

New NIGERIAN

"The Greatest Weapon is Truth"

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Honourable Ajadi

By: **BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan**

The New Nigeria People's Party, (NNPP) gubernatorial candidate in Ogun State in the 2023 general elections Ambassador Olufemi Ajadi Oguntoyinbo yesterday, advocated

payment of monthly citizenship benefit to every Nigerian by the Federal Government.

Ambassador Ajadi in a statement, said the payment should be made from the money that should have gone into fuel subsidy payments, saying, Federal Government

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Kwara Gov Restates Support For Tourism As Lafiagi Holds Sallah Nko Festival

*Emir hails AbdulRazaq's 'surprise' attendance, constant support

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Families Weep As Corpses Of Salvation Army Officers Arrive Akwa Ibom

**Akpabio commiserates families*

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Hajj 2023: Return Flight Of Bauchi Pilgrims Commences July 7

By; ZUBAIRU
ABDULLAHISADA

The return flight of Bauchi State pilgrims from Saudi Arabia is expected to begin next week Friday July 7, 2023.

The Executive Secretary Bauchi State Muslim Pilgrims Welfare Board Imam Abdurrahman Ibrahim Idris disclosed this while addressing the pilgrims on Friday June 30, 2023 in their tents in

Munna Saudi Arabia.

He said the board in collaboration with the Amirul Hajj team has set up modalities to ensure a hitch free return flight of the state pilgrims.

While wishing the pilgrims a Hajj Mabru which he said has no reward except Jannah, Imam Abdurrahman urged them to continue to respect the stipulated rules and regulations of Saudi kingdom.



COAS Lagbaja Holds Luncheon With Frontline Troops In Yobe

By; JACOB ONJEWU
DICKSON

The newly appointed Chief of Army Staff, Major General T.A. Lagbaja has pledged to consolidate on achievements of the Nigerian Army towards ensuring the complex security challenges confronting the nation by ensuring it is completely decimated.

General Lagbaja disclosed this at an Eid El Kabir Luncheon with the frontline troops of Sector 2, Joint Task Force Operation Hadin Kai at Damaturu the state capital. The COAS who was represented by the Commander of the Sector 2 Operation Hadin Kai, Major General Mayerinso Saraso, enjoins the troops to redouble efforts and give their very best, assuring to improve their welfare.

"I pledge to make your welfare my utmost priority. I will ensure all avenues of improving the capabilities of troops in

discharging their responsibilities are harnessed. I urge you to remain resolute, loyal and continue to exhibit the core values of the Nigerian Army as always"

General Lagbaja further explained, having been recently appointed as the 23rd Chief of Army Staff of the Nigerian Army, he believed that his appointment is a calling to engender change and make a difference in the shared vision towards the fulfilment of the constitutional responsibilities.

"In this regard, my Command Philosophy is to "Transform the Nigerian Army into a well-trained, equipped and highly motivated force towards achieving our constitutional responsibilities within a joint environment".

"I recognize and



COAS IAGBAJA

appreciate the sacrifices of our gallant troops deployed in operations within and outside the shores of this country" he said.

The Army Chief reaffirm the unalloyed loyalty of the officers and soldiers of the Nigerian Army in the defence of the constitution and Nigeria.

Flooding: We Must Take Tough Measures To Save Lives, FCDA Boss Hints

By; JACOB ONJEWU
DICKSON

The Executive Secretary of the Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA) Engr. Shehu Ahmad Hadi has said that the administration will take stiffer measures to save lives and property in TradeMore Estate.

This is as, he said that Trademore Estate did not have FCDA approved building plan and the continuous flooded areas can best be left as Green areas and not residential.

Hadi who is also the Chairman, Special Ministerial Task Team on flood mitigation made this known when he appeared as a guest on Channels Television Flagship program, Dateline Abuja over the weekend.

He said, "most structures are preventing water from flowing freely through its natural course which is responsible for flooding recorded in some parts of the city.

"Buildings in Trademore have been severally marked for demolition. Warnings have been given year in year out. They just keep risking their lives and that of others.

"People are clamouring that we



act quickly and take tough decisions to save lives and property. And this is what we must do. We cannot act as though we don't see this man-made problem caused by those who violated the Abuja Master plan".

He said.

While adding that the area is on a low line zone which is not safe, he said, "flooding can come at any time. They know this and have been experiencing it over the years, we have told the

residents there to vacate.

"The Police station in Trademore would be demolished. It would go alongside other buildings too we have engaged the FCT Police command and the Force

Headquarters and we provided a suitable place for them to operate from and fight crime".

"The property that was submerged in Trademore include market, Police station and other structures. If we had not taken proactive measures to relocate the police station, you can see that it was part of the reference point. We alert able to do that because it's a government property, severally, we have marked the structures and given notices for evacuation to no avail."

Responding to questions from anchor Chinwe Kayla Megwa on recent Severe flooding at Trademore Estate which reportedly claimed two lives, Hadi dismissed as untrue allegation that the FCT Administration has not given those affected sufficient notices. Engineer Hadi noted that Trademore estate is just one of the Area in focus as other areas where structures are built on floodplains too would experience removal of illegal structures.

He said Phase 11 and Phase 111 of Lokogoma, Mountain of Fire and Galadimawa Roundabout are all in the same water ways.

Reps Speaker Abbas Calls For Renewed Efforts On Climate Action

By: SANIALIYU, Zaria

The Speaker of the House of Representatives, Rt. Hon. Tajudeen Abbas, has called on parliaments across the globe to intensify efforts on climate action as the world marks the International Day of Parliamentarism.

A statement issued by Musa Abdullahi Krishi, Special Adviser on Media and Publicity to the Speaker, House of Representatives said the International Day of Parliamentarism, which marks the anniversary of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), is a day that calls for reflection among Parliaments anywhere in the world.

Abbas said the 2023 theme, 'Parliaments for the Planet,' which focuses on climate action, was apt as the world battles climate change.

The Speaker noted that the Nigerian Parliament, which is a member of the IPU, would continue to work assiduously with other Parliaments around the world to address the issue of climate change through legislation.

He said over the years, the Nigerian Parliament has played a key role on issues related to addressing climate change, saying that would continue in years to come.

According to him, climate change poses a great threat to mankind, hence the need to take concerted action to contain it.

He said the theme for this year's commemoration of the International Day of Parliamentarism, "Parliaments for the Planet" is designed to mobilize parliaments and parliamentarians to act on the climate emergency.



Some recipients of the awards

Nigeria Will Be Great Again If Fathers Can Represent God Faithfully - Rev Ajide

By: BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

The Pastor-in-charge of the New Heritage Baptist Church, (NHBC) Eniosa, Ibadan, Rev Philemon Oluwafemi Ajide on Friday, tasked fathers in the country to give their children good training and attention as instructed by God in the Bible.

Rev Ajide gave the task while commending members of the Men's Missionary Union (MMU) of the church for organising a successful programme to celebrate 2023 NHBC-MMU Father Abraham Award. He stressed that this stands as the only way to make Nigeria great again, saying, the suffering masses are experiencing in Nigeria presently were caused by some people, few individuals, who are also children of some parents.

"If truly we want a better Nigeria, where the right of every individuals will be respected, where great value will be attached to the lives of the masses,

where voice of the electorate will be heard, a country where food will be available for all and children of the poor will enjoy qualitative education, all fathers most rise to give their children and all other children in their communities good moral, educational and spiritual training inline with the commandment of God, regardless of our religion", he said.

Rev Ajide added, "Parents, especially father must have attitudinal change, responsibility of child's upbringing shouldn't be vested on mother's alone, they can't get it right and accurate alone.

"The suffering people, especially the masses are experiencing in Nigeria presently were caused by some people, few individuals, who are also children of some parents. Those stealing public fund, those engaging in kidnapping, armed robbery, rituals for money or position, subsidy embezzlement and other forms of

corruption are all products of some homes in Nigeria".

Rev Ajide also praised the organising committee of the programme for considering it important and urgent to issue appreciation letter signed on behalf of the Men's Missionary Union (MMU) by the Chairman, Mr. Tunde Oyekan and Secretary, Mr. Segun Adeniran.

Also, appreciation messages were sent to those awarded with different categories of 2023 NHBC-MMU Father Abraham Distinguished Awards, reading, "we would like to express our deepest gratitude to you for honouring God with your presence at our 2023 NHBC-MMU Father Abraham Award ceremony and your kind donation towards successful execution of the Great Commission assigned to us by our Lord Jesus Christ.

"Without your presence every efforts committed by us towards making this year's Fathers' Day a

huge success would have ended in futility, for this reason we really appreciate and pray God Almighty to reward you in multiple folds and increase His grace in your life in Jesus name, Amen.

"We also wish to appeal to you not to relent in offering support and good care as a father to all children in the Baptist Churches, Association, Conference, Convention and communities in general. We have assurance that if all fathers can offer their best to their children and those in their communities, Nigeria will be great again.

"Once more, on behalf of the Pastor-in-charge of the church, Reverend Philemon Oluwafemi Ajide, all MMU members and the entire members of the New Heritage Baptist Church, Quarters Road, Eniosa, Ibadan we appreciate you and your family for expressing love towards us and pray God to grant you more grace to keep offering acceptable services in His vineyard in Jesus name, amen," MMU prayed for all recipients.



Reps Speaker Abbas

Redeemed Pastor Dies As Ogun Security Outfit Neutralises Kidnap Suspect, Rescues 7 Victims

By ; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE Lagos

Luck came the way of seven members of the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) reportedly kidnapped at the weekend as they have been rescued unhurt by operatives of the Ogun State Community, Social Orientation and Safety Corps also known as So-Safe Corps.

The brave corps also succeeded in killing one of the kidnapers in a cross fire, while others escaped with serious gun shoot injuries.

Sadly however, the pastor of the church, whose identity could not be ascertained as the time of filing the report, was killed by the the bandits.

Our correspondent gathered that all the victims are members of the Redeemed Christian Church of God, Desires of Nations Parish, under Ogun Province 22, Abule-Ori in Obafemi Owode Local Government Area. They were said to have been attacked during a vigil on Friday and been taking to an unknown destination before the swift intervention of the

operatives of the Corps.

The Director of Information and Public Relations, So-Safe Corps Ogun State, ACC Moruf Yusuf made the disclosure on behalf of the State Commander, Dr. Soji Ganzallo in a release yesterday.

According to the statement, "At about 12.00am on Saturday, 1st July, 2023, the special operation team of the Corps, Owode-Egba Zonal Command under ACC Jimoh Rasaki Omoniyi received a distress call that some of the members of the Redeemed Christian Church of God, Desires of Nations Parish, under Ogun Province 22, Abule-Ori in Obafemi Owode Local Government Area were attacked during a vigil, while seven (7) members of the church were kidnapped and the pastor killed".

Ganzallo noted that the Officers of the Corps were charged to go after the suspected criminals and were instructed to ensure the victims are rescued unhurt. And the Officers swung into action immediately.



The neutralized suspect

He further revealed that the efforts of the Corps yielded a positive result and the seven (7) victims were rescued unhurt while one of the kidnapers was killed and many of the suspects sustained serious injury during a fire exchange.

The So - safe Commander revealed that the joint

team of the Nigeria Police and the So-Safe Corps are strategically trailing the fleeing suspected kidnapers to capture them alive.

Ganzallo hinted that the body of the deceased kidnapper had been deposited in the nearby morgue.

Quicken Investigation On Bawa, Emefiele, Falana Advises DSS

By AMOS TAUNA, Kaduna

Femi Falana, a human rights lawyer, has appealed to the Department of State Services (DSS) to ensure quick investigation into the cases involving Abdulsheed Bawa, the suspended Chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and Godwin Emefiele, the former Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN).

On June 10, Emefiele was arrested by officials of the DSS over charges bordering on terrorism financing, while Bawa was also arrested over allegations of abuse of office. Featuring on Channels TV's Politics Today programme on Friday night, Falana noted that under the administration of Criminal Justice Act if a Nigerian is going to be detained beyond 24 hours in places where there are no courts within a radius of 40km (like Lagos and Abuja), it is required to approach a Magistrate court to ask for a remand order to allow for investigation.

He added that the order cannot last for long even if the DSS has obtained a court order to detain Emefiele and Bawa.

According to the Senior Advocate of Nigeria,

Nigerian government should handled the cases in line with the provisions of the law to avoid a situation whereby loopholes are exploited.

He observed, "As far as I'm concerned, investigations should be speedily conducted, more so where allegations are made. I do not expect any delay in the investigation of the very serious allegation that has been made."

He noted that in the case of Emefiele, the State Security Services last year alleged his involvement in terrorism financing, urging them to quickly do something about that as with respect to money laundering and other offences, take them to the appropriate agencies of the government.

In the case of Mr Bawa, he explained that Nigerians have not been told the offences he committed, saying that he cannot speak very confidently with respect to the gentleman except to ask the government or the agencies involved to speed up an investigation and have them arraigned if they are indicted.

The SAN suggested that the duo should be granted bail if the appropriate legal procedures are not met to keep them in detention.

Fuel Subsidy: NNPP Chieftain Advocates Monthly Payments To All Nigerians

■ Insists FG has no more excuses not to deliver dividends of democracy

■ Says there is need to improve Nigerians welfare, provision of social amenities

should channel money that should have gone into fuel subsidy payments to improving Nigerians welfare.

According to the NNPP Chieftain, "this is the only way to justify the removal in the first place, and also demonstrate the government's genuine interest in the socio-economic condition of the Nigerian people"

"While the citizens go through all these pains, there is the need to cushion the effects of hardship through provision of palliatives. I therefore, call on the Federal Government to pay every Nigerian, Citizenship Benefit monthly, while the remaining of the removed subsidy should be used on education, health, housing and development of Infrastructure", he said.

Ambassador Ajadi added, " Let all these increment be channelled to Citizenship Benefits, Private Public Housing Mortgage Project for benefit of downtrodden, provision of qualitative education, improved health facilities and other infrastructure development".

The NNPP gubernatorial candidate while lauding Federal government for the courage in removing the subsidy said it should not stop there, but go ahead to ensuring that other areas of pain for the masses of the country are addressed. According to him, the other areas included social

amenities like good roads, electricity and pipe-borne water, adding that there was no reason for these to continue to be issues in the country now that the government would be saving a huge amount of money through stoppage of subsidy payments.

" While I commend President Tinubu for the bold step in removing subsidy payments, he should do more than that, by ensuring that the larger Nigerian society feel the impact of the removal. He should pilot the saved money to other areas of need so that the masses of the country could feel the impact of governance. Such areas include light, roads, light and general cost of living.

