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AWDROP Raises Alarm, Says Scarcity Of Potable Water Looms For Majority Of Nigerians



From left, Oyo State Governor, Mr. Seyi Makinde, Osun State Governor, Senator Ademola Adeleke, Ogun State Governor, Prince Dapo Abiodun and Ekiti State Governor, Biodun Oyebanji at the National Executive Council Meeting (NEC) held at the State House, Abuja. Photo: AKINOLAARIYO

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*Cautions lawyers against standing as "surety", legal representative, at same time

Remain Steadfast In War Against Proliferation Of Illicit Drugs, Olubadan Tasks NDLEA

By: BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

The Olubadan of Ibadanland, Oba Lekan Balogun on Tuesday raised alarm on proliferation of illicit drugs among the youth in the country.

Oba Balogun while raising the alarm during a familiarization visit of the Oyo State Command of the NDLEA led by its Commander, Olayinka Fadile to him in his Alarere residence tasked the National Drugs and Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) to remain up and doing in tackling the problem that is becoming cancerous.

The Olubadan emphasized that the entire traditional council of Ibadan was worried about the unpleasant situation in the various community compounds in the hinterland where boys and girls now take pride in drug abuse without let or hindrance hence the need for the agency to check the situation.

"You cannot be more worried than me and my members of the traditional council in Ibadanland over the menace of drug abuse among our boys and girls in our community compounds" he said.

Oba Balogun added, "On our part, we won't relent drumming it into their ears the dangers

inherent in the crime, but, we want more from your agency, especially through the deployment of your intelligence gathering unit.

"We assure you of our cooperation and collaboration to stem the ugly tide. At the palace level, we are in constant touch with the Mogajis and Baales on the need to monitor their respective areas and ensure that all manners of crime are exposed for proper sanction. We won't relent. Making me Ambassador of your advocacy campaign is a welcome responsibility which will permeate the entire traditional system".

Speaking, the NDLEA boss Commander Olayinka said "the task before us is challenging and there's no way we can do it alone without the involvement of our respective communities. When we talk of the communities, we are talking about the community leaders and this is how and why Your Imperial Majesty is involved.

"The agency is worried about the rate at which our youths abuse drugs. They have graduated from hemp smoking to others and more dangerous synthetic drugs that are now manufactured under various names like kolos, loud and all sorts of other names too



Commander Olayinka of NDLEA, Oyo State during the visit to Olubadan, Oba Lekan Balogun

numerous to mention, making the future to look bleak for our youths if care is not taken", he said.

The NDLEA Commander added, "It is for this reason that we are engaging all the critical stakeholders like Your Imperial Majesty with the conviction that with your support, we will succeed. This was part of what led to the WADA, the initiative of

our Chairman/Chief Executive Officer, Brig. Gen. Bubba Marwa (Rtd) and for which Your Imperial Majesty is now being made an Ambassador.

"The initiative is an advocacy campaign to create awareness that will spread through the society with anti-drug culture. It entails setting up coordinated anti drug programs and committees across the

communities which are expected of our ambassadors. We are counting on Your Imperial Majesty as our ambassador to help create drug awareness activities that will suffuse society with offensive actions against drug activities."

Oba Balogun was decorated as Ambassador of War Against Drug Abuse (WADA) by Commander Fadile.

Ikot Nkwo, Ibesikpo Asutan To Get Model Healthcare Center

By: PATRICK TITUS, Uyo

Akwa Ibom State Governor, Pastor Umo Eno has directed immediate construction of a Model Healthcare Center at Ikot Nkwo community in Ibesikpo Asutan local government area of the state to address the age-long yearnings of the people.

Governor Eno, gave the directive after decades of running a government owned primary healthcare center in a make-shift accommodation in the community to provide access to health services to the people.

The directive came on the heels of Governor Eno's inspection tour of a health post, where he discovered to his surprise that the primary healthcare facility has, over the years, been rendering its services to the locals in a shared accommodation.

Speaking while inspecting the Health Post and parcel of land donated by the community to the state government for the primary healthcare facility, Governor Eno commended the self-help efforts of Ikot Nkwo community and their magnanimity in sacrificing the parcel of land for the health center, describing the

gesture as a demonstration of goodwill and acceptability of government development drive and donated ten million naira to the community.

"We want to thank the entire village and the village council for donating this land. Provision of this land as far as I'm concerned, is a major stake that the community has done. Since you have accepted development, I want to assure you that development has come into this community.

"I assure you that in the next one week, work will commence on this site", he assured.

The gesture, he added, underscores their collaboration as stakeholders in the development of the community and actualization of the goals of A.R.I.S.E. Agenda, his administration's blueprint.

The governor also commended the health Officer-in-Charge of the Health Post, Mrs. Peace Blankson Effiong, for her commitment to serve humanity having utilized the make-shift facility to render healthcare services to the community.

Welcoming the governor to the area, the Chairman, Ibesikpo-

Asutan Local Government Council, Mrs. Akon Michael Asuquo, expressed gratitude to the governor for meeting the longtime yearning of the community.

The Council Boss was optimistic that the Health Centre, upon completion, would address the health care needs of the people particularly the women, children

and the aged.

On his part, the Acting Village Head of Ikot Nkwo, Obong Ibanga Etukudo Enyieama, thanked the governor for the gesture and declared a total surrender of the parcel of land to the government, with assurances of the community's support for the project to see the light of the day.

Stakeholders of the area including Mr Ide Owodiong, Elder Emmanuel Obot, Rt. Hon Eduok Eduok, Hon Eyakeno Etukudo, Youth Leader Comrade Michael Udo, among others were on hand to receive the Governor, who was accompanied by the SSG Prince Enobong Uwah, Head of Civil Service, Elder Effiong Essien and others.

Police Smokes Out Notorious Bandit In Katsina

By: SULAIMAN AHMED MISAU, Katsina

Katsina State Police Command has neutralized a suspected notorious terrorist - bandit and recovered sixty suspected rustled sheep and one AK 47 rifle with one hundred and ten rounds of 7.62 MM live ammunition.

A statement by the Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO) of the Command, Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP), Abubakar Sadiq

Aliyu said on August 15, 2023, at about 0009 hours the command received a distress call that bandits in their numbers, armed with dangerous weapons such as AK 47 rifles and shooting sporadically, invaded Korogo village via Daddara, Jibialocal government area and rustled sixty sheep.

ASP Sadiq Aliyu explained that, upon receipt of the report, unhesitatingly, the Divisional Police Officer (DPO), Jibia mobilized a team of Police

operatives to the scene and engaged the bandits in a fierce gun duel, as a result of which they were forced to abandon their heinous mission and scamper into the nearby bush.

ASP Abubakar Sadiq Aliyu said while combing the scene, the body of one neutralized suspected bandit, sixty rustled sheep, as well as one AK 47 rifle with one hundred and ten (110) rounds of 7.62mm live ammunition, were recovered. pointing out that, "the investigation is ongoing."

Subsidy Removal: Oyo Govt To Commence Palliatives Distribution Soon

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

Oyo State Government is to commence disbursement of subsidy removal palliative to the people of the state soon.

Chairman of the 15-man Palliatives Committee on Sustainable Action for Economic Recovery (SAFER) and Chief of Staff to Gov Seyi Makinde, Hon. Segun Ogunwuyi said towards this end, SAFER has divided itself into 5 sub-committees to fast-track the implementation of the palliatives, as directed by the Governor Seyi Makinde.

He said the state government was not unaware of the anticipation by citizens to

benefit from the palliatives promised by Governor Seyi Makinde to mitigate the impact of the removal of fuel subsidy.

Hon Ogunwuyi at a meeting with the enlarged committee members, said the palliatives would be rolled out the moment the governor ratifies the final template for the implementation from members, adding that input will be extended to 10,000 farmers in various enterprises.

The Chief of Staff stressed further that YEAP beneficiaries and small holders farmers who are known and proven to be engaging in active farming will benefit from the N500M government loan. According to Hon. Ogunwuyi, the new routes

have been mapped out by the transportation sub-committee for residents of the state.

The 5 sub-committees are: Sub-Committee on Transportation headed by Alh. Gafar Bello; Sub-Committee on Food Palliatives headed by Hon. Segun Olayiwola.

Sub-Committee on Food Security, headed by Barr. Olasunkanmi Olaleye; Sub-Committee on Small and Micro-Enterprises, headed by Prof. Musibau Babatunde and Sub-Committee on Healthcare headed by Prince Dotun Oyelade.

Hon Ogunwuyi said routes mapped out by the transport sub-committee include: Mokola-Apata-Omi Adio; Oja oba- Idi

ayunre; Beere- Amuloko; Dugne- Railway station; Gate Alakia- Adegbayi; Arola- Apete- Mokola. Challenge-Beere-Gate; Beere-Olomi-Olunde; Eleyele-Sango-Bodija; Kuola- Elebu-Challenge; Challenge-Apata-Omi.

The Committee Chairman added that palliative transportation has been provided for commuters from New Garage-Beere-Gate; Iseyin; Oyo; Ogbomoso; Ibarapa and Saki.

He therefore urged each sub-committee not to leave any stone unturned, in their quest for the most efficient way to get the palliatives across to those who really need them.

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Mosque Collapse: KADIFF Founder Visits Emir Of Zazzau

**Invites him to 6th KADIFF*

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The Founder of Kaduna International Film Festival (KADIFF), Audu Israel Kashim has paid a condolence visit to the Emir of Zazzau HRH Amb. Ahmed Nuhu Bamalli over the collapse of a section of the iconic Zaria Central Mosque on Friday August 11, 2023.

This was contained in a statement signed by the Personal Assistant to the founder KADIFF, Ambrose Fadoyin made available to our correspondent yesterday.

During the visit, Audu prayed for the

injured that the Almighty God may grant them quick recovery and for the deceased, "may Allah grant them Jannatul Firdaus".

He also used the opportunity to invite the Emir of Zazzau to the 6th Kaduna International Film Festival scheduled to hold next week from August 22 to 26, 2023 and also informed him that the emir of Zazzau's palace will be one of the tourist locations to visit during this year's Kaduna International Film Festival.

In his response, the Emir of Zazzau appreciated the founder of KADIFF for the visit and the condolences,

assuring him of his presence during the 6th Kaduna International Film Festival opening ceremony.

While emphasizing the need for promoting and writing Nigeria's local stories, be it in film or literature, he urged that film makers tell the true stories highlighting "Queen Amina" on Netflix which in his words, did not really tell the true historic events.

Audu was joined by some of this year's festival organizing team, Johnson Erakpotobor, Terry Nyam, Tata Empress, Crack Samuel, Jonah Fujuno, Junior Tamba, Stella Abiodun and Maina Ibrahim.

"He said the state government was not unaware of the anticipation by citizens to benefit from the palliatives promised by Governor Seyi Makinde to mitigate the impact of the removal of fuel subsidy."

Labourer Drags Kaduna CP, Others To Court Over Alleged Assault, Demands N200m Damages

By; SANIALIYU, Zaria

Mohammed Nazir a labourer, at Tudun Jukun, Zaria has dragged the Kaduna State Commissioner of Police and six others to Kaduna State High Court 3, Zaria over alleged assault and is demanding N200 million as damages.

Other respondents in the case are the Attorney General of Federation, Inspector General of Police, Area Commander, Zaria, Divisional Police Officer, Tudun Wada Division and Officer Auwal.

At the resumed hearing of the case, Aliyu Hajji, Counsel for the applicant (Nazir) told the court that the case has been slated for hearing and they were ready to go-on.

However, ASP Ibrahim Mohammed, Counsel for the Police, told the court that they were not ready and appeal for short adjournment to enable the respondents reply the applicant's application.

The presiding Judge, Justice Rabi Oladoja adjourned the matter to Sept. 4 for definite hearing.

The applicant approached the court on Aug.1 seeking for an enforcement of his fundamental human rights. He sought for eight reliefs/prayers which were

hinged on a declaration that the action of the respondents were in gross violation of his fundamental human rights as enshrined by the Constitution.

He also prayed for a sum of N200m as damages for the injuries, physical and psychological trauma allegedly inflicted on him by the police.

According to the affidavits attached to the application for the enforcement of the fundamental human rights, on July 25 there clash between some soldiers and police.

The clash was said to have occurred close to where the applicant (Nazir) was packing sand along drainages, while the doing his legitimate business one of soldiers snatched his shovel and use it in the fight.

After the clash has ended, the police raided the area, where they arrested him and took him to the Zaria Area Command office where he was detained.

On July 26, he was transferred to Tudun Wada Divisional Police Headquarters Zaria where one CPL Auwalu, Danrayya, and Nuhu Gareji allegedly used bamboo sticks to beat him, where he was said to have sustained serious injuries on his anus and legs.

Support CNG Vehicles, Modular Refineries, Rights Group Tell FG

**Advocates sale of crude to local refiners in Naira instead of dollars*

By; PATRICK TITUS, Uyo

The Centre for Human Rights and Accountability Network (CHRAN) has called on Federal Government to support Modular Refineries and the manufacturing of Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) vehicles to reduce the hardship Nigerians are facing following the removal of fuel subsidy in the country.

Speaking to newsmen in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State on Wednesday, Chairman of the group, Otuekong Franklyn Isong said if the Federal government allows the local refiners to purchase crude oil with Naira not Dollars and encourage them to refine locally, there would be abundance of petroleum products which would eventually crash the price.

Isong regretted that despite the abundance of crude oil in Nigeria, price

of petroleum products is high with its effect on cost of commodities, adding that President Tinubu should as a matter of urgency, look into the plight of Nigerians.

