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Those Against North Blocking el-Rufai's Ministerial Screening - Arewa Youth Forum

■ Says Senate fear God, conclude screening devoid of regional, religious sentiment



Ex Governor el-Rufai

By: JACOB ONJEWU
DICKSON

The frontline youth forum in Northern Nigeria, Arewa Youth Forum has alleged that those against the progress of the North are those behind the scene, working against the successful ministerial screening of immediate past Kaduna State Governor, Malam Nasir el-Rufai.

Arewa Youth Forum

expressed this in a statement signed by its President, Ahmed Mohammed Zagi, made available to newsmen in Kaduna on Thursday August 10, 2023.

"We are aware of sinister moves of some individuals who do not want the progress of the North, hence working from the background to frustrate Malam Nasir el-Rufai from becoming a minister under President Bola

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Governor of Katsina State, Malam Dikko Umaru Radda, PhD (left) with Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Polaris Bank, Mr. Adekunle Sonala (right) when the latter paid a business visit to the governor in the state. Photo: Bashir Bello Dollars



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N/Assembly Will Be Fair To All, Deputy Senate President Assures Promoters Of Tiga, Gari States In Kano

By; AMOS EBUTE MATHEW, Kaduna

The Deputy President of the Senate, Senator Barau I. Jibrin, has assured members of the movement for the creation of Tiga and Gari states from Kano State that the National Assembly would be just to all during the review of the 1999 Constitution.

It was made known in a statement signed by Ismail Mudashir Special Adviser (Media & Publicity) to the Deputy President of the Senate.

Senator Barau gave the assurance when members

of the movement led by Senator Mas'ud El-Jibrin Doguwa paid him a courtesy call at the National Assembly. The Deputy President of the Senate, who chairs the Senate Committee on Constitution Review, said the 10th Assembly would give all groups advocating states creation equal opportunities to present their cases.

He commended the members of the movement for Tiga and Gari states for sustaining the tempo over the years.

Earlier, Senator Doguwa stressed the need for the

creation of two states from Kano State.

He said in the last 40 years, they have been advocating the splitting of Kano State given its size and population to fast-track its development.

"We want two more states to be created out of the present Kano State. This will bring about much-needed development. In the last 40 years, we have been advocating the creation of two more states from Kano. We are not pushing for it to fight anybody but to attract development," he said.

He urged the Deputy

Senate President to support the project, commending him for the numerous projects across the three senatorial districts of Kano State.

"It was because of your performance and relationship with people that APC got the votes garnered during the last general elections in Kano State. You are the pillar of APC in Kano State, whether you like it or not, you are the pillar. All emirates in Kano have benefitted immensely from the numerous projects you have attracted to our state.



Senator Barau Jibrin (right) with Senator Doguwa

Engr Hassan Commiserates With Yusufari Emirate Council

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The President TY Buratai Football Academy, Chairman Sarkin Yakin Garkuwa Foundation Engr Hassan Mohammed Sarkin Yakin Garkuwan Keffi, Matawallen Arewa on Wednesday, commiserated with the Yusufari Emirate Council over the death of Mahmud Zanna Zakariya (Mawus) Village Head of Bulamadu.

"I join the good people of Yusufari to commiserate with the Yusufari emirate on the painful death of the revered monarch who served his people meritoriously and built bridges of friendship and goodwill

across the emirate," Matawallen Arewa said in a statement.

According to him, "The death of the monarch is also a personal loss to my own family which has a strong bond with the great Yusufari emirate under which I am a son of the Local Government.

"On behalf of my family, I condole with the people Bulamadu and Yusufari Emirate Council and the immediate family of the Village Head of Bulamadu Mahmu Zanna Zakariya (Mawus). May the Almighty Allah grant the monarch Al-Jannah Firdaus, and comfort his family and the entire people of the Yusufari Emirate."



Engr Hassan

Those Against North Blocking el-Rufai's Ministerial Screening - Arewa Youth Forum

Says Senate fear God, conclude screening devoid of regional, religious sentiment

Ahmed Tinubu," the group said.

According to the statement, the group wondered why a bright mind like el-Rufai could not scale through the screening, whereas those nominated after him have been cleared and their names submitted to the Presidency. They tasked the Senate to have the fear of God and conclude the screening devoid of regional or religious sentiment.

Arewa Youth Forum also appealed to President Tinubu to call those that may be behind the ministerial hurdle to order. "This is because el-Rufai is

one of Nigeria's best brains that can help in contributing positively to the growth of the country, especially in these trying times when the country is seeking answers to several issues plaguing it.

"Hence, we task all those delaying his clearance for a well deserved ministerial position to without waste of further time, do the needful so that Nigeria can get the best of his knowledge.

"el-Rufai is a critical thinker and problem solver. We have seen him do it in Kaduna within the past eight years and at the national level in the past," the group submitted.

Development: Ebonyi Govt Solicits Support, Cooperation From World Bank

By; MKPUMA ENYINNA, Abakaliki

Ebonyi State Government has solicited for more support and cooperation from the World Bank to help drive key sectors of development.

Governor Francis Ogbonna Nwifuru made the appeal at a meeting with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) State to State Team in his office.

The governor said although the state has secured a lot of funds through the support of the state to state programmes, more is required to be done in that direction.

"Let me first thank the leader and members of the team. When we started this issue of State Fiscal Transparency, Accountability and

Sustainability (SFTAS), we were able to achieve a lot through our commitment and your support. We are happy because of what we were able to get, but I urge you to give us more support. Any area we are behind, involve our people because we are still losing a lot in the implementation of World Bank Projects".

The governor acknowledged what he described as modest efforts of the previous administration in infrastructure and human capital development and assured he will always work with development partners to improve on the feat.

Earlier, the Leader of the team Dr. Joe Abah said they were in the governor's office to brief him on the activities of the State to State programme.

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Timi Frank To Senators, Reps: Return Akpabio's Illegal 'Enjoyment Allowance' To FG

**Challenges lawmakers to publish account statement*



Timi Frank

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

A political activist and former Deputy National Publicity Secretary of the All Progressives Congress (APC), Comrade Timi Frank yesterday, called on Senators and House of Representatives members to urgently return the money they have illegally collected from the National Assembly as “enjoyment” and “vacation” allowances.

Frank who made this call in a statement in Abuja, insisted that the primary role of the Legislature is to make laws for the order, security and good governance of the country and not to plunder it.

He wondered why the lawmakers have not deem it necessary to review the nation's minimum wage which will benefit the masses in the face of skyrocketing inflation but rather have resorted to helping themselves with funds from taxpayers' money to catch vacation cruise.

He described the attitude of members of the 10th National Assembly as the worst ever to happen to the country saying they appear to be far removed from the harsh economic realities inflicting excruciating pains on the average Nigerian who elected them into office.

Akpabio had on Monday night told Senators that the Clerk to the National Assembly (CNA), Magaji Tambawal, had sent a “token” (money) into their individual bank accounts to “enjoy” their annual “vacation.”

Frank said: “I have been

reliably informed that what Akpabio termed token is actually in millions of Naira which belongs to taxpayers.

“According to a Senator from the Northwest geopolitical zone who confided in me, 'each Senator received N35million while principal officers got N50million each.'

“He equally told me that each House of Representatives member got N30million while their principal officers received N45million each.

“The Senator said he has rejected his own largesse saying: 'Allah will not forgive me if I collect such an amount for vacation enjoyment while my constituents are suffering hardships. I will spend my vacation with my constituents in the village. I am not traveling to any other place so I don't need the money.'

“I know Akpabio and his cohorts will rush to deny this but let them do so with evidence by publishing their bank statements for Nigerians to verify for the sake of transparency. I also dare the Clerk to the National Assembly, Magaji Tambawal, to publish the vouchers with which he paid these slush funds into the accounts of legislators.”

Frank who is the United Liberation Movement for West Papua (ULMWP), Ambassador to East Africa and Middle East, however played Senator Jimoh Ibrahim (Ondo South) for claiming he only received N2million for vacation enjoyment even as he challenged him to publish his bank statement for

Gombe: Plans Underway To Shore Up Manpower In Health Sector, As Gov Inuwa Targets Recruitment Of Additional 200 Health Personnel

**Restates Commitment To Achieving Goals Of Universal Health Coverage*

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Gombe State Governor, Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya, CON says the provision of quality and affordable health care services to the people sits at the heart of his administration's resolve towards attaining the Universal Health Coverage.

According to a statement signed by the Director-General (Press Affairs) Government House Gombe, Ismaila Uba Misilli, made available on Tuesday August 8, 2023, the Governor stated this when he granted audience to National Officials of the Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria PSN led by its President Professor Cyril Usifor who are in the state to perfect arrangements for their forthcoming National Conference scheduled to in Gombe.

Represented by the

Secretary to the State Government, Professor Ibrahim Abubakar Njodi, Governor Inuwa intimated his guests that his administration has since employed 260 health workers; among them Pharmacists, adding that plans are underway to recruit another 200 to shore up manpower in the soon to be completed hospitals in Kaltungo Kumo and Bajoga.

He explained that government has provided at least one functional health center in each of the 114 political wards of the state.

The Governor added that in addition to the remodelling of the state specialist hospital, the government under his leadership is reinvigorating the general hospitals in Kaltungo and Bajoga while a new one is being constructed in Kumo to bring quality and affordable health care

services to the people at the grassroots.

“For the want of time, these are just few out of the numerous interventions the Gombe State Governor has provided and is still providing to guarantee the health of the people”.

On the industrial park which the President of the Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria PCN described as futuristic master class, the representative of the Governor said when completed, it will serve as a manufacturing hub with positive effect on employment and value chain.

Earlier speaking, the President of the Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria, Professor Cyril Usifor said they were in the state for their Annual General Meeting AGM preparatory to their National Conference scheduled to hold

sometime this month in Gombe.

He commended the administration of Governor Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya for creating a business friendly environment for potential investors to explore and make fortune for themselves and the people of the state.

The PSN President described the Muhammadu Buhari industrial park as a revolutionary step taken by the administration of Governor Inuwa Yahaya to bring social and economic prosperity to the people of the state.

He said given the available necessary condition for the Ease of Doing Business in the state, the society will be left with no other choice than to market the potentials of the state to investors within and outside the country.



Nigerians to confirm whether he told the truth or not.

He reiterated his call on President Bola Tinubu to prevail on the President of the Senate, Godswill Akpabio to resign his position for illegally and boldly distributing the nation's commonwealth to legislators on national television and for painting the legislature as the most corrupt arm of government in the country.

He equally called on Nigerians to rise up and demand Akpabio's resignation should the President or Akpabio's colleagues fail to rise up to the occasion.

He lamented that while the Federal Government has been complaining of lean financial resources and begging Nigerians to be “patient” and “wait” for things to improve, Akpabio could afford to dole out money for enjoyment without any thought about workers who have been crying that their minimum wage should be increased.

“They cannot pay common living wage to Nigerian workers but Akpabio's Freudian slip is a wake up call for Nigerians to urgently mobilize and take back their country, if the Nigeria Labour Congress fails to take action to protect and defend now impoverished Nigerian

workers.

He called on the leadership of Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC), Trade Union Congress (TUC) and other affiliate unions to rise up and genuinely fight for a living wage for Nigerian workers.

“If Akpabio can fight for senators and Members of the House of Representatives to get so much for enjoyment, we expect the organized labour leadership to fight for improved salaries, wages and welfare packages for Nigerian workers devoid of the types of compromise associated with past workers agitations,” he said.

Kaduna: Commissioner For LG, Chieftaincy Affairs Receives Delegates From UNICEF WASH

**Promises to uphold Gov Uba Sani's vision*

By; AMOS EBUTE
MATHEW, Kaduna

Kaduna State Ministry of Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs, has received the Country Director, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) under the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) in Nigeria, Jane Bevan, in Kaduna State.

The delegation was ably led by the Director General of the Kaduna State Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Agency (KADRUWASSA), Mubarak Shehu Ladan, who said they were on a courtesy and advocacy visit to the ministry. Ladan said the concept of WASH group is to advocate access to drinking water services, sanitation, and hygiene because the impact of deficiencies in each area overlaps strongly in the society.

Addressing the delegates at the conference hall of the ministry, the Honourable Commissioner for Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs, Kaduna State, Hon. Sadiq Mamman Lagos, said the ministry inline with the state government policies is ready to partner with developmental organizations towards ensuring that development thrives in every sector in the state.

Hon. Sadiq said the visit was apt, while noting that sustainable growth development can be achieved together through partnership with organizations such as WASH, against independent leadership.

Other delegates from WASH during the visit includes the organization's specialist and WASH Officer, Theresa Pamma and David Damian at the conference hall of the Ministry.

The meeting was also attended by principal officers like the Hon. Chairman of Kadan Local Government and ALGON Chairman Kaduna State, Shuaibu Bawa Jaja, Director of Admin and Finance ministry of Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs, Asmau Jaafar Sambo.



Security: Kwara Gov presents 32 patrol vehicles, 160 motorcycles to boost mobility

**KWARTMA gets 3 patrol vehicles*

By; BILIQIS ONAOLAPO
OLAJUMOKE, Ilorin

Kwara State Governor, AbdulRazaq on Monday, presented 32 brand new patrol vehicles and 160 motorcycles to support the movement of security personnel as government steps up collaborations to improve safety in the hinterlands.

The governor also presented three patrol vehicles to Kwara State Road Traffic Management Authority (KWARTMA) to improve their operations.

“Today is another day in our efforts to strengthen security across the state. Each of the 16 local governments is getting two vehicles and 10 motorcycles each,” the Governor said at a brief event in Government House Ilorin.

“The local council authorities are to work closely with all the stakeholders, including traditional rulers within their areas, and make sure that they have serious engagements with security agencies. The security agencies cannot do it alone. They need our support to make sure that our communities are safe. This is why we are making sure that they have the right mobility to do that. We urge them to put it to good use.”

Kwara State House of Assembly Speaker Rt. Hon. Yakubu Danladi-Saliyu commended the Governor for the initiative, which he said would help to bolster security in every part of the state.

“With what we saw here today, the job of the security networks across the 24 constituencies has been made easier. With this, security will be greatly improved in all the 16 local government areas. This shows again that His Excellency means well for the state. He has played his own role, and I plead that those in charge should make good use of it. This will bring positive development to the state,” he said.

Kwara State Association of Local Government of Nigeria (ALGON)/Ifelodun Local Government chairman Jide Ashonibare lauded the distribution of the vehicles, which he said would go a long way to strengthen local security architecture in the state.

“We are grateful to Your Excellency for this great step. We will make sure that they are put to proper use to strengthen security in our respective areas,” Ashonibare said.

KWARTMA Chief Executive Officer Akeem Adegboye received the vehicles on behalf of the body, thanking the Governor for the gesture.



Justice Dije Sworn-in As Pioneer Female Chief Judge Of Kano State

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Kano State Governor, Alh Abba Kabir Yusuf on Monday August 7, 2023, superintendent the swearing-in of Justice Dije Abdu Aboki as the substantive first female Chief Judge of Kano State. In conformity with the provisions of Section 271 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria on recommendation of the Nigeria Judicial Council (NJC) and confirmation by the State House of Assembly at an occasion that was held at Africa House, Government House.

Speaking after the oath taking, Governor Abba Kabir informed the gathering that the new chief Judge was appointed based proven track record in ensuring the dispensing of justice saying, " you have distinguished yourself throughout your career as a professional judicial officer that is committed to ensuring justice and fairness".