The NNPP Chieftain maintained that sectors like education, health and housing should equally be of concern to the government, asserting that their availability should be taken for granted in the country.

On the proposed payment of fee for proof of ownership certificates, he said, "also government has just announced that from next month, private and commercial motorists are to pay N1000 fee for proof of ownership certificates. Hitherto, the document was issued for free to buyers of new vehicles by the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC)."



Honourable Ajadi

Eid-el-Kabir: Gombe Government House Bubbles As Emir Abubakar III Stages Spectacular Durbar On Sallah Homage To Governor Inuwa Yahaya

*Emir Of Gombe Describes Inuwa's Achievements As Monumental, Unprecedented

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Governor State Governor, Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya, CON on Friday, played host to the Emir of Gombe, Alhaji Dr Abubakar Shehu Abubakar III, CFR and other eminent traditional title holders of Gombe Emirate on a Sallah Homage as part Eid-el-Kabir celebration.

A statement signed by the Director-General (Press Affairs) Government House Gombe, Ismaila Uba Misilli, said that the visit witnessed a colourful royal Durbar and other traditional displays.

The annual Sallah homage to the Government House is an age-long tradition, and is usually led by the Emir in company of district heads and members of his traditional council.

In an address at the occasion, Governor Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya remarked that the successes so far recorded by his administration would not have been possible without the moral support of traditional, religious and political leaders as well as the good people of the State.

"The achievements under my watch are not my making alone, the political, traditional and religious leaders as well as men, women and the youths; all played pivotal roles towards attaining these feats; so we are grateful to all".

Governor Inuwa, who is also the Chairman of the Northern Governors' Forum, used the occasion to assure the people of the State that the second lap of his administration will witness the provision more dividends of democracy that will make Gombe stand shoulder to shoulder with its peers and continue to be a reference point to others.

He noted that inspite of the numerous socio-economic challenges, his administration has remained undaunted towards the provision of critical infrastructure and other social amenities as contained in his campaign manifesto.

The Governor appealed to the Emir of Gombe and other traditional rulers in the state not to relent in seeking for opportunities and ways that will further bring development to the people of the state.

He assured the people that his administration will not relent in seeking the support, cooperation and wise counsel of the traditional rulers and opinion leaders in order to lead the State in the most effective, efficient and equitable manner.

Governor Inuwa Yahaya disclosed that President Bola Ahmed Tinubu is proud of Gombe State base of on verifiable indicators that promote and enhance fiscal and physical development of the State.

He called on the people of the state to continue to exercise patience as Government at the national and sub-national levels are working to stabilise the economic condition of the people.

The Governor noted that it was the determination of his administration to create an enabling environment for economic development that led to the state's emergence as number one in the Ease of Doing Business ranking for two consecutive times.

Governor Inuwa Yahaya called on the people of the state, particularly the youths to take advantage of the growing economic opportunities and possibilities in the state to engage in meaningful ventures and contribute to the growth and development of the State.

He expressed gratitude to the Almighty Allah and the Emir of Gombe for leading his council members and other Muslim faithful to the Government House for the traditional sallah homage.

Governor Inuwa equally thanked the royal father for paying glowing tribute to him and acknowledging his administration's modest efforts towards repositioning Gombe State as well as uniting the people through purposeful leadership.

Earlier speaking, the Emir of Gombe, Alhaji Dr Abubakar Shehu Abubakar III, CFR paid glowing tribute to Governor Inuwa Yahaya, noting that there is no area in the state that has not witnessed the remarkable and developmental strides of the APC-led administration.

He scored Governor Inuwa's administration very high in areas of roads construction; where he noted that over 700 KM of roads have been put up across the nooks and crannies of the State with special emphasis on the provision of ultramodern solar streetlights in Gombe metropolis, revitalization of healthcare facilities, repositioning of the education sector; in particular construction and renovation of over 1140 classes; mopping up of out of school children and returning them back to the classroom, industrial revolution going on in the State; especially with the construction of the 1000-hectare Muhammadu Buhari Industrial Park, prompt payment of salaries and settlement of outstanding gratuity of retirees, among others.

He described the achievements so far recorded by the Governor as monumental and unprecedented in the history of Gombe State.

He also described the commitment of the Governor as one deserving of applause of all men and women of goodwill.

The Emir of Gombe, who is also the Chairman of Gombe State Council of Emirs and Chiefs, assured Governor Inuwa Yahaya of the support of the traditional institution in the state in overall interest of the people.

The royal father later led hundreds of horsemen clad in colourful robes and regalia to stage a spectacular Durbar to the admiration of the Governor and other dignitaries present.



Nigerian Christian Clerics Condemn Burning Of Holy Qur'an In Sweden

**Calls for calm in Nigeria, world at large*

By; USMAN NASIDI,
Kaduna

Northern Nigerian Christian clerics have condemned in totality, the recent report of burning of a Holy Qur'an in Sweden on Wednesday as Muslims around the world celebrated the first day of Eid al-Adha, one of the most important festivals in the Muslim calendar.

The co-director of Interfaith Mediation Center, Reverend Dr. James Nobel and Pastor Yohanna Buru, the General Overseer of Christ Evangelical and Life Intervention Ministry Kaduna, condemned the attitude of Sweden Government for authorising the burning of the holy book for the second time.

According to the clerics, they are ready to defend the Holy Qur'an at any time, any place because Islam preaches peace, love and unity to all mankind.

In their separate remarks and reactions over the incidence, they condemned the attitude in strong terms, while saying that this is not good for peace and stability in the world.

According to them, the Sweden Qur'an burning has sparked anger from Muslims in the world, and



Photo: opinovi / Shutterstock.com

hence the need to condemn this ugly attitude, while calling on world leaders to look into the situation.

"We as Christian leaders from the Northern part of Nigeria are not truly happy at all over this ugly incidence and call on world leaders to look into the situation.

"We are equally begging the entire Arab world and the rest of Muslims in the universe for forgiveness. We have to condemn this attitude simply because this is not Christianity." They said.

They called for calm over the recent burning of Holy Qur'an, as they appealed to Muslims all over the world

for forgiveness and calm. They equally called on European Union (EU) to as a matter of urgency, halt this ugly activity and bring the perpetrators to book, as it has potential of affecting the world's peace.

"We as peace ambassadors of peace and Christian leaders cannot sit down and watch this happening and keep our mouths shut, therefore, we call for peace and calmness over the incidence, while calling on Muslim leaders for forgiveness," they stressed.

It was reported that two men stood outside Stockholm's Central Mosque on Wednesday

and burned a Qur'an, following the go ahead given by a Swedish court, to coincide with the beginning of the Muslim holiday of Eid-al-Adha.

The man who had requested permission for the action, a 37-year-old Iraqi refugee who wants the book banned, tore out pages from the Qur'an, wiped them on his shoe and set some of them on fire, Swedish public broadcaster SVT said.

Around 200 people gathered to watch, including counter protesters. One man was detained after he tried to throw a rock

Lagos Govt Embraces Digital Transformation to improve Healthcare Outcomes

By; MATTHEW UKACHUNWA, Lagos

Lagos State Government has embraced digital transformation in order to improve health services for its residents, the Permanent Secretary, Lagos State Ministry of Health, Dr. Olusegun Ogboye, has said. Ogboye disclosed this recently at the 3rd Africa Digital Health Summit which was held at the Eko Hotel and Suites, Victoria Island, Lagos.

He said that the key thrusts of the State's digital strategy for improved health services revolves around supporting patients in making the right healthcare choices, and provide them with options.

The Permanent Secretary, who was the keynote speaker at the summit, said that Lagos digital strategy also enables the people who take care of patients to understand them while providing safe and personalized care.

Speaking on the topic, "Digital Transformation of Health Systems: The Role of Collaboration and Partnerships", Ogboye stressed that Lagos digital strategy creates an environment where healthcare providers and patients can use and benefit from innovative technologies.

"The key thrusts of our digital strategy is such that preserve the patients' trust in the healthcare system and protect their rights and information", he said

Ogboye in his presentation opined that Africa's digital health landscape is evolving rapidly, with innovations and advancements changing the way "we approach healthcare

delivery, access, and quality". He noted that Governments play a crucial role in setting policies, allocating resources, and creating an enabling environment for digital health solutions to thrive.

The Permanent Secretary added that by collaborating, sharing best practices, and harmonizing regulations, Government can create a conducive ecosystem for innovation and ensure that digital health initiatives are aligned with the needs and priorities of our populations.

"Equally important is the collaboration between public and private sectors. The private sector brings a wealth of expertise, technology, and investment that can catalyse the digital transformation of health systems.

"By forming strategic partnerships, we can harness the strengths of both sectors and create sustainable business models that drive innovation, expand access, and improve the affordability of digital health solutions", he said.

Ogboye also noted that collaboration between healthcare providers and technology developers is essential to design, implement, and scale up digital health solutions that are user-centered, evidence-based, and contextually relevant.

"Co-creation and co-development of digital tools, such as telemedicine platforms, electronic health records, and health information systems, can ensure that they address the unique challenges faced by healthcare professionals and meet the specific needs of the communities they serve", he stated.

Eid-El-Adha: Kaduna South Reps Member Congratulates Muslim Ummah

**Says women empowerment, youth, educational scholarship his focus*

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The Honourable Member Representing Kaduna South Federal Constituency, at the Green Chamber of the National Assembly, Malam Hussaini Abdulkarim Ahmed (Mai Kero) has congratulated Muslim Ummah on the occasion of this year's Eid-El-Adha celebration, which symbolizes sacrifice.

In a statement made available on Friday by his Media Aide, Sharifudeen Ibrahim Muhammad (Dan Jarida), Hon. Mai Kero emphasized

the relevance of capacity building in creating opportunities for women and youth within the constituency. Hon. Maikero assured that he would work closely with traditional and religious leaders in the constituency to positively impact the lives of the people by creating and boosting existing businesses. He called on the residents to embrace peaceful coexistence regardless of their religious differences and lend a helping hand as sacrifice for the welfare of others in the spirit of Eid-El-Adha celebration exemplified by Prophet

Ibraheem and prayed for peace of Kaduna State and Nigeria in general.

Hon. Mai Kero, also appealed to Muslims, particularly those in the 13 wards of Kaduna South Federal Constituency, to embrace and utilize this period to pray for successful tenure.

"May Allah bring you joy, happiness, peace, and prosperity and accept our sacrifice as an act of ibadah on this blessed occasion of Eid-El-Adha," the statement concluded.



Mai Kero

PSNAFSA Felicitates Major General Lagbaja On Appointment As COAS

By; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

A group under the aegis of Prayer and Support for the Nigerian Armed Forces and other Security Agencies (PSNAFSA) has felicitated Major General Taareed Lagbaja on his recent appointment as the 23rd Chief of Army Staff, COAS by President Bola Ahmed Tinubu.

The appointment of Lagbaja, according to the group, did not come to many as a surprise, rather it shows that the Tinubuled administration must have taken into consideration experience, professionalism and leadership skills before settling for him, to formulate and execute policies towards the highest attainment of National Security and operational competence of the Nigerian Army and by extension, secure the territorial integrity of the country.

The group lauded the achievement of the COAS, disclosing that he has transversed combat operations in the air, water and land, with evident and remarkable feats in security

operations.

Convener of PSNAFSA, Mrs. Mary Fatile, a seasoned media practitioner and security analyst, hinted that Gen. Lagbaja has also demonstrated an ability to handle a combination of high volume and high complexity incidents, especially in Operation HARMONY IV, the Bakassi Peninsula, the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Operation ZAKI.

"His operational experience spans several significant missions which included Operation LAFIYA DOLE, Operation MESA/Operation UDOKA and Operation FOREST SANITY, among others.

"The new COAS can be described as a true leader who leads by example and one who demonstrates to others how the work is done. His simplicity and astuteness, in addition to his experience, skill, insight, creativity and resourcefulness has stood him out in every given Military assignment.

"It will not be out of place to state that his choice for the exalted position in the



Major General Lagbaja

Nigerian Army is the right step in the right direction at tackling insecurity in Nigeria.

"This group and all Nigerians therefore look forward to his ability at applying geographical approaches to map and analyze crime occurrences with a view to arresting factors responsible for violent crimes in Nigeria.

"As he hits the ground running by selecting key senior Army officers to

work with his Strategic Guidance, it is expected that progressive paths will be charted towards tackling the security challenges confronting the country, as well as building bridges across the Services and Agencies through robust joint, interagency and intergovernmental framework to confront the current security challenges" the group charged.

Akwa Ibom NUJ Bars Members From Covering Assembly

By; PATRICK TITUS, Uyo

The Akwa Ibom State Council of Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) has barred its members from covering activities of the State House of Assembly over appointment of a non-journalist as Press Secretary to the Speaker, Rt Hon Udeme Otong.

The union stated this in a communique issued at the end of this month Wednesday, has directed those in Press Corp in the Assembly to withdraw their services with immediate effect.

Congress frowned at the development and consequently warned that any defaulting member of the union shall face severe sanctions.

Congress also noted the persistent flooding of Atiku Abubakar Way, Uyo, occasioned by indiscriminate dumping of waste, resulting in a complete blockage of the drain and called on the Akwa Ibom State Environmental Protection and Waste Management

Agency, AKSEPWMA, to take immediate action to remediate the situation.

Congress noted that the Nigerian Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission (NUPRC), has shortchanged oil producing communities in Akwa Ibom State by not remitting the funds generated from fines from gas flaring in the affected communities to them directly, as enshrined in the Petroleum Industry Act, PIA, therefore, urged NUPRC to henceforth start paying gas flaring fines to the affected communities.

Congress called on security agencies to step up their surveillance and come up with measures to arrest the increasing cases of phone theft in Uyo capital city.

Congress called on the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC), Motor Traffic Division of the Nigeria Police and other authorities involved in traffic management to arrest and prosecute motorists who drive against the traffic as the ugly development has often resulted in accidents and injuries.

Ebonyi Deputy Speaker Assures Of Quality Representation

By; MKPUMA ENYINNA, Abakaliki

The Deputy Speaker of Ebonyi State House of Assembly and the member representing Ohaokwu South Constituency, Rt. Hon. Chief Chinedu Onah has assured the people of the constituency of his commitment to improving their lives.

He gave the assurance at his office when members of Umuezeaka Development Union led by its Caretaker Chairman, Hon. Joseph Ogeh paid him a courtesy visit to rejoice with him on his assumption of office and able representation.

The Deputy Speaker who promised to ensure that every need of every community is

met, expressed satisfaction with the level of support from the people of Umuezeaka Community during electioneering and urged them to continue to lend their support to the administration of Speaker of State House of Assembly Rt. Hon. Moses Ije Odunwa and State Governor, His Excellency Rt. Hon. Chief Francis Ogbonna Nwifuru.