He further regretted that millions of Naira being spent on Turn Around Maintenance (TAM) of moribund refineries and workers who are dormant, being paid monthly.

He also urged the Federal government to publish the list of those who received the subsidy from 1999 till May 29, 2023 when it was removed.

Isong also called on the organized labour not to allow the implementation of the rumoured impending increase in fuel price saying they (organised labor) should lead a mass protest if the FG goes ahead to increase the price even as he promised that CHRAN would follow noting that 'protest' is the only language Nigerian

government understands. According to him, "We have crude oil in this country, there is no basis for Nigerians to be experiencing petroleum price increase. We are experiencing this because we don't refine our products we depend on foreign exchange rate, rise of dollar against Naira free fall.

"CHRAN wants the President, Bola Tinubu to fix our refineries, support modular refineries to refine products locally. If they are able to buy the crude oil with Naira and not in dollar and refine, there will be availability of products and fall in price.

"The president should also ensure activation of Compressed Natural Gas vehicles in order to address the issue of incessant petroleum price increase. Having removed the subsidy you cannot continue to talk about market forces or allow the fate of Nigerians to be

hanging on determination of market forces of what you don't produce.

Isong also called on President Tinubu to constitute his cabinet wondering why a president after 60 days in office is yet to set up his cabinet even after them being cleared by the National Assembly.

He attributed the problems facing Nigeria to lack of people to advise the President.

"More than 60 days in office, the president has no cabinet in place? 45 of the nominees have been cleared so what is keeping them from being sworn in? As at now we don't know who is the Minister of petroleum resources, or Minister of labour. Who will address the issue of fuel increase, insecurity? and so on. Let his cabinet advise him on the issue of economy, insecurity etc. Robbery is on the increase, poverty is high because of one harsh policy of federal government." He said.

41-yr Old Man In Police Net For Allegedly Defiling 2 Siblings, 2 Others

By; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

A 41-year old man is now cooling his feet in police custody in Lagos over alleged defilement of four teenagers, amongst them, two siblings.

The suspect, identified as Sunday Fatoba, was alleged to have committed the crime in Ikorodu Local Government Area of the state.

Fatoba, who is under the custody of Igbogbo Police

station, was alleged to have had regular intercourse with the victims whose ages were between 11 years and 14 years old.

The victims, who were said to be children of the suspect's neighbors, were rescued from the suspect claws following the intervention of the Lagos State Office of the Public Defender (OPD) and handed over the suspect to the police for questioning.

It was learnt that the

defilement had been ongoing for weeks before OPD got wind of the situation through residents of the community and got the perpetrator arrested, to halt the continued abuse in the state.

The Director, OPD, Olubunmi Adesomoju, commended the community leaders for standing by the law to promote justice for the victims.

Adesomoju urged community leaders and

citizens within the State to support OPD in the fight against the violation of human rights, support protection of the vulnerable in the society as well as report cases of rape and defilement to the nearest office of the OPD.

She assured members of the public that any information received from them would be treated with a despatch, and the identity of such informant would be protected with utmost confidentiality.

Tinubu Needs Time To Fix Nigerian - ICAN Chairman

By; PETER NOSAKHARE, Kaduna

Nigerians should be patient in all that they do, including this present administration, of President Bola Tinubu especially as it concerns the hardship presently experienced in the country, following the removal of petroleum subsidy and the renewed insecurity situations that has continued unabated.

Explaining that Nigerians should

know subsidy payment was not included in the 2023 budget of the past administration of Muhammadu Buhari and as such including it (or paying) would be a misnormal for the present administration the 20th chairman of the institute of chartered accountants (ICAN) Kaduna and district society, in an interview with newsmen at the 20th investiture of ICAN held at Hotel 17, Kaduna, also urged Nigerians to know that "what

was destroyed or left unrepaired for eight (8) years cannot be expected to start working in four (4) months."

"Our refineries are obsolete and getting them fixed will consume huge capital, and for these reasons the president called for more private participation in the oil (downstream) sector of the economy," he said.

Dr. Yusuf expressed his delight that someone in the person of President Tinubu came out to tell

Nigerians the truth, that the subsidy was been paid for the benefit of other countries while the payer couldn't meet the demands of its citizens who were supposed to be the beneficiaries of the subsidy as petroleum products were been imported. "How can a country be paying petrol subsidy when its people find the product difficult to get," he queried.

The PH.D in Accounting further

stated that this administration needs all the support of Nigerians to be able to steer the country out of the muddy waters the past administration had swallowed the country in.

"President Tinubu needs our support to take this country to the Promised Land. The last eight (8) years was really difficult for Nigerians, but, the light bearer in here now," he stressed.

Ebonyi: Group Advocates 5% Budgetary Increase For Agriculture

By; M K P U M A ENYINNA, Abakaliki

United States Agency for International Development (USAID), In conjunction with palladium has Advocated for 5% Budgetary increase in Agricultural by Ebonyi State Government.

Speaking with journalists shortly after the road walk, the lead director of Neighborhood women Initiative Advancement and clutter Host in Ebonyi State, Comrade Nancy Oko Onya, said the Agric plus cluster Budget is the process taken to ask the three states that is currently benefiting from the project to increase Agric Budget of different state particularly in Ebonyi.

Mrs Oko Onya, revealed that the budget of Agriculture in the state is currently 2.5% therefore, asking the state government to increase Agricultural budget and practice and to reduce hunger, poverty, malnutrition and death In the state by implementing budget Of Agric to 5%," she revealed.

"We have also met with clerk of Ebonyi State House of Assembly on Agriculture we have created awareness and celebrated International youth day asking that youths should get into Agriculture seeing that older population of Agriculturists is living stage for a younger once", she said.

According to her, the increase would enhance food production in the state and create more jobs opportunity for Ebonyi residents.

Responding, the Deputy chief of staff, Government House, Engr Timothy Nwachi while speaking, commended the group for its advocacy for the welfare of Ebonyi citizens through agricultural mechanization, assuring them of Government attention on sustainability of agricultural budget input to 50%.

Engr Nwachi, noted that the statistics shows that Ebonyi State recorded top most among the states that produces largest rice in Nigeria, having surpass that record, an increase on agricultural projects and activities would help to improve on there capacity not just rice production but other agric product as long as farming is concern.

The Deputy chief of staff, added that the government of Ebonyi State led by Francis Ogbonna Nwifuru who have passion for Agriculture would not hesitate to look into the improvement on budget of 5% implementation.

He further revealed that the state government has directed local government chairmen to start distribution of fertilizer to the rural communities of the state and all this is what governor has put in place to ensure that Ebonyi remains at the top when it comes to agriculture.

"Having 2.7%, it will not be a difficult thing to increase the budget of Agriculture to 5% as you requested because this protest came at the right time because no distance time, government will start preparation of the state budget in which agriculture will not be left out."

Amotekun Behind Safe Return Of Farmers To Farms -Gov Makinde

*Inaugurates 12- man Oyo Amotekun Governing Board

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

Governor Seyi Makinde, on Monday, said that Amotekun is a strong reason why Oyo State farmers in rural communities are able to return to their farms without fear of attacks.

The governor said this while inaugurating a 12-man Governing Board of the Oyo State Security Network Agency, codenamed Amotekun Corps in Ibadan.

Governor Makinde emphasized that officers and men of the Amotekun Corps contributed to the security and order experienced in the state under Omituntun 1.0 as the body collaborated well with the federal security agencies to maintain peace and security in the state.

"We know that security is strongly linked to the development of any community. In fact, one of the core reasons why we witnessed accelerated development under Omituntun 1.0 is because Oyo Amotekun worked along with other security agencies to keep our state secure", he said.

Gov Makinde added, "The Amotekun policing meant that they are often the first necessity of defence for our rural communities. If we go through Amotekun's accomplishments under Omituntun 1.0, we will see that they are a strong reason why our farmers in rural communities are able to return to their farms without fear of attack.

" They recorded huge successes in stopping kidnappings, motor-bike snatching, burglaries,

illegal mining and fraud. We have a record of 10 kidnapping rescues that were carried out by the Amotekun Corps between June 2021 and May 2022". He stressed further, " When we started, the Police being the leading agency for internal security in Nigeria, were also apprehensive, saying who are these people and what is the state government trying to achieve? But, today, I am happy to say that the relationship between the Nigerian Police and Amotekun has become so cordial that they go out together to perform joint operations."

Charging the Amotekun Corps to work more so that the economic growth being experienced in the state can continue, Gov Makinde

said the new board has "the right set of people that will continue to lead Oyo Amotekun on the path of sustainable development and on the path of cooperation with other security agencies within the state."

He maintained that the Amotekun "Board was set up in conformity with the law and that its core mandate and primary responsibility is to make policy and administrative guidelines for the agency to perform optimally for development of the state"

Speaking on behalf of the members, chairman of the board, AIG Akande (rtd), assured that the corps will continue to work with other security agencies to make Oyo State secure, especially in the rural communities.



Gov Makinde with the 12-man Amotekun Board.

Bus Driver Loses Control, Rams Vehicle Onto Stationary Cars

By; IBRAHIMADAMU, Kaduna

Scores escaped death by the whiskers on Monday afternoon in Kaduna, as a commercial bus driver on transit through the city centre, lost control and ran into parked cars.

The accident which occurred at about 3pm, just by the roundabout beside Zenith Bank in the Southern portion of the intracity highway along Kachia Road, left seven passengers injured with two critically wounded due to the impact of the crash.

Eye witnesses spoken to by our reporter who got to the scene of the accident a couple of minutes later blamed the bus driver whom

they accused of excessive speeding, endangering the lives of his passengers and other road users.

Israel John who witnessed the accident accused the bus driver of speeding beyond control, saying if the bus was not on high speed, the driver could have been able to control the vehicle.

Another witness who pleaded for anonymity corroborated the account of other witnesses, adding that the bus driver must have had a break failure coupled with excessive speeding on reaching the roundabout where multiple cars were parked.

"If he were on a controllable motion, he would

have maneuvered the bus not to hit the stationary vehicles.

"But he was on a breakneck speed that was beyond what he could control, thus he ran into cars," he said.

The bus driver who simply identified himself as Salisu denied being on a high speed at the time of impact with the parked vehicles.

He instead blamed owners of the stationary cars for parking on the highway and in an unauthorized place within the roundabout.

He said he had no break failure as other people were saying.

"I left Katsina today afternoon on our way to Lagos with full passengers, mostly

businessmen with this 18-seater-bus which was in good condition.

"On getting to this roundabout, another oncoming vehicle veered onto my way, making me lose control in the process and crashing my bus onto these parked cars on the way," he stated.

Owner of a Toyota Sienna sedan which was badly damaged by the impact exonerated self from any blame, saying he did not leave the vehicle on the way.

He also accused the bus driver of speeding beyond control, adding that the accident would have been fatal but God's intervention saved the situation.

Insurgency: Grow Strong Foundation Trains 82 Community Volunteer Teachers in Yobe

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

In its quest to provide access to education for vulnerable children affected by the Boko Haram insurgency, a Non-Governmental Organisation, 'Grow Strong Foundation' has flagged off a new phase of training to 82 Community Volunteer Teachers across three local government areas of Bade, Damaturu and Potiskum in Yobe state.

The Programme Manager of the foundation, Musa Gambo told journalists that the training which is

aimed at providing access to education has so far enrolled 14,500 vulnerable children across the state.

"Currently, we are training 82 Community Volunteer Teachers that were recruited under the project across 11 schools. The training is on alternative learning to out of school children, prevention against sexual abuse, exploitation and Mental health and psychosocial supports".

"It is part of our effort to bridge the gap of manpower to complement the government

interventions to ensure out of school children access education even in emergencies" he said.

The project which is funded by "Education Cannot Wait" (ECW) through UNICEF and implemented by Grow Strong Foundation also distributed hygiene kits among others to ensure all pupils do not abscond from school as result of lack of hygiene kits especially among the girl child.

Some of the participants applaud Grow Strong Foundation for building

their capacity as well as identifying the vulnerable children that might have left school following the Boko Haram insurgency. Grow Strong Foundation (GSF) which was established in 2017 has the aim to protect, promote, and advocate for the participation and inclusion of young people and people living with disabilities in matters of social-protection, peace building and community development in the Northeast faced with insurgency.



Programme Officer, Grow Strong Foundation and participants at a training Damaturu

APC Will Bounce Back In Kano Deputy Senate President

By; AMOS EBUTE MATHEW, Kaduna

Deputy President of the Senate, Senator Barau I. Jibrin, has expressed optimism that the All Progressives Congress (APC) will bounce back in Kano State, appealing to stakeholders of the party in the state to be united.

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

Hosting local government vice chairmen under the umbrella of the Association of Local Government Vice Chairmen (ALGOVC), Kano State Chapter, at the National Assembly, Senator Barau said with prayers and unity, the outcome of the tribunal will be favourable to the APC.

APC has challenged the declaration of Abba Yusuf of the NNPP as the winner of the governorship election in Kano State at the Election Petition Tribunal.

"We are praying and hopeful that the outcome of

the tribunal will be favourable to us. Everything is in God's hands. Let us be united and work together. By God's grace, it's a matter of time, we will bounce back in Kano State.

"As it is now, we are in the opposition and as such there are a lot of expectations from us. We should be united and work together in the interest of our party," he said.

Commending the local government vice chairmen for their visit, Senator Barau said he would continue to work with them to improve the standard of living of the people at the grassroots.

"The local government is very essential. We will continue to work with you to address the challenges facing our people. We are proud of you. Let us continue to work together," he said.