The Governor reminded the new Chief Judge on the task ahead, " let me remind you that your new position has placed a huge burden of responsibilities on your shoulders and these responsibilities are amana (trust/pact) between you and good people of Kano state, and most importantly, between you and Allahu Subhanahu Watala".

Alh. Abba Kabir Yusuf urged her to in keeping the trust and commence the process of reforming the state Judiciary for the citizens to look into issues like perceived miscarriages of justice, perceived unjust and misjudged cases, alleged judicial corruption, and cases allegedly manipulated by money, power, and personal favours among others.

He assured the commitment of his administration to meet its obligations to the Judiciary and will complete all abandoned projects including new court complexes, recouping of courts building that were hitherto sold and demolished and prioritizing the welfare of judicial officers.

On the need for continuous smooth working relationship between the arms of government, the Governor added " the three arms of government constitute the government and the complimentary relationship is what would engender rapid and sustainable development in our state and the judiciary have a vital role to play in our state's journey to enduring peace, economic prosperity and sustainable development".

In her speech, the new Chief Judge, Hon. Justice (Mrs) Dije Abdu Aboki appreciated the state Governor for proposing her and recommended by NJC and final affirmation by Kano state house of Assembly pledging to work hard to justify the confidence reposed in her.

Justice Dije attributed the cordial relationship existing between the arms of government in to the quality leadership of the state governor and expressed optimism that the relationship will continue to wax more stronger.

Those who delivered goodwill messages at the event include; Former Attorney General of the Federation, Abubakar Malami (SAN), Justice Amina Wambai from International Federation of Female Judges, Grand Khadi of Kano, Tijjani Yusuf Yakasai, Justice Abdu Aboki (a spouse of the new chief Judge), former President of the Nigeria Bar Association (NBA), Abubakar Balarabe Mahmd (SAN), representative of His Eminence, the Sultan of Sokoto, Alh Mustapha Garba Mustapha, the Dan Darman of Sokoto.

A statement signed by the Chief Press Secretary to the Kano State Governor, Alh Abba Kabir Yusuf, Sanusi Bature Dawakin Tofa, dated August 7, 2023, informed that others are; the representatives of the emirs of Kano, Bichi, Karaye, Rano and Gaya, Sarkin Dawaki Mai Tuta, Alh Bello Abubakar Tuta and Justice M.L. Garba from the Supreme Court.



Retirement: Ogun NNPP Guber Candidate, Ajadi Extols Sotimirin's Virtue On Commitment To Fatherland

By: BAYOAKAMO, Ibadan

The gubernatorial candidate of the New Nigeria People's Party (NNPP) in 2023 elections in Ogun State, Ambassador Olufemi Ajadi Oguntoyinbo has commended Chief (Mrs) Oyenike Eniola Sotimirin for her strong contributions to the development of the nation's education and humanity. Speaking on Saturday, as the Chairman at the birthday celebration and 35 years in service of Mrs Sotimirin, as the Executive Headteacher of Local Government Model Primary School, Odogbolu, Ogun State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) before her retirement, Ambassador Ajadi lauded her contributions to education development in Ogun State, describing it as unquantifiable.

According to Ambassador Ajadi, Chief Sotimirin's performance as the Executive Headteacher of Local Government Model Primary School, Odogbolu, is not only tremendous, but distinct.

Emphasizing that Mrs Sotimirin devoted her life to serving her fatherland and contributed her quota immensely to the development of the nation in the education sector, particularly in Ogun State, he described her as a workaholic, who



Ambassador Ajadi with other guests at the event.

does many things successfully all alone at the same time and that she is full of ideas that can help turn things around for better.

The NNPP chieftain stressed that he strongly believed that she still has many things to do for the country, the state and humanity, noted that she is a true professional and her contributions

to education in Ogun are greatly acknowledged.

While appreciating God, the Chairman of the occasion and other guests on behalf of her entire family, the staff, learners and parent of Local Government Model Primary School, Odogbolu, Mrs Sotimirin expressed her heartfelt gratitude to Almighty

God for making the day a reality and huge success.

Mrs Sotimirin extended her gratitude to Ambassador Ajadi and all who contributed morally, financially and spiritually towards the event and prayed that God will continue to shower His abundant blessings on all them.

No Going Back In Fight Against Money Laundering - EFCC

**Acting Chairman says commission will ensure anyone who steals from public treasury, those assisting, face justice*

By: BAYOAKAMO, Ibadan

Acting Executive Chairman, Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, (EFCC), Mr Abdulkarim Chukkol yesterday, said there is no going back in its fight against money laundering. Mr Chukkol said this while speaking at a Workshop on Effective Reporting organized by the Economic and Financial Crimes, Ibadan Zonal Command

Speaking through the Assistant Commander of EFCC, Halma Mustafa Rafa'u, Mr Chukkol said the Commission is determined to focus on those stealing public treasury and their accomplices. is to beam its light on Politically Exposed Persons

"The EFCC is determined to ensure that anyone who steals from the public treasury and all those who assist them to do so under whatever guide, are brought to justice and ignorance

of the law will not be an excuse", he said.

Mr Chukkol added, "A key component of this framework is the reinvigorated Special Control Unit against Money laundering (SCUML), which is driving the fight against money laundering and illicit financial flows among Designated Non-Financial Businesses and Professions, (DNFBPs)".

"There is now a more robust regulation of the activities of these entities which are vulnerable to money laundering. To align itself with the progressive aspirants of Nigerians, to see that corruption is reduced to the barest minimum, if not completely eliminated".

According to the EFCC Acting Executive Chairman, the impact of the Commission on the economic life of the nation is widely acknowledged, adding, "through the Commission's

enforcement activities, recoveries running into several billions of naira have been recorded and the country's anti money laundering framework strengthened".

"You are the vehicle through which the EFCC reaches the Nigerian public with information about our operations. You

also play crucial roles in helping to mobilize the people to embrace the fight against corruption. This makes the media one of the most critical allies of the EFCC. I



Some participants at the workshop

acknowledge the fact that what the EFCC is today is largely due to the support and the critical views of the media. Our partnership has been and is still evolving. We greatly value your critical reviews as it ensured

remain faithful to the Nigerian people in the discharge of our mandate and we owe the media a debt of gratitude for the successes we have recorded in the last twenty years".

Kaduna Dep Gov Assures Corps Members Of Conducive Environment

**Cautions employers against rejecting them*

By: FUNMIADERINTO, Kaduna
The Deputy Governor of Kaduna State, Dr. Hadiza Sabuwa Balarabe has assured corps members posted to the state that the government will continue to do its best to provide a conducive environment required for them to carry out their assignment. Dr. Hadiza Sabuwa Balarabe who presided over the closing ceremony of the Orientation Course for the 2023 NYSC Batch B, Stream 1, described the scheme as a tool that prepares the corps members for building national cohesion. Dr. Balarabe reminded the corps members that the major objective of the NYSC is to

foster unity and integration among the micro-nationalities of Nigeria. “Go to the communities you are posted to, integrate, blend and make them your homes. “As willing community members, you will learn their ways, their cultures, language and identify with their problems”, she charged the corps members. “Today brings to an end weeks of intensive preparations for your primary assignment. I understand that you were committed to the activities and lectures you were exposed to during the training and impressed your trainers with your

high level of discipline. “This has therefore placed you in a better position to make your contribution towards building a strong and virile Nigeria. “I implore you not to isolate yourselves by associating with only your fellow corps members or people from your home culture. If you do that you would have defeated the purpose for which this program was instituted. “I wish to assure you that the Kaduna State Government will continue to give the scheme maximum support towards achieving its goals. In this regard, I want

to assure you that the Government will continue to do its best to provide the conducive environment required for you to carry out your assignment. “Consequently, all employers of corps members in the state are encouraged to accept corps members posted to them and make them comfortable by providing them with the minimum requirements stipulated by the NYSC guidelines. “At this juncture, I will like to commend all camp officials for the dedication and effort put into successfully moulding the corps members into ready tools for national cohesion.”



Fuel Subsidy Removal: We Employed 3,763 Applicants Into Yobe Civil Service - HoS

The recent removal of fuel subsidy by President Bola Ahmed Tinubu has continued to face mixed reactions forcing governments to find better alternatives of reducing hardship on its citizens. In this interview, the Head of Service Yobe State, Alhaji Garba Bilal, speaks on the new employment of 3,763 applicants into the state civil service and other issues. Excerpts:

You're working under Governor Mai Mala Buni as Head of the Civil Service, how has the journey been?

It is tedious but interesting. The most interesting part of it is that, once you are working with a focused and pragmatic leader that motivates you to do better, things will not only be easy but accomplishing.

You know, the civil service is the instrument of government for the formulation and implication of policies, programmes and projects leveraging on efficient aggregation and deployment of human and material resources.

His Excellency, the Executive Governor of Yobe State, Hon. Mai Mala Buni CON has been trying his best to ensure that human and material resources are provided so that the workers can put in their best for the overall development of our dear state, Yobe.

Recently, a good number of applicants were employed into the state civil service, is it part of the effort to cushion the effects of removal of fuel subsidy?

Yes, the removal of the fuel subsidy has affected all spheres of human endeavour and looking at our recovery process from the Boko Haram insurgency, the government is coming up with plans that would cushion the hardship being faced by our people.

Apart from food palliatives and empowerment programmes, recently, the Governor graciously approved the employment of 2,670 Degree/Higher National Diploma (HND), National Certificate of Education (NCE) and National Diploma holders to be employed cutting across all the 178 political wards of the state. Each ward was asked to provide not less than 5 candidates who are holders of the aforementioned qualifications for the purpose of the employment.

As you are aware, some of our local government areas have 12 wards, some 11, some even 13. So out of all these we have employed 890 Degree/HND holders, 890 NCE holders and 890 ND holders, and biometric data capture exercise has commenced.

In the present political era, or dispensation, for a government to employ 2,670 Degree/HND, NCE and ND holders is a great achievement by the government

of His Excellency Hon. Mai Mala Buni CON, bearing in mind the current economic situation in the country.

Not only that, the Governor has again approved the employment of another 700 personnel in order to reposition the state civil service to enable it respond to the socio-economic and political dynamics of the moment.

The 700 that were employed comprises 250 Degree/HND holders, 150 NCE holders, 150 ND holders and 150 SSCE holders. I am happy to inform you that they are currently doing their documentation, while others are collecting their appointment letters, indeed His Excellency, Hon. Mai Mala Buni is working and Yobe is responding.

As we face out the biometric of the 2,670 applicants employed, the next batch of the 700 would move in for the same exercise.

It is no longer news that fuel subsidy has been removed and life is becoming unbearable hence these employments approved by the His Excellency, Hon. Mai Mala Buni, the people's governor will go a long way in enhancing the living standards and livelihoods of the beneficiaries and their dependents.

Early this year, former President Muhammadu Buhari commissioned one of the largest Maternal and Child Hospital in Damaturu and is about to commence operation, do you have enough personnel to man the facility?

You see, the hospital which is located at the Yobe State University Teaching Hospital Damaturu, is one of the largest Maternal and Child Healthcare Hospitals in Nigeria.

As I've said, His Excellency Honourable Mai Mala Buni has approved the employment of 373 healthcare personnel of different professions including consultants of different specialties to man the newly established maternal and child hospital named after the Late Governor, Senator Mamman Bello Ali.

Furthermore, Yobe Ambulance services and Yobe Healthcare Regulatory agencies were also established recently and the Governor has also approved the employment of personnel to those agencies. This is in addition to the deployment of some professional staff to the two organizations for mentorship

of the newly employed staff. Still, if you look at the issue of manpower development in Yobe state with all sincerity, His Excellency the Executive Governor is really doing well in order to make life more bearable to the citizens.

If you go to the health sector for instance, a lot of health and allied workers, medical doctors, nurses among others have been employed by this government all with the view to ensuring that healthcare services are brought to the door steps of the common man in Yobe state.

As a matter of fact, Governor Mai Mala Buni is a man with a human heart and his government is humane because this kind of magnanimity that he has shown to the people of the Yobe state is unprecedented. Has the Governor been recognized by any institution at any level over his human capital development initiatives in the state?

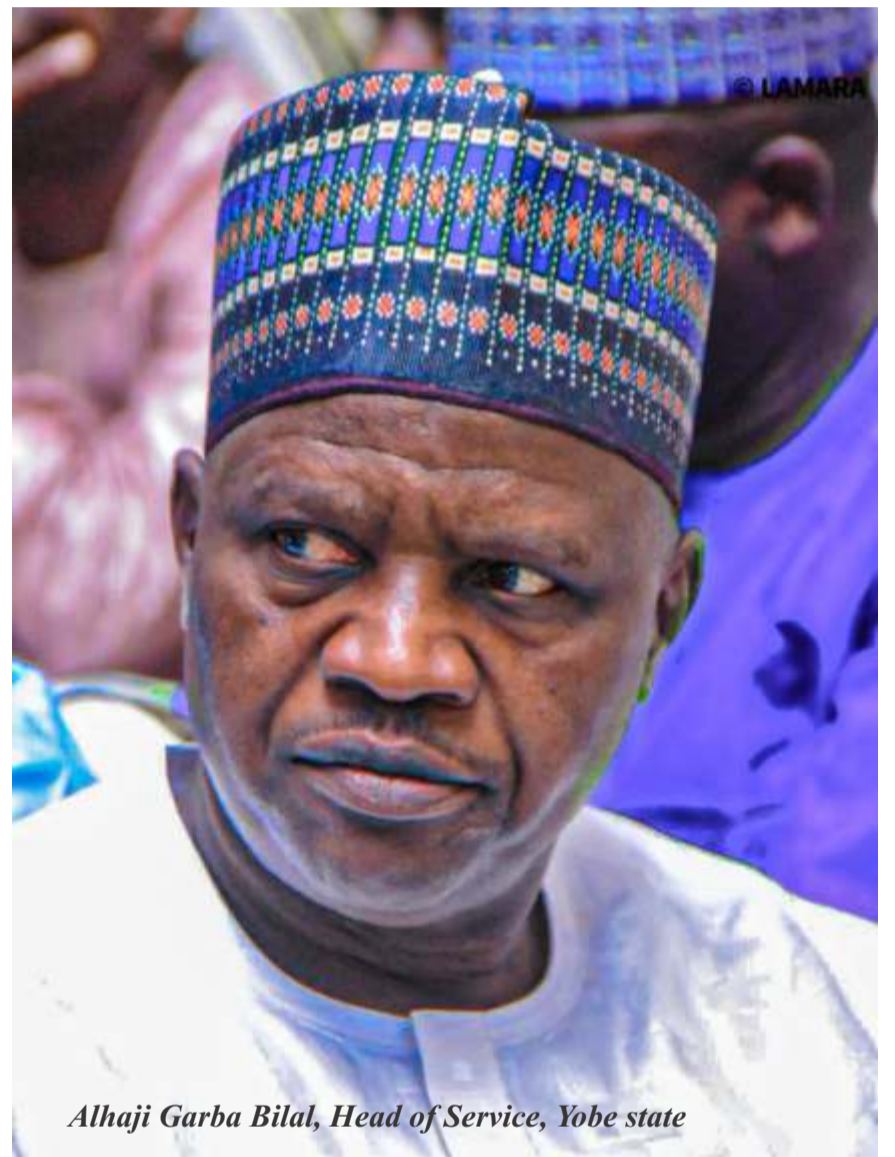
Oh yes! His Excellency, Hon. Mai Mala Buni because of the passion he has for human capital development, the National headquarters of the Nigeria Civil Service Union presented him with an award as the pillar of modern Yobe as far as human capital development is concerned.