Hon. Chinedu Onah further stated that for any organization or society to be meaningfully developed, the leadership must be up to its responsibilities and must also carry everybody along.

The Deputy Speaker urged the people to embrace those virtues that will bond them together so as to attract more

dividends of democracy.

Earlier, the caretaker chairman Umuezeaka Development Union, Hon. Joseph Ogeh said that the visit was to felicitate with the Deputy Speaker and to thank God for his benevolences.

He equally appreciated the Honourable members of the State House of Assembly for electing their son, Hon. Chinedu Onah as Deputy Speaker whom he described as a man with track records and proven integrity.

Hon. Ogeh assured the lawmaker of their total support and will always be with him in order to succeed in office and bring development across the constituency.



Federation Of Ijesa Students Honours APC UK Spokesman

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The publisher of the Reflector Newspaper and the spokesperson for the Nigeria ruling party in the United Kingdom, Hon. Jacob Ogunseye has been honoured for his roles in youth development and advocacy.

A highly elated Ogunseye could not hide his feelings as he described the award as a testament to a collective commitment to education, progress, and the future of our beloved Nigeria.

In a speech delivered on his behalf by the immediate past Vice-President of IYF, Hon. Adebunsi Tobiloba Adeleye, Ogunseye said he was deeply honoured and humbled to address the esteemed gathering as an award recipient in the Federation of Ijesa Students Union National Headquarters.

This event, the FISU Week Grand Finale, brings together talented and passionate students from across Ijesaland, both in Nigeria and the Diaspora.

"Today, I want to talk to you about a topic that is close to my heart and one that I believe holds the key to unlocking the true potential of our nation—the harnessing of the future of Nigeria through investment in youth and education. It is undeniable that the youth are the backbone of any society, and in Nigeria, with our vast population and vibrant energy, we possess an incredible resource that, if properly harnessed, can propel our nation to great heights.

"Education is the cornerstone upon which nations are built, and investing in education is an investment in the future. We must recognize that education

goes beyond mere academic knowledge. It is about equipping our youth with the skills, values, and mindset necessary to navigate an increasingly complex and interconnected world. It is about nurturing their creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities. It is about empowering them to become active participants in shaping their destinies and the destiny of our nation.

"To harness the future of Nigeria, we must prioritize quality education that is accessible to all, irrespective of their background or socioeconomic status. This means improving the infrastructure of our educational institutions, providing adequate resources and learning materials, and ensuring the professional development of our teachers. We must also embrace technology and innovation in education, leveraging digital platforms and tools to expand access and enhance learning outcomes.

"Additionally, investing in youth means providing them with opportunities for skills development, entrepreneurship and employment. We must create an enabling environment that encourages innovation and supports the aspirations of our young people. This includes fostering partnerships between educational institutions and industries, promoting vocational and technical education, and providing mentorship and networking opportunities. By doing so, we can unleash the entrepreneurial spirit and ingenuity of our youth, driving economic growth and sustainable development.

"Furthermore, investment in youth and education must be

accompanied by policies that promote good governance, transparency, and accountability.

We must create an environment that fosters trust, encourages investment, and ensures that resources allocated to education are utilized effectively and efficiently.

This requires collaboration between the government, private sector, civil society, and international partners to develop and implement comprehensive strategies that address the multifaceted challenges facing our education system.

"As we look to the future, let us remember that investing in our youth and education is not a choice but a necessity. The potential of our nation lies in the hands of our young people, and it is our collective responsibility to nurture and empower them. By harnessing their talents, providing them with quality education, and creating opportunities for their growth and development, we can build a prosperous and inclusive Nigeria for generations to come.

"I encourage the Federation of Ijesa Students Union to continue its commendable efforts in promoting unity, academic excellence, and the welfare of



Jacob Ogunseye

Ijesaland students.

"In conclusion, I would like to express my gratitude to the Federation of Ijesa Students Union for this honour and for organizing this remarkable event. Together, let us commit ourselves to the task of harnessing the future of Nigeria through investment in our youth and education. May we be guided by the words of Nelson Mandela, who said, "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." Let us embrace this power and transform Nigeria into a beacon of hope, progress, and prosperity." He said.

Other award recipients at the occasion include, Mr. Tijani Usman (General Beltij), the National President, Igbimo Oduduwa Youth Consultative Forum for the Excellence in

Leadership Award; Hon. Agbaje McThomas for the Outstanding Public Service Award; Chief Mrs Kehinde Olawale (Iyaloja Sabo Ilesa) for the Entrepreneurship and Business Development Award; Chief Olowoyeye Olawale (Babalaja Sabo Ilesa) for the Community Development and Philanthropy Award; High Chief Olugbenga Fadunsin Igbaroola (Arapate of Ijesaland) for the Cultural Preservation and Promotion Award; Mrs Sayo Ayeni for the Distinguished Woman of Influence Award; Prince Adebunsi Tobiloba ADELEYE, the Immediate IYF National Vice President for the Young Achiever's Award; Barrister Victor Abiola for the outstanding contribution to the Legal Profession. Award.

Kafin Hausa Lawmaker Assures Constituents Of Good Representation

By; JABIRU A. HASSAN, Dutse

The member representing Kafin Hausa Local Government Area at the Jigawa State House of Assembly, Honourable Muhammed Adamu Na'im has disclosed that he is ready to provide even representation for the development of his constituency.

He made the disclosure in his Sallah message to the government and people of Jigawa State on the occasion of Eid-el Kabir celebrations.

He announced his readiness to ensure that his people reap the best democratic dividends.

Honourable Adamu Na'im said that, "I joined politics in order to give my utmost contribution towards the progress of the people of Kafin Hausa Constituency, and I am certain that the present administration is making excellent efforts to meet the demands of its people". He emphasized.

Furthermore, the lawmaker thanked the entire people of Kafin Hausa Local

Government Area for supporting him during the last general elections and commended all his political associates, party leaders and elders for working selflessly towards the success of his political journey.

Honourable Na'im used the opportunity to felicitate the government and the people of Jigawa State on the occasion of Eid-el Kabir celebrations and called for more prayers towards the peaceful coexistence in the state and Nigeria in general.



Honourable Na'im

Colour, Class As Kwara Gov Joins Emir For Ilorin Durbar Horse Riding

*Durbar, a tool for socioeconomic growth - Gov AbdulRazaq

By **BILIQIS ONAOLAPO OLAJUMOKE, Ilorin**

Kwara State Governor and Nigeria Governors Forum (NGF) Chairman AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq on Thursday, joined the royal train of the Emir of Ilorin Dr Ibrahim Sulu-Gambari for the #IlorinDurbar, the annual sociocultural festival of the emirate involving colourful horse riding and other local displays.

The governor had earlier paid homage to the Emir, after which his delegation went back home to mount their horses as part of the cultural ceremony that attracted leading traditional title holders and thousands of Ilorin sons and daughters.

Mounted on the back of his

hugely decorated horse alongside his brother the Mutawali of Ilorin, Dr Alimi Abdulrazaq, the governor congratulated the people of the Emirate on the annual cultural festival which honours the Islamic monarchy of Sheikh Alimi, projects the valour of its people, unites the community, and boosts local commerce.

The AbdulRazaq administration has made cultural festivals across the state a key component of its drive for a greater Kwara, in which a handful of projects — visual arts centre, innovation hub, sugar film factory, and international conference center, among others — are being developed to build a new economy around tourism eco-system, technology and

innovation, and entrepreneurship.

Decked in glamorous cultural attires, the Abdulrazaqs paraded several horses mounted by young and old members of the family to welcome the Emir's large entourage of royal courtiers to their frontage, keeping alive the long-standing tradition that sees the monarch tour his community ahead of the grand parade and other ceremonies at his forecourt later in the afternoon.

The royal carriage touched base with many other family houses and Daudus, including Basambo, Abojumeji, Agaka Isale, Ajia Sakasaka, Bayero, Jiddah, Baboko, Magaji Ngeri, Taiwo, Ita Amodu, Afin, Ita Kure, among others.

A few royal chiefs were on the train such as the Ciroma of Ilorin, Mayaki of Ilorin, and Magaji Ngeri of Ilorin. The procession was televised live across all of the government's electronic media channels and a few other private ones.

Speaking to reporters as he joined the Emir, the Governor said: "We thank Almighty Allah for making us witness another Durbar of Ilorin Emirate. It is a significantly important culture to the people of Ilorin Emirate, which we commemorate every year. This event unifies and brings us all together to be our brother's keepers.

"We believe in our religion and of course our culture and our monarchy. At the backend of this is the economic benefit to the

state and the emirate as well. Business activities are doing very well, hotels, commercial buildings and relaxation centres alike. You can see how the people are happy, the merriment, the horse riders and everyone. We are having a good time today in Ilorin. In fact, we are enjoying it."

The Durbar holds as the state government opened up a few other centers for the citizens to have fun-filled Eid celebrations, including the newly developed flower garden and the amusement park.

The Ilorin Durbar is held every second day of Eid-ul-Adha, or festival of animal slaughtering, bringing together thousands of citizens of the city and visitors.



Police Arrest 269 Suspects For Rape, Kidnaping, Murder Others In Akwa Ibom

By; PATRICK TITUS, Uyo
 No fewer than 269 suspects have been arrested by the police in Akwa Ibom State for different offences, ranging from murder, kidnapping, armed robbery, cultism, rape, stealing and others between April and June this year. The Commissioner of Police in the state, CP Olateyo Durosini who disclosed this to journalists at the police headquarters in Ikot Akpan Abia, Uyo on Friday, said some of the suspects were charged to Court while others were still under investigation. CP Durosini made a breakdown of few cases to include arrest of three suspects on April 16, by operatives of the anti-kidnapping squad two days after they kidnapped the Vice

Chancellor of a private university in the state while on his way home. The suspects according to CP Durosini, were Prince Thursday Okon, a former domestic staff of the Vice Chancellor and two of his gang members, Saviour Sunday Luke and Richard Friday, all of Ikot Ebam Village in Mkpat Enin Local Government Area of the state. According to him, the sum of one million, two hundred and seventy thousand naira cash was recovered as part of the ransom paid, while Two Hundred and Fifty thousand naira was left in one of the Suspect's account. The Toyota Corolla used for the operation was also recovered. The VC has been reunited with

his family. Within the period also, the Police Commissioner said One Edu Udeme Ime of Mbak Etoi Village, Uyo was arrested on May 15, at Urua Ekpa junction by the Command's Quick Response Squad for being in possession of human skull. The Suspect, he added could not give any reasonable explanation as to why he was in possession of same but named their ring leader who is a suspected ritualist. In a coordinated operation, the duo of Enyeneokpo Ubeh of Ikot Antia Village and Gabriel Essien of Ndon Ebom village, both in Uruan LGA were arrested on May 3, by Operatives of the Anti-Narcotics Squad of the Command for vandalizing and stealing part of the airport gate

facing the Okobo axis of the Victor Attah International Airport. Some of the e vandalized parts have been recovered and efforts are being made to arrest other fleeing gang members. The CP stated. The CP also said, One Aniekan James of Ikot Ndot village in Ukanafun Local Government Area was arrested on June 16, for shooting his 35 years only Son, Odudu Aniekan James who have been having war of words with him. Suspect is suspected to be a serial murderer who have committed murders in Lagos and Aba in Abia State. Similarly, the CP said on June 13, five additional suspected cultists involved in the Nwaniba brutal cult clash which led to the loss of lives in the month of May were

arrested after a painstaking investigation. They include Kemfon Inyang Imeh a.k.a Laptop, Horgan Edem Obongedem a.k.a Eburutu, Brown Uduak Emmanuel a.k.a Spunky, Godwin Effiong Okon a.k.a Buy and Buy and Clement Sunday Udofia a.k.a Ikang Inwang - The Native Doctor who prepares their charms. CP Durosini maintained that the Command, in line with the directives of the current IGP to flush out criminal elements, would remain committed to providing the best of Policing Services for the good People of Akwa Ibom State in line with international best practices, stressing that all suspects would be charged to court at the completion of Investigation.



Emefiele: Ensure Return Of Access, GT Bank MD's For Immediate Questioning, Frank Tells DSS, UK Govt

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

A political activist and former Deputy National Publicity Secretary of the All Progressives Congress (APC), Comrade Timi Frank, has raised the alarm on the need to invite both the Managing Director of Access Bank and his counterpart at the Guaranteed Trust Bank (GTB) following the arrest and the ongoing probe of the erstwhile Governor of the Central Bank, Godwin Emefiele.

Frank said the probe of the two bank leaders was necessary based on allegations that the duo were allegedly main accomplices in aiding the atrocious acts of subversion and misappropriation of public funds meant for the welfare of the Nigerian people.

In a statement signed and released Friday in Abuja, Timi Frank also appealed to the government of United Kingdom (UK) to cooperate with Nigeria security agencies to immediately invite the duo for questioning.

Frank claimed that invitation for probe had been sent to the two managing directors.

According to him, this key information also discloses that even when invitation

from the Department of State Service has been extended to these individuals to report and answer to allegations bordering on their involvement with the erstwhile Governor of the CBN, active plans are underway to undermine the invitation extended to them whilst resorting to taking refuge in the UK specifically.

"It is important to note that even when invitations have been extended to these individuals to report on Monday the 3rd of July for questioning, the MD Gtbank who was sighted today chilling in the streets of the UK had repeatedly reaffirmed his unwillingness to return to the country for any such cross examination by the DSS.

"We are also aware that four other Managing Directors of tier one banks in the country have been fingered as direct accomplices and conduit for Mr. Emefiele with the Access and Gtbank MD's playing the greater roles in aiding to defraud and fleece the nation fraudulently.

"Therefore, I'd like to call on the UK government to kindly assist the Nigerian government by disallowing any form of extended stay for these individuals who are currently in the UK for personal purposes.

"The UK government must be seen in aiding the Nigerian government by disallowing any corrupt individual, whether Private or Public servants by making the UK a haven for corrupt officials.

"As stakeholders in fighting for a corrupt free nation, we're determined to do all we can in assisting the FG eradicate all forms of corruption in the Nigerian society.

"We must also note the acquisition of two private jets by the Gtbank Managing Director with a value of over \$80million which is not officially captured anywhere in their books. This fraudulent acquisition must also be properly ascertained to determine the genuineness of such largesse.

Frank also called on the State Security Service (DSS) "to do all within its powers in fishing out and bringing the enemies of Nigeria to book. We have had enough of individuals taking the country for a ride and benefitting solely for personal aggrandisement.