Earlier, the chairman of the association, Alhaji Yakubu Musa Naira, said they were at the National Assembly to congratulate Senator Barau on his emergence as the Deputy President of the Senate.

Again, CSO Urges Nigerian Authorities To Begin Registration of Hajj 2024 Intending Pilgrims

By; JABIRU A. HASSAN, Kano

Independent Hajj Reporters (IHR), a Civil Society Organisation (CSO) that monitors and reports on Hajj and Umrah activities, has called on the National Hajj Commission of Nigeria (NAHCON) and states Muslim Pilgrims Boards in Nigeria to immediately begin the registration of intending pilgrims for Hajj 2024.

IHR in a statement on Monday in Abuja, signed by its National Coordinator, Ibrahim Mohammed, said the call

became necessary due to the change in the calendar of Hajj activities by the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Hajj and Umrah following the conclusion of Hajj 2023.

According to the calendar, the authorities in the Kingdom expect all Hajj participating countries to conclude all arrangements for Hajj 2024 including visas by March next year.

The implications of this is that all Hajj countries will have to register pilgrims, collect payments and sign agreements

with service providers before that date.

The reality of 2024 Hajj preparations do not give room for delay, especially in Nigeria where the system operates a one-year Hajj plan – an extremely compacted activity that has caused so much confusion in the quest to create an enduring standard Hajj operating environment in Nigeria.

"The era of countries taking their time to conclude all plans often till the last minute is over. "Competent authorities, especially NAHCON), should

immediately order states to commence the registration of pilgrims and give suitable deadlines working with the country's 95,000 slots

"It is our believe that failure to do this will end up causing unnecessary confusion and create panic in the system ahead of 2024 hajj," IHR said.

The CSO also said many top Hajj participating countries such as Pakistan, Kuwait, Qatar, Indonesia and Bangladesh have kick-started registering pilgrims. "The latest change of calendar is good for all countries because

they will have at least three months to conclude all logistic arrangements because the exact number of pilgrims for the annual pilgrimage is known.

"NAHCON, states and private tour operators now have an opportunity to finalize accommodation and flight arrangements ahead of time. Even bed and tent slots can be allocated ahead of arrival to Saudi Arabia, thereby, solving the problem encountered this year," the CSO added.

Edo Won't Accept 'Emilokon' As Strategy For Winning Elections, Says Obaseki

By; RALPH OKHIRIA, Benin City

The Governor of Edo State, Mr. Godwin Obaseki, has said that the 'Emilokon' syndrome or spirit is not a strategy for winning elections and ruling Edo people.

The governor stated this when leaders of Edo South Senatorial District visited him in Government House on a solidarity visit.

He said what is happening between him and his deputy is really unfortunate, sad and avoidable because "the people know where we are coming from and what we have gone through." The governor noted that Edo people will not accept 'Emilokon' as a strategy in government as "they are not known for that. For us, it is the people that will decide.

"What has happened in the last few months is strange and even if you have ambition, this is not the time to express it. The time table for the election is not out. You can't be part of a government and also be the one to destabilise the same government.

"I thought we came together and will leave together and let the

people say you have done a great job and they will now make the decision themselves. They are the ones to say that come rain or sunshine, we must continue.

"You are telling the world one thing and yet doing another. You are loyal to your principal and yet you are in Court with your principal. Everybody has the right to be ambitious but do it the right way."

He added: "When we came in, I said let's build institutions, not individuals. The Constitution provides for a Deputy Governor and what I can't do, I call on my Deputy Governor to do it for me. That is not a crime. The Constitution doesn't provide for co-governor but Deputy Governor.

"Elevating a Deputy Governor and making him visible is not a crime. But this I did because I want to build institutions rather than individuals or persons. To mistake that and misuse it is really unfortunate as you have created the impression that the Deputy Governor should not be given responsibility."

On the charge that he gave the deputy governor too much responsibility, Obaseki said:

"People are already blaming me now for giving him responsibility and visibility and it's my fault. How can it be my fault when you want to groom young people? I believe when young people work with you, give them opportunities and expose them, preparing them for leadership positions in life, praying they don't abuse the privilege.

"I have no regret for exposing my deputy to power and leadership position. I have not made any mistakes but he is the one that made the mistake. I hope he retraces his steps. He is the one that took me to Court; he should be the one to talk to, not me. We are determined and focused to finish well and with your support, we are sure to finish well.

"We are not starting any new projects but finishing the ones already started and making sure all we started we finish and design a plan for those coming in, as no government can finish the work."



Governor Obaseki

Noting that Edo people cannot afford to make mistakes, he said: "We can't make any mistake again as our people have suffered in the past. We will not allow

them to suffer again. That is why we are doing our best in the State to change the narrative."

Group Urges Tinubu To Consider Kaduna APC Chairman For Ministerial Appointment

By; ISRAEL BULUS, Kaduna

A group known as Kaduna Concern Forum (KCF) has urged President Bola Ahmed Tinubu to consider the Kaduna State All Progressive Congress (APC) State Chairman, Group Capt. Emmanuel Jekada (rtd) as a ministerial nominee to strengthen the relationship of the party in the state and at the national level.

Our correspondent reports that Malam Nasir el-Rufai was said to have withdrawn his nomination, following the controversy surrounding his non-clearance by the Senate over security reports.

Musa Audu Yusuf, chairman of the group who stated this in a statement signed and issued to newsmen in Kaduna on Wednesday August 16,



Group Capt. Emmanuel Jekada (rtd)

appealed to President Tinubu to appoint credible and competent Nigerians into his cabinet of which Jekada possesses such qualities.

He said the Kaduna State APC who is from Kaduna-South is an outstanding Nigerian with an unrivaled track record who has demonstrated patriotism and excellence in his leadership.

"The state chairman has sustained the party's victory since 2015 till date, adding that he deserves a bigger assignment for some level of patronage in the Tinubu-led new government.

"For fairness and justice, every member who has contributed towards the party's victory has an inherent right to hope for a bigger platform to explore to sustain the party's victory they formed.

"We hope that Mr. President will come along with us in that regards and strengthen the relationship of the party in the state and at the national level to enjoin some level of patronage in the new government." The group added.

Musa argued that the State APC Chairman was coming from a region that has been neglected for ministerial appointment under the APC administration in the state since 2015.

"Jekada has the requisite credentials to occupy the ministerial office or any Federal Agency for the party to sustain its victory and patronage beyond 2027," the statement said.

Flood: 180 Livestock Farmers In Kaduna Get Inputs From FG

By; ISAAC ODEH, Kaduna
The Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (FMARD) has distributed inputs to 180 livestock farmers in Kaduna who were affected by flood in 2022.

The Permanent Secretary, Mr Ernest Umahkihe made the disclosure at the opening of the distribution exercise in Kaduna on Wednesday August 16, 2023. Represented by the Zonal

Director, Musa Raji, Umahkihe said the exercise was to mitigate the effects of the 2022 flood on the farmers.

He said that the Federal Government was not paying lip service to the issue of food security.

The ministry presented pasture seeds for improved grass growing, nutrition cakes and salt licks for quality beef and milk to the farmers.

"We are here to support the

farmers. We want to ensure that the nation does not experience food shortage.

"The Federal Government is committed towards promoting a more sustainable and resilient food system," he said.

The permanent secretary urged the farmers to take their occupation seriously in the interest of food security and their personal economies.

Also speaking, Mr Hussaini Musa, Assistant Director,

Livestock Services, Kaduna State Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources, commended the Federal Government for the gesture.

He described the distribution of pasture seeds as a good omen, saying that it will reduce the conflict between livestock and crop farmers.

A beneficiary, Mr Balarabe Gambo, who spoke on behalf of the farmers thanked the Federal Government for the support.

Gambo, Secretary, Gadan Gaya Milk Producing Cooperative Society, said that livestock production would witness a tremendous boost if all levels of government showed concerns to the plight of farmers.

"We are so happy, we assured you that this support will be well utilised in order to improve the quality of livestock in our farms," he said.



Unapproved Car Lot Motor Dealers Risk Prosecution In Lagos

By; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

The Lagos State Taskforce has frowned at the activities of motor dealers converting road set backs, walkways, gardens and other unapproved spaces to car lots.

It is therefore, set to henceforth, arrest and prosecute the offenders, vowing that the time to put an end to the illegal activities has finally come. Chairman of the agency, CSP Shola Jejeloye gave the hint at the headquarters of the Agency at Bolade Oshodi, where he described the action of some motor dealers and transport operators as inconsiderate for jeopardizing the safety, serenity, beautification exercise and greener Lagos initiative of Lagos State Government for their selfish gains.

In a release on Monday by Director, Press & Public Affairs of the agency Gbadeyan Abduraheem, made available to New Nigerian Newspaper, Jejeloye remarked that the practice of these individuals have been going on for a long while now, but the time to put an end to it had finally come. "It is high time we put a stop to this unruly behavior and environmental impunity of converting every available public space to personal use by some car dealers. Walkways, road setback, lay-bys were meant and created to cater for pedestrians movement and other public use, but nowadays you see cars parked on them with kegs placed on top indicating they are for sale. This is

totally wrong and we are here to put a final stop to it. Cars for sale should be parked at an approved car lots and not by the road side or walkways." Jejeloye stated.

The Chairman also stated that indiscriminate use of motor-dealers' registered number plates is worrisome now.

"We have it on good authority that car dealers are now fond of using one registered number plate for private use simply to evade other vehicle particulars. Some unscrupulous elements in the society use car dealer number plates to perpetrate criminal acts in the State which they believe would not be traced to them as the vehicle used during the criminal act could be different from the vehicle its placed on the following day."

He sounded a note of warning to car dealers who are still in the habit of parking their vehicles for sale on the walkways to either move them to proper car lots or have them impounded and their owners made to face the full wrath of the law. He warned them not to take Lagosians for granted by denying them their right to make use of public amenities built with tax payers money.

Jejeloye urged well meaning residents to report any infractions by car dealers to the Agency through the dedicated lines or social media handles for prompt actions.

"The quest to maintain sanity, serenity and habitability in our environment must be the collective effort of all".

NNPC's \$3bn Loan Is A Dubious Attempt To Stabilise Naira, Says Atiku's Aide



By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Frank Shaibu, the Special Assistant on Public Communication to former Vice President of Nigeria, Atiku Abubakar has described as patently fraudulent the announcement by the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited (NNPCL) that it had taken a loan for the primary purpose of supporting the naira.

Shaibu said that the announcement was a mere banana peel, a ruse to force the naira to appreciate on the parallel market.

He said in a statement that the move was cosmetic and unimaginative and had once again exposed President Bola Tinubu as a lilliputian economist that lacked ideas on how to rescue the economy he had pushed to the edge with unviable policies.

He argued that monetary policy was not the job of the NNPC but the Central Bank of Nigeria and wondered why the NNPC, which claimed to

be a profit-making organisation, would go ahead to take a loan for the primary purpose of stabilising the Naira.

Atiku's aide also drew parallels between the actions of the NNPC and the CBN under the authority of Godwin Emefiele.

Shaibu added that oil production has dropped on Tinubu's watch due to continuous oil theft.

He said that instead of boosting forex liquidity by increasing production and exports, Tinubu decided to take the jejune path of obtaining foreign loans, an inglorious road that his predecessor had travelled. He said, "For many years, Tinubu claimed that he built the economy of Lagos from scratch. Now, he has been exposed as a charlatan. His administration detained Emefiele and vilified him for taking FX loans from JP Morgan and Goldman Sachs running into \$7.5bn, which was used in defending the naira.

"Now, Tinubu's administration claims to

have done the same thing by forcing the NNPC to take a loan of \$3bn to defend the naira. We, however, have it on good authority that this is all a ruse to force the naira to appreciate at the parallel market, an action that will further affect the government's credibility.

"The NNPC has failed to shed the toga of an ordinary government agency. No wonder it has refused to become a public limited liability company, as stated in the Petroleum Industry Act. The NNPC boss, Mele Kyari, who is also desperate to retain his job, has allowed himself to become a willing political tool just like Emefiele. If the NNPC was a publicly listed oil firm like Aramco and Mobil, would it obtain a loan in order to 'defend the naira'?"

Shaibu said Tinubu lacked a clear economic blueprint, hence his constant failures.

He argued that Tinubu's policy flip-flops had already begun affecting Nigerian bonds, as

reported by Bloomberg.

He added, "The PUNCH aptly described Tinubu in its recent editorial as a loose cannon that goes around with a wrecking ball. He takes action whimsically without thinking about consequences. He announced the removal of petrol subsidies without proper planning and brought the nation to its knees.

"He forced the CBN to float the naira even though the country had liquidity problems. Now, he is on the verge of taking the West African region to war without Senate approval. Tinubu is nothing but a myth that will continue to unravel.

"He claims to have deregulated the petroleum sector, and yet NNPC is still the one determining the price of petrol.

"He has pegged the price of petrol and yet claims that there is no subsidy. Nigerians must not allow themselves to be deceived by this man."

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Subsidy Removal: NEC Sets Up Ad-hoc Committee To Liaise With Labour Leadership

*Urges state governments to upscale distribution of palliatives

*Mourns military personnel killed in Niger State

By: SADIQ ABUBAKAR, Maiduguri

In a bid to create a forum for dialogue towards resolving issues surrounding the petrol subsidy removal across the states, the National Economic Council (NEC) has constituted an Ad-hoc Committee to engage with the leadership of labour unions.

