to pay for subsidy now, will surely amount to breach law. Moreso, that government can't withdraw money illegally to pay subsidy," they pointed out.

They said that they understand why the management of Engineer Mele Kyari led NNPC during an emergency press conference held at the NNPC Towers, Abuja, told Nigerians that the move was in the best interest of the company.

"The Chief Executive Officer of the NNPC revealed that the company has been spending a substantial amount of its profits in the subsidy of the product.

"It is against this background that we insist on removal of subsidy and the money used to pay subsidy in the past be used for development of agricultural and industrial Sectors.

"We strongly believe that doing so will lead to high production of food and raw materials for industries as well as employment generation," they submitted.



President Tinubu

FIRS: Nigeria's Tax-To-GDP Ratio, 10.86% As At 2021

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Nigeria's Tax-to-GDP ratio which, in the last 12 years, hovered between 5% to 6% rose to 10.86% by the end of 2021.

The new ratio was communicated to the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), via a letter signed by the Statistician-General of the Federation, Prince Adeyemi Adeniran, on the 25th of May 2023, following a joint review by the Nigerian Bureau of Statistics (NBS), in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Finance and the FIRS, using data from 2010 to 2021.

This was contained in a statement signed by the Special Assistant to the Executive Chairman, FIRS (Media & Communication), Johannes Oluwatobi Wojuola, dated Wednesday May 31, 2023.

The revision took into account revenue items hitherto not previously included in the computations; particularly, relevant revenue collected by other agencies of government.

Tax-to-GDP ratio is a measure of a nation's tax revenue relative to the size of her economy as measured by Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The ratio is a useful tool for assessing the "health" of a country's tax system, and highlighting its tax potentials relative to the size of the economy. It is the ultimate measure of the effectiveness of a nation's tax system compared to other countries.

In a statement announcing the new Tax-to-GDP ratio, the Executive Chairman of FIRS, Mr. Muhammad Nami, explained that sources which previously put the country's Tax-to-GDP ratio at between 5% and 6% did not consider tax revenue accruing to other government agencies in their computation. Particularly, revenues collected by agencies other than the FIRS, Customs and States Internal Revenue Service were excluded. This situation was peculiar to Nigeria as most other countries operate harmonised tax system (all or most tax revenues are collected by one agency of

government) with single-point tax revenue reporting. As such, all relevant tax revenues are included in the computation of the Tax-to-GDP ratio.

"In order to correctly state the Tax-to-GDP ratio, the FIRS initiated a review and re-computation of the ratio for 2010 to 2021. In recomputing the ratio, key indicators that were previously left out were taken into account. This resulted into a revised Tax-to-GDP ratio of 10.86% for 2021 as against 6% hitherto reported," the statement noted.

Mr. Nami further noted that Nigeria's Tax-to-GDP ratio should ordinarily be higher than 10.86% but for certain economic and fiscal policy factors, including tax waivers and leakages occasioned by the country's fragmented tax system.

"It is important to note that the Tax-to-GDP ratio for Nigeria should be higher, but for the impact of tax waivers contained in our various tax laws (including exemptions to Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises brought-in by Finance Act, 2019), low tax morale, leakages occasioned by the country's fragmented tax system and the impact of the rebasing of the GDP in 2014", he explained.

The FIRS boss implored the government to consider reviewing its policies on tax waivers thereby guarantying increased revenue to prosecute its programmes and positively move the needle of the country's tax-to-GDP ratio.

The Statistician-General of the Federation, Prince Adeyemi Adeniran, in his letter to the Executive Chairman of FIRS, described the revision as a facelift to the Tax-to-GDP ratio for Nigeria in comparison with other countries.

He further noted that the NBS had "carefully and diligently reviewed the methodology used for computing the revised estimates, as well as the various items that have been included in the new computation," and that the NBS as an outcome of its review and meetings with FIRS has adopted the new Tax-to-GDP computation.

Inauguration: Igoche Mark Congratulates President Tinubu

**Showers Econiums on Ugboaja for Bagging National Honour*



Ejike Ugboaja

By; AMOS MATHEW, Kaduna

The Initiator of Mark D Ball Basketball Competition, Mr. Igoche Mark has congratulated the new President of Africa's largest democracy, Nigeria's leader, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu GCFR.

The Sports Administrator also paid glowing tributes to a former Nigerian Basketball Player, Ejike Ugboaja on his conferment of national honour, Member of the Federal Republic (MFR) by former President Muhammadu Buhari.

Mark in a congratulatory message he personally signed on Wednesday, praised President Tinubu's blueprint, which he described as a "game changer" for sports transformation in the country.

The message reads, "Dear Mr. President, I have gone through your manifesto titled "Renewed Hope 2023," your plan for sports development was weaved around training, athletes funding, sports as business and tool for national unity.

"This to me is highly commendable, because if properly implemented, it will be a Game

Changer. The sports ecosystem has the capacity to improve the country's GDP if things are done properly; this is when the right people are in charge of running sports, unlike the present situation.

It is worthy of note to state that the issue of corruption, greed and selfishness by sports administrators have crippled the sector. While we pledge our support to be a partner in progress, we pray for wisdom to achieve all set goals." Mark's message reads.

The basketball philanthropist was full of praise for his former player at Mark Mentors, Ejike Ugboaja MFR for receiving a national, according to Mark.

"You have become a standard for every aspiring domestic basketball player who desires to play at the biggest stage. From playing in our domestic league to Cleveland Cavaliers in the NBA; and your exploits at the national level were never unnoticed," Mark stated.

The former power forward was drafted to the NBA in 2006, and became a board member of the Nigeria Basketball Federation NBBF, between 2017-2021.

Be Ruthless In Dealing With Corruption, Group Tells Tinubu

**Dares Matawalle to provide evidence of corruption against EFCC boss or face law suit*

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

If President Bola Ahmed Tinubu is to succeed, he must take a decisive step in dealing ruthlessly with corruption irrespective of religious, tribe or political affiliation.

A group, The Corruption Trackers' Initiative gave the advise at a press briefing in Kaduna on Wednesday May 31, 2023.

"We are calling on the president, His Excellency Bola Ahmed Tinubu to be so decisive and ruthless on the issue of corruption if he wants to succeed, the president must not allow anybody irrespective of political affiliation, tribe or religion escape punishment if found culpable in any corruption case," the group said.

Reading the text of the briefing, Executive Director the Corruption Trackers' Initiative (TCTI), Hamza Abidin said that the president should reenergize the anti-corruption agencies and their affiliates to do their work effectively. Speaking further, they challenged former Governor of Zamfara State, Bello Matawalle to make public his evidence of allegation of extortion against the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Chairman or be ready to meet them

in court.

"Nobody should be above the law, but blackmail and propaganda should not be tolerated. the corruption trackers' have commenced the mobilization of at least one hundred thousand (100,000) state volunteers to gear up for the new task of NO ESCAPE ROUTE FOR LOOTERS.

"They are expected to monitor and report activities of suspected corrupt public officials and prepare public protest where necessary," they revealed.

According to the text of the press conference titled, "No Escape Route For Looters" they insisted that corrupt public office holders must account for their stewardship after May 29.

"This press conference is to inform the public on our activities, finding and positions on various ministries, departments, agencies, and parastatals in Nigeria based on available man power, resources and expertise.

"It has been a very difficult task but we are happy that our activities will seriously assist constituted authority in bringing public fund looters to book," the group assured.

They said so far, they were able to track over 17 government agencies

and parastatals in the area of corruption, accountability, value for money, prudence and transparency.

"Some of this organisations were able to prove a good record of accountability, transparency and good governance, while some stink in corruption and bad leadership.

"Our findings some agencies, ministries and parastatals engage in last minute recruitments, procurement, contract awarding, auctioning etc.

"Some of them never follow due process and most of the activities are enmeshed in large scale corruption, secrecy and lack decorum for good governance. some politically expose person are already in high level arrangement to leave the country so as to escape been investigated and possible prosecution," the group said.

They averred that some corrupt public officials are already forming groups which they intend to use in blackmailing some of the constituted authorities like EFCC, ICPC etc. to forestall any investigation about their stewardship.

"We shall be submitting our findings and report to constituted authority for further investigation and possible prosecution," they assured.



Kano State Governor Announces New Appointments

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The Executive Governor of Kano State His Excellency Alhaji Abba Kabir Yusuf has approved five additional appointments into various positions.

This was disclosed in a statement signed by his Chief Press Secretary, Sanusi Bature Dawakin Tofa, made available to

newsmen on Wednesday.

According to the statement, those appointed are; Engr. Garba Ahmed Bichi as Managing Director, Kano State Water Board, Dr. Rahila Mukhtar, Executive Secretary, Kano State Healthcare Contributory Management Agency (KCHMA) and Hassan Baba Danbaffa as the Managing Director, Kano State Road Maintenance

Agency (KARMA).

Others are, Arc. Ibrahim Yakubu Managing Director, Kano State Urban Planning and Development Authority (KNUPDA) and Abdulkadir Abdussalam Accountant General of Kano State.

"The swearing-in ceremony of the appointees would be announced soon to enable them assume the new responsibilities immediately," it informed.

CHANGE OF NAME

ABBAS - I, formerly known and addressed as Miss Ibrahim Salima Abbas, now wish to be known, called and addressed as Mrs. IBRAHIM SALIMA MUSTAPHA. All former documents remain valid. NYSC, Authorities concerned and General public should please take note.

Zulum Starts 2nd term with 25th Mega School In Gamboru

By; SADIQ ABUBAKAR, Maiduguri

As his first field activity since he was sworn-in for second term, Borno State Governor, Professor Babagana Umara Zulum, on Wednesday, laid foundation for the construction of a mega-size secondary school sited in Gamboru ward of Maiduguri Metropolitan Council. The project will be the 25th

Mega-size school built by Zulum's administration since May 29, 2019. The Zulum's administration had during its first term, constructed 24 mega-schools sited across the state with some of them dedicated to technical education. The administration also rehabilitated over 108 existing primary and secondary schools across the state with about 1,000 classrooms also built.