"I am convinced that the Department of



Timi Frank

State Service will take this information seriously and act accordingly in compelling these individuals to answer to their fraudulent roles in line with the provisions of the law.

"We have other key information at our disposal should the DSS oblige."

Families Weep As Corpses Of Salvation Army Officers Arrive Akwa Ibom

**Akpabio commiserates families*

By: PATRICK TITUS, Uyo

For the family of Capt. Edet Akpan Umana in Ikot Uboh, Nsit Ubium Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State, the tragedy of June 28, 2023 has brought an irreparable loss too difficult to bear.

Capt. Edet Akpan Umana and his wife, Capt. Mfonobong Edet Akpan were among the 13 senior officers of The Salvation Army Church, Eket District, Akwa Ibom State who died at Wednesday's auto crash along Lagos-Benin expressway while returning from a missionary assignment in Lagos.

Our correspondent learnt that the accident occurred in the early hours of the fateful day around Ovia Bridge near Benin City, Edo State, when the driver of the church-owned 18-seater bus lost control and collided with a trailer.

It was further learnt that 13 persons including the driver, a little girl who travelled with her parents and a pregnant woman were consumed by the accident. Pastor Ime Isaiah, brother to Capt. Mfonobong Edet Akpan who spoke to our correspondent,



said the family is deeply saddened by the incident which took the lives of both husband and wife, leaving two children behind.

Pastor Isaiah said, the 13 corpses

according to the Chief Mortuary Attendant at Emmanuel Hospital, Eket were brought on Saturday amidst tears.

"As my blood sister, the entire family is in grief with

uncontrollably pains as both husband and wife died in the crash.

"What I have seen in the mortuary today, has reminded me that there is nothing in this life.

"When I saw my sister and her husband naked in the mortuary, it further went to fulfill the scripture that naked shall a man come to the world, naked shall he go back.

"But one thing I have also learnt is that if you have money while on earth, eat and serve your God very well because no one knows tomorrow. If I was told that my dear sister and her husband will die that day, I wouldn't have believed but here it is, they are lying in mortuary, no life," Pastor Isaiah said.

Also mourning, is the family of Samingo Etukakpan in Eket, who lost five members to the tragedy.

He lamented he described as a great moment of grief.

According to Etukakpan, since the sad news came to the family, things have not been the same.

"Sorrow, pain and lamentation now take the place of joy that families were before the tragedy

struck.

Meanwhile, the President of the Senate, Godswill Akpabio, has commiserated the leadership and members of The Salvation Army, over the death of their officers and members in an auto crash along the Lagos-Benin expressway, describing it as shocking and tragic.

Senator Akpabio expressed this through a statement from his media unit, obtained by our correspondent.

According to the statement, "the President of the 10th Senate, Godswill Akpabio, received with great shock, the news of the death of members of this great commission in a fatal road accident around Ovia Bridge, near Benin City, which claimed the lives of 12 officers of the church, the driver and a baby while returning from a missionary assignment in Lagos to Akwa Ibom states."

"I commiserate Commissioner Daniel Kasuso, the Territorial Commander. I pray for the repose of the souls of the departed faithfuls. I pray that God grants those they left behind, the fortitude to bear this great loss.

Kwara Gov Restates Support For Tourism As Lafiagi Holds Sallah Nko Festival

***Emir hails AbdulRazaq's 'surprise' attendance, constant support**

By; BILIQIS ONAOLAPO
OLAJUMOKE, Ilorin

Kwara State Governor, AbdulRazaq at the weekend said the administration will double down in its efforts to make Kwara a tourism hub through the rich cultures of its peoples.

Speaking in Lafiagi in Edu Local Government Area of the state during the Emirate's Sallah Nko festival, the Governor said the state is endowed with beautiful cultures that can attract tourists and boost local economy.

Sallah Nko Festival is a yearly socio-cultural gathering where all sons and daughters of Lafiagi Emirate, including village heads, pay homage to the Emir as part of the Eid celebration. This year's edition involved the turbaning of some of its prominent persons as title holders in appreciation of their contributions to the community.

"We will continue to promote our culture. Next year again, this will be more elaborate. We want all Nigerians to come to Lafiagi, as they are coming for the Ilorin Durbar. There is an airport here. So, you can fly in and fly out," he told reporters on the sideline of the programme held in the forecourt of the Emir's palace.

Clad in a flowing surf-blue babanriga to match a white turban that reflected his nobility as the Sadaukin Lafiagi, the Governor congratulated the Emir Alhaji Mohammed Kudu Kawu and the people of Lafiagi on the successful event.

"Our message is always about peace and development. Many people have been honoured here because of their efforts in building the society, their community, and the state in general," he added.

AbdulRazaq again sympathised with the people of Lafiagi on the recent floods that ravaged farmlands and some parts of the Emirate, restating government's commitment to always support the victims amid other intergovernmental efforts to curb the perennial flood.

His message came a few days after Deputy Governor Kayode Alabi led a government's delegation to Lafiagi to commiserate with the people.

At the event were government officials and other dignitaries, such as the House of Representatives member for Edu/Moro/Patigi Federal

Constituency, Hon. Ahmed Adamu Saba; TIC Chairman for Edu and new Badakoshin Lafiagi Alhaji Aliyu Mohammed Labasa; Retired Navy Officer and Baraya Lafiagi Abdulkadir Umar; Director Income Tax Kwara State Internal Revenue Service and Dan Adanla Lafiagi Alhaji Mohammed Shehu Usman; and Dr. Ibrahim Tswachi Zubairu, who is Chigari Lafiagi. Emir of Lafiagi Alhaji Mohammed Kudu Kawu, for his part, said the Emirate chose to honour its eminent children with chieftaincy titles because they have distinguished themselves in their chosen fields.

He pledged that he and his people would continue to support the administration and prayed God to continue to uplift the Governor.

"Today, His Excellency paid us a surprise visit. We are deeply honoured, and we appreciate him. We will continue to pray for his success. He has shown love for the people of Lafiagi, and indeed we are grateful and honoured today. We wish him long life, prosperity, and more success," the Emir said.

"We are happy with what the Governor has done for us, and we will continue to reach out to him in order to seek for more interventions where necessary.

"On the fuel subsidy issue, it is biting so hard, we are also aware that your government and the Federal Government are working out modalities that will make it easier for us. May Allah guide you and make it easy."



Christians Join Shi'ites Youth As They Celebrate Prophet Isah, Annual Sallah Feast



By: SANIALIYU, Zaria

Youths Forum of the Islamic Movement (IMN) Zaria branch under Leadership of Sheikh Ibrahim El-Zakzaky have organized an annual Sallah Feast and Birthday anniversary of Prophet Isah (A.S).

Speaking on the anniversary at the occasion, Malam Abdulhamid Bello said, the event was organized to foster unity in the society.

He said, people are out of context of the historical record that people of the past were very united, but some segments have ignored the historical records of religion.

According to Malam Bello, the Prophet Isah has a special position from God that has done so many visions and miracles.

He recalled that Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) granted Christians an approval to serve in the Madina Central Mosque just to poster unity among themselves.

"Islam is a religion of peace and it is not forcing anybody to become a muslim but only by a concept and acceptance". Malam Abdulhamid Bello enjoined Muslims and Christians to be one and maintain the peaceful coexistence for rapid growth and development. Speaking on the division created by political class

which divides people on religion and ethnicity, he called on the Christians to understand that if a leader as a Muslim or Christian does wrong or bad, he does it for himself not for the religion.

While calling on religious leaders to wake up and challenge the injustice by those in the government and their cronies, he said, "Every religion has come with its guide and ideology of good governance to citizens".

In his remarks, Rev. Awwalu Farah said Shiites are lovers of peace and Jesus.

He reminded the followers to repent and embrace the right path on religion.

Rev. Farah prayed for peace in Nigeria and beyond, for progress and development in our country.

On his part, Rev. Stephen of ERCC/LCC Samaru emphasized brotherhood and unity as Muslims are brothers to Christians.

He said, with peace, religious practices will be enjoyed by all.

The celebration had in attendance, ECWA Bishara Samaru, ERCC/LCC Samaru, St. Mary's Catholic Church Ganga Uku, EYN Church Hayin Dogo Samaru, Makidoniya Baptist Muchiya and Living Faith Church Hayin Dogo Samaru.

Fix Insecurity, Electricity Issues To Attract Foreign Investors To Nigeria, Top Medical Practitioners Task Tinubu

By: BAYO AKAMO
Ibadan

Two leading Nigerian medical doctors, the Chairman of Ibadan Central Hospitals, Dr. Abib Olamitoye and the founder, Coxwell Hospital, Abeokuta, Prof Leke Badmos have tasked President Bola Tinubu to fix insecurity and electricity challenges facing Nigeria

The Medical Doctors gave the task on Saturday while speaking at the grand opening of a multimillion Naira Coxwell Hospital, Abeokuta, Ogun State, According to them, there is the need for Nigeria to overcome the twin-issue of insecurity and electricity that have been militating against the progress of the nation as the issues have been scaring foreign investors from doing businesses with the country and that addressing the two issues will no doubt attract foreign investors to Nigeria.

The founder, Coxwell Hospital, Abeokuta, Prof Leke Badmos while leading journalists on facility tour of the

hospital, declared that the project would reduce medical tourism, as some medical doctors, based in Canada have indicated interests to come to Nigeria and work in the hospital, with the purpose of gaining more knowledge.

Expressing optimism that Nigeria will be great, Prof Badmos said, "Rome wasn't built in a day. If you look at countries outside Nigeria, most of what they did there were done by the citizens".

According to Prof Badmos, "The government just made rules, laws and created enabling environment. If all these things are put in place, people will do so many things. I trust this current government and I am sure they will do their best".

"As a Nigerian, we should be thinking about how to help and contribute to national development because I believe that we are the government. I am sure this will go a long way to improve the health care facility", he said.

Prof Badmos added, "Coxwell Hospital is special because it is a

specialist hospital. It is special because it is located in Abeokuta, which is a cradle of knowledge, because the people would benefit from it and also because it is going to bring a lot of Western inputs".

"This is also a general hospital, but it is going to have obstetricians and gynecologists with a lot of stuff that can be compared with what we have outside like Canada and United States. There will be a lot of orthopaedic opportunities and internal medicine. We hope people would be coming from overseas to work here", adding, "with this development, it will reduce the number of people that will be traveling outside the country for treatments".

"People don't have to think that they have to pay through all their nose; we are going to make everything simple. The idea was conceived by my late father, who was a man of the people and my dear friend, Dr. Abib Olamitoye, who has been so supportive. We are going to make sure that it is affordable. Of course, I

am a man of the people and my aim is to give back to Abeokuta and this country. It has to be affordable and we are going to make sure that we make it affordable. He maintained, "the Federal Government is trying their best in terms of health facilities and I want to use this medium to advise the government to continue trying and the citizens should also continue to try their own." The Chairman of Ibadan Central Hospitals, Dr Abib Olamitoye while speaking said, "If the Federal Government could fix the two issues, wealthy Nigerians abroad would not need to be told to come and invest in the country". Dr Olamitoye stressed that many wealthy Nigerians that are based abroad have not been coming back to the country to invest because of insecurity and challenges of the epileptic electricity in the country. He stressed that Prof Badmos established the specialist hospital with modern day equipment for residents of Abeokuta, adding that the founder has spent more than 30 years abroad and he decided to give back to the society.



Prof Leke Badmos and Dr Abib Olamitoye at the opening of the hospital in Abeokuta

Akpabio's Emergence As Senate President, Great Relief To APC - National Chairman

**Says contest for offices over, it's time for governance*

By: BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

National Chairman of the All Progressives Congress (APC), Senator Abdulahi Adamu has disclosed that the emergence of Senator Godswill Akpabio as Senate President was a great relief to the party.

Senator Adamu said this on Saturday, when the President of the Senate, Godswill Akpabio led members of the Senate on Sallah homage to his Keffi residence in Nasarawa State.

The APC National Chairman declared that it is now time for members of the National Assembly to collaborate with the executive arm of government in the overall interest of Nigerians.

He emphasized that the contest for offices are over, it is now time for governance and that the time has come for effective collaboration between the Legislature and the Executive in the overall interest of our people.

"I congratulate you and your deputy on your emergence as the President of the Senate and Deputy President of the Senate respectively. Your emergence was a great relief to the party. Contests for offices are over, it is now time for governance. There must be effective collaboration between the Legislature and the Executive in the overall interest of our people", he said.

Senator Adamu added, "Nigerians expect a lot through you and that can only be achieved through a united legislature and the executive working in sync in bipartisan

manner".

"As the President of the Senate and Chairman of the National Assembly, you have the knowledge, experience and what it takes for the two arms of government to work in harmony for the peace and development of our country,

Speaking during the Sallah homage, President of the Senate, Senator Godswill Akpabio said the 10th Senate will support the President Bola Tinubu-led administration to succeed

"As I have been saying, the 10th National Assembly will support the President Bola Tinubu-led administration to succeed. We will put laws in place to support the Renewed Hope agenda of this administration in the overall interest of national peace, unity and development", he said.

Senator Akpabio while expressing happiness for the opportunity to pay homage to the APC National Chairman, describing him as a man of integrity that piloted the recent zoning arrangements in the National Assembly that produced results.

"Sallah is a period to exchange love which is what Islam enjoins us to do. We are here to pay Sallah homage to a man of honour. To give respect to whom it is due. We thank the leadership of the party and the National Working Committee (NWC) through you for the role you played which led to the success of the National Assembly leadership elections. We also thank the Almighty Allah for



APC National Chairman, Senator Abdulahi Adamu with Senator Godswill Akpabio during the Sallah homage on Saturday.

keeping you alive and we pray that He keeps you alive in good health for more contributions to the development of the youth of

this country.

The Senate President was accompanied to the Keffi home of the party chairman by the

deputy President of the Senate, Jibrin Barau, Senators Dave Umahi, Ali Ndume, and Opeyemi Bamidele.

ASUU Rejects NUC Academic Standards

By: AMOSTAUNA, Kaduna

The Core Curriculum Minimum Academic Standards prepared by the National Universities Commission (NUC), has been rejected by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU). According to the union, it is nightmarish, a threat to quality university education, and an erosion of powers of the university Senate in Nigerian universities.

Prof. Emmanuel Osodeke, the national president of ASUU, in a statement on Friday, opined that it was inexplicable that NUC pre-packaged 70 per cent CCMAS contents were being imposed on the Nigerian University System, saying that university Senates that are statutorily responsible for academic programme development, were left to work on only 30 per cent.

The statement believed that there were growing concerns about the numerous

shortcomings and gross inadequacies of the CCMAS documents.