The decision was reached at the 135th meeting of NEC chaired by the Vice President, Sen. Kashim Shettima in Abuja yesterday.

A statement issued and signed by Olusola Abiola, the Director Information, Office of the Vice President and made available to newsmen, said the committee comprises of the Nigerian Governors Forum Chairman, AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq; Governor of Anambra State, Chukwuma Soludo; Chairman of Progressives Governors Forum, Hope Uzodinma of Imo State; PDP Governors Forum Chairman, Bala Mohammed of Bauchi State, and Abia State Governor, Alex Otti.

The Vice President said the committee will liaise with the leadership of labour unions in the country to find a way forward on the emerging issues in the interest of the nation.

Council also received progress reports on the ongoing nationwide distribution of rice, grains, fertilizer, other items to States and N5 billion financial support, provided by the Federal Government.

The National Economic Council further commended the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) and the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) for their interventions.

It also appreciated the various interventions by State governments and urged them to upscale the distribution of palliatives towards alleviating the suffering of citizens especially the vulnerable groups.

The council also mourned the death of some military personnel in Niger State and observed a minute silence in honour of deceased, while commiserating with their families.

Excess Crude Account from 19th July to 14th August, 2023, \$473,754.57

Stabilisation Account from 18th July to 14th August, N30,346,557,405.12

Natural Resources Account from 18th July to 14th August 2023, N115,175,616,159.65.

Meanwhile, the state governors presented preliminary assessment of impact of flood disaster across the states of the federation which the Governor of Kogi State presented at the 128th NEC Meeting held on 20th October, 2022.

In his remark, the Chairman of the Nigeria Governor's Forum and Executive Governor of Sokoto State, Rt. Hon. Aminu Waziri Tambuwal, drew the attention of the NEC to the devastating effect of the 2022 flooding which affected about 31 States of the Federation.

He noted that the flood disaster had resulted in the loss of over 600 lives, displacement of millions of people, destruction of hundreds of thousands of houses and submersion of thousands of hectares of farmlands while appealing to the federal government for urgent intervention to address the impact of the menace of flood disaster on the people and infrastructures across the states of the federation.

Consequently, the Council has resolved to setup a 5-man Ad-hoc Committee on flooding comprising of Governors of Jigawa, Kogi, Anambra, Bayelsa, Lagos and Yobe State.

The following were also coopted into the Committee:

Honourable Minister of Finance, Budget and National Planning

Honourable Minister of Water Resources

Honourable Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development

Honourable Minister of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management

Governor of Central Bank of Nigeria

Director General, National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA)

The Terms of Reference of the Committee was to "Review the current flooding situation in the country and design a



The Committee had its inaugural meeting on Thursday 10th November 2022 at the Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF) Secretariat. Highlight of the Meeting were as follows:

The Committee also acknowledged the urgency of the assignment and hence the need to expedite action in order to table a draft report at the next NEC Meeting.

A sub-committee was constituted to propose modalities to address imminent food crisis due to the flooding and possible source of funding for palliatives to victims. The Sub-committee was to be Chaired by the Executive Governor of Kebbi State and the following as Members: Ministries of Agriculture, Humanitarian, Finance, NEMA and CBN. While the NEC Secretariat was directed to develop and forward a Template with accompanying letter to all the affected States to collect data on Preliminary Assessment of the impact of the flood in the affected Communities, harmonize the data and produce report of their findings to the Committee.

The NGF however lamented of some limitations which resulted in the late interventions of the exercise pointing out that, had did been it had strayed earlier than nine, the interventions would have been more successful and effective if all the affected States had responded as and when due and according to provisions made in the template.

Some of the limitations include the following: Delay or Non-submission of filled template by some States. Only 16 out of the total number of affected States forwarded their submissions to NEC Secretariat to date as expected. About 15 others were yet to do so. The submission from defaulting States are awaited to update the database.

Some of the States that submitted did not fully complied with requisitions of the template thereby making some of their submissions difficult to process by the automated system.

There is the need for compliance with laid down processes to allow for higher degree of uniformity especially considering the huge volume of data involved, noting that,

only few States reached out to the Council Secretariat's Technical Team for possible guidance and assistance in the exercise.

The statement said States are encouraged to take advantage of the Secretariat's personnel to address important concerns where necessary, hence only few States indicated financial implication for the damages caused thereby making it difficult to proposed a required amount of intervention while some submissions were not done according to the template which makes difficult to ascertain the financial implications of such states.

However, some recommendations were highlighted to include the plight of victims of the unfortunate flood disaster across affected States of the Federation could be alleviated if the much needed intervention from the Federal Government materialized without further delay.

The need to expedite release of fund to affected States as recommended by designated Committees constituted by the Federal Government to that effect, stressing that, this would go a long way in addressing the needs of the victims as well as offset debt incurred by some States to assist their citizens.

The council has also resolved that the NEC Secretariat and officials of the Office of the Vice President to visit the affected states for on-the-spot assessment of the situation on ground while the exercise will authenticate the date submitted by state to determine needed intervention.

And that Federal Government's immediate intervention should be expeditiously carried out by NEMA, Ecological Fund Office and other relevant agencies. States to assure maximum cooperation.

NEC further resolved that all hands should be on deck to assure appropriate submission and data presentation, pointing out that, the quality of data collected should be enhanced to meet international standard. That the challenges of flooding deserves concerted and collective effort.

NEC also stated that there is need to

Continued on Page 11



Below are other highlights of the meeting: template for compensation of victims".

Don't Only Maintain But Improve On NCS standard, Olubadan Tasks Customs ACG Adeniyi

**Describes NCS as Nigeria's economic life-wire*

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

The Olubadan of Ibadanland, Oba Lekan Balogun on Monday, charged the Acting Comptroller-General (ACG) of the Nigeria Customs Service (NCS), Bashir Adewale Adeniyi to maintain and as well improve on the standard of the NCS. Receiving the Customs ACG Adeniyi with his top management staff to his Alarere residence in Ibadan, the Olubadan pointed out that the Nigeria Customs Service ranks among the best globally in terms of efficiency and professionalism.

Oba Balogun stressed that the Nigeria Customs

Service (NCS) stands as the life wire of the nation's economy and an agency to be proud of in terms of acknowledged efficiency globally.

According to the Olubadan, the contributions of the NCS to the economic well-being of the country could not be overemphasized and that the Acting Comptroller General should not only maintain the standard but to improve on it.

"Aside the contributions of the agency to the economy, the NCS is also a source of pride to us in the country as it ranks among the best globally in terms of efficiency and professionalism", he said. The Olubadan added, "

We urge the new ACG to remain focused and committed to the mandate of the agency of sustaining our economy the way it has been doing and improve on the existing template of revenue generation towards making a remarkable impact during his tenure as we pray for the guidance of Almighty God to uphold you in the onerous task".

Speaking, ACG Adeniyi disclosed that all the activities in the agency revolve around the community and the importance of the traditional ruler in that regard is a crucial factor.

"All what we are doing in the agency are community-based and there's no way we can take

such critical stakeholder for granted. I'm here in the palace to seek for royal blessings in recognition of our traditional rulers as the custodians of our culture and traditions", he said.

ACG Adeniyi added, "We acknowledge Your Majesty's support, understanding and cooperation over the years and I covet same to take the agency farther in height of performance, professionalism and efficiency".

Stressing that the operations of the NCS in the South-Western part of the country are the biggest, ACG Adeniyi solicited for the citizenry's support and cooperation to remain atop among the other zones in the country.

Subsidy Removal: NEC Sets Up Ad-hoc Committee To Liaise With Labour Leadership

strengthen NEMA as a structure and sustainable adaptation measures for the citizens. In mobilizing resources to stem the tide of flooding, there is need to look beyond NEMA while NEC Secretariat should come up with recommendations on the roadmap towards addressing the flood situation.

PRESENTATION ON EXPLORING A NEC AGENDA FOR MACROECONOMICS STABILITY & SHARED PROSPERITY BY DG NESG

Other Presentation made include informing the council achievements on low Inflation and stimulation Growth and Macroeconomic Objectives as well as stability objectives such as

High and stable economy
Low Inflation Growth Price level
unemployment Account

Favourable Current low balance and stable exchange rate account balance

Others include current macroeconomic landscape which include

Investment inflows have dwindled since 2019, likewise the country's investment/GDP ratio; Crude Oil exports and refined petroleum products imports dominate Nigeria's trade structure.

The rest include

Nigeria's Naira position against major trading currencies deteriorated

Weak FX supply and heightened demand for imports remains core drivers of exchange rate instability; market volatility persists despite recent FX alignment, driven by pressure on FX demand that widens the gap between official and parallel market rates due to inadequate supply and speculative tendencies; external reserves remain under pressure as external

reserves fell by 8.3 percent from 37.1 billion in January 2023 to 33.9 billion in July 2023.

Key consideration for improving outcomes of fuel subsidy removal include

Inflationary impact: Fuel subsidy removal will increase inflation. So, there is a need for robust social programmes.

Efficiency in government spending: There has been a lack of clarity on how the government spends subsidy savings. This issue must be addressed.

Investment in the downstream and midstream segments of the industry: Achieving this will reduce huge dependence on petrol imports and strike out the need to pay subsidies on fuel.

While it was recommended that NEC must insist on pushing a national legislative reform agenda for national competitiveness hence It is essential that Nigeria need to resolve the legislative binding constraints to our national competitiveness because NESG through Nassber, our partnership with national assembly and Nigerian bar association has identified over 115 legislations that hinder growth, in the last few years, 10 legislations have been passed (including the cama 2020 and the pia 2021).

The council further resolutions include

Council commended NESG for its presentation especially on pragmatic roadmaps for tackling current economic challenges.

It was noted that the recommendations contained in the NESG's roadmap needs to be reviewed to align with existing economic agenda at the national and sub-national levels for pragmatic purposes.



ACG Adeniyi with the Olubadan of Ibadanland on Monday

Senator Marshall Katung Secures Approval To Build 300 Capacity Women, Youth Training Centre

By; AMOS TAUNA, Kaduna

The National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA), has agreed to deploy a Digital Economy Centre (DEC), in Kafanchan, headquarters of Kaduna South Senatorial District to facilitate digital services.

This followed a letter written to the agency by the Senator representing the zone in the 10th Senate, Barr. Sunday Marshall Katung, requesting for the

construction of a 300 capacity women and youth training centre in Kafanchan.

A copy of the letter dated July 18, 2023, revealed that five different secondary schools within the Senatorial zone were recommended as the project site, of which Government Secondary School, Kafanchan, in Jema'a Local Government Area was chosen by the agency.

It would be recalled that the Senator during his campaigns in the build-up to the 2023 general elections, said if elected, he

will build and equip women and youth training centre, as well as create ICT centres across the Senatorial District.

In a letter which was addressed to the principal of Government Secondary School Kafanchan, dated 7th August, 2023 and signed by the Head Project Management Unit of NITDA, Mohammed Saidu Kumo on behalf of the Director General and CEO, the Agency said the intervention project when completed, will facilitate access to digital services such as e-learning.

It said the Digital Economy Centre comprises computers, internet connectivity, Local Area Network, e-learning solution, solar-powered inverter, generator, among others. This will enable students to have access to digital resources and improve their learning experience.

The letter also directed the school to appoint a liaison officer for correspondence and ensure utmost cooperation with the agency and the contractor during the execution of the project.

2021 Sunday Igboho House Invasion: Widows, Children Head To Court, Demand N254bn Damages From FG, DSS

**Seek release of their kinsmen corpses*

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

Widows and under aged children of the two people allegedly killed during the invasion of the Ibadan residence of Yoruba nation agitator, Sunday Adeyemo Igboho are demanding N254billion special aggravated and/or exemplary damages from the Federal Government and the DSS.

The widows and under aged children of two late persons, Mr Olalekan Adisa and Alfa Abdulfatahi have filed a suit before an Oyo State High Court against the Attorney General of the Federation, State Security Service and the State Director, State Security Service, Oyo State Command for the release of the corpse of their father.

According to the widows and the children, the corpses of the duo of Mr. Olalekan Adisa and Alfa Abdulfatahi were allegedly loaded at the back of the DSS hilux van and that on getting to Ado Ekiti, the hilux detoured into the town while buses of DSS carrying 13 "war criminals," including a lady, waited on the Abuja road. When the hilux van came back, the corpses of Mr Adisa and Alfa Abdulfatahi were no

longer there."

In the suit No. M/36/2023, filed by their Counsel, Chief Yomi Alliyu (SAN), the widows and their under aged children, stressed that the application is brought pursuant to Sections 33.34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44 and 46 of the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999(as amended and Articles 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 (1), 14, 17, 18, 19, 20 & 25 of the African charter on Human Peoples rights.

The widows and their children in the suit, are praying for an order of the court, " compelling the respondents and severally to pay the applicants the sum of N - 4,753,800,000:00 (four billion, seven hundred and fifty three million, eight hundred thousand Naira) as special damages for the upkeep of the applicant, deceased's mother and those of her three children as hitherto performed by the deceased.

They are also seeking an order of the court awarding the sum of -N-250,000,000,000,000:00 (two hundred and fifty billion Naira) being exemplary and/or aggravated damages for breaching the Applicants' husband and/or father. MR. SAHEED OLALEKAN ADISA

(D E C E A S E D) ' s fundamental right by killing him in the course of illegal and/or unlawful invasion of Chief Sunday Adeyemo a.k.a Igboho Oosa's residence situate, lying and being at Igboho Villa, 1, Dalag Street, Off Soka Bus Stop Soka Area, Off Lagos-Ibadan Expressway, Ibadan, between 1.00 am. and 3.00 am, of July, 2021.