The governor was at Gamboru for the foundation laying of the 25th mega school which will have 30 classrooms, targeting 900 students during school session. A brief ceremony was held for the foundation laying. Borno's Acting Head of Service, Barrister Malum Fannami, Permanent Secretaries, and other government officials were in attendance.

Addressing residents, Zulum explained that the school is to provide immediate enrollment access to children hitherto walking long distances to attend secondary schools. The governor urged residents to ensure maximum utilization of the project when completed. "This edifice is a fulfillment of a promise I made to the people of this community. Please ensure that your children are enrolled in

this school by the time we complete it", Zulum urged. The governor further said that with government's plan to introduce afternoon school system, the new Mega school can accommodate 60 students per class, which means 30 students per class in the morning and another 30 by afternoon, and that will lead to 1,800 students for combine sessions.



AYRION Drags Dana Air To Court Over Missing Flight

**Demands N50m damages*

By: BAYOAKAMO, Ibadan

The All Youths Re-Oriented Initiative Of Nigeria (AYRION) has instituted a legal action against Dana Air over the failure of the airline company to airlift members of the group from Abuja to Lagos on April 28th, 2023 during which the President of the group and others missed "very important business appointment".

In the legal action, on behalf of the AYRION, its President and the governorship candidate of the New Nigeria People's Party (NNPP) in Ogun State, Ambassador Olufemi Ajadi Oguntoyinbo is demanding N50 million damages from the airline.

According to the general writ summons filed in the Federal High Court of Nigeria in the Abeokuta Judicial Division sitting in Abeokuta in the suit No: FHC/AB/CS/33/23, AYRION, stated "You are hereby commanded that within thirty days after the service of this writ on you, inclusive of the day of such, you do cause an appearance to be entered for you in this action at the said suit of the Incorporated Trustees of All Youth Re-Oriented Initiative of Nigeria.

Ambassador Ajadi maintained in the writ "Take Notice that in default of your so doing, the claimant may proceed therein, and judgment may be given in your absence".

Ambassador in the writ is seeking



from Court, "A Declaration that the defendant breached the rights of all the passengers of the defendant including members of the Claimant that boarded her aircraft No. 9J 356 scheduled for nine (9:00pm) from Abuja to Lagos by not airlifting them as scheduled and delaying them to the extent that they without option passed a night and slept in a harsh and uncomfortable manner at the Nnamdi Azikiwe Airport boarding/waiting room without making any provision as to Hotel, water, food, soap and necessary toiletries.

"An Order that the delay in the flight and the non-provisions or making of any arrangement as to a place to sleep, what to sleep on

and other necessities like water, food, soap and toiletries amounts to negligence and gross misconduct on the part of the Defendant.

"An Order of this Honourable Court recommending necessary disciplinary action to be taking against the respondent to serve as a deterrence to other airline operators by the Nigeria Civil Aviation Authority

An Order of this Honourable Court for general and exemplary damages against the defendant. "That I know as a fact that this Honourable Court can recommend necessary disciplinary action to be taking against the respondent by the

Nigeria Civil Aviation Authority and other regulating authorities to serve as a deterrence to other airline operators".

New Nigerian recalled that Ajadi accused the Dana Air of failure to provide an aircraft to airlift him and other passengers from Abuja to Lagos, despite receiving payments for the service and reassuring passengers, adding that, "this act of negligence from Dana Air prevented him from attending business meeting in Abeokuta on the said night, which not only cost him a financial loss but also dented his integrity, "as someone who cannot keep his promise".

Kwara Gov
Salutes
Assembly
Speaker
Danladi-
Salihu
At 38



Kwara Assembly Speaker

By; BILIQIS
ONAOLOPO
OLAJUMOKE, Ilorin

Kwara State Governor and Chairman of Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF) AbdulRazaq has congratulated the House of Assembly Speaker, Rt. Hon. Yakubu Danladi-Saliu on his 38th birthday.

The governor commended Danladi-Saliu for his deft handling of the legislative business and all issues of public importance, saying his composure and commitment to public good have stood him out as an exceptional representative of his people.

"On behalf of my family and the government of Kwara State, I rejoice with Mr. Speaker and his family on his birthday. I pray Allah to grant him long life in good health to continue to serve God and humanity."



From left: Co-Founder/COO, Revocube Technologies, Funmi Olanrewaju; Managing Partner, People Capacity Management (PCM), Biola Ojo; Head, People and Culture, Patricia Technologies, Elizabeth Nyah; Partner, PCM, Modupe Olundegun; Regional Head of Brand and Reputation, Africa at Google, Mojolaoluwa Aderemi; and Founder of Diversity Talent Management Limited, Victor Adebayo; at the 5th corporate anniversary and launch of PCM Business Academy & Africa TechEnt 1.0, in Lagos. Photo: AKINOLAARIYO

FG Will Ensure All-round Development Of Oil-producing Communities In Nigeria - Regulatory Commission

By: BAYOAKAMO, Ibadan
The Head, Nigeria Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission (NUPRC), Warri Regional Office, Mr Olusegun Benjamin Ogunnubi, yesterday, said the Federal Government is ready to always ensure an all-round development of oil-producing host communities in the country as enshrined in the Petroleum Industry Act (PIA). Mr Ogunnubi who gave the assurance in a statement, noted that the Host Community Development Trust fund (HCDDT) created by the

Petroleum Industry Act, gave the Commission the statutory obligation of ensuring the settlers, fund for the concerned communities.

According to Head, Nigeria Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission (NUPRC), Warri Regional Office, "Through the Host Community Development Trust fund (HCDDT), Nigeria Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission (NUPRC), will continue to ensure compliance from the settlers as regards their statutory responsibilities towards the concerned

communities together in which 3% of their operating expenditure will be used to develop the communities".

The NUPRC Regional Head maintained that if the concerned communities could not form a Trust Fund, the bulk of the funds would be used to develop projects defined by the communities.

While lauding stakeholders and communities in the state for their cooperation with the commission, Mr Ogunnubi solicited for more support from the people of Ugborodo community and that the smooth-running of escravos

operations must be ensured.

The Olu of Warri, Ogiame Atuwatse while receiving the Head Warri Regional Office NUPRC and his team assured of his readiness to always rally round the leadership of the NUPRC as led by the Chief Commission Executive, Engr. Gbenga Komolafe.

The Olu of Warri while urging the leadership of NUPRC to see to the plight of the host communities called for transparency in their engagements with the people, stakeholders and the host communities, said he was optimistic that the NUPRC

Warri Regional Office would succeed in its assignment.

He then tasked the Commission to organize an enlarged parley of relevant stakeholders and the host communities for felt-needs assessment for the betterment of all.

Members of Ogunnubi's entourage include Dr David Michaels, Mr Tom Senibo, Head of Development, Dr Muhammed Iaminga, Head of Gas Production, Mr Nri Tobechi, Manager Environment and Community, Mrs Akpojishi Head of Public Affairs Unit amongst others.

Ondo Group Applauds Akeredolu For Expressing Neutrality In Assembly Speaker Tussle

By: ADEBOYE ADO, Akure

Residents in Ondo kingdom under the aegis of Ondo Residents Political Awareness Forum (ORPAF) on Tuesday commended Governor Rotimi Akeredolu for expressing neutrality in the choice of the Speaker of 10th Assembly of the Sunshine State.

The group's Coordinator, Engr. Felix Akinboboye thanked the governor who was represented by his deputy, Lucky Aiyedatiwa during the two-day induction programme organised in Owo for all the 26 lawmakers-elect of the 10th Assembly Ondo Assembly.

Akinboboye said that resolve of the governor to allow members of the Assembly to freely choose their own speaker in line with their standing rules was very much commendable. He also urged both the new and returning state legislators to do the right by electing Hon. Olamide Adesanmi Oladiji (Landmark) as the next Speaker of the Assembly.

"We are glad that Governor Akeredolu has come out clean that he was not interested in imposing anyone as the Speaker of the 10th Ondo Assembly. This has further made the

coast a lot clearer for Hon. Landmark because he is obviously the most qualified and the choice of majority of the new and old members of the Assembly.

"We are most confident now that the likelihood of using Aketi's name to perpetrate illegally and to circumvent the standing rules of the Assembly would no longer arise. All we have been clamouring for all the while is to allow what is right, fair and just in the choice of next Speaker of the 10th Assembly.

Speaking further, Akinboboye described Hon. Landmark as a very competent, totally loyal and committed member of the APC. He also described the member representing Ondo East Constituency as a bridge builder and a highly experienced person in the business of law making.

"The individual we have been marketing all the while is not just the natural choice to become the next Speaker of Ondo Assembly; he obviously possesses all the attributes to become first amongst the equals in Ondo Assembly. He is known to

be a very successful Ondo Central. Nobody



businessman before he ventured into partisan politics". Meanwhile, Akinboboye also further stressed the need for the choice of Hon. Landmark, who is from Ondo Central to become the next Assembly Speaker in the overall interests of inclusiveness, fairness and equity.

"We will continue to underscore the obvious that our amiable Governor Akeredolu is from Ondo North Senatorial District while the hardworking Deputy Governor, Lucky Aiyedatiwa is from Ondo South. It is only fair and just for the Speaker of the Assembly to come from

should try to package an albino as a white man for us. Hon. Landmark is the only ranking member from Ondo Central and he is arguably the most competent ranking member in the Assembly.

"Our appeal once again is to all members of the Assembly to do what is right so as to be on a good side of posterity. We passionately appeal to the legislators not to rock the boat of Ondo Legislative Assembly by doing what is unbecoming. The lawmakers should endeavour to write their names in the golden sand of time by choosing Hon. Landmark Oladiji as the Speaker of the 10th

10th Assembly: Arewa Youth Urge APC To Enthroned Discipline

By: AMOS TAUNA, Kaduna

A group, The Arewa Young Professionals in Politics has said that the decision of the All Progressives Congress (APC) concerning principal officers of the the 10th Assembly must be used as a litmus test to enthrone discipline in the party.

The convener of the group, Malam Yusuf Idris Amoke, in a statement in Kaduna yesterday, said, "Any member who sees his or her self above the party must be identified and made to serve appropriate punishment to serve as deterrent to others who may be intending to go against the party in whatever capacity."