The statement said, "ASUU is not unaware that setting academic standards and assuring quality in the NUS is within the remit of the NUC. Section 10(1) of the Education (National Minimum Standards and Establishment of Institutions) Act, Cap E3, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria 2004, enjoins the NUC to lay down the minimum standards for all universities and other degree awarding institutions in the Federation and conduct the accreditation of their degrees and other academic awards."

It noted that the process of generating the standard is as important (if not more important) than what is produced as "minimum standards".

ASUU stated that the NUC has recently, through some hazy procedures, churned out CCMAS documents containing 70%

curricular contents in 17 academic fields with little or no input from the universities, stressing that the academic disciplines covered are (i) Administration and Management, (ii) Agriculture, (iii) Allied Health Sciences, (iv) Architecture, (v) Arts, (vi) Basic Medical Sciences, (vii) Computing, (viii) Communication and Media Studies, (ix) Education, (x) Engineering and Technology, (xi) Environmental Sciences, (xii) Law, (xiii) Medicine and Dentistry, (xiv) Pharmaceutical Science, (xv) Sciences, (xvi) Social Sciences, and (xvii) Veterinary Medicine.

It explained that many university administrators, though dissatisfied, were shying away from making public comments on CCMAS, saying that some university Senates did not hide their displeasure with the ongoing efforts to impose CCMAS on Nigerian universities by the NUC.

It said that the CCMAS is a nightmarish model of curriculum reengineering as an aberration to the Nigerian University System, pointing out that the CCMAS documents are flawed both in process and in content. There is no basis for the 70% "untouchable CCMAS," which cannot stand the test of critical scrutiny of university Senates.

It suggested that NUC should encourage universities, as currently being done by the University of Ibadan, to propose innovations for the review of their programmes and proposals from across universities should then be sieved and synthesised by more competent expert teams to review the existing BMAS documents and/or create new ones as appropriate.

It said that the difference here is the bottom-up approach, unlike the top-bottom or take-it-or-leave-it model of the CCMAS.

Prof Adamu Gwarzo: A humanist That Deserves Applaud

By; AUWALAHMED IBRAHIM

All the religions of the world teach doing good to people. Doing good is an indelible mark that never erases in the heart of the receiver. I once read that, "It pays to be Good" in the book of Noel Streatfeild written in 1936. While, an African proverb says, "sow good and you will definitely reap good", for sure, good people deserve commendation for others to emulate.

Being a good person entails different meanings with various analogies to many people. A good person can be anyone that gives comfort to people's pains, help them achieve their targets and or assist them reach their dream's line.

To partake in building a country is a responsibility of all citizens but only the good people do. Building a nation demands much from each citizen.

We can make our nation to be what we want it to be if all of us can put all hands on deck and contribute to it's needs.

With the little contribution everyone of us can give; we can make impact on our lives and of others. One of the good thing to do for our country now is to assist people to fulfill their educational needs.

Education is priceless no matter the prize, it is a rare gem that contributes to national growth and human development, without it people become despair, insecurity permeate and atrocities manifest like hills.

The people that provide education are philanthropists; referred to altruistic because only God can reward their sacrifices, even if it pays the proprietors the schools pay the government, the people and the nation in all ramifications.

The schools they build provide jobs, help the government in it's responsibility of providing education, and the most important; the proprietors pay revenue and provide employment for the citizens.

Professor Adamu Gwarzo; a young northern Nigerian professor from Kano State has become the beacon of the new modern Nigerian education with the vigor to help and provide a system of education that sells in the world.

With versatile professional experiences as a professor, a journalist, administrator and a business mogul, Gwarzo tireless efforts brought a new dawn in Africa.

Gwarzo is an educational entrepreneur whose global contributions are changing the landscape of African dogma of education.

With the establishment of Maryam Abacha American University (MAAUN) in Maradi, Republic of Niger and another University in Togo. Professor Adamu Abubakar Gwarzo had set a good pace in African domain of learning.

With the passion and quest to evolve education to meet the demands of the modern world employment in bilingualism; Gwarzo's perpetuation rekindled another hope for Nigerians for establishing another American university in Kano, Nigeria to meet the yearning of



Professor Gwarzo

students and world employment criteria. The university offers more than 15 courses.

Recently, in another development, the Federal Government of Nigeria through the National Universities Commission (NUC) on 9th June, 2023, issued operating license to Canadian University of Nigeria, Abuja and Franco-British International University, Kaduna own by Professor Adamu Gwarzo.

His first outstanding university in Niger, Maradi is leading the road in changing the tentacles of African stereotype of knowledge to suit the 21st Century education curricula by combining languages to teach and study.

The University which was given the name of the wife of Former Head of Nigeria between November, 1993 - June, 1998 (late General Sani Abacha of blessed memory), Maryam Abacha American University of Niger (MAAUN), Maradi is the first kind of private university in the whole of Africa established to expand the

expensive world languages in the African nations with new methodology of teaching.

The remarkable achievements of Professor Adamu Gwarzo are not about expanding knowledge in Africa but the generosity of bringing far to near and helping people to actualize their dreams in education and by touching millions of lives through his Foundation.

With millions of admission seekers in Nigeria; Adamu Gwarzo is closing the border-gap of crossing to outside universities.

His magnanimity in dolling dollars to assist education, less-privileged, women and reducing Climate Change Effect are making difference in African limelight. His vigor is to promote education, his passion is to fulfill heart desire and his focus is to rekindle the hope of UNESCO and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Africa.

Through his unwavering contributions to education; Prof. Gwarzo had many titles

for appreciations, his name is written with gold for everlasting memory and he is blessed for his sacrifices. The President Private Universities in Nigeria got many accolades including the pioneer of bilingual universities in Africa, many traditional titles and international awards.

The Adamu Gwarzo Foundation has become a pain reliever to people, through the foundation millions are being spent to meet people's need and bring succor to African nations. His support to Nigerian education is cristal for everyone to see and to testify the fact of Gwarzo's humanitarian assistance in Africa.

In 2021, Adamu Gwarzo Foundation donated a 66-seater luxurious bus worth N50 million and an ambulance worth N20 million to Kano University of Science and Technology Wudil (KUST).

The foundation also donated a 60-seater luxurious bus to Kaduna Polytechnic, also, the Foundation donated a 66-seater luxurious bus worth N50 million to Al-Istiqama University Sumaila, Kano State. Also, Gwarzo Foundation donated 60-seater Mercedes-Benz luxury busses each to Bayero University, Kano and a public Nigerian university.

However, with the interest to support books publication, Adamu Gwarzo Foundation supported the publication of two books; Pantami: The Trials and Triumphs of a Digital Economy Maestro," written by Mal. Yushau Shuaib and "eNaira Revolution: A Peep into Nigeria's Cashless Future," authored by Mr. Abdulrahman Abdulaheem with Two Million Naira. However in 2022, Gwarzo Foundation empowered 100 indigent women of Kano state with Fifty Thousand Naira (N50,000) each.

In 2022, Gwarzo Foundation donated N1 million for the stranded Nigerian medical student in Russia.

Professor Adamu Gwarzo compassionate feeling is unmeasured but for God and Africa, In June, Gwarzo gifted a house to one of his security guard for his dedicated service. Gwarzo sympathizes with the poor, assists the vulnerable and cushions the pains effect of people no matter their tribes, region and religion.

He is considered as an extraordinary human being whose vision is to build bridges for people to cross. He is a God sent to Nigeria to unchained the manacles of progress, disaster and retrogressive education and climate change in Africa, with these, Professor Adamu Gwarzo deserved applause and prayers.

Auwal Ahmed Ibrahim is a lecturer of Kaduna Polytechnic, Mass Communication Department and can be reached via auwalahmed@kadunapolytechnic.edu.ng

Delta Local Councils N40bn Credit Facility: Intrinsic Worth And Crucial Concerns

By; JEROME-MARIO CHIJOKE UTOMI

Even though it has been noted long ago by the sage that no individual, society, state or nation becomes great by living on borrowed funds, a critical look by this piece at the recent approval of a credit facility amounting to N40 billion by the Delta State House of Assembly for the Delta state Governor, Sheriff Francis Oborevori, for the purpose of assisting the 25 local government councils settle their accumulated pensions owed to retired primary school teachers and local government employees in the state, reveals that the state government's action was laced with ingrained merit(s).

Also in agreement with the above assertion are relations, friends and believers in the doctrines of common good, justice and equity, conversant with the excruciating economic hardship suffered by local government pensioners in Delta State as a result of this protracted disappointments and local government's inability to pay these pensioners their statutory entitlement.

To this group, the governor rendered to each of the local government pensioners; what is properly theirs, what is equal, fair and commensurate with the service they rendered to the state and their father land.

For me, Oborevori's, latest action when broadly viewed, tells us as a nation that the country's administrative structure is dysfunctional, that local councils across the nation are constrained by a centralising constitution that over-empowers the centre weakens the component states and local Government Areas that lack the authority to control their own resources, or secure lives and property within their territories.

The action by Delta state government's becomes even more appreciated when one remembers that it exposed how financially emasculated and economically unhealthy the Local Government Councils across the nation has become, and more than anything else elicits call on the Federal Government to cede more revenue generation powers/privileges to the local Government Councils in the country.

Call it restructuring, fiscal federalism or structural reconfiguration, you may not be far from the truth.

Supporting the urgency of the above assertion is the ugly report that the 25 Local Government Councils in the state (Delta) owed retired local government workers by twenty five Local Government Councils in the state N51 billion since 2016.

The unfortunate aspect of this narrative is that this local government Councils insolvency- challenge is not Delta state-specific but exists in both covert and overt



Delta Governor

forms and degrees among all the local government councils in the Federation.

This fact tells the Tinubu led administration to admit, appreciate and contemplate the need to have the country restructured.

Essentially, a peep into such conversation will also reveal that while many argue that the nation is asymmetrically structured and standing in an inverted pyramid shape with more power concentrated at the top and the base not formidable enough, making collapse inevitable if urgent and fundamental steps are not taken, some feel that restructuring is a panacea for enduring nationhood, and need not be a one-off thing. Hence, must be handled the same way one seeks equity; everyone is obligated to come to the table with clean hands; meaning, tolerance, openness and accommodation.

To the rest, Nigeria has a choice, to restructure by plan or by default.

In their explanation, a planned restructuring will be collaborative, systematic, and redesign Nigeria, yet keep it whole. A default restructuring will happen, certainly not by choice, but definitely like an uncontrolled experiment

with attendant risks and indefinite outcomes. The challenge confronting Nigeria now is that the long-overdue restructuring will happen when the cost of not restructuring far outweighs the cost of restructuring.

Former President Muhammadu Buhari at one particular occasion noted that 'no human law or edifice is perfect. Whatever structure we develop must periodically be perfected according to the changing circumstances and the country's socio-economic developments'.

This piece believes that the hour has come for President Bola Ahmed Tinubu led Federal Government to identify the imperfection in the nation's Federal system and have them amended. This is inevitable and eminently desirable.

Catalyzing the process of reforming this changing circumstance as stated by the former president should be the preoccupation of the FG and also acts as the propeller to having our federal framework reworked.

The above is imperative as the current posturing has made the government at the centre become the dispenser of goodness by proxy while leaving the federating

states idle and lazy which is against the spirit of the federal system of government and the expectation of the masses.

As an incentive, what the masses are saying and wanting in my understanding is that the padding of the second schedule of the exclusive legislative list, of our 1999 constitution with sixty-eight (68) items has made Abuja suffer 'political obesity' and need to shed some weight via power devolution.

What the people are saying is that the over blotted exclusive list has made our nation to currently stand in an inverted pyramid shape with more power concentrated at the top and the base not formidable enough making collapse inevitable if urgent and fundamental steps are not taken.

What the proponents of restructuring are saying is that the majority of the items are too trivial for the Federal Government to handle and should serve the greater good of the people if left in the hands of both the state and the local government. This is the hub of the masses' expectations.

Items such as; Police and some government security services, mines and minerals; including oil fields, oil mining geological surveys, control of parks, stamp duties, public holidays, taxation of incomes, profits and capital gains, and insurance among others to my mind should find their ways back to the states and the local councils.

However, it will not be out of place if the states and local councils are allowed to handle all these and made to pay taxes when necessary to the federal government coffers. By doing so, the federal government will be freed from handling the tiny details which prevent them from looking at the bigger national issues. In the same vein, it will empower states/regions and local councils that have been technically rendered redundant.

Finally, this piece holds the opinion that the template to solve these problems is already there: the Report of the 2014 National Conference. The holistic implementation of that report is germane to the survival of Nigeria.

Utomi Jerome-Mario is the Programme Coordinator (Media and Policy), Social and Economic Justice Advocacy (SEJA), Lagos. He could be reached via: jeromeutomi@yahoo.com/08032725374

Adamawa APC Ministerial Slot: Sen Moallayidi

An APC Man With Loyalty

By: Adaji Usman

The truth be told and states the obviously so that people with good morals with not be pricked or be policed by their conscience as against the many unfunded stories. I'm telling the story and change the narratives that Senator Abubakar Ahmad Moallayidi is one of the All Progressives Congress staunch Loyalist from Adamawa that the party is fortunate to get.

My close watch of Moallayidi an ABU graduate of high repute and a nationalist who earned respect across the length and breadth of Nigeria over the years has been a man with a strong fraternity to party politics. He is one Nigerian who defined his brand of politics within the context of political party affinity. Once he discovers himself in one, he dies by its principles and its ideologies. This is where the All progressives Congress, APC, the party is lucky to have found him a good Man and part of the party's camaraderie with unblinking loyalty.

Ahmad after the merger in 2015 remains committed to preaching and defending the party's ideals. Is no doubt one of the stanchion Man in the country and his enduring loyalty to the party is a glaring fact he is a die-hard party stalwart.

Knowing this Man from the cradle of his political lifeline to date, I can comfortably say is one of the Last Man standing for APC in Adamawa and indeed for the nation come rain come sun shines. Ahmad has sold out his conscience to build an APC of goodness for the Nigerian people. I have seen his body language, his composure, and his political temperament can go to any length for the APC to remain a national party. Amidst whatever situation, Ahmad can be there for the party he is doing well in working for Nigerians to get out of the woods of stagnation.

With no single political appointment or holding any position, Nigerians have discovered a leader, a Man with a passion to serve, deliver, and recreate a new haven that truly suggests the country with multiple mineral and human resources to build a nation of our fore father's dream is possible because of the Man in Ahmad

His knowledge in government is measureless, his experience in leadership is far-flung and his far-reaching experience in business to woo investors of all races and countries has stretched out to many nations of the world. More so that he attended leadership and business courses in Havard, UK, etc. It was there learned the rudiments, got the leadership skills in strategic thinking critical aware of the country dire needs of good leaders.