There is no way civil service can work effectively and efficiently without a harmonious working relationship with labour unions.

It is against this background that, the Michael Imoudu National Institute for Labour studies (MINILS) Ilorin in Kwara state awarded His Excellency as the fellow of the National Labour Institute (fnls) because of his robust action plans on labour matter and workers' welfare since his assumption of office as the democratically elected Governor of Yobe state.

Most of the civil servants employed in the former Borno and transferred their services to Yobe state upon creation are retiring, how do you cope with the challenges of qualified manpower?

A lot of hue and cry has been made that the civil servants who moved from former Borno to Yobe state have retired. If you look at it, what the governor is currently doing towards bridging the gap is a great achievement towards reforming and repositioning the state's civil



Alhaji Garba Bilal, Head of Service, Yobe state

service.

What the Governor did, sincerely speaking, is unprecedented in the history of Yobe state.

A lot of states are still owing workers' salary arrears, what is the situation in Yobe state?

Here in Yobe, the situation is entirely different because His Excellency has been doing everything humanly possible to ensure that salaries of all civil servants are paid as at when due and everyone is a living witness to that. He ensures both salaries and gratuities of retirees are computed and paid accordingly.

Coming to the newly employed staff, is there any plan to train them before posting to their places of assignment?

The governor has directed that immediately after the completion of the biometric data capture exercise, there's going to be a special training for all of them. We are not going to train them here in Yobe, we will take them to the public service Institute of Nigeria in Abuja, while others to the National Teachers' Institute or send them to Administrative Staff College of Nigeria (ASCON) for better

results.

Just last month, His Excellency, The Executive Governor of Yobe State Hon. Mai Mala Buni CON approved funds, where 76 senior, middle and junior level staff were sent to ASCON. This is a boost as far as productivity in the civil service is concerned.

The aim is to acquaint them with requisite knowledge that will translate government's policies and programmes into action

Finally, looking at the economic meltdown, do you think your government has the capacity to pay the salaries of the newly employed workers?

I want to assure you that the administration of His Excellency Hon. Mai Mala Buni CON is always proactive and hardly does anything without proper planning. There is enough resources to cater the newly employed personnel.

Look, people of Yobe State are lucky to have a kind hearted and humane leader whose passion is to ensure good governance, effective service delivery, transparency, accountability and prudent financial management.

FRSC Kaduna Command To Commence 24H Patrol Next Week, Says Sector Commander

By; IBRAHIMADAMU, Kaduna

Barring any last minute changes, Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) Kaduna Command has concluded necessary logistic arrangements to commence a 24 hour patrol within the city metropolitan areas.

This was disclosed by the State Sector commander Kabiru Yusuf Nadabo while on a courtesy visit at Nigeria Union Of Journalists (NUJ) Kaduna State Council on Wednesday August 9, 2023.

He said the round the clock patrol, especially after nightfall, would checkmate unruly drivers with road unworthy vehicles on transit through the city, whose risky and dangerous driving could endanger other road users. "The danger of having vehicles without serviceable and proper headlights on our highways at night cannot be overemphasized due to the disaster they could

cause.

"I will roll out my men to ensure the city metropolitan areas and environs are adequately patrolled to avert possible road crash as a result of flouting safety rules and regulations so that highways within the state metropolitan areas are made safe for users," he declared.

The sector commander reiterated his resolve to partner with members of the press to educate and enlighten the public on safety management, rules and regulations of using the highways, the need for safe driving and ensuring automobiles are roadworthy.

"I am here to build and solidify good relationship and sustainable synergy with Journalists in the state so they will spread the message and gospel of safety to the general public.

"The menace of road crash and the devastating consequences it poses on our populace cannot be adequately curtailed without the inputs and

contribution of the Media and members of the press.

"We will be pleased to have you as partners in progress in the fight against dangerous and risky driving that has been taking the lives of our dear ones," he stated.

He called on members of the public, particularly drivers who may have been unlawfully treated to report their travails through the proper channel such as the media. "I won't hesitate to apply disciplinary action against any erring officer under my command who has been found wanting by using their uniforms to oppress and exploit drivers.

"And the drivers on their part must ensure they comply with rules and regulations of using the highways and other public roads by making sure their vehicles are in good shape and road worthy condition," he emphasized.

"I have identified about 29 junctions which could be described as hot spots

within the metropolis which need adequate measures taken to prevent frequent crashes of vehicles around these spots.

"It saddens my heart having to receive unfortunate stories, an average of 180 in month on highways within my jurisdiction.

"I intend to replicate my Sokoto success story in Kaduna and leave an indelible mark worthy of emulation by my successors, thus my resolve to carry all stakeholders along, the media in particular so that together we can achieve our ultimate goals of eliminating avoidable accidents on our roads," he added.

On her part, Chairman NUJ Kaduna State Council Comrade Asma'u Yawo Halilu commended the Sector Commander for extending a hand of partnership to the council, adding that journalists in the state would ensure they contribute their quota in the crusade for safe

BudgetIT: Gombe State Earns High Ranking in 2023 Fiscal Transparency Report

By; JACOB O N J E W U DICKSON

Gombe State's commitment to fiscal transparency and accountability has earned it a significant distinction in the 2023 Fiscal Transparency Index published by BudgetIT, a reputable fiscal policy tracking organization in Nigeria.

According to a statement signed by the Director-General (Press Affairs) Government House Gombe, Ismaila Uba Misilli, made available yesterday, the state has been ranked an impressive 6th out of 36 states, with a commendable score of 74/100.

"This achievement reflects Gombe State's dedication to transparent budgeting, procurement practices, and online fiscal reporting," it said.

The report underscores Gombe State's accomplishments in various key areas, including budget transparency, procurement transparency, the integrity of the state's website, and fiscal transparency online. Particularly noteworthy is the state's Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF), which has been recognized as comprehensive and well-structured. The report acknowledges that Gombe State's approved budget met several stringent criteria, while its e-procurement portal stood out for its accessibility and navigability.

Governor Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya's administration has consistently demonstrated its commitment to fiscal transparency and accountability, earning Gombe State esteemed recognition both on a national and international level. Notably, the state recently secured the World Bank's States Fiscal Transparency, Accountability, and Sustainability (SFTAS) award in multiple categories, a testament to



Governor Inuwa Yahaya

the administration's impactful efforts in prudent public resource management.

Furthermore, Gombe State achieved a remarkable 7th position in Nigeria and clinched the top spot in the North East sub-region in the Transparency and Integrity Index by the Centre for Fiscal Transparency and Integrity Watch (CETIW). This recognitions affirmed the state's position as a role model in good governance, financial prudence, and fiscal integrity.

An associate professor and multi-disciplinary researcher, who also serves as the Director-General of Research and Documentation at the Government House, Dr. Mu'azu Shehu explained that based on his close monitoring of national and international open government and development ratings, Gombe State has performed credibly well in fiscal responsibility, transparency, and accountability. He noted that Governor Inuwa Yahaya's leadership has been pivotal in fostering a culture of good governance and transparency, positioning Gombe State as one of the most transparent and well-governed in the nation.

The remarkable strides taken by Gombe State underscore Governor Inuwa Yahaya's unwavering commitment to international best practices, as he continues to drive comprehensive reform to enhance the state's public finance management structure.



Development: Ebonyi Govt Solicits Support, Cooperation From World Bank

He said Ebonyi has made tremendous progress in public financing, management and transparency.

"Since 2020, we have focused on support to Internally Generated Revenue, participation of citizens in governance and how to mitigate conflict in the State."

"Ebonyi has been doing medium

expenditure framework successfully in line with the requirements of the fiscal responsibility laws. We have also helped the State to develop medium term sector strategy in three key sectors of Education, Health as well as water and sanitation and they have been using the strategy to do budgeting

"The governor when he was Speaker

of the State Assembly played a critical role by ensuring that all relevant laws that empowered the state to benefit were passed".

Dr. Abah stressed the need for Ebonyi State Government to set up a transformation unit that will offer technical support for the implementation of the Governor's manifesto.

Chicago State University: Tinubu Has Something To Hide - Atiku



President Tinubu and Atiku

By; JACOB ONJEWU DOCKSON

The Counsel representing the interest of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) presidential candidate, Atiku Abubakar in his quest to unravel the controversy around the educational qualifications of President Bola Tinubu has said that they are puzzled by Tinubu's "vigorous opposition" to a request asking the Chicago State University to make open disclosure about the matter.

Atiku's lawyer, Liu Angela, on Wednesday, said she had sent an email to Tinubu's lawyers asking for their cooperation in asking the Chicago State University about documents that are already in the public domain, which have been submitted in proceeding in the Nigerian court.

According to her, the email, which was sent on August 3, 2023 is requesting, "to learn CSU's position on whether, how, and when they were provided to other Nigerian litigants, and CSU's position on the authenticity of the

documents."

According to Ms Angela, "Mr. Tinubu should have been keen to clear up any inconsistencies in his academic achievements and set the records straight by allowing the expedition of the legal process.

"If there is an explanation for the discrepancies we have identified, we would think that Mr Tinubu would be eager to provide it. If you would like to provide an explanation to us, we are happy to consider it. That might preclude the need for, or at least expedite the deposition," the lawyer said.

Atiku has thus, through his lawyer, expressed a willingness to cooperate with Mr Tinubu's legal team to shut down controversies surrounding the president's credentials. But rather than extend the same cooperation to Atiku's lawyer, the team representing Tinubu has vehemently opposed all initiatives aimed to setting the records straight about Tinubu education claims at the Chicago State University.

Ms. Angela thus stressed that Mr Tinubu's adamant

refusal to grant them access to his school records has only fuelled suspicions and suggested that he has something to conceal.

"In candour, the vehemence of Mr Tinubu's opposition to this discovery is increasing rather than mitigating our suspicions," Mr Angela asserted.

The lawyer representing Atiku further noted disappointment about how Tinubu is frustrating and stalling the entire judicial process.

She explained that Tinubu had been advised to join the case earlier since the applicant would not oppose the request, but that he chose to remain silent and waited until Atiku's team had submitted an 'Order Directing Discovery' of his academic records in court before expressing an interest in joining the suit.

Then, "Mr Tinubu turned around a week later and headed straight to the States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois to apply to join as previously advised without consulting with Mr Abubakar, perceived as

a devious delay gimmick.

"At the outset, Applicant emphasizes that he does not oppose the Motion, but questions why Mr Tinubu filed it, instead of contacting and coordinating with Applicant's counsel to submit a joint submission," Ms Angela wrote in her response to Mr Tinubu's motion to join on August 4.

"Thus, on July 27, 2023, almost a week prior to filing the application, counsel for applicant advised counsel for Mr Tinubu and CSU that applicant intended to file the application and that he was "willing to stipulate to Mr. Tinubu's intervention in the Section 1782 federal action," Mr Abubakar's lawyer told the court.

The discretion by the Tinubu's team is further fueling optimism in the Atiku's team that the academic records would support his case against Mr Tinubu at the presidential elections petitions tribunal to prove that President Tinubu may have falsified his credentials and should be disqualified.

Ministerial Screening: Five Kaduna Groups Root For el-Rufa'i, Say Ex-Governor Unjustly Victimized

By; IBRAHIM ADAMU, Kaduna

A collection of five socio-economic and cultural groups under the umbrella of Tudun Wada Zaria Sustainable Development Association addressed a press conference in Kaduna yesteeday, with a call on individuals involved to clear and confirm Malam Nasir el-Rufai as a minister.

The group alleged that there is a conspiracy to deny the former Kaduna Governor from becoming a minister under the present administration, a sad development they noted would deprive the nation the chance of benefitting from competence, experience and tremendous contribution from the former FCT Minister.

Members of the group comprising; Road Transport Employees Association of Nigeria, Tudun Wada Modern Market Development Progressive Association, Motorcycle Owners and Riders Association, Zaria Progressive Animal Sellers

and Rearing Multipurpose Cooperative Society and Waje Districts Development Association, Zaria converged on the Secretariat of Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) Kaduna where they chanted the praises of elRufai amidst prepared press release read out by joint secretary of the associations Alhaji Nasiru Ladan.

Ladan said he saw no reason why el-Rufai should not be cleared and confirmed despite going through rigorous process of screening with various security services and others while other nominees with pending cases with EFCC were confirmed.

"el-Rufai remains the best performing governor in the history of Kaduna State based on his good track records and various infrastructure strides across the state.

"We therefore, call on the leadership of the senate to hasten the clearance and confirmation of el-Rufai in the interest of peace, fairness and justice," he stated.



Electioneering Period Is Over, Time To Hold Govt Accountable - PERL

**We influenced Kaduna APC SUSTAIN Blueprint - PICaN*

By: **JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON**

Partnership to Engage, Reform & Learn (PERL) Team Lead Kaduna State, Abel Adejor has said that electioneering period is over, it is time for governance and holding those elected accountable.

He expressed this while delivering the welcome address at a One-Day Review the Submission of Citizens Groups to Transition Committee and Track the Implementation held in Kaduna on Wednesday August 9, 2023.

He said prior to the elections, engagements were held with PICaN, where the gubernatorial candidates were present, where demand charter was presented to them.

"Now that we are going to look at government direction, we will look at areas in all sectors that require intervention.

"Through dialogue we will see how we can hold the government accountable," he said.

The Partnership for Issues-based

Campaign in Nigeria (PICaN) with support of Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office (FCDO) funded Partnership to Engage, Reform & Learn (PERL-ECP) organised the one-day roundtable session on Review the Submission of Citizens Groups to Transition Committee and Track the Implementation.

The objectives of the session are to: Reflect on the agenda-setting activities during the 2023 gubernatorial elections with focus on influence of citizens' demand charter, Facilitate dialogue with strategic political appointees to generate strategies to support and track the implementation of the SUSTAIN blueprint; and Jointly agree on next steps to strengthen partnership.

While presenting a paper titled "Agenda Setting, Journey So Far" at the review, founder of PICaN, Yusuf Ishaku Goje disclosed that its engagements and demand charter developed through its programmes,

influenced some content of the Kaduna State Governor, Senator Uba Sani of the All Progressives Congress (APC) SUSTAIN Agenda.

"In the health sector we submitted 14 needs, 4 were reflected in the blueprint.

"In social protection we submitted 7 and got 5 input," he said.

According to him, the demands presented in the charter for education were nine, out of which 3 were reflected in the SUSTAIN Agenda.

Speaking further, he predicted that the 2027 election in the state would feature more engagement with candidates.

"We believe by the next election, the engagement will be more robust," he added.

According to him, "Even the politicians are seeing that we are moving towards governance and the electorate are becoming more aware," he said.

The PICaN founder said that in view of the successes recorded, what they would do next is to

track the SUSTAIN Blueprint.

"Our next step is tracking the SUSTAIN Blueprint and citizens demand influence. After four years, that is what we will use as his result sheet for the Kaduna State Government," he revealed.

He added, "We will continue to track, because we have the state government development plan.

"The SUSTAIN Blueprint has seven areas of focus which we will track.

"State Development Plan 2021 to 2025, which will be looking at impact of services if they are changing and improving lives of the people," he said.

Explaining that it will be used as a baseline to see if they are making progress or not.