According to him, it is high time the party takes strict stands to ensure that its resolves are respected by all its members, stressing that members must understand that the party is supreme and should not select the which of its resolve to respect.

He called on the party to take disciplinary action against Mukhtar Aliyu Betera and his co-travellers, saying that his refusal to comply with the party's decision warrants expulsion.

The convener explained

that the emergence of individuals reminiscent of Sarakis and Dogaras who previously challenged the party's authority, saying that if Mukhtar Aliyu Betera persists in defying the party's position, he will be deemed a saboteur and face appropriate consequences.

The Arewa Young Professionals in Politics, he said, wishes to express gratitude to the leadership of the All Progressives Congress (APC) for addressing one of the two requests they presented regarding the zoning of the leadership of the National Assembly, pointing out that on April 6, 2023, the group held a press conference and called on the APC National Headquarters and the President-Elect to consider zoning the Senate President position to the South East and the Speaker of the National Assembly position to the North West. He said that in their wisdom and generosity, the party declined their request for a South East Senate President, but granted their request for the speakership to be zoned to the North West, designating Hon. Tajudeen Abbas from Kaduna State as their preferred candidate.

Former UCCDA Boss, Prince Enobong Uwah Becomes New SSG In Akwa Ibom



Prince Enobong Uwah, Akwa Ibom New SSG

By; PATRICK TITUS, Uyo

The newly appointed Secretary to Akwa Ibom State Government (SSG), Prince Enobong Uwah has been sworn into office by the State Governor, Pastor Umo Eno to succeed Dr. Emmanuel Ekwem.

Prince Uwah made the list of the first five appointments in Pastor Umo Eno's new administration, who was sworn in on Monday as the Executive Governor of the state.

Performing the ceremony at the Banquet Hall, Government House, Uyo on Wednesday, Governor Eno charged the new SSG to see his appointment as a call to service for the advancement of development in the state as the administration set out to usher in a new era of peace and stability.

The new SSG, Prince Enobong Uwah, was until his appointment, the Executive Chairman of Uyo Capital City Development Authority (UCCDA).

He is a consummate public servant with deep administrative and organizational proficiencies.

Before his new appointment, Prince Uwah served the state as a Commissioner for

Environment and Mineral Resources, Commissioner, Housing and Urban Renewal, Secretary General of the Divine Mandate, 2019, Secretary General, Maintain Peace Movement (MPM), and recently, Secretary General, Umo Eno/Akon Eyakenyi Campaign Organization.

The new SSG holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Geography and Regional Planning from the University of Cross River State, now University of Uyo and a Masters in Public Administration, also from the University of Uyo.

The 54 years old Atan Offot, Uyo-born politician is a Paul Harris Fellow of the Rotary International, a devout Christian, an avid golfer and a philanthropist. He is married to Mrs. Inemesit Uwah and is blessed with children.

New Nigerian learnt that, others who made the list of the Governor Umo Eno's first appointment include, Mr. Ekerette Udo who maintained his former position as Chief Press Secretary to the Governor, Mr Anietie Usen - Senior Special Assistant on Media and Publicity, Mr. Otobong Edem Inung - Chief Protocols, and Dr (Mrs.) Uduakobong Inam - Economic Adviser.

Lagos NUJ Congratulates Sanwo-Olu, Hamzat Over Successful Swearing-in

By; AYO OJEDOKUN, Lagos

The Lagos Council of the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) has congratulated Governor Babajide Olusola Sanwo-Olu and his deputy, Dr. Obafemi Kadri Hamzat on their successful inauguration for a second term in office.

A statement issued by the council, signed by its chairman, Comrade

Adeleye Ajayi, believes that Governor Sanwo-Olu will build on his numerous achievements in the first term, especially in the areas of infrastructure, education, health, transportation, roads, agriculture and youth empowerment (job creation), to mention a few.

"There is also the renewed hope by the people of Lagos State of enhanced socio-economic

development.

"As we are optimistic of a very bright future for all residents of Lagos State.

"We are also optimistic that the relationship between the media and the state government will wax stronger in the present dispensation for effective dissemination of policies and programmes of the government.

"The governor should also give priority attention in appointing more journalists into some key

positions in the state government.

"Be assured of the firm support and collaboration of the NUJ Lagos Council in dissemination of information concerning activities, programmes, projects and policies of your administration.

"We wish you and your deputy God's protection and divine wisdom to excel more than you did in the first term," the statement said.



Sanwo-Olu (left) with Hamzat

NCS Initiates Fast Track 2.0 For Rewarding Compliance

By; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

The Nigeria Customs Service (NCS), in collaboration with the World Bank under the Accelerating Revenue Mobilization Reforms Program (ARMOR), has initiated the modalities for migration from Fast Track Regime to Fast Track 2.0 (FT2.0).

The National Public Relations Officer, Nigeria

Customs Service (NCS) Abdullahi Wada, a Chief Superintendent of Customs (CSC) gave the hint in a statement in Wednesday.

According to the statement, "This system aims to reward compliance and facilitate trade by admitting traders based on their adherence to regulations and contribution to trade in Nigeria.

" By introducing Fast

Track 2.0, the Nigeria Customs Service aims to streamline trade processes, promote compliance, and create a more efficient and rewarding environment for traders.

" When fully operational, FT 2.0 is expected to encourage traders to comply with Customs regulations and rules. One of the main advantages is the potential for significant cost reductions

associated with cargo handling and demurrage at the ports.

" Traders who are interested in taking advantage of this facility can access more information and apply through the website www.fasttrack.nigeriatradehub.gov.ng. Existing traders who are currently using the old Fast Track system are advised to apply to the new Fast Track 2.0 (FT2.0)".

Delta Police Neutralises 2 Suspected Kidnappers, Rescues Victim, Recovers Firearms, Others

By ; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

The winning streak of Police in Delta State is swelling daily with the killing of two suspected kidnappers by police operatives in a fierce gun duel.

One AK 47 rifle, a pump action gun, 46 rounds of 7.62mm live ammunition and 13 rounds of live cartridges were reportedly recovered from the bandits.

Two victims earlier kidnapped by the gang and their car were also rescued and recovered by the operatives.

Our correspondent reliably gathered that the gang was engaged in a shoot out by operatives attached to Aladja Division, led by its DPO CSP Aliyu Shaba on 31st May 2023 along DSC/Effurun road, shortly after they kidnapped the couple.

The police public relations officer DSP Bright Edafe who made the disclosure in a release on Wednesday, said members of the gang on sighting the police, opened fire on the team in a bid to escape.

It reads, "Consequently, on 31/5/2023, at about 0120hrs, CSP Aliyu Shaba led operatives from Ovwian Aladja division

and embarked on a confidence building proactive patrol along DSC/Effurun road.

"During the patrol, the DPO received a distress call that a man and his wife (name withheld) were kidnapped and their lexus Jeep (registration number withheld) was taken also.

"The DPO swiftly trailed the escape route of the suspected kidnappers and eventually intercepted the vehicle along Warri-Sapele road by Aziza junction.

"On sighting the police, the suspects opened fire on the team in a bid to escape, and the police professionally responded, neutralizing two of the suspects in the process, while the other suspects abandoned the kidnapped couples in the vehicle and escaped. The victims were rescued unhurt.

"One AK47 rifle with breach number 16869, forty-six rounds of 7.62 live ammunition, one



The suspects

pump action gun, and thirteen live cartridges were recovered. Manhunt for the fleeing suspects is ongoing.

"The Commissioner of police, CP Wale Abass, while expressing satisfaction with the conduct of the successful operation, admonished other DPO's to sanitize their areas as well. He

noted that the command under his watch will force criminals to relocate or steer clear from crime.

"The CP also advised parents and community leaders to talk to their youths/wards not to take up arms in order to make a living because they will eventually meet a disastrous end".

IGP Usman Promotes 31,465 Sergeants, Corporals, Constables

By; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos.

No fewer than 31,465 policemen have been newly promoted by the Inspector General of Police, IGP Usman Alkali Baba as part of his manpower development policy, targeted at promoting deserving police officers on the basis of competence, qualification, and length of service.

The promotees comprise of 24,991 from Sergeants to Inspectors, 194 from Corporal to Sergeant, and 6,280 from Constable to Corporal.

The Force Public Relations Officer, CSP Olumuyiwa Adejobi made the disclosure in a release made available to journalists on Thursday. According to the statement, the IGP however charged the affected officers to add more pep in promoting the lofty principles and values of modern policing and discharge their duties as expected of them in line with the provisions of the extant laws.

Similarly, the IGP congratulated two Assistant Inspectors-General of Police on the conferment of national honours on them.

The very senior police officers include AIG Aishatu Abubakar, mni who was conferred with the award of Officer of the Order of the Niger (OON), and AIG Olofu Tony Adejoh, who was conferred with the individual award of National Productivity Order of Merit Award (NPOM) by the National Productivity Centre, Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment on the approval of the immediate past President and Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces.

The Inspector-General of Police



IGP Usman

charges the Senior Officers to bring their experience gathered over time and the well-deserved national recognition to bear in their national policing duties.

ANLCA Backs Hon Kalu As Deputy Reps Speaker

By ; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

The Association of Nigerian Licensed Customs Agents (ANLCA) has joined the league of individuals and group backing the nomination of Honourable Ben Kalu as Deputy Speaker designate of the House of Representatives in the 10th Assembly.

It would be recalled that the National Working Committee (NWC) of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in its zoning formula, had picked Hon Ben Kalu, representing (Bende, Abia) Federal Constituency as its choice candidate for the position.

ANLCA, in a statement by the SSA Media and Public Affairs to the National President Barr Val Iwuchukwu extoles the virtue of Hon Kalu, describing him as the best choice for the position.

While applauding the position of the ruling party, the Customs Licensed group said the experience acquired over time by the parliamentarian as ranking member, will serve as an advantage for him.

It added that his communication skills within the public and private sector acquired through years of experience in both sectors is an advantage to the value he will create as the Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives.