Senator Ahmad is one Nigerian Man who is a colonnade of APC with his Mr "strategist" titles that has become a slogan of political change mantra in Nigeria, most especially Adamawa State, his land of birth. The Man has no doubt a discovery of wisdom, one of the Adamawa's Son that is immensely contributing to liberating, emancipating, and salvaging the entire country from the crutches of leadership defects and putting life, meaning, and adding value into the political lifeline of Nigeria because of his firm belief in APC.

In him is the girdle of strength to lead well, he holds in his hand the rod of direction that will help in taking APC to a haven of rest for all of Nigerians. The party Man

despite what people consider weakness in his silence and muteness in delving into national issues. I see it as a virtue of greatness he owned that is using to camp down and stabilize many uproars within and outside the party that will possibly consume the party whenever he talks unduly.

As they say "silence is golden", to me it's not only golden, there is power in silence. This is the power Ahmad got that is having an effective thinking for all Nigerians. A brainy gift that is helping APC at the National and state level because of his staunch loyalty to the party.

It is beyond question that he is another beacon of hope, a glorious flying horse for APC. A trailblazer with all the threads of good leadership. Giving life to APC, the party he sojourned fighting tooth and nail to sustain its glorious future for Nigeria and to all Nigerians.

With his resilience and his good intentions for APC and Nigeria, I'm glad to say that Ahmad and many others abound in the country to give hope to Nigerians that the country can be better under President Ahmed Bola Tinubu, Nigeria's ashes of ugliness can be replaced with beauty because people like Modi are ready and willing to support the presence government to succeed.

I'm calling on President Bola Ahmed Tinubu to acknowledge the proficiency and accomplishment of Nigerians like Sen. Ahmad Abubakar Moallayidi for the ministerial appointment into the Federal Executive Council, FEC of the federal republic of Nigeria.

Ahmad is one unique brand whose political lifestyle is full of sincerity and building on trust in who he is. This Man is one for all equal to All Progress Congress, APC, a die-hard of the party since it was merged with other parties".

Ahmad represented Southern Senatorial Zone, but his growing political tentacles were clipped because of religion, ethnicity, and all sort of primordial sentiments worked against him and denied him to secure his second term bid of his Senatorial race. This easygoing and intelligent Adamawa politician has achieved strides of development while a Senator serving the Southern zone. He suffered from archaic mentality of people beclouded with all sense of bigotry, he found himself as what others will describe as "a politician in the disadvantaged zone of Adamawa, an area considered a Christian dominated with nine Local Governments. He will not have in any way a smooth ride to a successfully win the election under any party or guise. The forces that worked against him are purely ethnic and religious".

The rare opportunity he got in 2019 to win the election was associated with Insecurity and the Buhari Mantra of Change. But the subsequent election of the APC family also contributed to his failure because of internal squabbles".

I can now see hope for Nigeria because there is a Man (Ahmad) dying to keep the flag of APC flying as a pillar that can bring or spark up the light of progress in all parts of Nigeria.

May I now shout it out and make it boldly in the tablet's heart of all and sundry that Mallam Ahmad remains the best loyal Man of APC, the last Man that can ever stand for the party in the interest of all

party men. This is where I cherish his brand of politics. A party Man at all times, his belief in serving any political party is what will birth out good leaders that will serve the nation.

Ahmad can be an excellent APC Man from Adamawa for ministerial nomination going by his political and career pedigree over the years. His loyalty to the party is unquestionable with no traces of doubt".

I can see his vision and dream of a new APC have made him the number one party Man I cherish.

May I, therefore, say that the APC at the national level should have confidence in the likes of Ahmad to bring about a new rebirth of the party with their honest and constructive advise. May I also say that President Bola to have people like this Young in working closely with in other to help him pilot the affairs of this nation. He got whole lot of ideas in terms of leadership and knowledge to give good support.

If Ahmad will have the opportunity of working closely with Tinubu I'm confidence he will make sure that the government will certainly be of the people by the people and for the people. APC will never be a backward government with him as a Man holding tight to its membership card. Nigeria will be secure, free, and well positioned to grow in all facets of life. The moribund companies and industries owned by the Federal Government will be revived. Life and human sanctity will be meaningful and economy vibrancy will take the lead. It is what I see burning out from this great Man.

This APC Man has the wherewithal, Ahmad is more than able to help in turning around Nigeria of today facing all lots of challenges for the World development. He has what it takes to give out for the party to attract global attention, he is well equipped to make Nigeria earned the world news of positive stories of a country with Boko Haram bedeviled the country with many attacks, and change the narrative that country will capture the attention of the global economy.

Senator Ahmed Abubakar chaired the FCT Area Council election in 2015/2016 producing the best result of 5 and eventually 6 out of 6 area councils.

A very resourceful, prudent, transparent, and down-to-earth Senator".



Senator Moallayidi

He managed the sourced available resources to the success of the party. The point he was almost perceived to be an FCT-based politician because of his role in anything that concerns the party right from inception to date.

He is the Managing Director of ICC and Eagle Square. A place he has successfully managed with a lot of revenue generation for the government".

The chairman of the Arewa new hope agenda. A detribalised, dedicated, and committed to his belief in the APC.

A man that should form Tinubu's cabinet to drive home his pro-people program of renewed hope.

I call on the government lead by His excellency Sen Ahmed Tinubu to ensure inclusion of this all important person in his cabinet. This is my little contribution to nation building" he stressed

I see Ahmad as the best, the hope, and the life-changing supportive gear of the country's development. His stay in APC is salvation has come to all Nigerians. My respect to this party Man. My call to Nigerians, most especially the people of Adamawa State is just simple, thump up for Ahmad the valued APC Man, he is giving much to development of this country in a silence mode,

Ahmad and APC are for the emancipation of Nigeria. The last and final option. This is my stand, my honest view in the interest of every one of us in the country.

I celebrate this Man for being loyal to APC from inception up to this time. He has no doubts tendencies of shifting loyalty to another party. There is no iota of doubt that he will ever leave, he is standing strong to defend the party at all costs.

Ahmad Abubakar Moallayidi, the party man, is the role model of Nigerian Youths in politics.

Adaji Usman, APC-FCT Publicity Secretary. Write a this from Abuja-Nigeria

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

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

POLITICAL RATE

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

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

NNPC And The Rest Of Us

By; HASSAN GIMBA

This was published July 13, 2020 but still relevant.

Decree 33 of 1977 saw to the birth of the Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) on April 1 of that year through the merger of the Nigerian National Oil Corporation and the Federal Ministry of Mines and Steel. The main purpose was for it to add value to the nation's hydrocarbon resources "for the benefit of the nation's economy..."

NNPC's Kaduna, Warri and Port Harcourt Refineries, among others, were built solely for the "benefit" of the Nigerian economy. Completed and commissioned in 1980, the Kaduna Refinery was meant to be a modern conversion refinery having two parts: 50,000 barrels of fuel plant and another 50,000 barrels lubes plant for the production of lubricating oil blendstocks and waxes and bitumen.

The Warri Refinery, commissioned in 1978, was built to process 100,000 barrels of crude oil per day. In 1987 it was upgraded to process 125,000 barrels per day. Mainly, it was supposed to add value to some refinery by-products such as propylene rich stock and decant oil.

There are two refineries in Port Harcourt. The old one was commissioned in 1965 with a capacity of 60,000 barrels per day while the new refinery commissioned in 1989 has an installed capacity of 150,000 barrels per day.

Unfortunately, this is just on paper as Nigeria imports fuel rather than produce for local consumption and for export.

At one point in this country, NNPC was Nigeria's feeding bottle because it was in charge of Nigeria's main source of livelihood, the one commodity that provides nearly all our foreign exchange inflows.

However, the audited annual reports and financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2018, for the NNPC and its 20 subsidiaries and business divisions, signed by the group managing director of NNPC, Malam Mele Kyari, and the chief executives of the various subsidiaries showed that the three refineries recorded a combined loss of N154 billion while Kaduna refinery also recorded zero revenue for the group.

Details showed that Kaduna refinery spent N24 billion in direct costs to record zero

revenue and an operating loss of N64 billion for 2018, as against N2 billion revenue and N112 billion loss the year before.

A breakdown of the direct costs and administrative expenses showed that it incurred N447.7 million in Training Expenses, Security expenses of N230 million, Communication expenses of N37.3 million, and Consultancy fees of N843 million.

For the Warri Refining Company, the audited financial statement showed that the company earned N1.98 billion as revenue while it incurred N12.74 billion as cost of sales, resulting in a gross loss of N10.57 billion and an operating loss of N45.39 billion.

The Port Harcourt Refining Company's recorded revenue of N1.45 billion in 2018 is swallowed by expenses of N24.04 billion, a gross loss of N22.58 billion.

In simple words, these three refineries lost almost N160 billion and earned about N3.5 billion in 2018.

Interestingly, the NNPC has a total staff strength of 6,621 as of April 20, 2020, whose salaries are in billions – they earn stupendous salaries and are among the best paid in the country. Its directors alone pocket billions in emoluments. A director in NNPC can earn more than N33 million a year. A breakdown of the payments made to directors at the Kaduna Refinery alone showed that total employee cost was put at N23 billion in 2018. This includes salaries and wages, death benefits, administrative expenses, etc.

NNPC's salary structure is such that an entry-level worker can have four times the salary of another entry worker in other sectors. Therefore a barely passed degree holder who secured employment there can have four times the salary of a first-class graduate who is employed as a teacher elsewhere.

Apparently, instead of being there "for the benefit of the nation's economy", NNPC is just there for the benefit of less than 7,000 privileged Nigerians. No wonder, only the well connected get employed there. In truth, the NNPC is a burden Nigeria can ill afford to continue shouldering.

In the build-up to the last election, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, the presidential candidate of the opposition Peoples Democratic Party, PDP, at a town hall meeting with Kaduna State ward, local government and state

party leaders, said that the NNPC had failed to serve the purpose for which it was established in 1977 and promised to sell it if elected.

He lamented that Nigeria, one of the biggest producers of crude oil, still imports refined products for local consumption at exorbitant prices to the detriment of the common man. Atiku was of course vilified but an organisation filled with fat cats can cause a lot of propaganda damage to anyone who wants to wean it off its feeding pipe.

Nigeria and NNPC remind me of a donkey and salt story I read many years ago. There was a man who had a donkey and used it to transport some bags of salt to the market in another village half a day's journey away or something like that.

Halfway to the market, there was a bridge over a small pond. One day, the donkey accidentally fell into the pond. When it came out of the pond, its load was lighter because almost half of the salt had dissolved in the water and so it happily moved on. If donkeys could whistle, that donkey must have whistled happily all the way to the market.

The next day, the now enlightened donkey ran towards the bridge and jumped into the pond and came out to continue the journey, its burden easier to bear. It repeated this the next day, which made the salt trader wiser up to his donkey's game. He then came up with a solution. The next day he loaded his bags on the donkey as usual and they started on their journey. On getting to the spot, the donkey saw the pond and, as usual, it jumped in with relish. However, this time around it came out grunting, for the load on its back had tripled in weight. The salt trader had loaded cassava flour (garri) instead of salt on the donkey. Since that day, the donkey carefully avoided falling into the pond again.

Nigeria is trudging under the weight of the NNPC and it needs to shed this weight. But who will bell the cat?

Employment Slots

When did we descend this low as a nation? Since when have appointments and even admissions to government institutions become property to be shared?

This practice is well known, even if not accepted by helpless Nigerians. One cannot get a federal job except if a member of the National Assembly or head of a ministry, department or agency who gets slots, slots in one's name. This practice is replicated



Hassan Gimba

Monday Column

at the state levels by state counterparts of the aforementioned. Traditional rulers, too, get their own share and, depending on their national status, even get at the federal level. Some of these "beneficiaries" even take theirs to the markets and sell to the highest bidders.

Unfortunately, this illegal practice, which has no respect for merit, serves more to dampen the spirit of the active youth and deprives them of hope in the future. Hope is what makes one work hard; without it, people lose the zeal to put in their best and they psychologically feel alienated from society.

Such a class of people ultimately become disenchanted with the system, feel betrayed by their leaders and never ask what they can do for their country. They become idle and indolent, and an idle mind is the devil's playground. So they readily form the recruitment base for all types of crimes. Some may even take up arms against a country they see as having consigned them to the backwaters of society.

This breeds the discontent and restiveness we see all over the country and gives rise to the 'them' and 'us' schism that is dangerous to societal peace.

Members of the legislature and executive may fall on the excuse that their constituents inundate them with CVs. However, it is also true they started the whole

untidy business while trying to compensate loyal 'boys'.

We were recently regaled with the drama of Mr Festus Keyamo and lawmakers in the House of Reps over this "sharing" formula. The lawmakers were not satisfied with 15% slots in the federal government's determination to give temporary jobs to 1000 people per local government. Nigerians ever in search of heroes hailed Keyamo. But the truth is that the executive, ever wily and always painting the legislature as the devil's incarnate, wanted to hijack the remaining share.

A few days later, Keyamo, however, accompanied his senior minister back to the lawmakers to apologise for his behaviour. Didn't anybody tell him that after such grandstanding, the honourable thing was to resign rather than go back to his vomit?

It is high time we build competitiveness and confidence in our youth by encouraging them to work hard and reap the reward of working hard irrespective of who they are or where they come from. It is the only way for a nation to develop and Nigeria can only develop when we begin to promote hard work and merit.

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

Addressing the Epidemic of Multiplication of Government Agencies

By Jibrin Ibrahim

FOR longer than Nigerians can remember, successive governments have been making promises of cutting Nigeria's huge cost of governance in the face of dwindling resources beginning with reversing the epidemic of multiplication of governmental agencies. In 2011, former President Goodluck Jonathan set up the Presidential Committee on Restructuring and Rationalisation of Federal Government Parastatals, Commissions and Agencies, under the chairmanship of Steve Oronsaye. The Committee submitted an 800-page report on April 16, 2012, which recommended the abolition and merger of 102 government agencies and parastatals, while some were listed to be self-funding.

"Since the Oronsaye Committee, about 300 additional agencies, commissions, tertiary institutions and parastatals have been created through new legislative bills in the National Assembly which got excited by the benefits of agency creation either as a constituency project for their self-aggrandisement or as an avenue for additional income by private associations who are ready to bribe legislators to get their private outfits acquire the chapeau of a government agency and be placed on the national budget."