" An order of this Honourable Court directing the Respondents to return all the items legally belonging to the Applicants' husband and/or father seized from the said house of Chief Sunday Adeyemo a.k.a Igboho Oosa, at Igboho Villa, 1, Dalag Street, Off Soka Bus Stop, Soka Area, Off Lagos-Ibadan Expressway, Ibadan, by the Respondents to wit

* 1-phone 12 pro max mobile phone or N-850,000:00 its price; Techno Spark phone or =N=90,000:00 its price;(Nokia phone or =N=180,000:00 its price; (4.) Gold chain and ring worth -N-1.5 million; and 5 Nos. international passport booklets belonging to the deceased and the Applicants or =N-150,000:00 cost of replacing them.

The applicants are also seeking an order of the Court " directing the

Respondents to tender public apology in two (2) national dailies, to wit The Nigerian Tribune and Puncin newspapers, for breaching the fundamental human rights of the Applicant's deceased husband", and for such other and/or further equitable and /or legal reliefs as the Court may deem necessary in the circumstance of this application"

They stressed in the suit that at the hearing of this application the said Applicant or his Counsel on his behalf will use the Affidavits sworn to by the Applicant, MR. BASIR ARIYO and MR. OMIYALE and all the Exhibits therein referred to

103106/035787/033742 New Nigerian recalls that on July 1, 2021, operatives of the Department of State Service invaded the house of Chief Sunday Adeyemo a.k.a Igboho Oosa at Soka, Sanyo Area, Ibadan during which properties worth over N500m were destroyed while Mr Olalekan Adisa that went with two police escorts to the place from Osogbo and the blind Chief Imam of the Estate, Alfa Yekinni Olatubosun Abdulfatahi, observing tahjud and or night vigil between 1.00 a.m and 3.00a.m met their untimely death.

Katsina Gov Seeks Tighter Border Patrols To Check Arms, Drug Trafficking

By; SULAIMAN AHMED MISAU, Katsina

Governor Dikko Umaru Radda of Katsina State has reiterated the need for tighter border patrol to address the menace of arms, drug trafficking and condemned harassments of residents of some Katsina communities by operatives of the Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) Called anti-smuggling special force.

Governor Umaru Radda charged the Nigeria Customs Service to renew its fight against smuggling of arms and illicit drugs, fueling armed banditry across States in the North West and Central geo-political zones.

Governor Radda made the call in a statement by his Chief Press Secretary, Ibrahim Mohammed Kaula when he received the Senate adhoc Committee investigating the incessant killings of people smuggling rice and other prohibited goods into the country by officers of the Nigeria Customs.

Mohammed Kaula said the committee chaired by Senator Francis Fadahunsi, has Senators Abdulaziz Musa Yar'adua, Adeola Olamilekan, Shuaib Salisu, Kawu Sumaila, Tony Nwoye and Suleiman Sadiq as members.

The committee accompanied by some Senior Customs Officials from Federal Operations Unit Zone "B", Mohammed Kaula said was received by Governor Radda at the General Muhammadu Buhari

(Government) House in Katsina. "Governor Dikko Radda observed that, while it is essential for the Nigeria Customs Service to stop the smuggling of contraband food items, it is more important for the agency to curb the smuggling of arms and illicit drugs into the country," the Governor's spokesman said.

According to Governor Radda "In as much as it is essential to stop the smuggling of food items such as rice and tiger nuts among others, it is more of a priority for the Customs to curb the movement of arms and illicit drugs through our borders because these contraband items end up in the hands of armed bandits."

"Curbing the smuggling of arms will also complement ongoing efforts by security agencies in the fight against bandits and other armed groups operating in different parts of the country. I have interacted at length with the members of the committee, we support their work, and we hereby call on our people that reside along the borders to cooperate with them," he said.

Ibrahim Mohammed Kaula said while speaking further, the Katsina Governor, expressed dismay on the increasing harassment suffered by members of Jibia border communities from the hands of customs officials.

This, he said, compounded the movement of consumable goods from and to the area. emphasizing that, "Nigerian law had spelt out clearly prohibited goods that could not be allowed into the country."

NNPP SW Leader, Olopoeniyan, A Political Warlord - Ajadi

**Congratulates him on 60th birthday*

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

Achieftain of the New Nigeria People's Party (NNPP) in Ogun state, Ambassador Olufemi Ajadi Oguntoyinbo on Tuesday, described the South West leader of the party, Alhaji Rasheed Adebisi Olopoeyan as a political warlord.

Ambassador Ajadi in a statement to rejoice with Alhaji Rasheed Adebisi Olopoeyan on his 62nd birthday declared that as a politician of note whose contributions to the development of the South West and Nigeria politics as a whole cannot be quantified.

The NNPP gubernatorial candidate in Ogun state in the

March 2023 polls maintained that the story of Alhaji Olopoeniyan sojourn on earth " is one of the abundances of the God's Grace, whose unfailing love for humanity has been sufficient in his life.

"Today, on behalf of myself, my family and our party, New Nigeria People's Party (NNPP) in Ogun state, I have the pleasure of wishing a business guru, exemplary leader and great politician a truly marvellous birthday", he said..

Ambassador Ajadi



Composite picture of Ambassador Ajadi (left) with Alhaji Olopoeniyan.

added, " We are happy for our indefatigable and leader of note, political warlord for attaining 62nd years on the surface of earth. Alhaji Olopoeyan has fantastic qualities, he is dependable, trustworthy and always there for his people.

" His selfless service to humanity, Oyo State, South West and the nation at large and many achievements he has recorded in both personal and public life, are some of the reasons I cannot but celebrate him on this occasion of his 62nd birthday. We pray to Almighty God to continue to keep you in good health and bless you with many more years of robust service to humanity. Amin".

Google Africa Has Answered Our Call To Promote Digital Innovation, Inclusion - Uba Sani

By: FUNMIADERINTO, Kaduna
In efforts to promote digital inclusion and leverage technology to drive economic growth, Governor of Kaduna State, Senator Uba Sani has received a high powered delegation from Google Africa, led by its Director for West Africa, Mr. Olumide Balogun. Governor Uba Sani who received the

delegation on Monday, said, "I am glad that Google Africa has answered our call to promote digital innovation and inclusion." He pointed out that, "Kaduna State has a high digital maturity index. We have creative and talented young people who are ready and motivated to learn, especially in this age of Artificial

Intelligence." He said, the Kaduna State Government in collaboration with Google, will train 5,000 women and girls in data science, artificial intelligence, and entrepreneurial application of digital technologies. "The programme will be executed by Data Science Nigeria, which will set up Arewa Tech4Ladies. This initiative is crafted to

serve four key semi-urban and rural communities in Kaduna State, offering specialised women-focused learning, mentoring, and job placement support facilities. "The Kaduna State Government will give Google and its partners the necessary support to effectively implement this laudable initiative," he said.



Customs Ogun 1 Area Command Uncovers 1,245 Ammunition Hidden In Smuggled Bags Of Rice

By: RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

Operatives attached to Ogun 1 Area Command of the Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) have intercepted a total 1,245 ammunition hidden inside smuggled bags of rice, New Nigerian Newspapers has learnt.

The consignment was said to have been intercepted at a border area of Ogun State between Nigeria and Republic of Benin.

Comptroller Bamidele Makinde, Customs Area Controller of the command who disclosed this at a press briefing in Idiroko said his operatives made the discovery on Friday, August 11, 2023 following intelligence.

Makinde said upon receiving the intelligence on a planned smuggling of prohibited items into the country from Republic of Benin, by criminal elements resulted in 24 hour surveillance.

He described the act as a threat to national security while discouraging other traders from such unlawful practices.

According to the Controller, value of the seized ammunition and rice is N17,638,145. He added that the driver of the vehicle fled into the bush and the service has commenced investigation into the issue.

Smuggled bags of rice in a car where the ammunition were discovered.

He said "We swung into action by deploying our operatives on 24 hours surveillance to thwart their nefarious activities. At about 0024 hours on Friday, 12th August, 2023, the Roving B Team of the Command intercepted five old vehicles, (Toyota Camry with Chassis No. 4TIBG22KIWU312145, Toyota Camry



Compt Bamidele and other senior officers showing exhibits before newsmen during the briefing.

with Chassis No. 4TIXK1263NU108237 and three Mazda 626 cars with Chassis Nos. JM2GD14H201568566, JMZGF14F201173029 and JMZGF14P20141862 respectively), loaded with 203 bags of foreign parboiled rice of 50kg each abandoned in a bush path at to Bolo Junction, close to an exit point to the Republic of Benin, and near Ijoun, Yewa North Local Government Area of Ogun State, Nigeria. The drivers who were suspected to have been hinted at the movement of our operatives, escaped through the bush of the said area, in order to evade arrest.

"During examination of the seized vehicles and the item, about 1,245 rounds of 70mm (2³/₄" live ammunition of Lion, Trust, Supreme and Redstar branded cartridges were found to have been ingeniously concealed in 20 bags of the intercepted foreign rice. While considering the potential danger of ammunition of such magnitude if successfully smuggled in, we redoubled our efforts to ensure they do not find their way into the country. It is a threat to safety of the border communities and national security. We are committed to ensuring maximum security of our border lines with all sense of patriotism.

"The Duty Paid Value (DPV) of the seized ammunition and rice is N17,638,145.00. The items have been deposited for safekeeping, pending further necessary action. Investigation is ongoing to unravel the cartel responsible for the attempted smuggling of the items for arrest and prosecution" Bamidele said.

Bail For Suspects In Our Custody Is Free - EFCC

*Cautions lawyers against standing as "surety", legal representative, at same time

By: BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, (EFCC) has declared that securing administrative bail of suspects in the commission's custody is free.

Acting Commander of the Ibadan Zonal Command of the EFCC, ACE I Halima Mustafa Rufa'u said this in Ibadan on Wednesday, while receiving in her office, Executive Committee members of the Ibadan Branch of Nigerian Bar Association, (NBA), led by its Chairman, Folashade Aladeniyi.

She stressed that EFCC does not charge any fee from lawyers or family members of detained suspects before releasing them on bail.

The EFCC acting Zonal Commander then tasked lawyers to stop standing as "surety" and legal

representative, at the same time, to suspects.

According to ACE I Halima Mustafa Rufa'u, such an act could not only get them into trouble, but does not portray the legal profession in good light.

"In the event the suspect was released and later jumps administrative bail, the Commission will have no choice than to arrest the lawyer first, before going after other sureties", she said.

The EFCC Zonal Commander then lauded the NBA for the visit, stressing that it would strengthen the existing collaboration and synergy between the two bodies.

Speaking, the Chairman, Ibadan branch NBA, Barrister Folashade Aladeniyi, commended the Ibadan Zonal Command of the EFCC for its efforts in curbing cybercrime and related fraud activities in



Ibadan Zonal EFCC Acting Commander with NBA Executives on Wednesday

Oyo State.

"I want to commend the Ibadan Zonal Command and the EFCC at large for its activities towards curbing economic and financial crimes, especially cybercrime in the country. This is evident in

the statistics of convictions secured by the Commission over the years", she said.

Barrister Aladeniyi however charged the EFCC Acting Zonal Commander to protect the rights of suspects in detention

by ensuring their quick release, while also causing investigation into the activities of politically exposed persons accused of corruption in the state.

Scholar Designs 'Ajewole Connect' App To Aid Masses Children's Education, Boost Economy

By; AYO OJEDOKUN, Lagos

Nigerian Educationist, Dr. Akande Kazeem Babatunde has developed an app that will serve as a platform to connect artisans and customers.

The application, "Ajewole Connect" was developed for middle-class and low-level artisans that need better visibility and more customers for their businesses.

Akande, while onboarding the application commented that the initiative was borne out of finding a drastic solution to improve the standard of living in the middle and low class families. He also noted that generating more income will assist parents in supporting their wards' education.

Speaking on the usability and functions of the application, Akande mentioned that a lot of work has gone into the development of the app to ensure that users find it easy to get artisans on the platform.

Akande explained that the developers have dedicated the past year to gather data and integrate with location providers to ensure that all local government, cities, and areas in Nigeria is covered to ensure that everyone has access and a wonderful experience using the platform.

It was inquired from Akande if there was a plan for traders and artisans who do not have access to mobile devices, he responded that "even traders and artisans who are not tech savvy will benefit from the app as there will be agents to put them into the system."

While discussing the various opportunities that will be explored with the application, Akande mentioned that it will provide a platform for trader groups to organize and develop cooperatives to gather money that will ease the payment of expensive tuition fees, reminding the public that his principal aim is to ensure that everyone irrespective of their class has access to good education.

These groups will also have access to loan facilities from the application credit infrastructure.

Akande has gone a step ahead in collaborating with secondary and tertiary education providers to seek support and allow parents pay tuition fees in installments through the application.

The flow of cash through the platform is also expected to inject funds and help grow the economy.

Also speaking to newsmen was the Head of Operations at Ajewole Connect, Akande Yusuf, who highlighted that the app has pre-vetted over a million artisans and will be able to serve several customers in different locations.

He mentioned that the founder's initiative is borne from his generosity and love for education, and Ajewole Connect will be a blessing to many families.

The application will onboard mechanics, plumbers, carpenters, electricians, and several vocations that households and businesses need in their day to day operations.