The statement reads, "It is a geometrical axiom to state that when one straight line falls perpendicular with another straight line that lies horizontal, the angles formed are supplementary angles of one hundred and eighty degrees, therefore the choice of Hon Ben Kalu as Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives is a round peg in a round hole.

"Benjamin Kalu was elected to represent the good people of Bende Federal Constituency, Abia State in the 2019 General Elections and sworn in to office on the 11th of June 2019. He was re-elected to the same office in the 2023 General Election.

"He is currently the Spokesperson of the House of Representatives at the Nigeria National Assembly as the House

Committee Chairman Media and Public Affairs. His wealth of experience has been resourceful to the major committees of the house where he serves as a member; Defence, Airforce, Navy, National Security and Intelligence, Agricultural Services, Health Institutions and Health Services, Basic Education, Federal Judiciary, Petroleum Upstream, Climate Change, Federal Charater, Pensions and other Adhoc committees like the Petroleum Industry Bill (PIB) etc.

"He sat in different stakeholders meeting where strategic decisions were taken, why such decisions were taken and its impact in the overall interest of the nation sank well with him and it has become unforgettable experience. It is trite to say that in the 9th Assembly, he acquired matchless experience which makes him the best man (from the South East) for the job.

"He is a Barrister and Solicitor of the Supreme Court of Nigeria who has been involved in series of complex international business structuring from start-up, negotiation, pre and post incorporation stages. He has been engaged in international trade, import and export financing. He has handled series of financing deals for marine vessels purchases and documentation which involved syndication with multilateral finance institutions and local banks. Before settling down for the practice of law, Benjamin has built international businesses from start-up to international recognition.

His communication skills within the public and private sector acquired through years of experience in both sectors is an advantage to the value he will create as the Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives. "His experience in government and governmental affairs will assist him in upholding the interdependence of the arms of the government while upholding most importantly the independence of the Legislature" the statement concluded.

How Uba Sani Emerged Vice Chair Of Progressives Governors Forum

By; FUNMI ADERINTO , Kaduna

Details have yesterday, been revealed, how Kaduna State Governor, Senator Uba Sani, who just started his first term, emerged as the Vice Chairman of the influential Progressive

Governor's Forum.

He emerged at a meeting of the Progressives Governors' Forum on Wednesday in Abuja.

However, according to him as our correspondent gathered yesterday, "I was unanimously picked as the Vice Chairman of the influential Forum by my dear

colleagues. The Governor of Imo State, H.E. Hope Uzodinma emerged the Chairman.

"We are grateful for this honour and will work assiduously to chart a policy direction for the forum.

He said he will ensure that it serves as an effective peer

review mechanism to fastrack progress and development of APC governed states.

"Shortly after our meeting, we had an interactive session with our party's National Chairman, H.E. Senator Abdullahi Adamu.

"We committed ourselves to the effective execution of the

policies and programmes of the APC and to work with the President Bola Ahmed Tinubuled Federal Government to accelerate the economic development of the country and address the challenges of poverty and insecurity.



Port Standing Task Team Educates Media Practitioners On Its Core Duties, Powers

By ; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

The Port Standing Task Team has let journalists into its core duties and powers, saying it has the power to arrest, prosecute and sanction agencies, private operators and individuals who fail to comply with the laid down rules and guidelines in the nation's ports.

The National Coordinator of the Team Mr. Moses Fadipe made the disclosure at the 2-Day Training Retreat organised by the Association of Maritime Journalists of Nigeria, AMJON at the Administrative Staff College of Nigeria (ASCON) in Topo, Badagry in Lagos, themed, "Enhancing Capacity/Efficiency in Modern News Reportage".

Presenting a paper titled, "Port Standing Task Team's Relationship with Government Agencies in Tackling Corruption at the Ports", Fadipe pointed out that the role of the Team is to improve transparency, enhance revenue generation, and tackle corruption, in order to encourage local businesses and foreign investments.

He pointed out that its role is to improve transparency, enhance revenue generation, and tackle corruption, in order to encourage local businesses and foreign investments.

His words: "The PSTT is responsible for the enforcement of the provisions of the Nigerian Port Process Manual (NPPM) which includes the implementation of the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for all port-related activities.

"The PSTT ensures that all government agencies and private sector operators comply with the NPPM, thereby improving the ease of doing business at the ports. The PSTT also carries out necessary anti-corruption

measures to dismantle traffic logjams fueling corruption within the port logistics rings at port Western and Eastern ports of the country.

On revenue generation, he stated categorically that revenue generation is not a primary objective of the PSTT and so the team cannot be said to be directly involved in revenue generation.

"However, the NPPM which the PSTT enforces seek to establish a business environment in the country that would lead to improved revenue generation at the ports.

"This is done by ways of plugging leakages to ensure all revenues generated from port operations are remitted to the appropriate government coffers. The PSTT's efforts are also aimed at encouraging foreign investors and local businesses to do business in Nigeria, as they are assured of a transparent and efficient port system".

The National Coordinator PSTT also highlighted that the objectives of the PSTT are already manifesting, adding that many industry stakeholders have attested to the reduction in the cost of doing business at the port as the team role and effort has helped to reduce delays and inefficiencies in the ports.

Others are the reduction of vessels turnaround time in the ports by streamlining processes and eliminating bottlenecks; reduced cargo dwell time; improved movement of haulage; reduction in unreceipted charges, and reduction in incidents of infractions.

"In the area of vessel clearance, the level of incidence of infractions where ship captains feel unfairly treated has reduced tremendously. This has been attributed to the PSTT's efforts in enforcing adherence to the provisions of the NPPM and



Mr. Fadipe

carrying out necessary anti-corruption measures.

Recalling past event and how PSTT has brought a change, Fadipe said, "In 2019, there were 266 incident reports with an average demurrage of \$20,000 per day. The PSTT was able to prevent unnecessary delays due to quick case resolutions. Case resolutions were down from 7-10 days in the past to 1-8 hours. This trajectory has continued to this day and the amount saved in daily demurrages could be estimated in billions of naira in addition to savings in other operational costs".

On the difference between PSTT and other Task Forces in the ports, he stated that the PSTT is made up of various government agencies and private sector operators, while others are usually established by a single government agency.

He explained further that the PSTT is solely responsible for the enforcement of the NPPM

and has a broader mandate.

"The PSTT operates on a more collaborative basis, with all members working together to achieve its goals in three broad phases. "Phase One: Monitoring of Joint Boarding Exercises and Rummaging.

"Phase Two: Monitoring of Joint Cargo Examination to ensure that goods are cleared in a timely and efficient manner. Phase Three: Dismantling of Illegal Checkpoints and Extortion Points at the Port Logistics Ring tagged "Operation Free the Port Corridor", he said.

The PSTT boss revealed that members are exposed to risks and dangers such as physical attacks, verbal abuse, and threats to their lives and families, as well as bribes while carrying out their duties.

To mitigate the risks, he said that the PSTT has put in place measures to protect its members by providing them with security personnel and protective gear, as well as ensuring that they are

adequately trained.

According to him, the management of the team also works consciously with limited resources to ensure that members are incentivised with tokens of allowances and other benefits.

Fadipe tasked AMJON members on accurate and objective reportage on the PSTT's operations to ensure that the public is well informed about the efforts of the team in tackling corruption at the ports.

While suggesting a collaboration between AMJON and the PSTT, he noted that the team will henceforth, update the association regularly on its activities, initiatives, challenges or successes to bridge the information gap.

"AMJON members are expected to adhere to ethical journalism standards and avoid sensationalism or biased reporting. Clear and informed reportage by AMJON members can contribute to building public trust in the PSTT and its efforts to improve transparency and efficiency in port operations.

"AMJON members can also provide feedback and suggestions on how the PSTT can improve its operations. This collaboration can lead to better-informed reportage by AMJON members and a stronger public understanding of the PSTT's efforts to tackle corruption at the ports", he added.

The PSTT was established in 2021 to monitor and enforce compliance with the provisions of the NPPM. It is made up of various government agencies, including the Nigerian Shippers Council (NSC), the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC), the Department of State Services (DSS), and the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA).

LASTMA Recovers Trapped Cart Pusher Under Fallen Container

By; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

Tragedy has occurred in Lagos as a container conveyed by a truck fell on a cart pusher, killing him instantly.

The fallen container was said to have been fully loaded with concrete stones when it fell on a cart pusher.

However, operatives of the Lagos State Traffic Management Authority (LASTMA) have recovered the corpse of the deceased.

The Director, Public Affairs and Enlightenment Department of the

Agency Aebayo Taofiq, who made the disclosure in a release said the incident occurred at Goye by UBA inward Dopemu area of Lagos.

It reads, "Lastma Badmus Abdul-Akeem 'Zebra' (zone 32 Dopemu Akowonjo) who led the rescue team disclosed that the fallen container truck fully loaded with concrete stones fell on a cart pusher who died instantly.

"Lastma Abdul-Akeem disclosed further that preliminary investigation revealed that the driver of the container lost full concentration while dragging road on top speed with another trailer

before fallen off the road blocking the entire brt corridor inward Dopemu.

"He confirmed that while the driver of the fallen truck ran away, Lastma Officials retrieved a photocopy of his driver's license at the accident scene.

"According to Zebra Abdul-Akeem "After noticing a trapped body underneath a fallen container, we called the LASEMA Response Unit (LRU) and Police men from Gowon Divisional Police Headquarters for immediate rescue operations and investigations.

"While LASEMA Response Unit (LRU) evacuated the fallen container off

the brt corridor, the recovered dead was handed over to members of the Hausa community around Dopemu area after they mobilized themselves to scene of the accident to with dangerous weapons.

"The General Manager of LASTMA Mr Bolaji Oreagba while consoling with the family of deceased urged truck drivers and other motoring public to always adhere strictly to safety standard while driving on highways across the State.

"He however maintained that speed limit road signs were erected to guide truck drivers and other motoring public on speed limitations across the State".

Lagos Gov Performs Ground Breaking Ceremony Of State's Infectious Disease Research Institute

By; MATTHEW UKACHUNWA, Lagos

Lagos State Governor, Mr. Babajide Sanwo-Olu on Friday, performed the ground breaking ceremony of the State's Infectious Disease Research Institute (IDRI).