The report revealed a high level of competition among several overlapping agencies, which had not only created ill feelings among government agencies but also brought about unnecessary wastage in government expenditure. They recommended, among other things, the discontinuation of government funding of professional bodies and councils. The measures were aimed at freeing funds for the much-needed capital projects across the country. Goodluck Jonathan did not implement the report although he had set up a committee that prepared a Whitepaper in March 2014. Muhammadu Buhari stepped into power with a firm promise that he would implement it. He did not even try to do it.

This issue is one of the clear illustrations of the crumbling capacity of the State to govern. Government is simply incapable of doing what it sets out to do. The report was so comprehensive and clear that the Jonathan administration did not need two years to produce a Whitepaper which simply outlines what aspects of the report are accepted for implementation and how. The Whitepaper was prepared by Muhammed Adoke Committee, then the Buhari administration established the Bukar Aji

Committee to review the Mohammed Adoke Whitepaper. Then government set up the Amal Pepple Committee to review new Parastatals, Agencies and Commissions (PAC) created between 2012 to October 2021. After that, the Ebele Okeke Committee was set up to draft a whitepaper on the Amal Pepple Committee Report on new Parastatals, Agencies and Commissions created between 2012 and 2021.

By refusing to act on the original report for over a decade, the situation was allowed to get out of hand and the bureaucratic machine continued on its self-serving tactic of creating more opportunities for committees and their budgets while the original problem is allowed to fester. Since the Oronsaye Committee, about 300 additional agencies, commissions, tertiary institutions and parastatals have been created through new legislative bills in the National Assembly which got excited by the benefits of agency creation either as a constituency project for their self-aggrandisement or as an avenue for additional income by private associations who are ready to bribe legislators to get their private outfits acquire the chapeau of a government agency and be placed on the national budget.

According to the Guardian (28 August 2022), between 2015 and 2019, 213 out of the total number of 311 bills introduced to the 8th Senate were bills that sought the creation of more federal agencies and commissions and 80 of them received Presidential assent. Of the 742 legislative bills introduced to the two chambers of the National Assembly between June 2019 and June 2021, over 262 were establishment bills, that is, bills seeking the establishment of one agency or the other. The legislative bills, many of which have been passed and assented to by the President include the National Commission for the Coordination and Control of the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (Establishment), 2022; the Nigerian Peace Corps Bill; North Central Development Commission (Est., etc) Bill 2019; Electoral Offences Commission (Est., etc) Bill, 2019; North West Development Commission (Est., etc) Bill, 2019; National Sports Commission (Est., etc) Bill, 2019; and Social Intervention Programmes Agency (Est., etc) Bill, 2019.

"The real issue is that core ministries are not doing their work of review of trends and planning for future needs and there is a mad rush to create new institutions and place them on government budget. Meanwhile, government has lost the capacity to pay for these new agencies and dwindling revenues

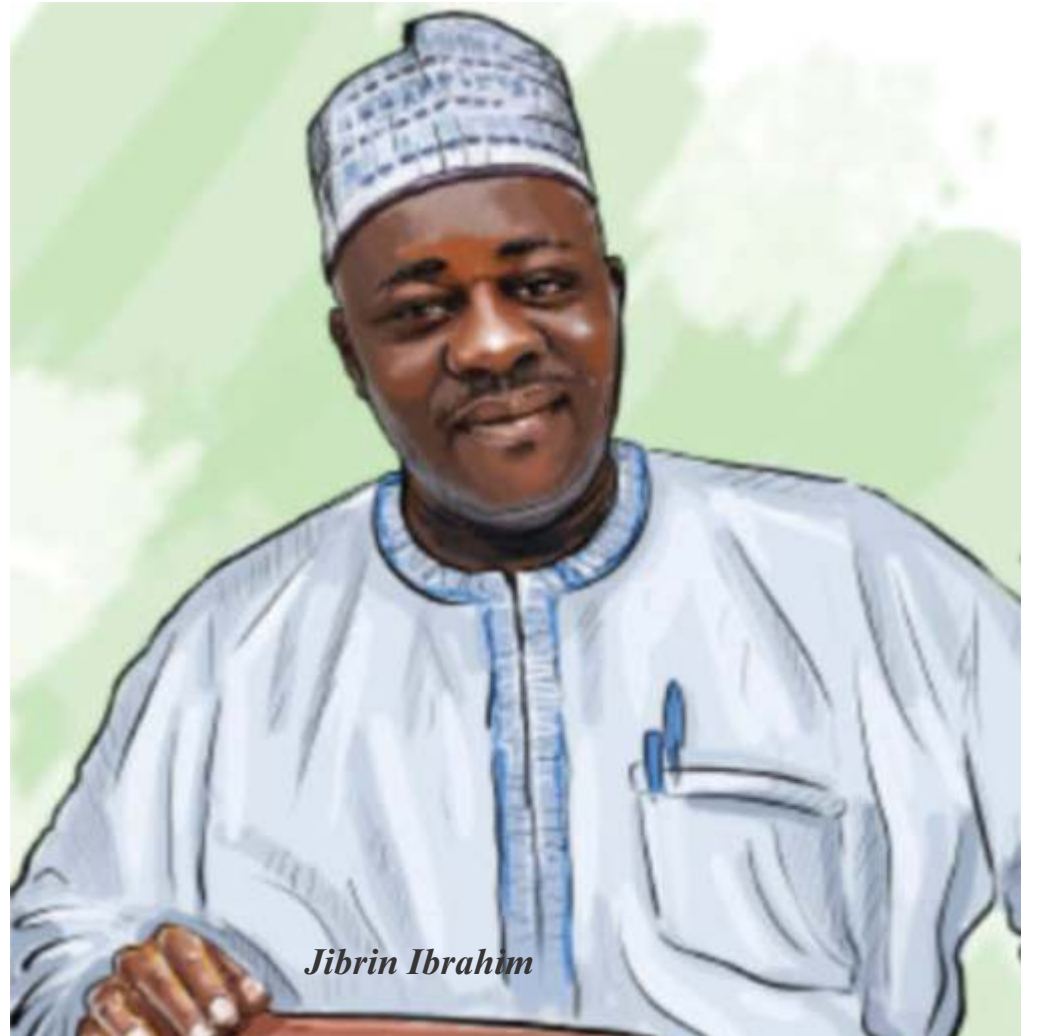
are being spread so thinly that most agencies are actually not able to deliver on their mandates because government simply does not have the funds to enable them to do their work."

Also included are the National Food Reserve Agency (Est., etc) Bill, 2019; Police Academy (Est., etc) Bill, 2019; North Central Development Commission (Est., etc) Bill, 2019; and South West Development Commission (Est., etc) Bill, 2019; Fiscal Responsibility Commission (Est., etc) Bill, 2019; National Road Fund (Est., etc) Bill, 2019; National Assembly Budget and Research Office (Est., etc) Bill, 2019; National Commission for the Eradication of Child Destitution (Est., etc) Bill, 2019; Dormant Account Funds Management (Est., etc) Bill, 2019; and Constituency Development Fund (Est., etc) Bill, 2019. The bills were therefore emanating both from government and outside government.

It is in this context that the announcement this week by the Tinubu administration that in line with the Oronsaye Report, the federal government has notified professional bodies and councils that it would cease to fund them beginning from the 2024 budget in line with the decisions of the Presidential Committee on Salaries (PCS). The message was clear. I like the idea of simply implementing what could be implemented directly rather than setting up more whitepaper committees:

"I wish to inform you that the presidential committee on salaries (PCS) at its 13th meeting approved the discontinuation of budgetary allocation to professional Bodies/Councils effective 1st January, 2024. You will be required, effective 1st January 2024, to be fully responsible for your personnel, overhead and capital expenditures." This a good beginning.

The bodies that would be affected include Teachers Registration



Jibrin Ibrahim

Council of Nigeria (TRCN), Computer Registration Council, Librarians Registration Council, National Education Research and Development Council, Mass Literacy Council, National Examination Council (NECO) and the West African Examination Council (WAEC) under the Ministry of Education.

Under the Ministry of Health, those to be affected include the Nursing and Midwifery Council, Pharmacist Council of Nigeria, Medical and Dental Council of Nigeria, and the Medical Laboratory Science Council of Nigeria will be affected.

"For too long, Nigeria has allowed irresponsibility and personal interests to shape the public space. This drift must be stopped."

Others include Environmental Health Council of Nigeria, Nigeria Press Council, Council for the Regulation of Freight Forwarding in Nigeria, Council of Nigerian Mining Engineers and Geosciences; Veterinary Council of Nigeria, Council for the Regulation of Engineering in Nigeria, Survey Council of Nigeria, Legal Aid Council, Council of Legal Education, National Automotive Design and Development Council; Nigeria Export Promotion Council, Financial Reporting Council of Nigeria, Nigeria Investment Promotion Council; the Nigerian Council of Food Science and Technology among others.

This is just the tip of the iceberg. There has been, for example, an inflation in the creation of tertiary institutions. The Premium Times

editorial of 17th October 2022 pointed out that at the time, there were 63 bills before the National Assembly for the establishment of more universities, colleges of education, and polytechnics. Out of these bills, 26 are for federal universities and 33 for colleges of education, agriculture, health, and forestry institutions. Meanwhile, the existing institutions were not filling up existing admission spaces. In 2020, for instance, JAMB said that 400,000 university admission slots were not utilised. Only 551,553 candidates were offered admission that year. For colleges of education, only 47,920 students were admitted out of 235,240 admission slots available. The real issue is that core ministries are not doing their work of review of trends and planning for future needs and there is a mad rush to create new institutions and place them on government budget. Meanwhile, government has lost the capacity to pay for these new agencies and dwindling revenues are being spread so thinly that most agencies are actually not able to deliver on their mandates because government simply does not have the funds to enable them to do their work.

For too long, Nigeria has allowed irresponsibility and personal interests to shape the public space. This drift must be stopped.

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

Xi, Biden And Putin: Big Men in a Small World

By Owei Lakemfa.

THE tension which has enveloped the universe for over a century has been exacerbated by the multinational war in Ukraine, so any candle light for peace gives a ray of hope. That was what the United States (US) and China offered the world when their officials on June 19, 2023 ended a two-day meeting in Beijing with the announcement of the drilling of a communication channel, and planned bilateral agreements.

However, the next day, President Joe Biden, 'the leader of the free world' deliberately shot a missile at the peace move, and 24 hours later, China responded in similar measure. With that, the peace candle just lit by the two largest armies and economies in the world, was blown out. Predictably, Russian President Vladimir Putin lampooned Biden, and surprisingly New Zealand, a trusted ally of the US, also lashed out against Biden.

"The day after China's response, Biden doubled down. At a joint press conference with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, he said his verbal attacks against China are "just not something I'm going to change very much". This month's talks were the first high level meeting between the two countries in the last five years. They seemed doomed from inception as the previously scheduled one in February failed to hold. The US had accused China of sending a surveillance air balloon over Alaska with China responding that the Americans were merely being hysterical.

The US, for the June talks, had picked its 71st Secretary of State, 61-year-old Anthony John Blinken, to lead its delegation to China. He had served as Deputy National Security Advisor and Deputy Secretary of State in the Obama administration.

In the two days, the US delegation met President Xi Jinping, Director of the China Communist Party Central Foreign Affairs Office Wang Yi, and Foreign Minister Qin Gang. US-China tension had risen significantly on August 2, 2022 when Nancy Pelosi, as the Speaker of the US House of Representatives, led five other American legislators on a pointedly provocative visit to Taiwan, China's breakaway territory.

Pelosi had told the world that: "The visit should be seen as an unequivocal statement that America stands with Taiwan, our

democratic partner, as it defends itself and its freedom." Taiwanese fighter jets had escorted her and China had responded by launching military exercises around Taiwan, and cancelled eight official military programmes with the US.

"However, New Zealand Prime Minister Chris Hipkins, unlike Blinken, had no inhibitions. He told Biden that Xi is no dictator: "No, and the form of government that China has is a matter for the Chinese people." He added: "If they (the Chinese) wanted to change their system of government, then that would be a matter for them." Hipkins comments came a week before his on-going visit to China in which both countries are discussing exports, education and tourism."

But at the Beijing talks, the US assured China that "there has been no change to the US one China policy, based on the Taiwan Relations Act".

Blinken's spokesperson, Matthew Miller, said both countries "had candid, substantive, and constructive discussions" and emphasised the importance of maintaining open channels to reduce the risk of conflict.

They agreed to establish joint Work Groups, strengthen people-to-people exchanges and increase the number of direct flights.

The US statement said both countries agreed to work together "on shared transnational challenges, such as climate change, global macroeconomic stability, food security, public health, and counter-narcotics". In agreeing to follow-on senior engagements in Washington, the Americans invited Foreign Minister Qin to Washington to continue the discussions.

"In 2022, Biden had described Russian President Vladimir Putin as "a murderous dictator, a pure thug who is waging an immoral war against the people of Ukraine." Last week, Russia pointed out that there is a disconnect between the outcome of the Blinken visit to Beijing and Biden labelling Xi a dictator. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said while Blinken's visit had "various conciliatory statements", Biden's follow-up comments are "incomprehensible". Moscow said: "These are very contradictory manifestations of US foreign policy, which speak of a large element of unpredictability." The Russian



Presidency added: "However, that's their business. We have our own bad relations with the United States of America and our very good relations with the Peoples Republic of China."

In analysing the outcome, it is difficult to guess what President Biden objected to, but he clearly was not happy with the outcome of Blinken's trip; perhaps events were happening too fast for him. Whatever his reasons, he went all out the next day to shoot down the peace process.

Biden, at a fundraiser in California, made fun of China for allegedly passing through "real economic difficulties". He presented no facts to back up his claims. Then he launched the verbal missile on China: "The reason why Xi Jinping got very upset in terms of when I shot that balloon down with two box cars full of spy equipment is he didn't know it was there. No, I'm serious. That was the great embarrassment for dictators, when they didn't know what happened."

China Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning, next day, described Biden's attacks as "extremely absurd and irresponsible".

The day after China's response, Biden doubled down. At a joint press conference with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, he said his verbal attacks against China are "just not something I'm going to change very much".

"Given what may well be an apparition revolt by the Wagner Group, the US has apparently reviewed its claims that Putin is a dictator while maintaining Xi is one. Perhaps the real dictator is Biden who with a hawkish foreign policy built on a war culture and industry, is wrecking peace moves and pushing non-

diplomatic solutions in a conflict-weary world."

Apparently aware that his comments had wrecked the peace talks, the American President added: "I expect to be meeting with President Xi sometime in the future, near-term. And I don't think it's had any real consequence."

Poor Blinken who saw his best diplomatic efforts wrecked within minutes by his boss, had no choice but to concur. On June 25, he told the media: "The President speaks clearly, he speaks candidly. I've worked with him for more than 20 years and he speaks for all of us."