AWDROP Raises Alarm, Says Scarcity Of Potable Water Looms For Majority Of Nigerians

*Seeks govt palliative to drillers

*Tasks new minister on positive action

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

The President, Association of Waterwell Drilling Rig Owners and Practitioners (AWDROP) Engr. Michael Ale has alerted that safe drinking water may soon become unaffordable for many less privileged Nigerians

Engineer Ale who also doubles as the Co-founder of Global Initiative for Nigeria Development (GIND) in a statement yesterday, said this may be as a result of looming scarcity of safe drinking water in Nigeria.

He stressed that potable water may soon become unaffordable for many less privileged Nigerians, following the increasing cost of borehole drilling in the country.

Engineer Ale maintained that it is a fact that borehole remains the most

affordable and accessible clean underground water for Nigerians as clean surface water is no longer available to people.

The AWDROP President noted that there the time has come for government's intervention on the looming scarcity of safe water before Nigerians start drinking from dirty source of water which may result to waterborne diseases.

"Water from boreholes comes straight from the ground making it 100% fresh and natural, unlike mains water, which is actually 60% recycled wastewater. The government at this critical time need to provide solution to avoid imminent waterborne diseases and other incommunicable diseases among Nigerian populace", he said

The AWDROP President added, "Borehole allows

businesses to thrive as a lot of companies such as farms need water to grow plants and take care of livestock which make a borehole installation a much more affordable option in the long run."

"Government at all levels should consider palliative to Nigeria Drillers in terms of support to their businesses. As this much needed support at this critical time will augment the cost of drilling driving non affordability of water for either consumption or all season farming."

While charging newly appointed Minister for Water Resources and Sanitation, Joseph Utsve to show administrative skill in managing the ministry which is the life wire of livelihood, he stressed "imagine cost of drilling has risen from what it used to be to like

40% increase".

"This is really not good for Nigerian Livelihood. My fear for the people in the rural area is not even as scared as those in the urban city. Almost 79% of government infrastructure ceases to function one month after commissioning.

"Why is privately owned water infrastructure working and those belonging to government are not working. It's not going to be business as usual where borehole contracts are awarded to non professionals. Palliative will go down the drain and in the pocket of the unqualified company or individual consultant."

Engr Ale noted, "proper monetary will henceforth be adequately applied with the use of technology of our trace and track monitoring device".

Arewa Youth Welcome Wike's Appointment As FCT Minister

By; AMOS TAUNA, Kaduna

The Arewa Youth Assembly (AYA) a leading youth organization in Northern Nigeria, has hailed the appointment of former Governor of River State, Nyesom Wike as the FCT Minister.

Mohammed Salihu Danlami, speaker of the group in a statement in Kaduna yesterday, said, "We extend our heartfelt commendations to President Tinubu for making this excellent choice, ensuring that round pegs are placed in

roundholes.

"The Arewa Youth Assembly acknowledges the remarkable achievements of Mr. Wike during his tenure as governor, which have undoubtedly contributed to his wealth of experience and capability which will be brought to bear in this new role. His dedication to public service, development initiatives, and commitment to the welfare of his constituents greatly impressed us."

The group pledged its unwavering support to the newly appointed FCT Minister and urged all

residents of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) to do the same, saying that having demonstrated exceptional leadership skills and a profound understanding of governance, it expressed confidence in Mr. Wike's ability to bring about positive changes in the FCT.

The group called on Mr. Wike to address the persistent gridlock affecting the Abuja-Nyanya route, stressing that the issue has caused significant inconvenience to commuters and has long been a matter of great

concern.

"We believe that the collective efforts of the Minister and the support of the residents will help proffer lasting solutions to this problem," the statement explained.

The Arewa Youth Assembly expressed its heartfelt prayers for a successful tenure for the newly appointed FCT Minister and expressed confidence that under his able leadership, the FCT will witness further progress, development, and prosperity.

Germany Legalizes Smoking, Use Of Marijuana

By; IBRAHIM ADAMU, Kaduna

Germany Government has moved an inch closer to decriminalizing use and smoking of cannabis for

recreational purpose.

The new law, the first of its kind in the whole of Europe will however require the approval of German parliament.

The most liberalized law in any European Union (EU) member

state if scaled through would allow adults the possession and use of a limited number of cannabis in a communal setting.

The country with the strongest economy in Europe presently allows production and utilization

of marijuana for medical use only under strict prescription and supervision of medical experts.

The new arrangement shall as well protect underage children from exposure to the drugs.

While residents will be allowed

to form and join voluntary nonprofit organization for enlightenment and safe use of marijuana, a government official disclosed on Wednesday evening in Berlin.

NIS Acting Comptroller General Adepoju Advocates Management Training Of Security Agencies At Top Level

By; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

Acting Comptroller General of the Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS) Caroline Wura-Ola Adepoju has emphasised a management training of security agencies at top level cannot be downplayed especially now with challenges ranging from weapons smuggling, banditry and other vices that may undermine the nation's security rearing their ugly heads.

She also called for sustained synergy among security agencies in dual areas of both border security and migration management to safeguard Nigeria's territorial integrity.

Adepoju made this known when participants of the Advanced Security Management Course (ASMC) III of the National Institute for Security Studies (NISS) paid a courtesy visit to the NIS Headquarters.

A statement made available by the Service Public Relations Officer, DCI Aridegbe Adedotun PhD, stated that Ag. CGI Adepoju pcc+, fsi, who also is a fellow of the Institute, said the visit of the the 27 participants not only ignited a sense of nostalgia but opened up

her horizon to the big picture, hoping it has done the same for the participants.

She said, "the Nigeria Immigration is classified into two: border security and migration management. A secure border is a secure nation, the success of this Organisation (NIS) is a sine qua non to the success and progress of Nigeria and so the Service must be taken with all seriousness.

"And of course security is the collective responsibility of everyone especially every security agency that is why your participation in this Advanced Security Management Course (ASMC) III is apt.

"With the level of insecurity ongoing in Nigeria, smuggling of weapons, armed banditry, terrorism, farmers herders clashes, money laundering and sundry vices there cannot be a better time for people at management level to be exposed to serious training that you are undertaking.

She charges the participants to justify the confidence reposed in them, advising them to allow the knowledge gained to cascade to subordinates and spread.

On collaboration she said, "I want you to know that inter-agency synergy and



Caroline Wura-Ola Adepoju, Acting NIS CG

collaboration cannot be overemphasised so work with your colleagues, share intelligence, when you see something, say something. Be loyal, be dedicated." She charged them.

Speaking on behalf of the participants, Deputy Comptroller from the Nigeria Customs Service, Abubakar Dalhatu Zurumi said the institute has changed their perception and that knowledge was acquired, experience was imparted and all will be put

to use. He said the need to synergise on border management and security was important as they were meant to understand.

The participants were taken on a tour of facilities at the Service Headquarters especially the Command and Control Centre in the Technology Building.

The Commandant of the Institute AS Adeleke fsi, mni, was represented by the Deputy Commandant and the Director of Studies

Vandalized Track on Viral Video Not Nigerian Railway's - NRC Management

By; MATTHEW UKACHUNWALagos

The management of Nigerian Railway Corporation (NRC) has said that the vandalized rail track that was circulated on viral video does not belong to it.

NRC said that all of its standard gauge lines have been in daily operation.

"From a close observation one will clearly confirm that trains have not passed on that track for some time as it is devoid of the usual shining evidence of friction between the wheels and the rail," the Corporation stated in a statement signed by Paschal Nnorli for the Management on August 16, 2023.

NRC pointed out that the track in circulation is double track, and emphasized that only the Lagos-Ibadan section of the corporation's standard gauge is dual track, and that it witnesses daily train operations.

"It is pertinent to state that even though the

Corporation records pockets of vandalism of tracks accessories, the one in circulation is certainly not within the jurisdiction of the Corporation," NRC announced.

It said that on the 9th of August 2023, the Railway Police in Rigasa in collaboration with other security agencies arrested a gang that specialized in vandalizing track accessories and signalling equipment. "A large quantity of track accessories including clips and nuts were recovered from them. Investigation is currently ongoing to get to the end users," NRC declared.

The Corporation urged the general public, especially communities along railway corridor, to join hands with it and security agencies in curbing the menace of those vandals by promptly reporting suspicious movements along the rail track to the nearest railway station or security agency.

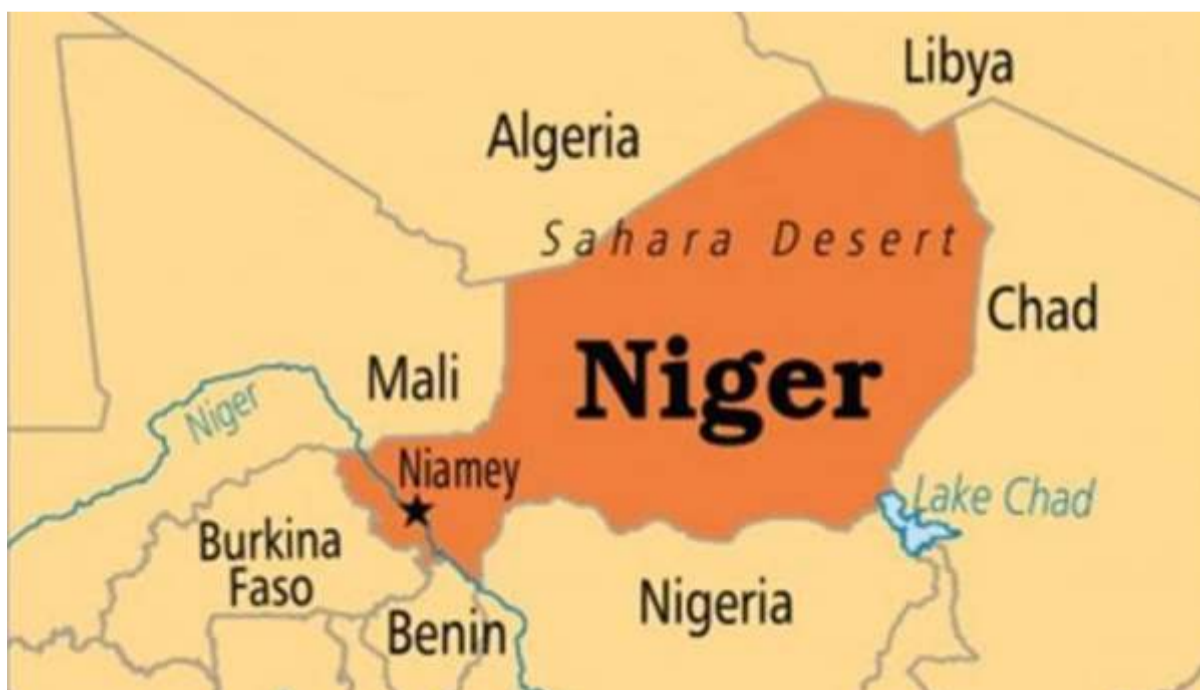
Niger Republic Loses 17 Soldiers In ISWAP Attack

By; IBRAHIM ADAMU, Kaduna

A daring attack from terrorist ISWAP fighters on Wednesday morning, left 17 Nigerien troops dead and scores injured.

The ambush attack on troops of the neighboring francophone nation took place in the county's border with Burkina Faso which has been a hot spot for terrorist activities that prompted joint-multinational patrol efforts from closely affected countries in the sub Sahara Region.

The latest tragedy on an overstretched army was coming amidst an ongoing war rhetorics between leaders of ECOWAS regional bloc and the embattled military junta in



Niamey which experts believe may escalate into confrontation if diplomatic solution fails.

Nigeria, Niger, Chad, Cameroon, Burkina Faso and other Sahel nations have so far expended human and

material fortunes in efforts to wade off ISWAP and Boko Haram fighters from their borders.

While joint military patrols and alliance formed by these nations to have a formidable front against terrorist fighters was yet to eradicate threat of ISWAP in the Sahel sub region, experts feared division among member states of ECOWAS arising from the coup in Niger may endanger and weaken success made so far against the armed fighters.

Leaders of Chad, Guinea and Burkina Faso who are military men themselves had already expressed solidarities with their comrade-in-arms in Niamey, while ECOWAS bloc with Headquarters in Abuja insisted that the military must reinstate the ousted President Mohamed Bazoum back to power, saying anything short of this would attract the wrath of the West African economic alliance.

Ministry Of Marine Affairs And Blue Economy: An Idea That Took Time To Incubate



By; **MURTALA ADOGI MOHAMMED**

Nigeria, with its vast coastline along the Gulf of Guinea and the Atlantic Ocean, is rich in marine resources that have the potential to drive economic growth, create jobs, and contribute to sustainable development.

Recognizing the significance of these resources and the need to effectively manage and harness them, the Nigerian government established the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Blue Economy.

This new ministry is tasked with overseeing and promoting the sustainable development of Nigeria's marine resources and harnessing the potential of the blue economy for the benefit of the nation.

Why the Establishment of the Ministry: The establishment of the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Blue Economy is driven by several key factors:

1. Economic Diversification: Nigeria's economy has traditionally been

dependent on oil and gas exports. The establishment of the blue economy ministry reflects a broader national strategy to diversify the economy and reduce reliance on a single sector.

The blue economy offers diverse opportunities for economic growth in sectors such as fisheries, aquaculture, maritime transportation, renewable energy, tourism, and more.

2. Sustainable Development: The blue economy encompasses a range of activities that can be carried out in harmony with environmental sustainability. By establishing the ministry, the Nigerian government aims to ensure that the development of marine resources and industries is carried out in a way that safeguards the environment, maintains biodiversity, and contributes to the overall sustainable development goals of the country.