The four-floor IDRI is located within the premises of the Mainland Hospital, Yaba.

The institute is being established to advance knowledge, research and evidence-based information on the identification, prevention, control and effective management of communicable and infectious diseases.

It will accommodate five major facilities including Research Laboratories, Genomics and Reference, Clinics; Teaching rooms, Administrative Offices and Conference Rooms.

Speaking at the event, Governor Sanwo-Olu explained that the proposed establishment and construction of the institute became necessary with the outbreak of Ebola within the Africa sub-region and the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic which ravaged the world.

He said: "It gives me great pleasure to be here to break the ground for commencement of the construction of the Lagos State Infectious Disease Research Institute (IDRI) at Mainland Hospital, Yaba which will further consolidates our administration's effort to the provision and development of healthcare infrastructure in the state.

"The construction of the proposed Infectious Disease

Research Institute became necessary in the year 2014 with the outbreak of the Ebola virus within this African sub region. The emergence of the global COVID-19 pandemic brought about the turnaround to actualize the dream of the institute".

Sanwo-Olu who was represented by the Commissioner for Transportation, Dr. Frederick Oladeinde noted that the development of the institute, which he termed a critical medical infrastructure, will go a long way in ensuring rapid response and diagnosis to emerging pathogens, especially at the beginning of an outbreak when quarantine, treatment, and other public health measures are most effective.

Underscoring the importance of research to prevention, control and effective management of disease outbreak, the Governor explained that academic research globally has impacted tremendously the provision of scientific and evidence based information and advice on the identification, control and outbreak management of communicable diseases in the 21st Century.

"The role being played by academic research in the improvement of healthcare delivery has necessitated the need for the state to integrate research centers and institutes into the Lagos State Health Master plan. It is hoped that this would facilitate continued learning, and promote national and international medical collaboration", He said.

Sanwo-Olu while noting that Lagos State has a research

agenda, explained that his administration has been doing a lot with regards to research on infectious diseases particularly outbreak response and intervention in dealing with pathogens of high consequence, biosecurity threats and pandemic. He noted that the IDRI will facilitate continued learning and promote national and international medical collaboration adding that

"It is popular knowledge that intervention driven by research should happen before the outbreak of infectious disease and not during an outbreak so as to have a clear research understanding and purposeful response and intervention strategies against any outbreak", the Governor said.

He said his administration will not rest on its oars and will continue to work tirelessly in ensuring that Lagos becomes a world class research center and a model of access to quality, efficient, equitable and sustainable health service in the world.

"This Institute will provide a platform for experts to review evidence-based information and advice on the identification, prevention, control and outbreak management of communicable diseases as well as providing feedback for addressing emerging issues of concern", he said.

Speaking in the same vein, the Permanent Secretary, Lagos State Ministry of Health, Dr. Olusegun Ogboye explained that the establishment IDRI is targeted at building the infectious disease research

capacity within the state in preparation for health emergencies that may occur in future by providing evidence based information on the identification and control of pathogens of high consequence. Dr Ogboye explained further that the proposed facility; a four floors building sitting on a total of 5,600sqm land space with each floor area being 1,400sqm in measurement, would have an array of services offered on its campus to facilitate learning and innovations.

He noted that the concept designs of the edifice will incorporate eco-friendly designs, with a heavy focus on biosecurity principles that will enable Lagos State to be fully equipped and increase its resilience at all levels to diminish the impact of future diseases that may emerge.

"What we are trying to do now is to stay ahead of the curve by developing this infection disease research institute so that we can be ready for the next agent that may come at any time. We are going to be building capacity of our laboratory workers and our medical practitioners in state so that whenever another epidemic comes we will be ready", He said Also speaking, the Medical Director, Mainland Hospital Yaba, Dr. Abimbola Bowale noted that the bedrock of any health system is research and innovation, adding that the IDRI which is solely dedicated to research will help the Lagos State health system prepare for outbreaks epidemics in the future.

"We have trained manpower and

infrastructure, and then, what we have done today is part of ensuring that we have robust infrastructure to be able to respond to outbreak" he said.

In her remarks, the General Manager, Lagos State Infrastructure Asset Management Agency (LASIAMA), Ms Adenike Adekanbi explained that LASIAMA has been at the forefront of medical and infectious disease infrastructure management since the beginning of the present administration.

She said the involvement of LASIAMA in the IDRI project is in continuation of the function of her agency to manage the State infrastructure assets, stressing that she and her team are excited to be part of the IDRI project.

In attendance at the event were; the Special Adviser to the Governor on Labour and Industrial Relations, Mr. Babatunde Williams; Some members of the Body of Permanent Secretaries; including Permanent Secretary, Public Service Office, Mrs Sukanmi Oyegbola; Permanent Secretary, Office of the State Auditor General, Mr. Adewuyi Adewale; Vice Chairman of the Governing Council on Biosecurity and Bio-Banking; Prof. Akin Osibogun and other members of the Council; the Onisabe of Igbobi-Sabe, HRM Oba Owolabi Adeyemi Adeniyi; Director, Health Care Planning Research and Statistics, Dr. Dayo Lajide; Members of the League of Medical Directors of State-owned Hospitals amongst others.

Fleeing Terrorists Encircle Brinin-Gwari, Allegedly Abduct Many

By; AMOSTAUNA, Kaduna

Locals in Brinin-Gwari town in Kaduna State have said that fleeing terrorists from neighbouring state, Zamfara encircled the town on Thursday night and abducted many residents of the community.

A source told New Nigerian that the sad event happened at Gobirawa area of Birnin-Gwari main town close to NTA Birnin-Gwari, saying that not more than 500 metres to the Air Force field base.

The Birnin-Gwari Local Government Council chairman, Abdullahi Ibrahim Muhammad Amir, has since issued a warning to the residents of the area to

restrict movement in the entire Birnin-Gwari Emirate.

In a widely publicised message, the council chairman warned that after a meeting with the Emirate Council and security agencies in the area, all movements whether on foot; bike or any kind of vehicle is not allowed from 8.30pm in the emirate.

Alhaji Zubair Abdurra'uf, the Danmasanin Birnin-Gwari and former Managing Director of the Kaduna State Media Corporation, told newsmen on Friday night, "when I said early this month that terrorists were closing in on Birnin-Gwari, many people did not believe me."

He explained that now the terrorists have the audacity to enter the main town of Birnin-Gwari and carry out their evil act, saying that he believes the government has been paying lip service to the issue of security in Birnin-Gwari.

He said that if the government is serious about insecurity, the government should come and have a kind of security summit in Birnin-Gwari, discuss issues and strategies, not for public consumption but to bring solutions to the security challenges in the area.

He lamented that at the moment, nobody can go to farm in Birnin-Gwari, particularly the central part, saying that

nobody has gone to either clear the farm or even to attempt to do the early planting because the terrorists have taken over most of the farmlands.

Zubair expressed hope that government would do something in these last few days, that would enable the people of Birnin-Gwari to conduct their activities peacefully.

He noted that the local government council has taken drastic measures in imposing a kind of curfew on Birnin-Gwari, hoping that the government would do everything possible to overcome the bad situation between now and Monday, when the incumbent administration would be handing over.

el-Rufai The Visionary: Tribute To An Epitome Of Courage And Character

By; ABDULHALEM ISHAQ RINGIM

The annals of Kaduna bear witness to its profound greatness and unparalleled influence in the political and economic history of Northern Nigeria and the nation as a whole. However, as we cast our gaze back in recent history up to the year 2014, just prior to Malam el-Rufai assuming office, uncertainty loomed large, and the future of the state appeared devoid of inspiration. This was the Kaduna that el-Rufai inherited.

Yet, unlike many of us who wavered in doubt, el-Rufai arrived with the mindset of a visionary, one who possesses an astute appreciation for Kaduna's rich historical tapestry and a vivid depiction of a future he meticulously painted into a clear vision.

The state found itself in the throes of crisis — a situation that may be likened to that which Winston Churchill described as when “the balance quivers, and the proportions are veiled in mist” — necessitating a departure from the stagnant waters of gradualism and managerial governance. It called for leadership of a transformative nature, steeped in vision and revolution. And in timely fashion, Malam el-Rufai answered the clarion call, assuming the role of Kaduna's modern-day builder.

Malam el-Rufai stands apart, distinguished by his unwavering loyalty to his values. As he embarked upon the daunting task of rebuilding Kaduna State and positioning it as a bastion of excellence and a beacon of subnational development, his most prominent attributes were his unparalleled courage and an indomitable character. His unwavering courage allowed him to navigate complex situations and make unconventional choices that defied the status quo.

While such choices, made within the confines of limited time, resources, and opposition, have often been labeled as anti-people and unpopular, they have consistently proven to be advantageous for the state's pursuit of economic viability, developmental transformation, and sustainability. These

decisions have frequently elicited populist political reactions which in most cases have invariably succumbed to the triumph of their outcomes.

Malam's courage finds reinforcement in the unparalleled strength and unwavering nature of his character that propel him to stand resolute in his decisions and policy stances, pursuing them to their very limits, even when the certainty of success remains uncertain during implementation. Unless a consensus of data and undeniable evidence disproves the viability and positive trajectory of such stances, driven by his unwavering values and intellectual acumen, Malam el-Rufai remains undeterred.

Rebuilding Kaduna State stands as his life's work, and in his pursuit, he kindled a self-sufficient legion of public servants. Drawn from the ranks of productive young individuals, women, and experienced technocrats, this formidable force was trained, supported, and shielded to deliver unparalleled public service to the people of Kaduna State. The dynamism and remarkable excellence displayed by this team, whose achievements remain unparalleled and record-breaking, are a testament to Malam's inherent leadership qualities and the vitality of his visionary and transformative inclinations.

As a parting gift, Malam bestowed upon us a successor whose hunger for success and the development of Kaduna State reverberates palpably. The assurance of a seamless transition was further solidified through recalibrating the state's political landscape, employing both strategy and force to conform to a stable political coalition that champions long-term development over short-term unsustainable gains, mitigating the risks of consistent and intermittent transitional crisis management.