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In 2022, Biden had described Russian President Vladimir Putin as "a murderous dictator, a pure thug who is waging an immoral war against the people of Ukraine." Last week, Russia pointed out that there is a disconnect between the outcome of the Blinken visit to Beijing and Biden labelling Xi a dictator. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said while Blinken's visit had "various conciliatory statements", Biden's follow-up comments are "incomprehensible". Moscow said: "These are very contradictory manifestations of

US foreign policy, which speak of a large element of unpredictability." The Russian Presidency added: "However, that's their business. We have our own bad relations with the United States of America and our very good relations with the Peoples Republic of China."

"Doubtlessly, Presidents Xi, Biden and Putin are big men in our small world, but the world is big enough for all countries to fly without bumping into themselves. We need courage to insist on this and tell the big man that we prefer a world at peace than one perpetually on war footing."

Ironically, the US that has consistently labelled Putin as a dictator that brooks no opposition, now says the attempted revolt by the Russian mercenary Wagner group, shows Putin is weak. Blinken said: "We've seen more cracks emerge in the Russian façade. It is too soon to tell exactly where they go, and when they get there."

Given what may well be an apparition revolt by the Wagner Group, the US has apparently reviewed its claims that Putin is a dictator while maintaining Xi is one. Perhaps the real dictator is Biden who with a hawkish foreign policy built on a war culture and industry, is wrecking peace moves and pushing non-diplomatic solutions in a conflict-weary world.

Doubtlessly, Presidents Xi, Biden and Putin are big men in our small world, but the world is big enough for all countries to fly without bumping into themselves. We need courage to insist on this and tell the big man that we prefer a world at peace than one perpetually on war footing.

Top SWAN Presidential Contender, Isaiah Benjamin Vows To Hit Ground Running

**Hails outgoing President Sirawoo for uplifting SWAN's status *Says all would be carried along according to statutes of association*

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The frontrunner for the Presidency of the Sports Writers Association of Nigeria (SWAN), and the immediate past Chairman of SWAN, Kaduna Chapter, Mr. Isaiah Benjamin has while hailing the outgoing President Sir Honour Sirawoo for uplifting the image of the association, has assured that he would hit the ground running if elected National President of the body next week.

Mr. Benjamin spoke to journalists on the sidelines of the preparation of the National under 21 Female Volleyball team's departure for Niger Republic for the Africa Zone 3 Tournament, saying that if he is elected SWAN National President, he will immediately visit state chapters in all parts of the country with the aim of resuscitating projects that were paused or abandoned.

He added that the body, in consolidating the achievements of Sir Sirawoo, has a lot of lofty projects that would better the lot of members of the Association, however, internal crisis, he noted had held the body back the implementation of such projects.

"When I am elected as the President of

SWAN, I would hit the ground running, I am in a hurry to implement projects and ideas that would bring about the development of members of the body in financial terms, academics and all other aspects, that would consolidate on achievements of our amiable outgoing President.

"Sports Writers Association of Nigeria have lot of lofty ideas but for to minor disagreements here and there, many of these projects could be implemented to the letter.

"I intend to ensure that we get those projects working, to this end, I will visit all SWAN Chapters in all part of the country to know what projects we can help support," he said.

On the issue of disagreement between members of SWAN on one hand, and the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ), the presidential front runner for SWAN said genuine consultations are ongoing with all members who are aggrieved and that in no distant time, there would be reconciliation.

"I can assure that genuine reconciliation talks are in progressive and very soon, everything shall be resolved amicably, while relying on the SWAN statutes.



Isaiah Benjamin

"I have listened to aggrieved individuals, I have spoken to virtually all stakeholders and we are almost reaching an understanding," he assured.

Isaiah who was till his resignation, the chairman of the Kaduna Chapter, attributed the success story of SWAN Kaduna to collective efforts by both the officials and members of the body.

"I couldn't have succeeded as the Chairman of SWAN Kaduna, if the Excos and members had not cooperated with me.

"They supported me, brought good ideas and helped to implement these ideas and that is why we were successful," he added.

Kaduna Group Face 2 Face Movement Steps Up Activities, Woos More Members

**Plans leadership training for members*

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

A grassroots group, Face 2 Face Mobilization Movement in Kaduna State with tens of thousands membership, has stepped up its activities with a view to ensuring credible representation of political office holders.

This came to the fore at its meeting held on Sunday July 2, 2023 in Kaduna.

Speaker after speaker at the meeting, stressed the need for membership drive, to position them to have huge impact in the political activities in the state.

Members of the group emphasized that being a non partisan group, their focus is on ensuring only credible candidates emerge to represent the state in all tiers of governance.

Speaking earlier, president of the group, Comrade Bulus Michah Usman explained that they have been in existence for eight years and have so far made impact in terms of those who have emerged on the political terrain. He charged all members to be committed, as well as dedicated

to activities of the group.

He emphasized that the most important thing for them is to forge ahead and make impact, with all members having a say in the movement.

"We look forward to doing more things like printing political magazines and other activities that will further consolidate on impact made.

"We are looking forward to being formidable and determining political outcomes in 10 local government areas of the state and by extension, the entire state

"We look forward to having convention annually, where we can have even the president of Nigeria in attendance based on invitation, as empowered by our constitution, which was certified

in December 2021.

"We will make copies of the constitution available to most individuals, before we go on to its final process.

"The group is open to all ethnic groups, religions and tribal affiliations.

"I urge you to invite others to our meetings, so we can have more impact. We work with JN1 and

CAN, so our membership is not drawn from any single religion.

"We would finalize deliberation on our constitution at our next meeting God willing, I implore all of you to be present then," he said.

Speaking further, he said the group is not all about politics, but I'd focused on development, hence, soon, projects by the movement will be seen in different communities.

He revealed that before becoming a bonafide member of the group, all members are advised to register for a leadership training coming up in October this year.

"The one-day training will afford members opportunity to learn and mingle. It would prepare them to be members. Please put it at the back of your mind, you will pay for the training, but it won't be much," so that we can also have support from our patrons," he said.

He therefore, introduced Comrade Obadiah James, who would be the chairman of the leadership training committee, whose full membership would soon be made public.



Volleyball Zone 3: Team In High Spirit As 12 U-21 Girls Depart For Niger

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Nigeria's representatives to Niamey, capital of Niger Republic departed the prestigious Ahmadu Bello Stadium Kaduna on Sunday July 2, 2023 in high spirits.

Our correspondent who was there to witness their departure, reports that they were all revved up and roaring to succeed as they bade farewell to a team of officials from the Nigeria Volleyball Federation (NVBF).

In an interview with sports writers at the departure venue, Technical Director NVBF, Mr. Martins Melandi explained

that they have been in camp for three weeks in preparation for Africa Zone 3 Competition in Niger Republic.

"Today they are departing Kaduna for Niamey.

"We have been in camp in preparation and played some friendly matches," he said.

According to him, a total of 17 persons comprise the team.

"We have 12 Players, three coaches, one media, one referee and a head of delegation," he explained.

According to him, Nigerians should expect nothing short of a top notch performance from the young lads.

"From what I saw, they are technically sound. They will compete with all countries in West Africa. The arrival is July 3, while the competition runs till 10th," he said.

Also speaking, Female Head Coach, Rakiya Mohammed for U-21 team, said that the girls have been drilled and are ready to deliver.

"We are departing today. From what you are seeing from the girls, you know their spirit is high.

"The NVBF President, Engineer Musa Nimrod has ensured all the welfare of the players," she said.

According to her, if they win, they will win a ticket to participate in World Championship in Thailand.

"These girls you are seeing, they are not actually U-21 but U-19 because their championship is coming up in Croatia, so we are using this to further prepare them," she added.

Captain of the team, 17-year old Kelechi Ndukauba said that she is confident they will excel because they worked hard while training.

"We want Nigerians to pray for us and we will ensure that we make them proud," she assured.



Captain of team, Kelechi Ndukauba



Head Coach, Rakiya Mohammed



NVBF Technical Director, Martins Melandi



The team in a group photograph shortly before departure. Photos: BASHIR BELLO DOLLARS



The team and some officials shortly before departure. Photos: BASHIR BELLO DOLLARS



The team in a group photograph shortly before departure. Photos: BASHIR BELLO DOLLARS

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Reps Members Commissions Projects In Ebonyi



By: M K P U M A
ENYINNA, Abakaliki

As part of activities to mark the birthday of the member representing Ikwo/Ezza South Federal Constituency in the House of Representatives accompanied by other National Assembly members, has embarked on commissioning of projects attracted by Comrade Chinedu Ogah in different parts of his constituency.

Comrade Ogah was accompanied by National Assembly members, including the member representing Ekwusigo, Nnewi North and South Federal Constituency, Hon. Uchenna Nwachukwu; the member representing Igboetiti/Uzouwani Federal Constituency, Hon. Stainless Nwogu, Hon. Favour Ogbonnaya, among others, stakeholders, friends and well wishers to commission projects located in different parts of Ikwo/Ezza South Federal Constituency.

Some of the places visited for the commissioning of projects in Ikwo include, Echealike community for

Commissioning of rural electricity project like transformer, solar street lights; Ndiagu Achara for commissioning of four class rooms block and Akwakwa Bridge, among others.

The commissioning climaxed with a town hall meeting at the College of Education, where the honourable members met with the constituents to get their feedback on the achievements so far, and also to identify where needs more attention in order to be captured in subsequent projects of the lawmaker.

Speaking to newsmen after the Commissioning, Hon. Favour Ogbonnaya commended Comrade Chinedu Ogah for the outstanding performance in his constituency, saying that the unimaginable achievements will make others to hold their representatives to ransom to be effective and accountable to the people they are representing.

He noted that reaching out to the people that elected the lawmaker will make him identify their challenges and find a way of proffering solution to them as exemplified by

Comrade Ogah.

"If you take advantage of all these commissioning that are ending today, you will come back, hold your representatives to give account of all they did. This is what we call elevative representation. You need to see what the honourable member representing Ikwo/Ezza South Federal Constituency did, and they are asking him, are you the president of Federal Republic of Nigeria? He has capacity to deliver on his mandate. It is that capacity that attracted these projects.

"So, town hall meeting is the apex, reaching out to the people. My people say, "you cannot smell the mouth of someone, until you go closer to the person." This is exactly what Chinedu has done by reaching out to feel their pains, impact, and then have something to present when he goes back to Abuja."

Also speaking, the member representing Igboetiti/Uzouwani Federal Constituency in Enugu State, Hon. Stainless Nwogu appreciated the efforts of Comrade Ogah in

attracting numerous projects to the people he is representing, stating that his performance is a big challenge to other National Assembly members who are battling to achieve such feat.

He added that the expectations from his constituents are very high, but he will follow the footprints of Comrade Ogah to replicate same to his people.

"I am a little bit confused based on the fact that, I asked my colleagues, this constituency allowance every year, like how much am I expecting.

"What Chinedu Ogah has done by all these commissioning of projects like class rooms block, boreholes, road and so forth, my worry as a colleague in National Assembly is that the money I am expecting, may not be enough to actualize what I saw. But just as I said earlier, I will learn and tap from his grace.

"I am a Labour Party (LP) member, the expectations from my people are so high. I will be happy if I achieve 70 per cent of what Chinedu Ogah has displayed," he disclosed.

Volleyball Zone 3: Team In High Spirit As 12 U-21 Girls Depart For Niger

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Chief Of Army Staff Approves Appointment, Redeployment Of Officers

By: AMOS TAUNA,
Kaduna

Major General Taoreed Lagbaja, the Chief of Army Staff, has approved the appointment and redeployment of Major Generals, Brigadier Generals and other senior officers across formations and units in the country.

The Director, Army Public Relations, Brigadier General Onyema Nwachukwu, in a statement on Friday, explained that the development was part of efforts to rejig the service to ensure administrative and operational efficiency in the Army.

According to him, the retirement of some senior officers following the appointment of the Army Chief was responsible for the shake-up, saying that the redeployment was routine.

He added, "It is imperative to note that redeployment in the Nigerian Army is routine, particularly with the recent retirement of some senior officers as a result of the appointment of the new Army leadership. The redeployments take effect from July 3, 2023."

Those affected by the recent redeployment, according to the statement included some Principal Staff Officers of Defence and Army Headquarters, Corps Commanders, Commandants of NA Training Institutions, Brigade Commanders, Commanding Officers, and several others.

He gave the names as the new General Officers' Commanding appointees are Major General VU Okoro from the Department of Army Operations to Headquarters 2 Division as the new GOC; Maj Gen HT Dada from Defence Intelligence Agency to Headquarters 82 Division as the GOC; Maj Gen MT Usman redeployed to 81 Division as GOC from HQ 2 Division; and Maj Gen KA Isoni who will assume Command as the Commander Army Headquarters Garrison, while Maj Gen AE Abubakar is redeployed from Headquarters 7 Division / Sector 1 OPHK to Headquarters 3 Division NA as GOC and Commander Operation SAFE HAVEN.

The statement also gave the names of the newly appointed Corps Commanders as Major General GO Adesina, redeployed from Defence Headquarters to Headquarters NA Signals Corps and appointed Corps Commander; Maj Gen OO Oluyede from Office of the COAS Directorate of Inspection and Compliance to Headquarters Infantry Corps as Corps Commander; while Maj Gen HG Tafida has been redeployed from DICON to Headquarters Nigerian Army Electrical and Mechanical Engineers as the new Corps Commander.

Maj Gen EL Ugwuoke, the statement explained, is appointed Corps Commander Nigerian Army Ordnance Corps from AHQ Department of Logistics and Brig Gen SI Musa as the new Acting Director Legal Service, adding that Brig Gen ND Shagaya is now the Commandant Nigerian Army School of Supply and Transport.

The statement stressed that the newly redeployed Defence and Army Headquarters Principal Staff Officers are Major General EV Onumajuru from the Department of Special Services and Programmes (Army) to Defence Headquarters and appointed Chief of Defence Operations; Maj Gen ES Buba from Defence Intelligence Agency to Defence Headquarters and appointed Director Defence Media Operations; Maj Gen OR Aiyenigba from Headquarters Nigerian Army Corps of Military Police and appointed Chief of Army Standards and Evaluation; Maj Gen OJ Akpor has been appointed Chief of Administration (Army).

The statement also said others are Maj Gen HT Wesley from TRADOC to Army Headquarters as Chief of Special Services and Programmes (Army), Maj Gen Y Yahaya from Defence Headquarters to Department of Personnel Management and appointed Chief of Personnel Management, while Maj Gen IM Jallo moves from Army Headquarters Department of Policy and Plans to Office of the COAS as Director Inspection and Compliance.