The Partnership for Issues-based Campaign in Nigeria (PICaN) with support of Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office (FCDO) funded Partnership to Engage, Reform & Learn (PERL-ECP) organised the one-day roundtable session on Review the Submission of Citizens Groups to Transition

Committee and Track the Implementation.

Goje said that ahead of handing over, a memo was submitted to sub committees of the transition committee in Kaduna State.

"During electioneering campaign, we presented a demand charter to the then candidate of APC, now Governor, Senator Uba Sani," he said.

He explained that the demand charters become social contract between the electorate and the political class.

Goje said that several activities were held ahead of the 2023 general election, including PERL supported accountability mechanism and other groups including women and PWDs to develop a charter

"PICaN facilitated #TheAgenda Virtual Dialogue with political actors, Ihifix Technologies supported PICaN to develop a website and PICaN introduced a programme called The Agenda on Invicta FM.

"PERL supported PICaN to



War Or Military Intervention Not Answer To Niger Republic Coup - Intelligence Specialist

**Says efforts to free ousted Nigerian president should be priority*

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

A counter-terrorism and intelligence specialist, Ambassador Abayomi Mumuni Nurain has expressed concerns that war or military intervention is not the answer to the Nigeria Republic coup d'etat crisis.

Ambassador Nurain in a statement on Monday, signed by his media aide, Rasheed Abubakar, urged the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to shelve any military intervention on the Niger Republic crisis. The Counter Terrorism - Intelligence Specialist emphasized that ECOWAS should intensify its efforts towards securing the release of ousted Nigerian President, Mohamed Bazoum through diplomatic engagements and not with a military intervention.

He pointed out that military intervention should be shelved for more diplomatic engagements and communication that would ensure the freedom of Bazoum, hence the need for President Tinubu to ensure that war is not the answer and that he should not be provoked to settle for military intervention, with an outcome would be so brutal.

"President Tinubu should resist temptations to deploy ECOWAS troops to Niger. He should not be surprised if other Francophone nations in the association later pitch their tents with Niger if War were to break out. We have quite different orientations. They were colonised by France and Nigeria was a British colony", he said.

Ambassador Nurain

"President Tinubu should resist temptations to deploy ECOWAS troops to Niger. He should not be surprised if other Francophone nations in the association later pitch their tents with Niger if War were to break out."

added, " Though our military establishment is fierce and strong in the African community, it has been overstretched by internal terrorism. We shouldn't add more burden with the Niger crisis that effective diplomatic engagements and strategies can solve. Right now, the Western gladiators are seeing this as another opportunity to see Africa go into war against itself. We must never allow that happen".

" The first thing that should have been on the priority list of ECOWAS when the coup was announced is securing the release of President Mohamed Bazoum. And this should be done through robust diplomatic engagements and persuasive communications".

He stressed further, "War or military intervention is not the answer. I think ECOWAS can do better to manage the crisis rather than setting for war whose consequence would be untold and brutal. Therefore, the ECOWAS chieftains should intensify diplomatic engagements and persuasive communications with the junta. They should not be deterred by the fact that the last diplomatic engagement failed".

The Counter-terrorism and intelligence specialist maintained, "In all of these crises, the life of the ousted president is most precious. He should come out alive first. Any declaration of war may see him killed, which would defeat the essence of the whole thing. Bazoum's release should top the priorities of ECOWAS. They should do more and continue to press for his release by the junta."

Jubilation As OYSADA Commences Distribution Of Farm Assets Worth Millions Of Naira

**Beneficiaries laud Gov Makinde*

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

It was praise galore as farmers in Ogbomoso South, Surulere, and Oriire local government areas of Oyo State on Monday received farm input worth millions of Naira from OYS-Cares in conjunction with World Bank under the Oyo State Agribusiness Development Agency (OYSADA).

Speaking at the distribution of the farm inputs to as 90 farmers, Oyo State Coordinator for Nigeria COVID-19 Action Recovery and Economic Stimulus (N-Cares) Result Area 2, Mr. Kolawole Adewumi Bamigbola disclosed that benefitting farmers are from Ogbomoso South, Surulere, and Oriire local government areas.

The N-Cares Result Area 2, Coordinator said the 90 beneficiaries were grouped into two categories of 70 cassava farmers and 20 maize farmers and that "each cassava farmer received 20 bundles of cassava cuttings, two bags of NPK fertilizer and one liter of herbicide, while maize farmers, grouped into two, will go home with 10kg of maize seeds, two bags of NPK fertilizer, one liter of post-emergence herbicide, and one liter of pre-emergence herbicide."

At Iresa - Adu, headquarters of Surulere Local Government Area, 70 beneficiaries received 20 bundles of cassava

cuttings, two bags of NPK fertilizer and one liter of herbicide each, while in Oriire Local Government Area, 100 farmers of 10 groups comprising of eight groups of 80 cassava farmers, received 20 bundles of cassava cuttings, two bags of NPK fertilizer and one liter of herbicide.

Also, two groups of 20 maize farmers received 10kg of maize seeds, two bags of NPK fertilizer, one liter of pre-emergence herbicide and one liter of post-emergence herbicide as farm input to enhance their production.

Chairman of Ogbomoso South Local Government Area, Hon. Oyedokun Oyeniyi Timothy in his remarks at the distribution, lauded Gov Seyi Makinde for the intervention.

"You can all see that this Engr. Seyi Makinde-led administration in Oyo State is talk and do government, all these farm input before us are worth millions of Naira and I want to urge you to make good use of them", he said. Hon Oyedokun added, "I'm so happy for you, especially the YEAP beneficiaries, for most of



Benefitting farmers at the distribution

you thought that the governor has neglected you, but as you can see, this is a man that has you on mind, so I expect a lot from you because you have learnt a lot about farming through state sponsored trainings to Nasarawa State. Moreso, you're young, vibrant, able and agile, so I want you to wake up to the task ahead. "I want you to make good use of these items to increase your farm products. These items were given to you to ensure food security in our state and to whom much is given, much is expected, so it is time for youth to tell us that you're not lazy," he added.

Beneficiaries of the farm assets while speaking with journalists shortly after the distribution, lauded Governor Makinde for the initiative.

A maize farmer, Olusegun

Ajao Moses, from Owode Farmers Group in Ogbomoso South, said Governor Makinde has done well.

"We are so grateful, and on behalf of our people we really thank him for this support." He added.

A cassava farmer in Oriire Local Government Area, Mrs. Adebowale Florence said, "I'm a cassava farmer from Idi-Ayin town, my farm is also located in Idi-Ayin town here in Surulere Local Government Area, I'm so grateful that I'm one of the beneficiaries that received 20 bundles of cassava cuttings, two bags of NPK fertilizer and one liter of herbicide, this is so huge and there is no doubt it will enhance my production, I'm so grateful to Engr. Seyi Makinde for this support, we are so proud to be farmers under his administration because of his support always."

No Plan To Confiscate Ancestral Lands At Kake Village Without Compensation -- Zaria LG Boss

By; SANALIYU, Zaria

Zaria Local Government has said that it has no plans to confiscate peoples land at Kake Village, without following due process and ordered that everything should stop until all issues are resolved.

The chairman of the council, Engr. Aliyu Idris stated this while reacting to the Letter of "Pre Action Notice" dated August 8, 2023 by the Counsel to the owners of the lands and

houses at Kake, Barrister A Y Mohammed of Excellencia Legal Consults sent to him.

He said, people were misinformed about the whole process which made those with the land and houses provoked.

Engr. Idris said that there are good plans towards making the area well developed.

According to him, it is not all the lands in Kake that will be affected but after the demarcation that is the time the affected lands will

be known and the owners will be compensated accordingly.

The Chairman further said the planned layout will be of the benefit to the owners officially, because government will issues Certificates of Occupancy (C of Os) to them after the exercise.

He assured the landowners that their lands will not be confiscated without compensation to the owners of the lands falls within the layout sketch.

"Also in agreement, the

council will only deal with their lawyer on their behalf as well as we will not entertain individuals in respect to Kake lands," he informed.

Earlier, the counsel to the Kake landowners, Barrister A. Y. Mohammed sent a "Pre Action Notice" to the local government chairman that his clients will seek redress from a court of law if it insists on going on with the planned development on their lands.

Foremost Industrialist, Apostle Danilux Emerges Chairman MAN Apapa Branch

By; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

Aforemost industrialist and philanthropist, Apostle Raphael Danilola (Danilux) has been unanimously elected as the Chairman of Apapa Branch of Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN) at its 52nd Annual General Meeting, held in Lagos yesterday, August 8, 2023.

The theme, "Financing Nigeria's Manufacturing Sector for Economic Growth", the Meeting, which was well attended by captains of industries, manufacturers, directors, management staff of the organized private sector amongst others from Apapa branch of MAN, also had in attendance the Governor of Lagos State Mr. Babajide Olusola Sanwo-Olu ably represented by the permanent secretary Lagos State Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Cooperatives Mrs Adetutu Ososanya, the national President of MAN Otunba Francis Meshioye who joined via zoom, current Vice President MAN Lagos zone Prince Felix Oba Okojie, immediate past Vice President of MAN Lagos zone Mr. John Aluya, Director General of MAN Mr. Segun Ajayi-Kadir who was ably represented, Mr Olukayode A. Pitan MD/CEO Bank of Industry (BOI) represented by Dr. Isah Omagu GM large enterprise BOI, Mrs Adetola Mosaku who represented the GM of LASEPA Dr Dolapo Fasawe, Mr. Adeoye Babajide of the Lagos State Ministry of environment, outgoing Chairman of the branch Engr. Frank Ike Onyebu and members of his council, the executive secretary of MAN Apapa branch and his staff, the media etc.

Mr. Olukayode A. Pitan MD/CEO of BOI, the guest lecturer at the AGM represented by Dr. Omagu spoke extensively on the topic: Financing Options for Competitiveness of Nigeria Manufacturers under AFCFTA.

He harped on the financing difficulties faced by manufacturers to include

infrastructural deficit, multiple taxation, lack of trained manpower and managerial skills, high interest rates, soaring inflation, increased exposure to high cost of doing business, etc.

Pitan pointed out that with regards to AFCFTA, Nigeria is lagging behind but is trying so hard to pull its weight, having joined late, explaining that AFCFTA aims at minimizing delays at borders, eliminating tariffs by about 90%, etc.

On the involvement of BOI, he explained that is wired to provide not only financial support to manufactures at a single digit over a long term tenor, unlike commercial banks but also involved in advocacy on technical support and innovative ways of doing business for manufacturers.

The BOI Boss called for more engagements and collaboration between BOI and manufacturers in order to grow the Nigeria economy in terms of productivity and creation of wealth and employment.

The highlight of the event was the election of Apostle Raphael Danilola (Danilux) as the chairman of the branch in a free and fair election.

Members unanimously entrusted in his leadership, the affairs of the association for the next four years.

Also elected with the new chairman were the Vice chairman, treasurer and other council members who were all sworn in with the new chairman.

In his welcome address/acceptance speech, Apostle Raphael Danilola (Danilux) appreciated members for unanimously electing him and promised not to let the association down in taking the association to greater heights.

He paid glowing tributes to his predecessor for a job well done and for raising the bar with his leadership quality which has changed the fortunes of the association for the better.

The new chairman called for the support of the outgoing leadership and members to collectively take Apapa branch of MAN to a higher level for the collective good of all.

Bama LG Boss Launches Distribution Of 10 Keke NAPEP, 10 Jega Tricycles In Banki

By; SADIQ ABUBAKAR, Maiduguri

In a bid to deliver dividends of democracy to all parts of Bama Local Government Area of Borno State and to enhance its economic development, the Caretaker Chairman, Hon. Grema Terab in responding to complaints about the complete absence of transportation system in Banki Town since the restoration of peace and livelihood activities to the once bubbling border town, has intervened.

The chairman in his remarks while launching the mass local transport scheme on Monday, said that once visitors arrive Banki Motor Park at the outskirts and entrance of the town, they would be forced to continue the rest of their journey into town on foot, or bicycles, except they are lucky and get lift. Similarly, he said there existed no means of

transporting and moving goods or luggages from the motor park to the town and other places around, except carts (amalanke). The LGC Chairman further explained that, in line with the Sustainable Rural Development Agenda (SRDA) of Professor Babagana Umara Zulum, Bama Local Government Council initiated a transport scheme for Banki Town, with the provision of 10 Keke NAPEPs and 10 Jega tricycle pick-up vans to ease movement of both people and goods within the town.

According to him, the vehicles were distributed to transport unions and various clubs and associations on subsidized hire purchase basis in order to empower the beneficiaries, lessen the transportation burden and ensure periodic rollover of the programme. Grema Terab narrated that once the beneficiaries finish paying 50% of the



cost of the vehicles, they will be granted full ownership as an empowerment gesture while the local government council will continue to provide new sets of vehicles to other beneficiaries on routine basis.

He however, warned that no vehicle is allowed to be taken out of Banki Town

for any reason at any time, even after securing full ownership of the property. The 152 Commanding Officer Banki Unit appreciated the chairman and stressed that they are hopeful that with this modest effort, movement will be much easier and economic activities will be improved in the border town.

Ex NAPS President, Olalere Joins Race For NANS' Leadership

By; AYO OJEDOKUN, Lagos

The immediate past National President of National Association of Polytechnic Students (NAPS) Comrade Olalere Benedict Adetunji has declared intention to contest for the Senate President of the National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS).

Adetunji's experience according to his profile and background, cuts across student unionism over the years and has served in various capacities in uplifting and ensuring that students welfare was protected.

In a statement of intent made available to New Nigerian, Adetunji highlighted things he will do differently to ensure that the interests of his people are well protected. The statement reads, "I appreciate every singular privilege given to serve at different capacities in the student's constituency. It

serves as expository experiences in restoring and contributing to the dignity of our dear students' community and the nation at large. I'm Comrade Olalere Benedict Adetunji, the immediate Past National President of National Association of Polytechnic Students (NAPS). I have a strong desire in pushing forth in my activism in the student's community at National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS).

"National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS) is an umbrella body for all Nigerian students both at home and in the diaspora. Over the years, the association has been the voice of Nigerian students at all levels and has been contributing to their welfare in one way or the other.

"After several observations on the activities of National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS), I

decided to aspire for the position of Senate President of this noble Association.

"My aspiration is borne out of passion to contribute my quota to the advancement of Nigerian students at large by introducing more innovations and creativity to the Senate Arm of National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS).

"I will be coming up with lots of ideas that will benefit the entire Nigerian students across board, set up strategic committees in the Senate Arm to oversee some existing issues and build a robust relationship with the Senate Arm of Federal Republic of Nigeria to uphold the Constitution of National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS) in fullest.

"The Constitution of National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS) gives a wide opportunity for the

advancement of Nigerian students, but there is need for a critical study and understanding to make the most of it.

"However, I am going to work tirelessly to ensure that within the stipulated time frame, a lot of constitutional amendments would have been attended to, to foster the will of the National Executive Council of NANS with great opportunity to discharge their duties without delay.

"Conclusively, I declare my ambition to the entire students populace, senators, leaders and stakeholders as I aspire for the Office of the Senate President of National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS), with code name 'RENEWED CONSOLIDATION 2023'. Together, we can keep the narration positive. I'm humbly seeking for your support in all ramifications", he declared.

1st Coronation Anniversary: Peace, Major Achievement Of Olubadan Balogun - Planning Committee

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

The Planning Committee, Olubadan's First Year Coronation Anniversary on Wednesday, disclosed that Ibadanland has been very peaceful in the last one year under Oba Lekan Balogun as the Olubadan of Ibadanland.