As a result, Kaduna State has undergone a remarkable metamorphosis across various sectors over the past eight years. This comprehensive development drive encompassed legislative, policy, and institutional reforms, as well as

human capital development and social investment.

The primary objective of the Kaduna State Government (KDSG) under his watch was to establish a sustainable, diversified, and inclusive knowledge-based economy capable of independent reliance on internal revenue generation in the near future, ensuring development across all sectors.

To realize this visionary agenda, the state government aligned all interventions with a comprehensive development master plan, which was translated into periodic State Development Plans (SDP) that provided a robust framework for sustainable economic growth and social progress. The implementation of this development agenda has been methodical, with a steadfast focus on ensuring that the people of Kaduna are the ultimate beneficiaries.

The initial phase involved wide-ranging reforms, including amendments to legislations and policies, designed to facilitate holistic development and establish frameworks for the execution of the state government's transformative agenda. Subsequently, institutional and infrastructural reforms were set in motion, resulting in profound overhauls in the operations of government institutions. These reforms prioritized efficiency, accountability, and the establishment of world-class social enterprises, all while upholding the convenience of the populace and catering to the interests of businesses and investors.

As a result of these far-reaching reforms, Kaduna State has emerged as the premier destination for conducting business in Nigeria, attracting



substantial investments and elevating its global standing in terms of ease of doing business. The state's revitalized tax administration laws and the influx of investments have led to an unprecedented surge in Internally Generated Revenue (IGR), which is being efficiently channeled toward improving social welfare through infrastructural development, as well as investments in healthcare, education, and human capital development.

The influx of investments has created a multitude of job opportunities for skilled individuals and opened avenues for upskilling the previously unskilled population through knowledge transfer, skill development programs, and technology initiatives introduced by a diverse range of investors. Furthermore, the state government has implemented a robust social protection system that utilizes social policies to create a comprehensive database for the impoverished and vulnerable, ensuring access to essential social protection measures such as education, affordable healthcare, and income security. These concerted efforts aim to achieve financial inclusion, reduce economic inequality, and foster economic harmony within the state.

Now, as democracy dictates and

the transient nature of power demands, Malam el-Rufai must gracefully bow and step aside. Although it fills us with a sense of inexplicable sorrow to bid him farewell, we find solace in the fact that his legacies are firmly entrenched and self-sustaining. Moreover, he has bequeathed us with a successor in Malam Uba Sani, who harbors a palpable hunger for success and the continued development of Kaduna State.

May the divine guiding light of Allah forever illuminate Malam el-Rufai's path as he embarks on this new chapter. May he transcend boundaries and become a global exemplar of greatness and excellence, by the grace and will of Allah. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to him for his unwavering leadership, his visionary outlook, his extraordinary courage and character, his unwavering determination and sense of direction and personally, for giving me a mentor in Hafiz Bayero. Kaduna State stands transfigured, an embodiment of excellence and a formidable force to be reckoned with courtesy of Malam Nasir Ahmad el-Rufai.

Abdulhaleem Ishaq Ringim is a political and public affairs analyst. He writes from Zaria and can be reached via haleemabdul1999@gmail.com

Subsidy Is Gone: A Simple Explainer

By; ABDULHALEM ISHAQRINGIM

The enactment of the Petroleum Industry Act 2021 was intended to mark a significant shift in the regulation of the downstream petroleum sector. The act aimed to align petrol prices with market dynamics, phasing out the fuel subsidy regime. However, despite the planned full deregulation in February 2022, the government continued to allocate funds for subsidies, leading to financial strain and mounting debts.

Under the Petroleum Industry Act, the government ought to have terminated fuel subsidies and allow petrol prices to reflect the general market rates six months after its enactment. However, the government continued to provide for subsidy costs in its budget. Due to financial constraints, the government could not back the subsidy provisions in the 2022 and 2023 budgets with financing, resulting in unpaid subsidy costs. The Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited (NNPCL) acting as the supplier of last resort offset these costs. This resulted in the accumulation of a debt of N2.8 trillion for the government in the process.

The new President, Bola Ahmed Tinubu has pronounced the termination of the subsidy regime. This is in line with the law and is further necessitated by the inability to finance subsidy commitments since February 2022. The removal of subsidies means that petrol prices will now fluctuate based on market dynamics rather than being fixed.

While the arguments continue on whether the announcement approach was systematic or not, it has to a certain extent saved the country the intense speculative buying activities that would have resulted from scheduling the announcement and other implications that would have marred such gradualism. I consider it a welcome development and commend the President for such uncommon courage which has been missing in the governance space for long.

However, the repercussions extend beyond price

adjustments. The rise in price will naturally raise costs of transportation which will in turn further pressurize the country's inflation rate. The government's lack of resources to offset subsidy liabilities since February and the outstanding debt to NNPCL means there hardly will be any room for reinvestment including allocating funds for palliatives or post-subsidy shock alleviation. Moreover, it is crucial to note that even when the government was able to offset the subsidy costs, it relied on borrowing rather than revenue to cover the costs, exacerbating the financial burden.

With the subsidy officially and finally gone, the government must prioritize strategies to repay NNPCL's debt of N2.8 trillion and other subsidy related debts while refocusing on the productive sectors of the economy and social welfare. This commitment demands immediate attention, as the accumulated debt poses a significant liability and might impede effective utilization of government revenues.

An encouraging prospect arises from the current situation as we grapple with outstanding subsidy debts. Once the government's financial circumstances improve, its focus will permanently shift away from the subsidy regime and towards prioritizing crucial areas such as education, health, infrastructure, and other significant sectors. This shift is anticipated and underscores the government's intention to allocate resources towards enhancing public value and renewing national hope.

Meanwhile, the government should advisably prioritize the



Ringim

enhancement of public transport systems and collaborate with state governments to improve mass transit systems and infrastructure especially by incorporating more diesel-based buses to the stock of public transport vehicles in their various states. The situation should also serve as an incentive for state governments to renew focus on developing Bus and Light

Rail Transit systems.

To consolidate this hard decision, the government should consider the privatization of state-owned refineries to enhance efficiency and promote private sector participation in the downstream sector. By opening up the refineries to private investment, the government can improve their operational performance,

output and overall local refining capacity. As Dangote refinery gets ready to begin operations, the government should also support other private oil-refining projects like the BUA refinery in Akwa Ibom.

Additionally, the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited (NNPCL) should explore the possibility of an initial public offering (IPO) to raise capital and expand its operations. Emphasizing the development of the gas sector could also be beneficial, considering its potential for revenue generation and reducing dependency on imported fuels.

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“With the subsidy officially and finally gone, the government must prioritize strategies to repay NNPCL's debt of N2.8 trillion and other subsidy related debts while refocusing on the productive sectors of the economy and social welfare. This commitment demands immediate attention, as the accumulated debt poses a significant liability and might impede effective utilization of government revenues.”

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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
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6 COLUMNS

Depth	38.1 (CM)	Depth	-	15 (Inches)
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POLITICAL RATE

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

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PAGE 4 OR 5	375,000.00	28,125.00	403,125.00
PAGE 6 OR 7	325,000.00	24,375.00	349,375.00
FRONT PAGE MAST HEAD EAR PIECE	225,000.00	16,875.00	241,875.00
FRONT PAGE SOLUS	312,500.00	23,437.50	335,937.50
FRONT PAGE STRIP	375,000.00	28,125.00	403,125.00
BACK PAGE EAR PIECE	200,000.00	15,000.00	215,000.00
BACK PAGE STRIP	250,000.00	18,750.00	268,750.00
CENTRE SPREAD (COLOUR)	837,500.00	62,812.50	900,312.50
DOUBLE SPREAD (COLOUR)	700,000.00	52,500.00	752,500.00
CENTRE SPREAD (BLACK & WHITE)	575,000.00	43,125.00	618,125.00
DOUBLE SPREAD (BLACK & WHITE)	550,000.00	41,250.00	591,250.00
FRONT PAGE (10" X 6)	3,250,000.00	243,750.00	3,493,750.00
ROP STRIP (COLOUR)	125,000.00	9,375.00	134,375.00
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PROPERTY AND IT, VACANCY, AGRIC, AND EVENTS/EDUCATION RATE

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

The Road To Heaven May No Longer Be Narrow

BY OWEI LAKEMFA

As a child I was taught that the road to heaven is narrow. But that seems to be the teachings of the ancients; now across the world, shepherds are letting their flocks know that there are shortcuts, or even flights to heaven. Perhaps the old depended on stars to guide them on the road to heaven while the modern are using Google maps and satellite imaging.

The old idea that the road to heaven is narrow might have been reinforced by Matthew who advised: Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it (Matthew 7: 13-14). I know it immediately warned us to beware of false prophets, but who am I to judge?

The struggle to get to heaven has been quite intense so much that the old church in Rome used to sell pardons (Remission of sin) to the rich who want the Heavens to forgive and guarantee them a place. But these days, there are several ways to get directly to heaven. Some men of the world reasoned that when Adam and Eve were nude, they communed directly with the Lord. So they came to the conclusion that in this ostentatious world when fashion seems to rule worship centres, and bishops deck in heavy regalia, the best route to heaven is to worship in all nakedness. So nudity rules in their churches. In the White Tail Chapel, Ivor, Southampton, Virginia, everybody, including the pastor reading the passages, worship completely nude;

just the way they were born. Everyone coming to worship in the church must leave all their material possessions, including clothing, behind and worship only in truth and spirit. Wearing apparels in the church was optional until Sunday, August, 2015, when Pastor Allen Parker announced a complete ban. He explained this mode of worship: "When Jesus was born he was naked, when he was crucified he was naked and when he arose he left his clothes in the tomb and he was naked. If God made us that way, how can that be wrong? I consider this a gift and a privilege God has given me as our members are caring, understanding and they're community and family oriented. We have one of the most involved chapels any place around."

When a couple, Katie and Robert, tied the nuptial knots, they did so in complete nudity. So, there was no need for wedding gowns or dresses. That must have significantly reduced costs. Worshipping nude to get closer to the Lord on the way to heaven does not mean they will get to the promised land. But never mind, there are churches and shepherds who now, not only guarantee people going to heaven, but doing so without going by road which may still be narrow. So they sell flight tickets to heaven.