3. Job Creation: The blue economy has the potential to generate significant employment opportunities, particularly in

coastal communities and rural areas. By promoting sectors like fisheries, aquaculture, and maritime transportation, the ministry aims to create jobs, improve livelihoods, and enhance economic resilience in these regions.

4. Resource Management: The marine environment is home to valuable resources, including fish stocks, minerals, and renewable energy sources. Effective management of these resources is essential to prevent overexploitation, preserve biodiversity, and ensure their availability for future generations.

5. Global Commitments: Nigeria is a signatory to international agreements and commitments related to sustainable ocean management, conservation, and environmental protection. The establishment of the ministry demonstrates the government's commitment to fulfilling these global obligations and playing a proactive role in global efforts to protect the oceans.

6. Attracting Investments: The blue economy has the potential to attract both domestic and foreign investments in various sectors. By providing a dedicated ministry focused on marine affairs and blue economy, the Nigerian government aims to create an enabling environment for investments and business growth in these sectors.

The establishment of the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Blue Economy in Nigeria is a strategic move to harness the economic, social, and environmental potential of the blue economy.

By focusing on sustainable development, job creation, resource management, and international commitments, the ministry will drive Nigeria's progress toward a more diversified and resilient economy that benefits both current and future generations.

*Murtala Adogi Mohammed PhD
Founder/CEO System Strategy & Policy
Lab, ABUJA, Nigeria [17/08,*

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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

TERMS OF ADVERT PLACEMENT

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

TECHNICAL DATA

6 COLUMNS

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

POLITICAL RATE

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

LOOSE INSERTS

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

CLASSIFIEDS

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

SPECIAL POSITION

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

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

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

Wike, Tahir Competent To Transform New Offices- APC Chieftain

**Congratulates new Ministers*

**Says Tinubu's administration on track to salvage Nigeria*

By: TOM GARBA, Yola

A former Governor of Rivers State, Nyesom Wike, and the minister appointed from Adamawa State, Prof Mamman Tahir have been commended by an All Progressives Congress (APC), chieftain, Hon Hamisu Idris Medugu.

Medugu described them as men with a lot of experience both in government and private sectors that Nigeria can begin to feel their impact as ministers of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) and Minister of Education.

While extolling their abilities, Medugu recalled how Wike massively changed Rivers State by bringing physical infrastructural development in the entire state capital.

According to him, he is certain that Wike will create a modern Abuja municipal and immediately remove illegal structures that are defacing the beauty of the federal capital and distorting its real master plan.

He called on Wike to work with the Abuja master plan, especially the environment board of FCT, which is in charge of

sanitation and the security aspect.

He said Abuja should maintain a standard of world cities, where power generation, security lights and cameras are fixed on every street and road.

The Adamawa-born business mogul thanked President Bola Ahmed Tinubu for his thoughtful leadership ideas, which he was optimistic, will change Nigeria's system of education.

He said the leadership of Tinubu is on track and the wisdom to give the education ministry to Professor Mamman Tahir, a renowned educationist with experience spanning many decades, is a welcome development.

According to Hamisu the career of Tahir as a professor of law and a university lecturer at the University of Maiduguri and later an administrator as the Vice Chancellor, has the building blocks ability with requisite development mechanisms to transform the entire educational system of the country.

Hamisu in an interview with our Yola correspondent, went on to say that Tahir has successfully managed the Abuja Law

Law School as an administrator-Director General (DG).

Also, he praised Tahir for facilitating the siting of Yola Campus of the Law School, which he said is today, is a model of development and is enhancing the socio-economy life of Adamawa citizens.

Being an astute APC die-hard who has directly and indirectly worked for the success of Tinubu and helped in growing the party and served in many capacities, his last point of public engagement was the Vice Chancellor of Baze University of Abuja.

Medugu congratulated Wike and Tahir and said the two ministers will be good



Medugu

pillars of support to President Bola Ahmed Tinubu-led administrator and strengthen the APC in the country.

Chief Benjamin Omale: Philanthropist Extraordinaire Empowering Idoma Nation - Ochetoha K'Idoma Youth

**Applauds remarkable contributions of a true humanitarian*

the nation by providing thousands of job opportunities to Nigerians of all works of life both skilled and unskilled.

"His business acumen combined with his kind hearted compassion has created a lasting impression in the lives of many who have encountered this unique and distinguished personality," the group said.

They explained that Chief Omale's humanitarianism has garnered recognition both locally and internationally.

"His relentless pursuit of excellence has earned him numerous awards, including; the Prestigious Business Person of the Year by Leadership Newspaper in 2020, the Business Excellence Award by the Kaduna State Ministry of Commerce and Industry in 2010, the esteemed International Special Peace Envoy Award by the United Nations in 2010 and the Garkuwan Matasan Arewa conferred on him by both the Moslem and Christian youth in the northern part of Nigeria.

"These and many more accolades stand as a testament to his commitment to making a positive difference in the lives of those who come in contact with

him.

"His passion for continuous learning is evident in the different certification acquired by him. For example, this worthy son of Idoma nation is a graduate of Production and Operations Management from the prestigious Kaduna Polytechnic and has a Masters Degree in Business Administration from Kaduna State University.

"Driven by the desire to give back to society, he has utilized his education, business acumen and expertise to uplift the less privileged in the society by mobilizing ideas and resources within his disposal to create a better future for all," the statement assured.

According to them, beyond all these, Chief Omale, the Ohonyeta of Idoma kingdom is a symbol of unity and social integration.

"A detribalized Nigerian, who believes in the corporate entity of



Chief Benjamin Omale:

Nigeria.

"He exemplifies this inclusiveness and peaceful harmonious living by fostering a sense of belonging among people of diverse backgrounds through his people centered policies and programs geared towards achieving a better society for all.

"Married with six children, his

commitment to family values echoes his dedication to nurturing a compassionate and morally sound society," the statement added.

The Ochetoha K'Idoma Youth Wing proudly acknowledged the exceptional contributions of Chief (DR) Benjamin Omale, the Ohonyeta of Idoma kingdom for his commitment to empowering the youth, fostering educational development and skills acquisition and supporting community

development.

"These and many other noble ideas are the reasons that prompted the Ochetoha K'Idoma Youth Wing to identify and stand proudly by this Benue distinguished personality of Idoma extraction.

"We salute his unwavering dedication to the progress and

prosperity of the Idoma kingdom, Benue state and Nigeria as a whole and express our deepest gratitude for his invaluable contributions.

"The legacy of Chief (Dr) Benjamin Omale as a philanthropist and a humanitarian extraordinaire will forever be etched in the hearts of those whose lives he has touched through his kindness and compassion.

"He has become a beacon of hope and a driving force for positive change in the Idoma Nation, Benue state, Nigeria and beyond.

"The Ochetoha K'Idoma Youth Wing stands united in our admiration and support for this remarkable individual, who truly embodies the spirit of uplifting others to create a brighter and more inclusive future for all," they said.

While recommending him as a team player and progressive Nigerian, they beckoned on all to interface with this distinguished personality as they encouraged more sons and daughters of Idoma nation to emulate his virtues.

Solving Nigeria's Problems: Match Words With Actions, Sultan Charges Leaders

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

For meaningful progress to be made in Nigeria, leaders must match words with action and implement solutions to problems proffered at various fora.

The Sultan of Sokoto, His Eminence, Alhaji Muhammadu Sa'ad gave the advice, while delivering his remarks at a one-day Strategic Meeting With Traditional Leaders of Inaccessible Communities at the Arewa House, Kaduna on Wednesday August 16, 2023.

"As leaders, we don't lack solutions to our problems, what we lack is implementation.

"We speak in beautiful languages and go back home without implementing.

"We come back again and speak the same without implementing resolutions.

"We should be implementing our resolutions to make progress," he said.

The Sultan thanked the District Heads across the 19 Northern states for commitment to ensuring vaccination is successful.

"Health is wealth, a healthy nation is a progressive nation. It is our duty as leaders to ensure our children get immunized against diseases like polio and others," he stressed.

He thanked the UNICEF and other development partners for their contributions to health issues in the country.

"We are here for serious discussions so please contribute. He who wears the shoes knows where it pinches," he advised the traditional leaders.

He urged them not to hold back any details of where challenges affecting immunisation lies in their respective communities.

In his remarks, Executive Director /CEO National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA), Dr. Faisal Shuaib expressed gratitude to His Eminence, the Sultan of Sokoto, Alhaji Muhammad Sa'ad Abubakar III for his unwavering leadership and endorsement of primary health care programmes and interventions.

"His drive has been a source of inspiration to all of us. I would also like to convey my appreciation to the Northern Traditional Leaders Committee on Primary Health Care Delivery (NTLC), under the esteemed chairmanship of His Royal Highness, Alhaji Samaila Mera, the Emir of Argungu. Your consistent support has strengthened our determination and emphasized the significance of collaborating with the traditional institution in shaping our nation's healthcare landscape.

"I stand before you today with deep respect for the cultural heritage and wisdom you embody, and with a plea for your invaluable support in a matter of utmost importance – the eradication of circulating variant polio virus (cVPV2) from our communities. Your guidance and influence have the power to shape the destiny of our communities, and today, we are here to listen to you and ask for your partnership in securing a healthier and brighter future for our children.



"Polio, an ancient and relentless foe, has tested our resilience for decades. But we have not faltered; we have not surrendered. Together, we fought several battles until we won the war against wild polio virus. Now, the time has come to overcome its counterpart known as the circulating variant polio virus (cVPV2). We have the tools, the knowledge, the experience and the unwavering spirit to achieve this monumental task. Your leadership can accelerate our progress," he said.

He tasked participants to reflect on the generations before them, on the stories of strength and unity that their ancestors passed down.

"They faced challenges that seemed insurmountable, yet they prevailed through unity and collective effort. Today, we find ourselves at a similar crossroads. The battle against cVPV2 requires a united front – a bond between traditional, religious and local leaders, health workers, parents, and every citizen who dreams of a polio-free future.

"As we convene today, I encourage you to approach our discussions with honesty and openness, focusing on charting our path forward. Your insights, rooted in your deep knowledge of your communities, are invaluable. Through collaboration, we can devise strategies to reach children in these security challenged areas. Over the past two weeks, similar dialogues took place in Sokoto and Zamfara States. The unity displayed across these gatherings underscores the shared urgency of our mission. The National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA) and the Federal Ministry of Health remains steadfast in its objective: to halt the transmission of circulating variant Polio virus type 2 (cVPV2) by December 2023. We can then use this platform to build a stronger routine immunization and PHC system.

"The essence of leadership lies not only in making decisions that affect the present but also in paving the way for the generations to come. When we support the eradication of circulating variant polio virus, we are not just safeguarding the

health of our children; we are nurturing a legacy of strength, resilience, and progress. We are sending a resounding message that our communities stand together, fortified against challenges that dare to hinder our progress," he said.

He noted that he understands that questions may arise, about the safety of vaccines and the intentions behind these efforts.

"Let us address these concerns with the knowledge that vaccines have saved countless lives, that they have given us the gift of health and vitality. Our commitment to eradicating all forms of polio viruses is driven by a collective responsibility to protect our children from preventable suffering.

"Your Royal Highnesses, Your voices hold immense power. As esteemed leaders, your endorsement and encouragement can dispel doubts, inspire trust, and rally communities to embrace vaccination. By reaching out to parents, caregivers, and the youth, you can sow the seeds of awareness, understanding, and unity. Let us harness the power of our culture, our traditions, and our influence to lead this charge," he said.

He therefore, implored all to see beyond the challenges and embrace the opportunities that lie ahead.

"Let us be the generation that ends the grip of all variants of polio on our land. Together, we can change the course of history and leave a legacy of triumph for generations to come. Let us stand as beacons of hope, guiding our communities towards a brighter, healthier future," he added.

In his submission, the Country Representative to Nigeria, World Health Organisation (WHO), Dr Walter Kazadi Mulombo commended the Government of Nigeria for the laudable initiative of PHC strengthening through strong community engagement in inaccessible areas.

Underscore:

"I take this moment to observe silence in my heart for community members and health workers who have lost their lives while serving their fatherland in inaccessible areas in Nigeria. We will

continue to remember them for their great contributions to health as humanitarian services.

"The ongoing inaccessibility to the delivery of PHC services to communities in the North East Nigeria and more recently, North West has continued to bring setbacks to Nigeria in achieving Universal Health Coverage:

"Especially in the instances where vaccination teams cannot access communities because of the fear of been kidnapped or killed.

"Community informants and surveillance officers have also been limited in their work of disease surveillance, detection, and reporting," he said.

He said that community members have been limited in their movement to health centres to access health services.

"The issues of inaccessibility to communities by the Nigerian Health Workforce have persisted and brought an image on the country in the form of "Zero Dose Children," he said.

According to him, these Zero Dose Children have not received any doses of vaccines, or they are under immunized for their age.

"During pregnancy, the mothers of these zero dose children could not visit the health facilities for the required Antenatal Care.

"To worsen it all, the deliveries of these children were not attended to by Skilled Birth Attendants due to community inaccessibility

"Low level of health education because community members do not have access to health workers.

"All these deprivations of health services and poor household practices have greatly contributed to low immunity in children and are the reasons behind the circulation of the polio mutant virus in the respective communities in your districts.

"The Nigerian polio statistics of week 32, 2023 indicates that the isolation of the circulating variant polio virus type 2 (cVPV2) has reduced by 63% in Nigeria when 2023 and 2022 were compared:

51 cases have so far been detected between January and 13 August 2023 from 15 LGAs;

However, 47 of the 51 cases (92%) are from this axis of the North West Nigeria

Majority of the cases are from states with security challenges in the region," he said. He pointed out that In Kaduna State there are 19 LGAs involving 111 wards with insecure settlements.