Speaking on behalf of the Planning Committee Chairman, Professor Oladapo Afolabi, at a press conference on the one year Coronation Anniversary of Oba Balogun, the Personal Assistant on Media to Olubadan, Mr Oladele Ogunsola stated that Ibadan has also witnessed lots of development in the last one year.

Mr Ogunsola stressed, "another very crucial area where Kabiyesi's intervention in the last one year has been very noticeable and acknowledged is in the area of war against land grabbing and dispute arising from selling of a particular land to multiple persons".

"There has been a consensus that Ibadanland under his watch has been very peaceful in the last one year with very good

reduction in the activities of the hoodlums who make life unbearable for residents of some areas either by robbery or other violence acts instigated by intake of alcohol and or drugs, indian-hemp not exempted", he said.

The Personal Assist on Media to Olubadan added, "The reduction of such crimes cannot be divorced from the pro-activeness of the traditional compound heads known as Mogajis who are constantly reminded by Kabiyesi not only to watch over their compounds, but to also attend to the needs of the jobless adults around whose hands become the devil's workshop out of idleness in their own little ways."

"We must give kudos to our security agents in this regard for being up and doing. They have been very committed to their core mandates of securing lives and property".

He stressed further, "Talking about peace in Ibadanland, another very crucial area where Kabiyesi's intervention in the last one year has been very noticeable and acknowledged is in the area of war against land grabbing and dispute arising from selling of a

particular land to multiple persons. Immediately after inauguration last year, the decision to set up a committee to look into such matters was made by the Olubadan Advisory Council."

The Planning Committee on behalf of Oba Balogun appealed "to Ibadan sons and daughters, both at home and in the diaspora that have the wherewithall to come up with concerted efforts towards reducing the unemployment rate, bearing in mind that government alone cannot solve the problem. It is also one solid way to reduce crime"

"In the last one year, Kabiyesi has brought honours to Ibadanland as the first Olubadan in history to become a University Chancellor by his appointment as the Chancellor of Sa'datu Rimi University of Education in far away Kano State and the second Olubadan to receive National Honour of Commander of the Order of Federal Republic (CFR).

"The recent elevation of the members of Olubadan Advisory Council hitherto addressed as High Chiefs to Beaded Crown wearing

Obas as Royal Majesties was another of Kabiyesi's first in Ibadan history. Today, under his watch, Ibadan Traditional system is now composed of Obas.

Highlighting events for the one year Coronation Anniversary starting this Thursday, Mr Ogunsola said it will kick off with a symposium titled Ibadan Treasure of the last Empire and the Challenges of Urban Development to be delivered by Mogaji Prof. Aderemi Raji-Oyelade at the Trenchard Hall, University of Ibadan after which there will be the launch of a Compendium specially packaged for the anniversary.

On Friday, there will be conferment of honorary Chieftaincy titles on Prof. Soji Adejumo, Barr. Bolaji Ayorinde and Alhaji Adebayo Aruna after which special Jumat service holds at the Central Mosque, Oja'ba, Reception party on Saturday at the Jogor Centre, Obafemi Awolowo Stadium Way, Oke-Ado and thanksgiving service at The Cathedral of St. James The Great, Oke-Bola, Ibadan on Sunday 6th August which is the final day.

Kebbi Gov't. To Build Convergence Among Development Partners Working In State

By; ALEX UANGBAOJE, Kaduna

Kebbi State Governor, Comrade Nasir Idris has said that his administration is working to bring development partners under one roof. He disclosed this while flagging-off a meeting with representatives of development partners across the country held at the Cabinet Office in Birnin Kebbi on Wednesday.

The meeting according to Ahmed Idris, his Chief Press Secretary, is aimed at strengthening the working relationship between the state government and the development partners towards bringing more development to the state.

The governor, who was represented by his deputy, Sen. Umar Tafida Arugungu, said that the essence of the meeting was for government to achieve some specific objectives to include; improving resource mobilisation, allocation, harmonisation and utilisation to avoid duplications and double or multi-dipping by beneficiaries.

The meeting, he said, would promote partnerships and investments in social, community and human capital developmental projects; scrutinising and earmarking spending approvals of projects, timely provision of counterpart funding, improving inclusive governance especially at the community level.

The governor added that the meeting would pave way for strategic data collection and analysis, while the development partners shall relate with relevant MDAs and community structures across the state to ensure effective implementation of donor-driven and people oriented interventions.

"Now with this development the office of Special Adviser (SA), Donor Projects Co-ordination should be established which is in line with best practices.

"The Donor Projects Co-ordination Office under the office of the Executive Governor will be overseen by the SA to the Governor on International Donor

Agencies, providing the roles of coordinating and focal office," he said.

He pointed out that the present government had serious concern for development of the state in all sectors.

In his remarks, the Secretary to the State Government (SSG), Alhaji Yakubu Bala (Tafidan Yauri), who was represented by the Head of Civil Service, Alhaji Sufyanu Garba Bena assured the participants that the present administration would work out modalities to make all partnerships work for the benefit of present and future generations.

Also speaking, the Special Adviser to the Governor on International Donor Agencies, Hon (Dr) Usman Buhari Ali Gwandu called for a review of development partners' activities, policies and frameworks and called on putting opportunities support services to provide capacity development and institutional strengthening.

In her welcome address, the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Budget and Economic Planning, Mrs Aisha Usman observed that many partners were working in Kebbi in the areas of health and health related interventions, agriculture, malaria, tuberculosis, water and sanitation among others.

"Most of these interventions are complementary, the state has to play its own part for any meaningful impact to be felt. We therefore call on the state government to fulfil its own part of the bargain for 100% results to be obtained" she said.

The meeting was attended by Special Advisers, Alhaji Kabiru Labbo Jega (Finance) and Alhaji Muhammad Arzika Dakingari (Revenue Generation) as well as Emir of Gwandu, Alhaji Muhammad Ilyasu Bashir, represented by the Wazirin Gwandu, Alhaji Abdullahi Umar.

Others were; development partners, donor organisations, non-governmental organisations and business membership organisations from across the state.



From left Osun State Governor, Senator Ademola Adeleke; Consultant Bestways, Dr. Victor Dare and Osun State Speaker of the House of Assembly, Rt. Hon. Adewale Egbedun @ the just concluded retreat programme for the new political office holders and key stakeholders of osun state held @ the western sun hotels and suites Ede, Osun State. Photo: AKINOLAARIYO

Ministerial.Nomination Of Hon Jisalo, Second To None - Group

**Lauds President Tinubu*

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

A group, "The National Frontiers" has described the nomination of Hon Zaphaniah Jisalo as a Minister designate by President Bola Tinubu as "second to none".

The body in a statement made available to journalists by its Secretary, Alhaji Isiaka Kehinde after its meeting in Ibadan, commended President Tinubu "for extending his dragnet to fish out Hon Jisalo.

Describing Hon Jisalo as "the blind spot" which successive Federal Governments couldn't locate, the body said "a state exists for the sake of good life only, therefore given opportunity to somebody with passion and commitment to make the place more beautiful is nothing but one of the wisest steps taken by the president thus far".

Likened Honourable Jisalo to Lee Kwan Yee an erstwhile Minister of Singapore who built the one time decrepit country to an International financial hub through



Hon Zaphaniah Jisalo

series of transformations", the group affirmed that it has no modicum of hesitation that given his requisite experience as an outstanding Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC) Chairman and as a one time member of Representatives who was elected twice because of his sterling performance, he will convert the opportunity given to him to serve to colossal

success".

"We have perused the outstanding resume of the former Honourable and we can boldly assert that he is equipped with loads of past experience in FCT administration and will reflect same in his current assignment and he will leave an exemplary trail on the sands of time by the time he completes his first term of office and like a morning Sun whose

returned is always desired, people will be shouting "encore" after his first term in office", it said. National Frontiers added, "One can't go to pharmacy to buy a pack of experience, you have to be in those games in order to acquire the experience. This will be an opportunity long awaited by FCT residents to shout," they said.

Humanitarian Service: JDPC To Empower 41 IDPs On Skills, Donates Food, Relief Materials

By: AUSTINE EMMANUEL, Kaduna

Justice, Development and Peace Caritas, (JDPC) has said that they will empower at least, 41 IDPs on different vocations to help curb the many challenges faced by internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Kaduna State.

The Coordinator, JDPC Rev. Fr. Joshua Achir disclosed this to journalists in Kaduna at the weekend, during a visit to the IDP camp in Maraban Rido, Chikun Local Government Area of Kaduna State.

The foundation which donated food items, sanitary pads and other relief materials, said the 41 people are those who showed interest in learning skills to better their means of livelihood

and therefore, they will do everything possible to assist them fulfill their dreams.

The food items distributed include, 20 bags of 100kg maize, 10 bags of 50kg rice, five bags of 100kg beans, 150 litres of palm oil and three cartons of sanitary pads.

Achir appealed to humanitarian organisations and other well-meaning Nigerians to support the IDPs, saying that their life is pathetic, while calling on the governments at all levels to live up to their responsibility of securing lives and property of Nigerians to enable them go about to their normal businesses.

He said, "We are empowering 41 of the IDPs who indicated interest, they are going to

learn skills like tailoring, hair dressing, soap and detergent making to enable them better their lives and that of their families." He said.

The coordinator of the IDPs, Adams Sule said, "we have about 2,500 children here, most of the children are orphans, their parents were killed by bandits, most of the women here are widows, their husbands killed, we have over 4000 IDPs.

"Our major challenges here is hunger, the IDPs are suffering, our children can no longer go to school because our source of income is farming which the bandits have taken away from us."

He appealed to Nigerians to support the IDPs, especially the children, in order for them to go back to school.

Thirteen-year-old Sandra Yohanna, who narrated her experience in the camp, said her mother usually puts salt in water for her and her siblings to drink as dinner before going to bed at times.

"My mother gave birth to 10 of us. We were kidnapped in 2021. My parents sold all our property to pay ransom. We don't have any food at home. All of us are no longer going to school because my mother could not afford to pay our school fees. Sometimes my mother will put salt in water and ask us to drink and sleep because there is no food.

"I am appealing to Nigerians to help us and other IDPs with food and education because some of us want to go to school to be able to help our families," Yohanna said.

EARCOM Lauds Gov Eno On Settlement Of Teachers' Gratuities

By; PATRICK TITUS, Uyo

The Akwa Ibom State Governor, Pastor Umo Eno has been commended for addressing the plights of retired Primary School Teachers in the state by releasing one billion Naira to settle their gratuities.

Ethical and Attitudinal Reorientation Commission (EARCOM), gave the commendation through the Head Media/Advocacy Unit, Reverend Osondu Ahirika, while speaking on a Radio programme in Uyo yesterday.

Ahirika also mentioned the release of another 800 million Naira by the governor to clear the backlog of leave grants in the state as another action worthy of commendation. According to Ahirika, the gesture is a considerate, kind hearted and a demonstration of Governor Umo Eno's responsiveness to the peoples outcry and a firm commitment to honouring his campaign pledge about workers welfare.

Ahirika who stressed that there is no justification to condemn vice if one cannot commend virtue, urged the people to appreciate Governor Umo Eno for the timely intervention on the protracted issue of gratuities and leave grants payment in under 100 days in office.

The Media/Advocacy Unit

Head of EARCOM, however tasked workers and the people to reciprocate the governors' kind disposition by putting in more diligence to reposition the service with a view to impacting positively on the quality of governance.

He noted that beyond ensuring regular payment of workers' salaries, Governor Eno has directed that Leave grants should henceforth be incorporated into monthly salaries for prompt payment, describing this as in keeping with his now habitual tilt to new templates and tinges to governance.

On the nine-year old Akwa Ibom pupil of Mobil Pegasus Schools, Miss Mmekudmfon Wilfred Effiong who emerged winner for the National Creative Writing Competition, EARCOM advocated that a Hall of Fame be instituted to celebrate, honour and immortalise Akwa Ibom citizens who excel in various endeavours of life and make them brand Ambassadors of the State.

EARCOM congratulated Miss Effiong, a primary 4 pupil and Imaobong Uko who is making exploits internationally in athletics, among many others and urged citizens to emulate their stellar examples and perform greater feats worthy of recognition rather than resort to social vices, idleness and slothfulness.





Doctor's Death In Hospital Elevator

By Safiya I. Dantiye

THE sad death of a young doctor undergoing housemanship, Dr Vwaere Diaso, on Tuesday at the General Hospital, Odan, Lagos Island in a faulty elevator that crashed emphasised what Tom Clancy called "African casual" in his novel, Executive Orders because security men didn't check some things they were supposed to check in an airport in Sudan, which could be dangerous. I was not happy about it when I read the sad, tragic story, but it is a bitter truth that we take things too casual, even where things ought to be taken with utmost seriousness.

If only we would all take note of this tragedy and change our lackadaisical ways of doing things as it would not only accelerate our development, but would make others to take us seriously and have confidence in working with us. They would trust us that it would be done. As it is, this attitude has contaminated some foreigners and they behave like this. They would not dare do it in their countries, but because it is the norm here, they slide into it.

We only react after damage had been done, at times costing lives, only to go back to our casual way of doing things. What a shame!

It was said the faulty elevator was reported to the authorities many times as it used to stop with people inside. The authorities always promised to fix it. Dr Diaso entered the elevator to go down and get her food from a dispatch rider when it crashed from the 10th floor. The Nigerian Medical Association (NMA), Lagos State chapter, protested her death and grounded activities in the hospital. One placard reads: "Here is Vwaere Diaso, she didn't have to die for us to get it right."

As a result, the Lagos State Government said it had set up a panel of inquiry and would sanction anyone found culpable.

Another laxity which may not actually surprise us was that according to her colleagues, it took forty minutes for engineers to arrive and dismantle the elevator. So, it was not a case of the elevator crashing and she was rushed to the emergency unit.

If only we would all take note of this tragedy and change our lackadaisical ways of doing things as it would not only accelerate our development, but would make others to take us seriously and have confidence in working with us. They would trust us that it would be done. As it

is, this attitude has contaminated some foreigners and they behave like this. They would not dare do it in their countries, but because it is the norm here, they slide into it.

There is zero chance that those that caused the death of Dr Diaso through negligence would get the deserved punishment, which is unfortunate to put it mildly.

This however boils down to us not holding people to account. If people see that there are consequences for their actions, or inactions, as the case may be, they would take their work or responsibility serious. After all those Nigerians that go abroad behave well there, observing all the rules and regulations because breaking rules there come with consequences that must be faced.

But they relax when they come to Nigeria as there is almost zero obedience to rules and regulations and even those that live here that want to behave by the book, they are mocked for behaving like a 'white man'. They accept that laxity is the habit of black people, which is not saying much about us.

And they are also casual about saying it; they don't see it as an indictment of them as a people. The irony is lost on them.

There is zero chance that those that caused the death of Dr Diaso through negligence would get the deserved punishment, which is unfortunate to put it mildly.

But all the same those concerned should push for justice for this young girl whose promising life was terminated.

Let us be serious and change our ways by being diligent in our responsibilities. It shouldn't take the death of an innocent person to remind us of how too casual we are, which is costly, to say the least.

One thing is certain. The elevator would be changed, bringing into mind the placard that says, "She didn't have to die for us to get it right."