In Zimbabwe, Pastor Tito Watts and wife, Amanda who have been selling flight tickets to heaven for \$500 per person are not without customers. What is more: the ticket is inclusive of visa and a straight passage into heaven as it also grants immunity from prosecutions for sins committed on earth. When the police arrested



him, Pastor Watts explained that they had the wrong person as he was merely a salesman for Jesus. His followers believe him and stormed the police station demanding that their pastor be freed to continue his evangelical work.

While there are still debates whether the road to heaven is still narrow or has been widened, a shepherd, Pastor David F. Isanga of the Universal Apostle Fellowship Church of Righteousness, Kaliro, Eastern Uganda, assures his flock that they are already citizens of heaven. The pastor asked them to buy plots of land in heaven. He told his followers to sell all their properties, including houses, farms, livestock and lands, give him the money so he can allocate lands to them in heaven. He did not tell them the size of the lands, whether they are serviced plots and if they are upscale property. He also has not revealed how he became an estate agent in heaven and whether he receives commission.

In all the talk about heaven being the final destination of the faithful, people do not appear to want to die. Joe

Louis quotation: "Everybody wants to go to heaven, but nobody wants to die", became so famous that it featured in many songs. I also used to think that anyone who goes to heaven never returns. That was until South African Pastor Paseka Motsoeneng, alias "Prophet Mboro", announced he not only had been on a trip to heaven and returned, but also took photographs using his smartphone! Since he did not say he met people or angels during his trip, he must have taken selfies.

The story did not end there: Mboro is charging those who want to view his heavenly photographs 5,000 rand (\$340) each. In all these cases, people negotiate the road to heaven, or like Mboro, go on tourist tours where they take photographs. But Nigerian Pastor Noah Ade Abraham, actually knows where heaven is and charges a ticket fee of N310,000 per entrant. In his well organised three-stage movement to heaven, he established his operational base in Kaduna, a transit camp in Kabba, Kogi State and a departure camp which he calls the Christ High Commission, in Araromi-

Ugbesi, Omuo-Oke, Ekiti East Local Government Area of Ekiti State. At the departure camp were 40 persons who had met the financial requirements and were waiting for Jesus to descend and meet them.

However, this is not expected to be a trip as the kingdom will descend on the transit camp and it will be transformed into heaven. So like the Jehovah Witnesses preach, heaven is not where you will ascend to or go on a trip through some narrow road or land on an airport; heaven is right here on earth.

Meanwhile, Pastor Abraham is yoked with earthly matters as the police charged him for allegedly obtaining money "by false pretence and intent to defraud" by claiming he is capable of taking his followers to heaven. But how can ordinary mortals prove that the pastor is lying? It is like the story of a pastor who asked his followers to fast to death in order to go straight to heaven. When charged for making false claims that he is Jesus, he said if the prosecutor doubted him, it should produce the real Jesus.

The basic lesson in all these is that nobody should allow another human being to control his mind.

Argentina 2023: How Nigeria, Mohammed, Haliru Sarki goals Sent Hosts Argentina Out Of World Cup With 2-0 Win



By: **AYO OJEDOKUN, Lagos**

Nigeria eliminated host nation Argentina as goals from Ibrahim Muhammad and Rilwanu Haliru Sarki sent the six-time champions out of the FIFA U-20 World Cup at the Round of 16 on Wednesday.

On an incredible night in western Argentina, the Flying Eagles pulled out every trick in the books to defend in numbers and then score two goals on quick counter-attacks that had the Albiceleste Sub-20, who had won all their three matches in the group phase, flummoxed and dumbstruck as they crashed out of the tournament.

Head Coach Ladan Bosso had promised that his boys would give as much as they got, and they did that and more with clear intent from the 9th minute when a

snapshot by Ibrahim Muhammad on the edge of the box went narrowly off.

There were even exchanges afterwards and the Argies came close with a header in the 39th minute, but the Flying Eagles returned with more stamina and guile in the second half and completely gobsmacked the hosts in front of nearly 30,000 fans in San Juan.

Goalkeeper Chijioke Aniagboso had saved from Barco in the 51st minute and Jude Sunday's shot was held by the opposition goalie, before the two-time silver medallists struck the underside of the bar with an intelligent shot from the edge of the box by Tochukwu Nnadi in the 58th minute.

The hosts escaped there, but would not be that lucky three minutes later, when from a long Aniagboso ball out, substitute

Emmanuel Umeh found an onrushing Muhammad who stretched beyond the attention of two defenders and slotted beyond the advancing goalkeeper into the net.

Two minutes later, Umeh could have turned goalscorer when he ran powerfully down the left and planted himself in a good position, but dragged his shot a little too wide.

Carboni saw his shot held by the calm and collected Aniagboso and then headed wide, before Umeh again came close only to be foiled with the goalkeeper beaten.

The nifty Romero hit the upright with a deceptive shot in the 83rd minute, and Abel Ogwuche cleared the ball as two Argies were set to pull the trigger in the 85th minute with things becoming really anxious.

Javier Mascherano's boys poured forward in search of the equalizer, and were then open to a sucker punch. AC Milan of Italy's Victor Eletu showed tenacity and grits to hold on to another long Aniagboso ball out of defence, and then lifted for Haliru Sarki to nod into the net with aplomb for Nigeria's second with one minute into added time.

The victory somewhat atoned for Argentina's 2-1 defeat of Nigeria in the final of the 2005 edition of the competition in The Netherlands, when Lionel Messi scored twice from the penalty spot to deny the African champions.

Victory took the Flying Eagles to the quarter-finals, where they meet the winner of the Ecuador/South Korea Round of 16 duel.

205 Young Volleyball Players Jostle For 50 Slots In Nigeria's U-17 Volleyball Teams

*Sweat it out at Kaduna 3-day open camp

By: JACOB ONJEWU
DICKSON

A total of 205 young volleyball stars from all over Nigeria are at the Ahmadu Bello Stadium Kaduna on a three days trial, jostling to be called to the national U-17 team. When sports writers visited the camp yesterday, Technical Director of the Nigeria Volleyball Federation (NVBF), Mr. Martins Melandi, disclosed that they were there for U-17 Boys and Girls Open Camp to showcase their talents. "As they are playing, the coaches are doing selection for potential national team call up," he added.

According to him, CAVB gave Nigeria hosting rights of U-17 competition and it was initially billed for June, but has been

shifted to September, hence they are scouting for fresh players that would make Nigeria proud.

"As at yesterday, we had 145 boys and 60 girls. We have done screening to screen out over aged players and those their heights are not okay. We are doing second screening to see them play," he said.

According to him, he is impressed so far with the level of skills displayed by some of them. "That is why we have to put everybody on court to select the best," he explained.

The NVBF Technical Director disclosed that after the three days camp, they are expected to select 25 boys and same number of girls, which would be called to camp subsequently.

He further explained that the

players came from all over Nigeria, are being accommodated and fed by the federation, adding that at the end of it all, they would each be given transport allowances when going back.

On expectations from the new administration inaugurated on Monday, he said it looks promising for sports development.

"We expect their support not to only footballs, but all sports. Volleyball is coming up strong. We have two international competitions in August. We are supposed to go on foreign training tour but no funds, so we need support in such areas," he said.

Also speaking, Head Coach Boys National U-17, Coach Suleiman Olayinka Ajeigbe said that they have their eyes wide

open to ensure only the best players are selected from the open camp.

"We need to look at the technical input and height, as well as skills in them while selecting. We have to give everybody level playing ground.

"We are at screening stage, not selection camp. We have to look at those that are above average so that in the next two weeks, we invite them," he added.

For the Female U-17 coach, Sunday Yunana Akapson, he described talents sighted so far, as encouraging.

"The open camp is very encouraging. I know we have to work hard to pick the best. The primary way so far is that the players are interested to play. They have the interest. The bulk of the work now is on our

technical expertise," he said.

One of the female players who spoke to sportswriters, Pamela Bawa from Plateau State, residing in Abuja, said that she feels at home because they have helped her improve her game and instill discipline

"You also feel encouraged because you make new friends. I am not 100 per cent sure I would be selected but I am hopeful," she opened up.

Also speaking, male player, Kazeem Mutiu Olawale a 16-year old, said that his height gives him added advantage.

"I will work hard and do my best to be selected. I want to play international competitions in future and this is just the perfect opportunity to launch a career," the SS 2 student added.



205 Young Volleyball Players Jostle For 50 Slots In Nigeria's U-17 Volleyball Teams *Sweat it out at Kaduna 3-day open camp



WAFU U-20 Women Tourney: Super Falconets Trounce Benin Republic 3-0 To Reach Final

By; AYO OJEDOKUN, Lagos

Nigeria strolled to a 3-0 win over Benin Republic in the second semi-final of the WAFU U-20 Women Championship in Kumasi on Wednesday, easily picking their ticket to the Final match to be decided

on Saturday at the same Baba Yara Stadium. Expectedly, the World Cup quarter-finalists didn't have to break much sweat on the night, with Amina Omowunmi Bello putting them in front in the 23rd minute of the game. Precocious attacking midfielder Esther

Onyenezide hit a brace, scoring first in the 34th and then in the 52nd minute to put daylight between both teams in Ghana's second city. Nigeria's Chinyere Kalu was selected as Most Valuable Player of the Match. Hosts Ghana won the first

semi final match, defeating Burkina Faso's Dames 3-1 to reach the final on Saturday. Saturday's final jangles the bell of the interesting rivalry between Ghana and Nigeria at all levels of the game, and the hosts would wish they could stop the 19-goal Falconets

who are already looking like champions-in-waiting. Tournament top scorer Opeyemi Ajakaye did not add to her tally on Wednesday night, but Saturday's final is a great opportunity for her to raise her total haul for the championship.



The Super Falconets during training

Yomaraz Wins Dr Olukoya Cup

By; AYO OJEDOKUN, Lagos

There was plenty of football action at the Campus Mini Stadium, Lagos Island on Tuesday, as Yomaraz Football Club defeated Built On Trust and Love (BTL) Academy 4-1 in the final of this year's Dr. D.K. Olukoya football cup competition. It was indeed a sweet revenge for Yomaraz that lost the final to same BTL in last year's edition.