It took years without the elevator being fixed or changed, probably being postponed several times due to 'lack of funds' or such flimsy excuses on matters that concern incidents that could lead to death. But now the death of Dr Diaso would do the magic where money would materialise and it would be fixed and everybody is expected to be happy.

Let us be serious and change our ways by being diligent in our responsibilities. It shouldn't take the death of an innocent person to remind us of how too casual we are, which is costly, to say the least.

PSC Boss Arase, DIG Mba, Others To Grace Book Launch By Lagos Award Winning Journalist

By; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

The Chairman of the Police Service Commission (PSC) Dr. Solomon Arase and the Deputy Inspector General of Police, Planning and Strategy DIG Frank Mba and others are expected to grace the book launch of an award winning journalist, slated to be unveiled in Lagos.

Titled, "We Are Priceless", the book authored by Juliana Francis, a celebrated and cerebral Crime Reporter, will be unveiled at 11am on August 31, 2023, at the POWA Hall, Oduduwa Street, off Sobo Arobiodu, GRA, Ikeja, Lagos.

The book, centered on Japa, a trending slang, denotes the desperation of most Nigerians, both young and not too young, to flee the economic quagmire in the country to seek a better life in Europe and the West.

Unfortunately, it did not just start. Sadly, it involves trafficking of innocent children, particularly girls of school age into sex slavery.

Fraudulent people have continued to take advantage of the seemingly endemic poverty in the land to deceive parents into handing over their children to be trafficked into sexual exploitation abroad on the pretext of jobs with mouth-watering salaries.

The chairman of the Launch Committee Abiodun Bello in a release in Lagos hinted that the launch will be headlined by dignitaries from all walks of life.

"The Chairman of the event is the former Inspector General of Police (IGP) now the Chair of the Police Service Commission (PSC), Dr. Solomon Arase, the Speakers are Ms Olufunke Fayemi of the Report Women Network and chief producer, Voice of Nigeria and Mrs. Evelyn Usman, the vice-president, Crime Reporters Association of Nigeria (CRAN) while the Special Keynote Speaker is Dr. Godwin Morka, former director, National Agency for Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP).

"Others are the President of the National Association of Proprietors of Private Schools (NAPSS), Otunba Yomi Odubela, as the Guest Speaker, former Presidential aide, Mr. Femi Adesina, as Special Guest/Book Reviewer, while the Special Guest of Honour is Deputy Inspector

General of Police (DIG), Frank Mba.

"Other Special Guests of Honour are the CEO, Raimi Salau Nigeria Limited, Alhaji Raimi Salau, the Director-General (DG), NAPTIP, Prof. Fatima Waziri-Azi, and the Chair/CEO, Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NIDCOM), Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa.

He explained that the book centres on the escape of five courageous children from sex slavery, which they were deceived into by the people who their parents and guardians trusted.

According to the author, the book reminds us of how vulnerable children continue to be sacrificed on the altar of unbridled wealth accumulation via the selfish quest of adults who should protect them.

"For too long, parents have been fooled into giving their children to human traffickers and merchants of child labour.

"In Nigeria, children as young as eight years old, 10, and 13 are trafficked into sex slavery, child labour, and other crimes and many are killed in the process.

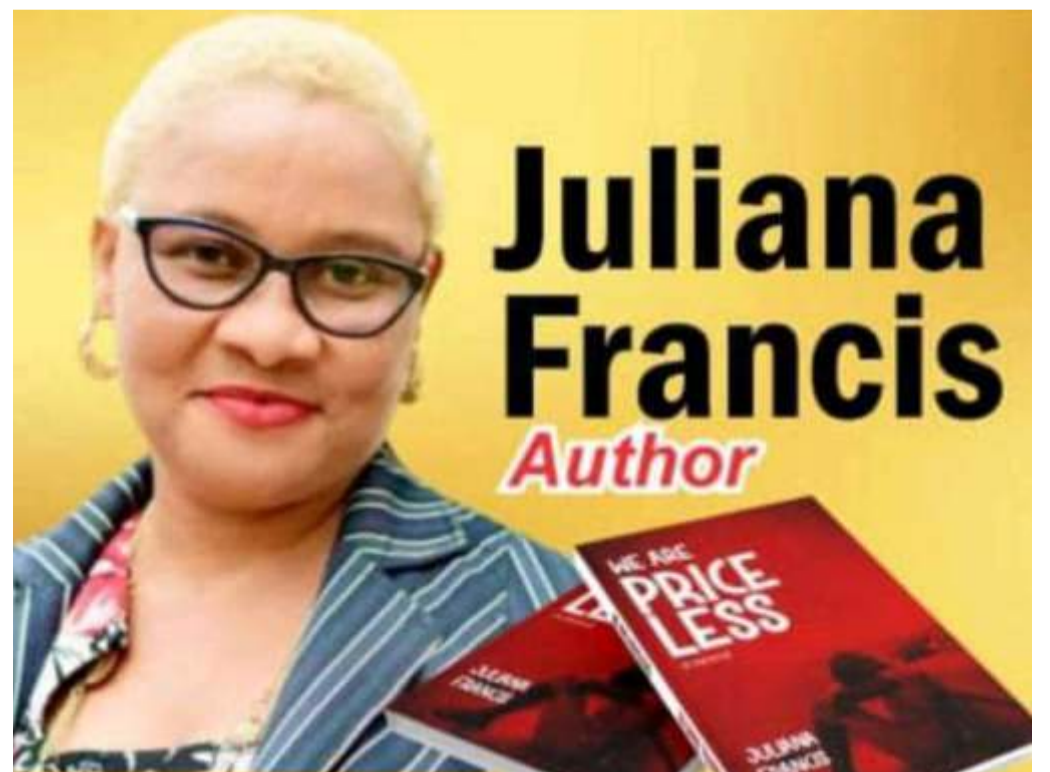
"We can fight human trafficking by first catching our young ones, educating them to know about the ill, and joining in stopping it.

"It is a campaign tool for all sectors, showing the realities of human trafficking and urging Nigerians to join the fight to checkmate the menace," Francis said.

The author studied Literature-In-English at the University of Ilorin. She started her journalism career in 2002 with The Sun newspaper. Francis was at different times the Crime Editor of the Nigerian Compass, the Newswatch newspaper and the New Telegraph.

As a journalist, Francis has passion for unearthing crimes against humanity, especially the girl-child. She has won several awards and received multiple nominations across the globe. She is the first female overall winner of the coveted Wole Soyinka Prize for Investigative Reporting in Nigeria.

Francis, a media consultant, is the CEO of Youthlens Initiative Development and the publisher of Youthlens.com. She is an alumnus of the ReportWomen Female Reporters Leadership Programme (FRLP), 2017 set and also a trainer and mentor to budding journalists.



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

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TECHNICAL DATA

6 COLUMNS

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

POLITICAL RATE

SPACE	RATE	VAT	TOTAL
FRONT PAGE MAST HEAD EAR PIECE	461,622.86	34,621.71	496,244.57
FRONT PAGE SOLUS	787,474.29	59,060.57	846,534.86
FRONT PAGE STRIP	787,474.29	59,060.57	846,534.86
BACK PAGE EAR PIECE	420,889.54	31,566.72	452,456.26
FULL PAGE (COLOUR)	465,967.54	34,947.57	500,915.11
FULL PAGE (BLACK AND WHITE)	364,037.14	27,302.79	391,339.93
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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

DSS And Accusations Of Disobedience To Court Orders – Setting The Records Straight

By: PETER N. AFUNANYA

Recently, the media is awash with various commentaries about DSS disobedience to Court Orders. These accusations, as wrong as they are, have peaked in the Emefiele saga. It may interest the public and indeed the avowed critics of the Service to note the following incidents and timelines to show that it has religiously obeyed Court orders in respect of the case and even others.

In 2022, the Service commenced the investigation of Mr Godwin Emefiele on suspicion of Terrorism Financing, Money Laundering among others and subsequently applied to the Federal High Court, Abuja for his arrest and detention. But the Chief Judge objected to the order and clearly stated that the Service did not need an order to investigate or arrest him. Emefiele was to later obtain a restraining order issued by Justice MA Hassan of the FCT High Court against the Service. Instructively, the DSS obeyed this Order and did not arrest or detain Emefiele.

However, on 9th June, 2023, Emefiele was suspended as CBN Governor by the President. Based on new information and suspected criminal infractions, the Service, as expected by law, arrested and detained him using a Magisterial Order. On 10th July, 2023, Justice Hamza Mu'azu of the FCT High Court, while recognising that the DSS had every legal right to arrest, detain and investigate Emefiele, ordered for his release or prosecution within seven days. The Service expeditiously and expressly complied with the order and charged him for illegal possession of firearms and ammunitions being one of the criminal suspicions. The Muazu Order had, by implication, extended Emefiele's detention by seven days with effect from 10th July, 2023 when the initial detention order had expired.

Within the same period, Justice Bello Kawu of the same FCT High Court, while dismissing reliefs sought by Peter Abang, Counsel to Emefiele on 14th July, 2023 ordered for the release or prosecution of Emefiele within 48 hours. However, the Service had complied with the seven days ultimatum issued by Justice Muazu. In obedience to rule of law, Emefiele was arraigned before Justice Nicholas Oweibo of the Federal High Court, Ikoyi, Lagos, on 25th July, 2023 for illegal possession of arms and ammunition. The Service had long issued a press statement over the incident that happened at the Court between its staff and those of Nigerian Correctional Service (NCoS) and pledged to investigate it. Though the investigation is ongoing, the preliminary findings are quite shocking considering the ignoble roles played by some public officials.

As normal with criminal investigations, security agencies re-arrest suspects when there is adequate suspicion of commission of a crime or as may be revealed by an ongoing investigation. Emefiele was re-arrested on the basis of this. Even though the re-arrest was tainted by the overzealousness of personnel of the Service and NCoS, it was nonetheless

legally procedural.

Later, the Service applied for an Exparte Order at the FCT High Court presided by Justice Edward Okpe (and not Justice Mu'azu as erroneously and massively reported in the media) to detain Emefiele for 14 days. Against the established rules regarding exparte applications, a lawyer suddenly appeared in the Court for Emefiele. While the Judge did not outrightly reject the DSS request, he struck out the motion upon its withdrawal by the Service counsel. But this is not without his guidance. Earlier, the Judge had drawn the attention of the Counsels to Section 293 of Administration of Criminal Justice Act (ACJA) which also recognises the Magistrate Court as a competent Court that can first be approached for an order for custody of a suspect under investigation. In other words, the Service, having taken the hint of the Court, took the right steps. What transpired at the Court was, thereafter, variously misrepresented by some mischief makers. Part of the disinformation is to the effect that the Court "struck out the application and stated that it was an abuse of judicial process". That was not what the Court said. What Justice Okpe said was "the Applicant having withdrawn the application, same is hereby struck out". That was all. The Court records are there. But purveyors of fake news distorted the message to suit their intent; just to make the Service look bad – a sort of giving the dog a bad name in order to hang it.

Many had gone to town with stories of DSS fragrant disobedience to Court Orders especially in view of the last episodes at the High Courts in Lagos and Abuja. With what played out at the Court on 27th July 2023 under Justice Okpe, the Service immediately applied and obtained a detention Order from a Magistrate Court. So, Emefiele is legally detained. For reasons that the Emefiele case is subjudice, the Service will refrain from making further comments on the subject matter.

For either lack of knowledge or deliberate act to ignore the truth, there has been sustained bashing of the Service and its leadership in the media and public spaces. It is ironical that the same people who condemn media trial are daily taking the Service through the same. The actual points are however, not lost on the Service. It is aware of the depth of the orchestrations and even deeper plot to incite the judiciary against it.

Targeting DSS DG, YM Bichi, for insidious media attacks is needless. Any DGSS, even if brought from heaven among the angels, will discharge the DSS mandate. There isn't a time in our national

sojourn for greatness that key organs of government will cease to exist or not needed. The DSS, like the CIA, FBI among others, is a major and positive instrument of State administration and management. It is essential for statecraft, governance, stability and public order. Scraping it as being canvassed by the uninformed is unreasonable. It is indeed obvious the DSS is misunderstood. It is obvious there is a mob action against the Service. Allow the DSS be. Allow Bichi, a fine gentleman officer, be. Support DSS. Support Nigeria. As in the national anthem, Arise, O Compatriots. Some critics have made varied insinuations including abusing the Service, its leadership and completely distorting the significant historical role of the Service in nation building. Others have said it is wobbling and of no relevance. Laughable. The DSS is not tottering. It is standing and firmly too. Even the worst of its critics knows that the Service has played (and still plays) stabilising roles for the nation. Its loyalty and patriotism are incomparable. The Service is a stabilising force for the country's democracy. Same for the indivisibility and indissolubility of Nigeria's sovereignty. Only a collaborative support from stakeholders will strengthen this. The Service does not claim to know it all; a reason it allows for constructive criticism and makes out time to explain itself in line with transparency and democratic accountability. Whether on Emefiele, Bawa or Kanu, the Service has obeyed judicial orders and handled the cases procedurally and in accordance with the rule of law. Critics are encouraged to be a bit more discerning and up their research capabilities. Doing so will reveal that the Service obeys



orders. The Court of Appeal judgement on Kanu is recommended for detailed study. Maybe, we can decipher the difference between Discharged and Acquitted and what the use of either or both mean in the final order of a Judge. The DSS is an ardent respecter of the law. Anyone may argue this but it is true. It is in this regard that it has applied for either a stay or notice of appeal on some of the matters. One who does not obey the laws will not resort to legal procedures like the DSS has done.

Let those seeking justice not intimidate the Judges or derail law enforcement efforts. Judges deliver justice without fear or favour and should be allowed to discharge their duties honourably. For the umpteenth time, the Service reiterates its unequivocal stance on rule of law and respect for the judiciary. This position remains unchanging despite the futile attempts to paint it otherwise.

Peter N. Afunanya Ph.D, fsi is the Public Relations Officer Department of State Services (DSS) National Headquarters Abuja.

"That was not what the Court said. What Justice Okpe said was "the Applicant having withdrawn the application, same is hereby struck out".

Niger: Apply Pressure BUT Stop the Countdown to War

Prof Jibrin Ibrahim

LAST Sunday, at its 51st Extraordinary Summit in Abuja, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) announced a series of resolutions that would guide its action towards the restoration of constitutional order in Niger following the coup. The most spectacular was as follows:

“In the event the Authority's demands are not met within one week, take all measures necessary to restore constitutional order in the Republic of Niger. Such measures may include the use of force; To this effect, the Chiefs of defense staff of ECOWAS are to meet immediately.”

The most important concern I have for the threat of war is the current geopolitical dynamics in which France and the United States are determined to keep a foothold in Niger where they have stationed their soldiers and have a major drone base in Agadez covering the entire region. As France has already been booted out of Burkina Faso and Mali, and their place taken over by the Russian Wagner Group, the risk of a proxy war between world powers could easily replace the ECOWAS objective of the restoration of the democratic order.

This type of threat worked effectively in ousting President Jammeh of the Gambia in 2017 because there was unity of purpose in the entire region and the military threat against such a small country was credible. The situation in Niger and in West Africa today is significantly different after a fourth coup in the region. It is important to think carefully before taking a risky path. I am however confident that it is possible to reverse the current trend of the return of the military.

It would be recalled that on 9th July 2023, President Bola Tinubu was elected Chairman of ECOWAS. In his acceptance speech, he warned that the threat to peace in the region had reached an alarming proportion with terrorism and an emerging pattern of military takeovers that ECOWAS must take concerted action addressing with the urgency the matter demands.

This decision of Nigeria to retake its leadership position in West Africa is positive. His first action point as ECOWAS Chairman was establishing the Presidential Troika + 1 (Talon – Benin, Embalo – Guinea Bissau and Bazoum – Niger + Umar Touray, President of ECOWAS Commission to develop an immediate action plan to address terrorism and coups d'état in West Africa. The four presidents met in Abuja on 18th

July and drew up plans to engage Mali, Burkina Faso and Guinea on expeditious return to constitutional rule, credible and inclusive elections.

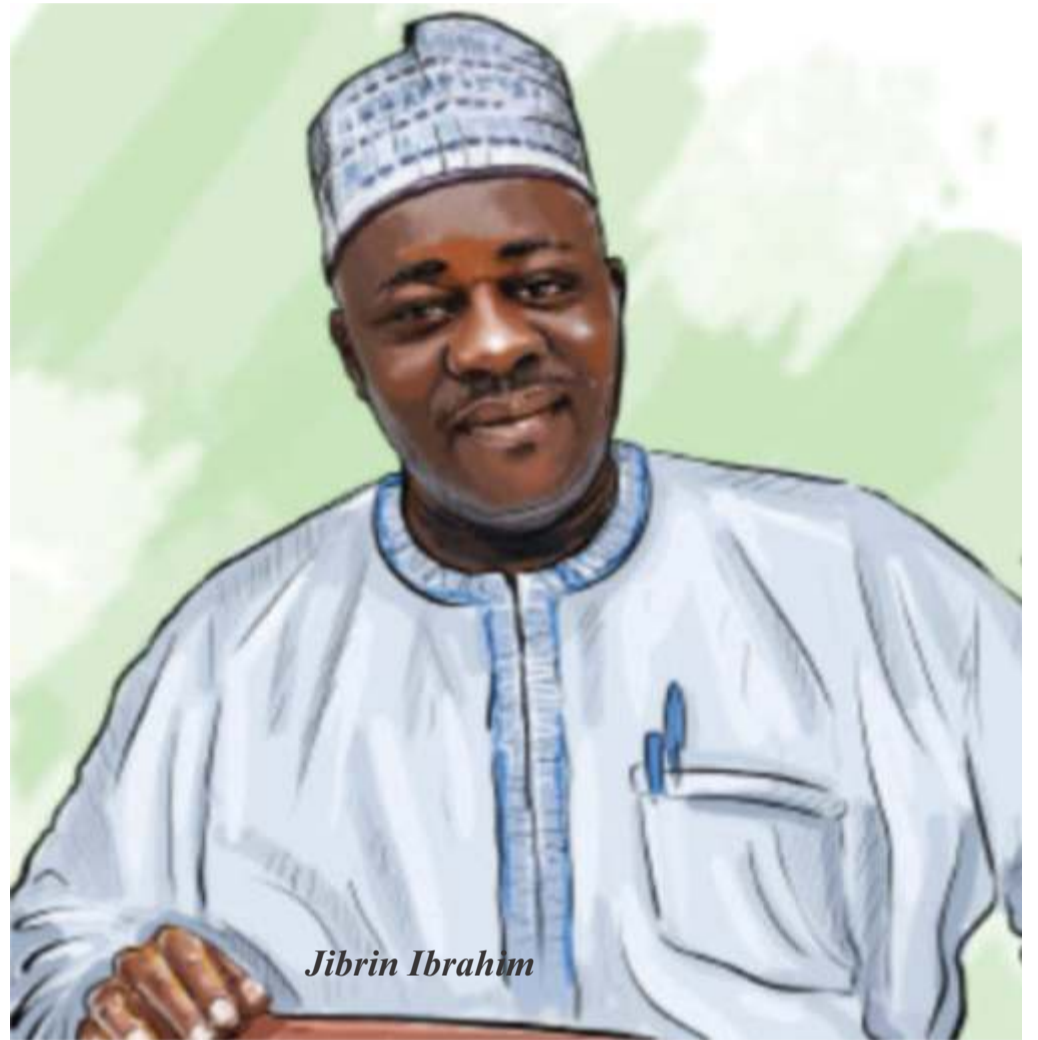
Shortly thereafter, President Bazoum himself became the next victim of a coup. President Tinubu is right to show strong leadership in this struggle against terrorism and return of the military. His actions however need to be carefully considered as the threat is against not just one but four countries – Niger, Mali, Burkina Faso and Guinea, who have already announced that they will fight together if Niger is attacked.

Algeria has also a statement stating it would not allow a repeat of the dismantling of the state and subsequent chaos that was allowed to happen to Libya. Niger itself is not completely isolated as its borders with Mali, Burkina Faso, Chad, Libya and Algeria have already been reopened. The only closed borders it has today are with Nigeria and Benin.

Nigeria, on whose neck a lot of action will rely on has to consider the long history of amical and fraternal relations it has had with both the State and people of Niger. During the civil war, in spite of a lot of pressure, Niger resisted French solicitations to support Biafra. When they wanted to dam the river Niger, they accepted Nigeria's appeal not to, so that Nigeria could fully benefit from its own hydroelectric dams on the River Niger. In compensation, we have been providing them electricity until the current sanctions' regime went into force and the supply was stopped. What would be the implications of this measure for future bilateral relations.

The most important concern I have for the threat of war is the current geopolitical dynamics in which France and the United States are determined to keep a foothold in Niger where they have stationed their soldiers and have a major drone base in Agadez covering the entire region. As France has already been booted out of Burkina Faso and Mali, and their place taken over by the Russian Wagner Group, the risk of a proxy war between world powers could easily replace the ECOWAS objective of the restoration of the democratic order. Already, there are reports that the Niger putschists have gone to Mali for meetings with the Wagner Group. For Nigeria, the implications of a military confrontation could be the inflow of millions of refugees into our territory.

Public opinion in Niger and indeed in much of the Sahel is very deeply anti-French. ECOWAS needs to be careful and ensure that the people do not see its actions as being teleguided by French and



Jibrin Ibrahim

American imperialism. The ECOWAS Vision 2050 is for a West Africa of the peoples and the organisation must conduct I believe that ECOWAS must maintain its principle of Zero tolerance for unconstitutional change of government as enshrined in the ECOWAS and African Union Protocols and other instruments but the sanctions regime currently being implemented should be enough to force the hands of the junta. These include:

- Closure of land and air borders between ECOWAS countries and Niger;
- Institution of ECOWAS no-fly zone on all commercial flights to and from Niger;
- Suspension of all commercial and financial transactions between ECOWAS Member States and Niger;
- Freeze of all service transaction including utility services;
- Freeze of assets of the Republic of Niger in ECOWAS Central Banks;
- Freeze of assets of the Niger State and the State Enterprises and Parastatals in Commercial Banks;
- Suspension of Niger from all financial assistance and transactions with all financial institutions, particularly, EBID and BOAD;
- Travel ban and asset freeze for the military officials involved in the coup attempt. The same applies to their family members and the civilians who accept to participate in any institutions or government established by these military officials.

It is also important to maintain and indeed

intensify the current mediation efforts. In this regard, I strongly support the dispatch of a mediation team to Niamey yesterday by the Chairman of the ECOWAS, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, with a mandate to expeditiously resolve the current political impasse in the country. The delegation is headed by former Nigerian Head of State, General Abdulsalami Abubakar (Rtd). Other members are the Sultan of Sokoto, Alhaji Muhammad Sa'ad Abubakar III and the President of the ECOWAS Commission, Omar Alieu Touray.

President Tinubu has also sent a separate delegation led by Ambassador Babagana Kingibe to engage with the leaders of Libya and Algeria on the Niger crisis.

Public opinion in Niger and indeed in much of the Sahel is very deeply anti-French. ECOWAS needs to be careful and ensure that the people do not see its actions as being teleguided by French and American imperialism. The ECOWAS Vision 2050 is for a West Africa of the peoples and the organisation must conduct itself in a way and manner that does not alienate the said peoples.

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

Let Me Breathe, I Don't Want To Die

By Owei Lakemfa

TWO different but related cries ring in my head. "Let the Poor breathe" and "I don't want to die." The first is the cry across the country as the masses are being suffocated by inflation and over 90 million poor get hungrier.

The second is the plaintive cry of young medical doctor, Vwaere Diaso, whose calling is to save lives. However, when her life was in danger with her limbs broken by a heartless system, her blood flowing from various parts and she knew her life was ebbing and she desperately needed help, her dying cry to her colleagues was: "I don't want to die."

"So, youthful Dr Vwaere Diaso died an avoidable and agonising death, another monument to a dysfunctional system; all that is left are her grieving family, mournful colleagues and a Tribunal of Inquiry."

Dr Diaso graduated from medical school in 2022 and was two weeks away from completing her housemanship at the Island General Hospital, Odan, when last Tuesday, August 1, 2023 she routinely took the hospital lift from her ninth-floor official quarters.

Now, for some years now, doctors at the hospital said they had complained about the poor state of the lift. As soon as she entered the lift, it took a downward plunge crashing to the ground floor. There were people around, including on the ground floor, who knew somebody was in the lift, but a rescue team did not arrive until 40 minutes later.

Dr Moye, who was at the scene, narrated what happened next: "They tried to use rods to open it, to be sure it wasn't a joke. They finally opened it and the sight was gruesome. Muffled sounds of excruciating pain and agony became apparent."

"Her forehead had a horizontal cut, her mouth had another one and she had raccoon eyes. She was lying in between the base of the elevator and the ground floor, with the engine hanging over her head, which meant any miscalculation in movement, she'll be crushed to instant death."

"She was literally sandwiched in-between the hanging engine and below the ground floor with blood on broken glasses and fractured limbs. It's not a sight to describe."

"I remember telling her to relax that help was coming. She said: 'Don't tell me to relax, tell them to get me out of here'. We eventually got her out and she kept saying she thinks she'll die."

"Emergency care was almost zero and inside a hospital for that matter."

So, youthful Dr Vwaere Diaso died an avoidable and agonising death, another monument to a dysfunctional system; all that is left are her grieving family, mournful colleagues and a Tribunal of Inquiry.

The loud cries of "Let the Poor breathe" eventually penetrated the hallowed chambers of the Senate. But to the

Distinguished Senators of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, it was a joke. So, they turned it into a comedy skit. Senator Akintunde Abiodun who had moved a motion that another round of increased electricity tariff should not be visited on the populace had repeated the cry: "Let The Poor Breathe!"

The President of the Senate, Chief Godswill Obot Akpabio, then sarcastically put to voice vote a motion that the Nigerian poor should be allowed to breathe: "The prayer is that, let the poor breathe, and Senator Mustapha has seconded that the poor should breathe. Those who are in support of the additional prayer that the poor should be allowed to breathe, say 'aye' and those who are against say 'nay'". The Senators crooned 'aye' and the chamber burst into laughter.

The laughter was not unexpected; our situation is not different from 1821 when the poet, Percy Bysshe 'PB' Shelley wrote: "The rich have become richer, and the poor have become poorer." Our Senators get such jumbo pay, that to mention their humongous monthly pay, has become treasonable as such revelation can lead to a national revolt. Additionally, they award 'Constituency Project' contracts to themselves which does not pass through contract scrutiny, open award and accounting process; they account for and to themselves.

Again like former President Muhammadu Buhari cried out for years without taking steps to curb it, the National Assembly (NASS) has a tradition of padding the country's annual budget for their own private interests. As I write, there is a N500 billion palliative targeted at the poor and the NASS has a princely cut of N70



billion from it. If this largesse were to be divided equally amongst the 469 member-NASS, they will each get about N150 million. You see why our Distinguished Senators can afford to mock the poor?

Then, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) seems primed to invade our neighbours in Niger Republic over the military coup in that country. Nigeria is expected to provide the bulk of the invasion force. Secondly, such an invasion would be quite problematic unless Nigeria participates. This is because the three other members of ECOWAS having land borders with Niger: Benin, Mali and Burkina Faso, are opposed to the invasion.

In fact, the last two along with another ECOWAS member, Guinea, have pledged their support to Niger were ECOWAS to invade. The three other countries having borders with Niger: Chad, Algeria and Libya, are not members of ECOWAS and are unlikely to allow ECOWAS troops use their countries to facilitate such an attack. Chad, although an ally of France – a country that desperately wants the invasion – is also ruled by a military junta; Algeria is opposed to any invasion that

can send refugees across its borders, while Libya is a failed state with four contending governments.

However, Senator Akpabio in briefing Nigerians on the resolution of the Senate claimed that the President never requested for the deployment of the Nigerian military for action in Niger. I had to go back to read the President's letter and concluded that while President Tinubu wrote his request in the official English language, Chief Akpabio must have read it in his native Anang language.

Even if the Nigeria executive were to support the invasion, under Section 5 of the Constitution, it needs the express approval of the NASS to levy war. Specifically, 5(4)b states that "except with the prior approval of the Senate, no member of the armed forces of the Federation shall be deployed on combat duty outside Nigeria".

In compliance with this provision, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu wrote the Senate expressly stating that the "actions expected" of Nigeria include the: "Military build-up and deployment of personnel for military intervention to enforce compliance of the Military Junta in Niger Republic should they remain recalcitrant."

The Senate on Saturday, August 5, 2023, rejected the President's request for the deployment of Nigeria military personnel to Niger. Rather, it advised President Tinubu and "other leaders of ECOWAS to strengthen political and diplomatic options and other means with a view to resolving the political impasse in Niger Republic".

However, Senator Akpabio in briefing Nigerians on the resolution of the Senate claimed that the President never requested for the deployment of the Nigerian military for action in Niger. I had to go back to read the President's letter and concluded that while President Tinubu wrote his request in the official English language, Chief Akpabio must have read it in his native Anang language.

"If this largesse were to be divided equally amongst the 469 member-NASS, they will each get about N150 million. You see why our Distinguished Senators can afford to mock the poor?"

Kabiru Sani Giant: A right peg in the right hole

By Bashir Bello, Abuja

Among the appointments made by the Kebbi State Government, the appointment of Ahaji Kabiru Sani Giant as the Special Adviser to Kebbi State Governor on Political Affairs and Power could be described as apt and a clear sign of placing the right peg inside the right hole. A seasoned and grassroots politician with a friendly disposition, Kabiru Sani Giant since his appointment has shown his unflinching support to the administration of Governor Nasiru Idris by building bridges across the state and beyond among stakeholders.

One of such initiatives was his recent meeting with members of the Correspondents' Chapel of the Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) Kebbi State, where he passionately appealed to Journalists to support the present administration of Governor Nasiru Idris to bring the desired transformation of the state to reality. According to him the call for support for the new administration became imperative given the critical role of journalists in the growth and development of any society.

"We need your support to give this government a good name. We cannot stop you from writing stories, but you should balance them before publishing them. We need to harmonize, consolidate and work together for the good of the state and the nation at large," he said.

No doubt that one of his first move as a political aide was to build harmony among stakeholders especially outlining the importance of journalists in democracy shows a man who is truly committed to the development of Kebbi State and the country at large. Again, the fact that his boss, Governor Nasiru Idris, so far is one of the top performing new governors in the country shows that he has among his team an efficient aide and certainly deserves someone like Kabiru Sani Giant to help consolidate his vision and policies to the people of the state. Governor Diris through most of his policies has shown that he is fully committed to transform Kebbi State into one of the most developed states in the country. One of his best moves so far as governor was his administration's pledged to assist the Kaduna Electricity Distribution Company (KAEDCO) with 15 MVA transformers to enhance effective power supply across the state. As expected kabiru Sani Giant was there to offer this timely and very essential motivating element in the development of the lives of the people in his role as the Special Adviser on Power.