Hero of the day was Yomaraz's striker, Alao Damola who scored a brace in the highly entertaining match watched by several fans, including Godwin Enakhena, Sporting Director of Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministry.

There were two other splendid goals by Mustapha Amodu and Liabi Alao; as the Most Valuable Player Afolabi Akeen, substitute Victor Ogar and co pilled pressure on (BTL) that got her consolatory goal after missing a penalty by Charles Ojoh.

After being presented with a

golden trophy and N150,000 (One hundred and fifty thousand naira) prize money, Head Coach of Yomaraz, Akeem Olokodano said hard-work and superior tactics gave his side victory.

On his part, Sporting Director of BTL Academy, Khalifa Lawal applauded the standard of the tournament while admitting that the better side won the title. His team finished with a silver medal and N100,000 (One hundred thousand Naira)

Meanwhile, highly elated chairperson of the Lagos State Football and Other Sports Supporters Club, organisers of the tournament, Alhaja Shade Gbajumo said she cannot thank Dr. Olukoya enough over the successes recorded at the tournament at both the Isheri Registration Centre and Campus Mini Stadium

"I can't thank the Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministry General Overseer, Dr. D.K. Olukoya



The winners, Yomaraz

enough for his fatherly support for youths. He has actually touched the lives of our young ones through this Ibile Football championship and it's our hope that quality players unveiled would go on to represent Nigeria

at the International level as well as secure big clubs globally. "Lagos State Football and Other Sports Supporter Club is proud to be the first Supporters Club to organise a football tournament in this country and we shall sustain

Akwa Utd FC Congratulates Governor Umo Eno On Assumption Of Office

By; PATRICK TITUS, Uyo

The Chairman, Management, players, and staff of Akwa United Football Club of Uyo have congratulated Pastor Umo Bassey Eno on his assumption of office as the Governor of Akwa Ibom State.

Pastor Umo Eno was sworn into office on Monday, May 29, at a colourful inauguration ceremony at the Nest of Champions in Uyo.

Chairman of Akwa United Football Club, the 2021 champions of the Nigeria Professional Football League (NPFL), Elder Paul Bassey on behalf of the club, described Governor Eno as a dedicated, purposeful, result-oriented, and visionary leader.

A statement on Wednesday, signed by media manager of the club, Mr Mfon Patrick made available to New Nigerian stated that Pastor Eno has capacity to build on the foundations laid by his predecessors in developing and making Akwa Ibom State a safe haven for its people and a destination of choice for investors,

"We are indeed blessed to have a man like Pastor Umo Eno as our governor. With his track record as a servant of God and a successful entrepreneur who has established himself and impacted the lives of many within and outside the state, we are confident that our dear state will witness massive human capacity, and sports development, as well as an infrastructural renaissance.

"It is true that the journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. While the task ahead seems enormous, we pray God Almighty guides and directs you to choose people with the right passion for the job who will share your dreams and interpret your wonderful vision for our dear state.

"We at Akwa United Football Club are committed to working with and supporting your administration by ensuring we do our best to keep winning trophies and bringing glory and honour to our dear state in line with your administration's Arise agenda. "The outgoing government under the supervision of Sir Monday Eboeg Uko as Commissioner developed credible sports infrastructure needed to expose and nurture the abundant sports talents scattered all over the state.

"Your predecessors in office have laid solid foundations during their time and we encourage you and trust that with your capacity, you will build lasting legacies on those foundations in discovering and nurturing sports talents in our youths and for the generations yet unborn.

New NIGERIAN

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1,872 People Killed, 714 Abducted In Four Months In 34 States - Report

By; AMOS TAUNA, Kaduna

A Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) that focuses on human rights and peace building, Stefanos Foundation, has disclosed that between January and April, 2023, there were 217 attacks from 34 states in Nigeria.

According to the Jos-based human rights organisation, the attacks resulted in the killing of 1,872 persons, 714 abductions, and 65 sustained various degrees of injuries.

Ms. Fatima Njoku, the Advocacy Manager at Stefanos Foundation, during a joint press briefing in Abuja yesterday, stressed that there is an urgent need for action to address the

underlying causes of the violence in parts of the country and the root causes of the violence.

She noted that the situation is so alarming the increase in violence across the nation is a cause for concern, especially as Nigeria is not at war, saying, "From eyewitness reports and testimonies of direct victims across the board, we can say that the attacks are carried out in literally the same style, with attackers dressed in similar fashion and victims with similar profiles. This has happened in Agatu, Guma, Logo in Benue State, Kagoro, Zangon Kataf, Kajuru, Kafanchan in southern Kaduna, Bassa, Riyom, Barkin Ladi, and now Mangu in Plateau State, and the list goes on." She stated that the new

administration has come in at a time when the security of lives and property, which is the primary purpose of government, is at its worst in Nigeria's history, stressing that it calls for the attention of the government for urgent action.

The M w a g h a v u l Development Association (MDA) in Mangu Local Government Area of Plateau State alleged that the ongoing violence in their communities may be linked to deep economic interests and called for immediate action to address the ongoing violence.

Chief Joseph Gwamkat, MDA's National President, stated that the return to their ancestral homes was non-negotiable, saying that if

nothing was done to address the situation, there will be "hunger and poverty" in the land, with the present economic climate.

He explained that about 40 per cent of farm produce from Plateau State comes from Mangu LGA, saying that the ongoing violence is a threat to their livelihood.

Gwamkat said the MDA strongly recommends the "establishment of state policing" in all states and communities in Nigeria, and "creation of special courts" to dispense justice between conflicting communities.

He lamented that the presence of the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) or the Plateau State Emergency Management Agency has never been felt.

WAFU U-20 Women
Tourney: Super Falconets
Trounce Benin Republic
3-0 To Reach Final

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10th Assembly: Arewa Youth Urge APC To Enthroned Discipline

By; AMOS TAUNA, Kaduna

A group, The Arewa Young Professionals in Politics has said that the decision of the All Progressives Congress (APC) concerning principal officers of the 10th Assembly must be used as a litmus test to enthrone discipline in the party.

The convener of the group, Malam Yusuf Idris Amoke, in a statement in Kaduna yesterday, said, "Any member who sees his or her self above the party must be identified and made to serve appropriate punishment to serve as deterrent to others who may be intending to go against the party in whatever capacity."

According to him, it is high time the party takes strict stands to ensure that its resolves are respected by all its members, stressing that members must understand that the party is supreme and should not select the which of its resolve to respect.

He called on the party to take disciplinary action against Mukhtar Aliyu Betera and his co-travellers, saying that his refusal to comply with the party's decision warrants expulsion.

The convener explained that the emergence of individuals reminiscent of Sarakis and Dogaras who previously challenged the party's authority, saying that if Mukhtar Aliyu Betera persists in defying the party's position, he will be deemed a saboteur and face appropriate consequences.

The Arewa Young Professionals in Politics, he said, wishes to express gratitude to the leadership of the All Progressives Congress (APC) for addressing one of the two requests they presented regarding the zoning of the leadership of the National Assembly, pointing out that on April 6, 2023, the group held a press conference and called on the APC National Headquarters and the President-Elect to consider zoning the Senate President position to the South East and the Speaker of the National Assembly position to the North West. He said that in their wisdom and generosity, the party declined their request for a South East Senate President, but granted their request for the speakership to be zoned to the North West, designating Hon. Tajudeen Abbas from Kaduna State as their preferred candidate.

12 Permanent Secretaries Deployed In Ebonyi

By; M K P U M A ENYINNA, Abakaliki

The Governor of Ebonyi State, Hon. Francis Ogonna Nwifuru has deployed 12 permanent secretaries to various ministries, agencies and liaison offices within and outside the state as part of steps to ensure efficiency and repositioning of Civil and Public Service in the State. This was contained in a statement signed by the Chief Press Secretary to the Governor, Dr. Monday Uzor, stating that the deployment is with immediate effect.

'As part of steps to ensure efficiency and repositioning of the civil and public service in the state, the Governor of Ebonyi State, His Excellency Rt. Hon. Francis Ogonna Nwifuru has approved the deployment of Permanent

Secretaries as follows, Mr. Monday Nkwuda (Ministry of Works and Transport), Mrs. Joy Mbam (Ministry of Lands and Survey), Engr. Chukwuma Ojiogu (Ministry of Power), Mrs. Uzoma Betty (Public Procurement Council), Barr. Albert Aloh (Ministry of Justice), Barr. Ogonnaya Ota, (Ministry of Internal Security), Mrs. Ogechi Ugwuocha (Lagos Liaison), Mrs. Felicia Arusi (Ministry of Agriculture), Mrs. Mfon Williams (Ministry of Finance), Dr. Kizito Nwovu (Abuja Liaison) and Mrs. Henrietta Oruh (Ministry



Ebonyi Governor

of Infrastructure). 'The deployment is with immediate effect,' it stressed.

It would be recalled that last month, the immediate past governor, David

Umahi compulsory retired 17 permanent secretaries across the state before handing over to the present administration led by Francis Ogonna Nwifuru.

Katsina Governor Leads 7 Colleagues On Visit To Buhari In Daura

By; SULA IMAN AHMED MISAU, Katsina

Governor Dikko Umaru Radda of Katsina State alongside Seven other Governors have visited former President, Muhammadu Buhari in Daura.

The delegation of the governors according to a statement from the office of the Senior Special Assistant on Digital Media to Katsina State Governor, includes, Dapo Abiodun of

Ogun; Babajide Sanwo Olu, Lagos; Abdullahi Sule, Nasarawa; Bala Muhammad, Bauchi, Hope Uzodinma, Imo and the Deputy Governor of Kano State, Aminu Abdulsalam.

Others in attendance were, former Governors of Niger, Abubakar Sani Bello; Jigawa, Abubakar Badaru; Kebbi, Senator Atiku Bagudu; Plateau, Barrister Simon Lalong and Kano, Dr Abdullahi Umar Ganduje.