According to him, the state government and the Management of KAEDCO held a meeting on ways of improving power supply to the state, adding that, the firm complained of having feeders that cannot provide enough supply to transformers across the state. Alhaji Sani Giant stated that government is emphasizing the need for consumers to pay their light bills regularly while he charged KAEDCO to employ prudent staff that will collect payment from consumers and remits monies accordingly. He also appeared to the traditional institutions across the State to be paying their light bill and stop depending on government for payments as KAEDCO is operating as a private business. He revealed that government had decided to provide solar-powered street lights to reduce cost of monthly billing of seven million naira if the

ongoing road reconstruction project in the state capital is completed.

In his role as Special Adviser on Political Affairs and Power, Kabiru Sani Giant has equally fully represented and presented the state commitment to tackle insecurity in the state. This he meant known when he announced the endorsement of the activities of the Nigerian Hunters and Forestry Security Service (NHFSS) recently. He revealed that the state governor has approved the recruitment of about 400 young men and women from the state into the rank and file of the security outfit as part of a full and official take off of the Service in the state. He said the administration of Governor Idris has pleaded to see that operatives of NHFSS are fully funded and provided with needed equipment and other logistics and working tools to fully empower them in

their efforts to checkmate the activities of undesirables' elements who aim to use the forests to perpetuate crimes. He acknowledged the huge contributions of NHFSS officers and men who he said have shown gallantry and discipline in the discharge of their duties in collaboration with the police and other security agencies.

According to him " His Excellency, the Governor has promised to speak with Mr President so that the Bill establishing the NHFSS would be signed into law. His Excellency has further promised to provide everything ranging from logistics to equipment that you need for the smooth operation of your group."

So far the security in Kebbi State is laudable and fully abated as testified to by the Director, Security Service of the state, Abdulrahman Usman who said that the security challenges facing Kebbi State have abated considerably since Governor Nasiru assumed office. He said the governor took certain actions that boosted the morals of security and military personnel in the state. He revealed that apart from purchasing the needed security equipment, the governor also paid the backlog of salaries and allowances of security personnel in the state.

The appointment of Kabiru Sani Giant has exemplified that with the right people in position of power the government can effectively carry out its policies and build strong bridges with the people once there is empathy in their direction. This, the Kebbi State Government

under Governor Idris assisted by his team has demonstrated. One example was the quick visits by the state delegation led by Kabiru Sani Giant to the families of 9 who died in a boat mishap in the Koko/Besse Local Government Area of Kebbi State recently. At the condolence visit to the family, the Governor urged them to accept what happened as destiny from Almighty Allah and urged the family members, relations and loved ones to keep praying for the souls of the deceased. He said the loss was not only for the families, but it was a loss to the entire state.

No doubt that Alhaji Kabiru Sani Giant as the Special Adviser to Kebbi State Governor on Political Affairs and Power has proven in a shortest time that he is indeed a right peg in a round hole since his appointment.

Finalists Of Bishop Mike Okonkwo Football Championship Emerge

By: AYO OJEDOKUN, Lagos

The curtain is gradually drawing on the ongoing annual Bishop Mike Okonkwo Football Championship, with the finalists emerging in both the male and female categories.

In entertaining semi-final matches played at the Legacy Pitch of the National Institute For Sports (NIS) Lagos, Sam Jasson FC defeated Opopo Oba Iwamumo by 4-2 via penalties after their game ended 1-1 at regulation time to book a final ticket in the tournament, while in the second semi-final match, Team 360 recorded another 4-2 penalty victory over Cats FC after playing a 1-1 draw at full time.

In the female category, Phoenix defeated Dynamic Queens by 4-0, while Young Talents FC beat Nakamura by 5-4 penalties after playing out a 1-1 draw at full time.

Speaking on the championship, Chairman of the Local Organising Committee, Deacon Malachy Ndubuzor

commended all the teams for exhibiting high sense of discipline from the kick off date to the last four games, charging the finalists to embrace fair play as they go into the finals of the biggest grassroots football tournament in the country.

"I'm happy that this year's edition is gradually coming to an end and I want to commend the teams for their excellent performance and conduct from the beginning of the competition to the semi-final stage.

"It's equally important I remind them to maintain that level of discipline till the end even as he announced that ex- Super Eagles' player, Ifeanyi Ekwueme will lead other ex- internationals to grace the finals slated for September, 2 at the Yaba College of Technology, Lagos.

The tournament which is sponsored by the presiding Bishop of The Redeemed Evangelical Mission (TREM), Bishop Mike Okonkwo is also used to celebrate the birthday of the man of God.

Coach George Club, CFSAF Dominate Kaduna NYG Trials

**Kaduna Athletics Assoc chairman lauds athletes*

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Enoch Frank of Coach George Club ran a blistering 11.89s to win the Kaduna U-15 National Youth Games trials 100m boys title, as Nwueze Zoko also of Coach George Club won the female version in 13:07s.

Ahmed Faruk of C/George Club won the long sprint double gold medals in boys 200m and 400m, while Peniel Daniel of CFSAF also made it a double title in the girls high jump and long jump. Gabriel Inusa of Flying

Horse Club won the boys 100m silver in 12.09s, while Isaac Eze ran 13.20s to win bronze. Schorlastical Obi of CFSAF was second in the girls 100m race in 13.41s, as Annabel Buka of C/George Club won bronze in 13.79s.

Ahmed Faruk ran 24.08s to win the boys 200m ahead of Gabriel Inusa who ran 24.09s and Ibrahim Saidu of C/George Club who ran 25.16s. Faruk ran 53.49s to win the quarter-mile race ahead of Ismail Lawal of Kada (54.12s) and Ibrahim Saidu (55.06s).

The girls 200m race went to Schorlastical Obi who ran 26.59s to beat Philemon Juliet of C/George (27.67s) and Godiya James of Flying Horse (28.89s).

Peniel Daniel of CFSAF jumped a height of 1.45m to win the girls high jump, while leaping a distance of 4.94m in the long jump was enough to earn her double gold medals. Stephanie Obiekwu was second in the long jump with 4.40m, as Nwueze Zoko doubled her podium appearances with long jump bronze (4.38m). Emmanuel Azubuike won

the boys high jump after scaling 1.52m, while Sabiu Alamin jumped 1.35m for the second position.

Speaking after the event, Chairman of Kaduna State Athletics Association (KAA), Hon. Sani Abbas lauded the athletes and coaches for their performance, he tasked those that would be selected to give good representation for the state, while pledging that the Athletics Association in Kaduna state is set for a glorious performance to help the state reclaim its lost glory locally and nationally.



FIFPRO's Statement Is Mere Storm In Tea-cup - NFF

By: AYO OJEDOKUN, Lagos

The Nigeria Football Federation (NFF), has dismissed as nothing more than a storm in a tea cup, a statement issued by the world body of professional footballers, FIFPRO on Tuesday, calling on the Federation to pay players of the Super Falcons what they are owed.

The federation reiterated that it had an earlier agreement with the players on what they would earn at the FIFA Women's World Cup in Australia and New Zealand, but world football-governing body, FIFA came up with a new template that guaranteed more money for the players and which made players of all participating teams happier.

The NFF insisted it does need FIFPRO shouting from far off to pay Nigerian players what they had been promised by both FIFA and the NFF, dismissing the body's statement as a

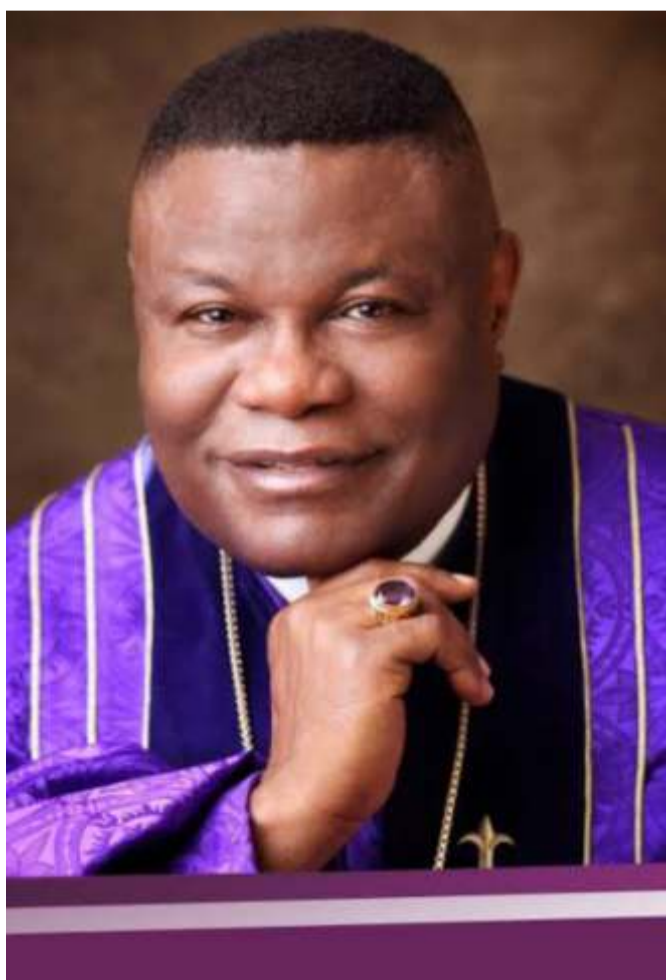
mere relevance-seeking message.

It recalled that its officials sat down and agreed with the players on what to pay them, but FIFA came up with a juicier package and they were all happy about it. If they had beaten England, for instance, and reached the quarter-finals, the NFF disclosed that the players would have been entitled to \$90,000, and not the \$60,000 each player will be getting now. A place in the semi-finals would have guaranteed at least \$165,000 each (for 4th place, and \$180,000 each for 3rd place) for the players.

The Federation praised the team for its efforts at reaching the Round of 16 and standing up firmly to world number four England on the turf, as well as its heroics in the group phase. It noted that not losing a single match out of four in regulation time is a remarkable record by an African team.

The nation's football-governing body stated that it has no issues with the players; it had assured them before the World Cup that they would be paid the couple of friendly matches and qualifying matches for which they were being owed appearance fees and bonuses respectively. It pledged to pay the money once the World Cup money is paid.

The NFF also charged FIFPRO to stop playing the ostrich and stand up to its real responsibilities, calling on the body to address the real issues. The Federation revealed that after all these years, FIFPRO does not have an affiliate body in Nigeria. It challenged the body to come to Nigeria and set up an affiliate body that can always and legitimately speak on behalf of Nigerian players, and made up of individuals who understand the culture and dynamics of the African environment.



Bishop Mike Okonkwo

Group Applauds Governor Uba Sani On Pragmatic Leadership

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

A Renaissance Group, Youth Development and Political Research has hailed Governor Uba Sani for what they described as a pragmatic approach to governance of the state.

They expressed this in a statement signed by the Convener of the group, Yusuf Usman Garba after a plenary session held yesterday in Kaduna.

"So far, the heightened commitment from the part of the Executive Governor in assessing the levels of the projects scattered across all the state for proper evaluation and completion in accordance with the mandate of the government of not leaving any project uncompleted. "In one fell swoop, the governor has also elevated the hope and aspiration of the rural dwellers and politicians living on the fringes of the grassroots by initiating a progressive template which will define the road map to actualizing his mandate on the rural communities through various initiatives," the

statement said.

The group also responded in platitude towards the governor's security revolution efforts, especially as he met with the Service Chiefs (the Army, Air Force, Navy and the Office of the National Security Adviser) in Abuja, with a view to fine tuning effective security strategies which will decapitate and greatly demoralize the fighting spirit of the criminals and terrorists living within the state and in the surrounding bushes.

"Already, result have been coming in of successful operations," they added.

According to the group, following the successes recorded within his short period in office, they came up with a consolidated statement which is geared towards the political initiatives and pragmatic manifesto of the ebullient Governor of Kaduna State, His Excellency, Senator Malam Uba Sani,

"Among the major highlights of Senator



Uba Sani

Malam Uba Sani the Governor of Kaduna State leadership attributes, there are only three of so many of what he intends to do for the people of Kaduna State.

The press release stated in part highlight that in the area of "Sustainable Development, we call on vibrant politicians and business sectors of the society to rally round the governor in order to achieve the ideals and efforts of sustainable development which is

geared towards delving into ongoing projects which were inherited from the past administration of Malam Nasir Ahmad el-Rufa'i with the vision of completing them all," they said.

On the strength of their assessment, the group said that Governor Uba Sani has firmly gripped the helms of the ship with the positive determination of steering it to the shore where the anchor of development will be dropped.

Coach George Club, CFSAF Dominate Kaduna NYG Trials

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Sector 3 Troop Adopts Non-kinetic Approach, Constructs Recreational Facilities In Monguno

By; JACPB ONJEWU DICKSON

In a bid to sustain the momentum of the fight against insurgency as well strengthen the existing Civil-Military cooperation with the host communities, the Commander Sector 3, Operation Hadin Kai and Multinational Joint Task Force, Major General P.O.A Okoye has commissioned a recreational facilities in Monguno town, Borno state.

In his welcome address before the commissioning of the project, the Commander explains the move was to ensure the existing civil-military cooperation is maintained towards fighting the Boko Haram insurgency that bedeviled the region for over a decade.

"The recreation facilities are the first of their kind in the AOR which is part of the non-kinetic efforts to encourage more returnees back to the community. The International Standard Volleyball Court and other indoor sporting facilities like table tennis and snooker were consciously put together to promote positive activities aimed at disabusing the minds of teeming youth and diverting their attention from engaging in criminal and non-profitable ventures such as terrorism", he said.

Commissioning the newly built recreation projects, Professor Babagana Umara Zulum, the Executive Governor of Borno state, represented by his Special Adviser on Security Affairs, Brigadier General Abdullahi Ishaq (Rtd), extolled quality initiatives of the Commander Sector 3 for his pragmatic and proactive leadership approach in promoting developmental, cooperative and infrastructure facilities in

Monguno.

The Governor who reaffirmed his unalloyed supports for the Army and other security agencies in the state, reiterating that "the military has done marvelously well in facilitating gradual return of peace and tranquility to the communities, adding that 'as a people, we are very optimistic that the sports facilities would leave a lasting impression in the hearts of the populace which will definitely go a long way in winning their hearts and minds'".

Gov Zulum also expressed his immense appreciation to the Chief of Army staff, Lieutenant General TA Lagbaja for his doggedness and resolve in tackling myriads of security challenges bedeviling the Northeast and the country at large.

He also commended the Theatre Commander, Joint Task Force (North East) Operation Hadin Kai, Major General GU Chibuisi for his dynamic leadership style.

Highlights of the occasion include commissioning of the newly Constructed Recreational Facilities and flagging off of the Volleyball game between the Headquarters Sector 3 Team and Monguno Family Team. The contest was won by Monguno Family Team.

The colorful event was attended by the Special Adviser on Security Affairs to the State Government, Chairman Monguno local government District Head of Monguno and Leader of adjoining communities, principal staff officers of Headquarters Sector 3, heads of sister security agencies, religious leaders, representative of Trade Unions and other Associations and members of humanitarian organizations among others.