"This poses a serious risk to the success recorded so far

Prayers: I am kindly enjoining you to maintain your valuable support in the following areas:

1. To checkmate the phenomenon of team members finger marking eligible children without vaccination, do intensify close supervision of their activities
2. Ensure only matured community leaders follow teams during campaigns
3. Continue to encourage community members to go for routine immunization services
4. Follow up and resolve pending noncompliance cases," he urged.

SWAN Congratulates New Sports Minister Enoch

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The Sports Writers Association of Nigeria (SWAN) has congratulated the newly designated Minister of Sports, Senator John Owan Enoch.

SWAN President, Mr. Isaiah Benjamin, in a press statement issued by the Association's Secretary-General Amb. Ikenna Okonkwo on Thursday in Abuja expressed optimism that the new Sports Minister will bring his political pedigree to bare.

"Going by his experience in public and private service, we believe that Senator Enoch will work to uplift Nigeria's sports to higher heights.

"As a successful politician since he ventured into the political space in 1997, the sporting space will be a good fit for his commitment to serve and make sports viable.

"The sporting media will surely give all the support to succeed. We will also continuously play our watchdog role in a bid to make it easy for the new sports Minister and indeed other administrators to operate seamlessly," the statement said.

Senator Enoch who was named the Minister for Sports on Wednesday August 17, 2023 will be officially inaugurated on Monday August 21, 2023, alongside his colleagues by President Bola Tinubu.

Born on 1966, Senator Enoch hails from Agbokim Waterfall community, Etung local government area of Cross River State.

He served as a Senator representing the Central Senatorial District of Cross River State in the 8th Assembly of the Senate, after he represented his constituency in the Federal House of Representatives.



John Owan Enoch.

Nigeria Wins 8 Medals At 7th Commonwealth Youth Games

By: AYO OJEDOKUN, Lagos

The beautiful Caribbean city of Port of Spain, in Trinidad and Tobago has just ended the successful staging of the 7th Commonwealth Youth Games (CYG).

It was a long-awaited event that was supposed to be held in 2021 but had to be rescheduled due to the global pandemic crisis.

However, from August 4 to 11, the youth from the 69 commonwealth nations, and territories gathered in the Port of Spain, the capital of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago to showcase their incredible God-given talent in sportsmanship in

celebration of the CYG. Among the participating countries was a talented team of 25-man Team Nigeria.

They consisted of 15 athletes and 10 contingent officials. They participated in 4 sports - cycling, swimming, athletics and para-athletics.

Filled with hope and determination, these young athletes aimed to make their country proud. Little did they know that their performances would leave a lasting mark on the Games.

Nigeria's team gave a stellar performance, bringing home a total of 8 medals - 6 gold and 2 silver.

One of the athletes,

Destiny Agbo etched her name into the history books by breaking a Games record in the para-Discus event F42-44/61-64.

This feat was even more remarkable as the event just made its debut in the Games, making Agbo's result an instant record.

The Nigerian team had more victories to celebrate as Samuel Uchenna Oga continued his outstanding performance by also winning two gold medals in the 200 and 400 meters.

Faith Okwose, another young Nigerian athlete, displayed her speed and skill by claiming two gold medals in the 100 meters and the mixed

doubles.

Justina Eyakpobeyan added to Nigeria's success by winning two silver medals in the 100 meters and 200 meters. The quartet of Faith, Okon, Samuel, and Justina combined their skills to achieve victory in the 4x100 mixed doubles.

Nigeria's achievements were not only a matter of pride for the athletes but also their fellow countrymen back home. The youth of Nigeria had made a statement on the global stage, proving that they were a force to be reckoned with. Their dedication, hard work, and love for their sport had paid off.

Engr. Habu Ahmed Gumel, the President of

the Commonwealth Games Association, summed up the stellar performance of Team Nigeria thus:

"The Games were a commendable showcase of talent and sportsmanship," noting, these lads were simply 'fantastic'.

The Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Sports, Ismail Abubakar praised the team on behalf of the Federal Government and particularly commended athletics for contributing all the medals.

The overall winners of the Games were Australia, followed closely by England, Ireland, South Africa, and Nigeria.

In the end, it was a

perfect blend of talent, determination, and sportsmanship that made the Commonwealth Games a truly memorable event for both the participants and the spectators.

As the sun set on the twin islands of Trinidad and Tobago, the young athletes returned home with heads held high, knowing that they had left a lasting legacy on the Games.

Their journey had been filled with ups and downs, but in the end, their perseverance and passion brought them success.

The youth of Nigeria had proven that dreams could be turned into reality and that with hard work and commitment, anything was possible.

Team Kaduna Dominates NYG Zonal Eliminations, Picks

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Team Kaduna went all out to dominate the 7th Edition National Youth Games (NYG) North-West Zonal Team Sports Elimination held at the Ahmadu Bello Stadium Kaduna.

They left no one in doubt of their superiority after picking the highest number of tickets to represent the zone in

team sports.

Kaduna picked the tickets in male and female football events, male and female basketball, male and female volleyball, female handball, male and female cricket and male rugby.

Similarly, Team Kaduna picked tickets in male and female beach volleyball, male hockey and male soft ball events.

This was contained in a final results from

the zonal preliminaries which was signed by the

Zonal Sports Coordinator North-West Zone Kaduna, Mohammed Kabir Datti, as well as the Directors of Sports of five out of the seven North West states.

According to the final results of the eliminations held between August 12 to 14, 2023 in Kaduna, Kano State picked tickets in male football, female volleyball,

male handball, male and female rugby, and male hockey events.

For Jigawa State, they picked tickets in male and female basketball and female beach volleyball.

Sokoto State picked tickets in male volleyball, male and female handball, male beach volleyball and male cricket.

Kebbi State picked ticket in female cricket, male baseball and female soft ball.



NPFL: GTI Commends Propel Sports Africa Ahead New Season

By: AYO OJEDOKUN, Lagos

Strategic partners to the Nigeria Premier Football League (NPFL), GTI Asset Management & Trust Limited, has commended Propel Sports Africa as they build up for the OTT live streaming of the elite league ahead of the new season commencing on August 26, 2023.

GTI/TNFF Head of Media and Publicity, Andrew Ekejiuba, revealed this in a press statement made available to sports journalists in Lagos on Monday.

He thumbed up Propel Sports Africa as they have commenced training of cameramen who will man their AI Cameras to be used for the live streaming of NPFL matches across the country.

“GTI is delighted with what Propel Sports Africa has so far done in the past few days by deploying and training young Nigerians nationwide who will be manning these state-of-the-art cameras in the various match venues in the upcoming season.

“The crew commenced their trainings from Lagos on August 5, 2023 and later moved to other venues across the country,” Ekejiuba said.

However, GTI will continue to work closely with the newly inaugurated Board of the Nigeria Premier League (NPL) led by Hon. Gbenga Elegbeleye towards a successful and seamless execution of the upcoming season.

GTI's Executive Director, Nelson Ine who also doubles as Project Director of The Nigeria Football Fund (TNFF) made the observation and appealed to all stakeholders of the elite league to join hands together to uplift the NPFL.

“It is the hope of GTI that all hands must be on deck in order to reposition our elite league such that it ranks among the best globally.

“GTI is ready, and willing to contribute more to the success story of NPFL as we also urge corporate Nigeria and individuals to invest in NPFL to create a brighter future for our upcoming super stars in the beautiful game of football.

“However, very soon some major partners/sponsors will be unveiled for the NPFL before the commencement of the new season as discussions are at advanced stage in this regard,” he concluded.

Golfers Hail As Makinde Names De Fun Golfers Kitty Group Member As State Commissioner



By: AYO OJEDOKUN, Lagos

“The resonating sound of resounding applause and heartfelt accolades echoed through the ranks of the De Fun Golfers Kitty Group, marking the auspicious moment when Mr. Akin-Funmilayo William ascended to the role of Oyo State Commissioner for Lands, Housing, and Urban Development.”

The above was the way Otunba Abimbola Davis, the Chairman of 'De Fun

Golfers', a subgroup within prestigious Ibadan Golf Club (IGC) described the recent appointment of the founder of the group and also a former Captain of IGC, Mr. Akin-Funmilayo William by Governor Seyi Makinde. Akin Funmilayo-William, is a seasoned figure within the civil service in Oyo State, and has left his mark across the landscape of the state, having served in virtually every local government. His journey culminated in his elevation to the esteemed position of

Permanent Secretary of the Local Government Service Commission in 2019 a role he steadfastly held until his retirement in 2023.

Otunba Davis in a piece he wrote in the second edition of the newsletter for the De Fun Golfers Kitty Group, published this August said “it is no surprise that Governor Makinde, is honouring Akin Funmilayo-William's outstanding service and unblemished professionalism, by confidently bestowed

upon him this commissioner role.”

“Unassuming in demeanour, unwavering in loyalty, and devoted to the spirit of public service, Akin Funmilayo William once captained the Ibadan Golf Club and played a pivotal role in birthing the De Fun Golfers Kitty Group. The community he co-founded has burgeoned under his stewardship, becoming a formidable presence within the world of golf”, he averred.



Proper Oluwadare



Kaduna SWAN Secretary, Okpani Jacob Onjewu Dickson (left) Director of Sports Ministry of Sports Development, Yakubu Ibrahim (middle) and SWAN Chairman Kaduna, Shehu Abdullahi when they visited the state Ministry of Sports Development on Thursday August 17, 2023. Photo: BASHIR BELLO DOLLARS

**Team Kaduna
Dominates NYG Zonal
Eliminations,
Picks**

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Nigeria Needs You On Positive Public Perception, Lions Club Calls On DG Jegede

By: ADEBOYE ADO, Akure

The Lions Clubs International, District 404A-4, Nigeria challenged the youths to imbibe values that will propel them at achieving their goals and becoming good ambassadors. Speaking at a one-day Symposium organised by the District to commemorate the Year 2023 International Youth Day, the Pioneer District Governor of District 404A-4, Nigeria, Lion Dr Kofoworola Jegede, PMJF, NLCF, LCIP called on youths to inculcate the values of hardwork to be good ambassadors of their family, state and Nigeria. Lion Dr Kofoworola Jegede who spoke during the programme held in conjunction with Leos in District 404-A4, in Akure, the Ondo State Capital; said the youths should endeavour to always engage in useful and productive ventures that will make them globally competitive. The theme of this year International Youth Day is, "Green Skills for Youth: Towards a Sustainable World", while the Symposium centred on "Imbibing Values of Services to Humanity from Cradles: Great Asset to Nation Building". The pioneer District Governor

encouraged the youth to be good ambassadors and representatives of their families, generation and the country at large, while also positively *projecting* the image of the country to the entire world at all times.

"The youth have the energy, the brain, the intellect, but they are now channelling their energy into other things other than all these internet frauds, 419 and other crimes", she said.

She added that her project for the Lions Year which is to build Youth Empowerment Centre in Akure is aimed at properly repositioning the youth to be the best they can be in life.

"Youths are the most vibrant when we talk about the internet, you are the most vibrant when we talk about the social media, and social media are the gateway to information, social media are what connect the world together, and that is why we said the world is a global village", she declared.

The symposium was well attended by youths, Leos and Lions leaders including Past Council Chair, Lion Olumuyiwa Jegede; Cabinet Officers, Region One Chairperson, Lion Ola Amure, Club Presidents, the Immediate Past President of

Akure Professionals Lions Clubs and Special Adviser to the Governor of Ondo State on Public and Inter-Governmental Relations, Dr. Bunmi Ademosu, among several others.

The Speaker of the Day, Professor Adekunle Dada of the Federal University of Technology, FUTA, Akure, emphasised the need for the youth to inculcate and imbibe the spirit of genuine service to humanity for the betterment of the society, just as he also called on parents to give their wards sound upbringing to properly shape their future.

"Service to humanity is an important virtue because it allows us to understand others and feel their problems by showing kindness and humility. The aim is to promote the welfare and well-being of others irrespective of age, gender, race or religion, as well as economic status", he said.

The lecturer charged the youth to always come with innovative ideas to contribute to the development of their country.

In their separate addresses on the Theme of the celebration: GREEN SKILLS FOR YOUTH: Towards a Sustainable World, the Chairperson, Leo Programme for District 404A-4, Nigeria, Lion Emmanuel



Onavwie and the Chairperson, Youth Exchange and Empowerment, Lion Emmanuel Chukwurah urged youths to continually acquire skills to green the environment that would make the world habitable.

PCC Olumuyiwa Jegede who expressed satisfaction at the turnout of youths for the programme and their desire to put to work thoughts espoused, said the Lions Club will not relent at periodically building the capacity of youths at re-channelling their energy, thoughts

and orientation towards being progressive minded, and shun internet fraud, crimes and criminality or anything that can destroy their future.

The District Leo President, Rofiyat Kazeem lauded the initiative of the District Governor at promoting Leos and youths within the District and promised to make good use of the opportunity.

Highpoint of the event was the dancing skills showcased by the Youths with the District Governor.

Chief Benjamin Omale: Philanthropist Extraordinaire Empowering Idoma Nation - Ochetoha K'Idoma Youth **Applauds remarkable contributions of a true humanitarian*

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

A group, Ochetoha K'Idoma Youth Wing World Wide, has extolled the virtues of a renowned business mogul, Chief Benjamin Omale, describing him as an extraordinary philanthropist who has empowered the Idoma nation.

This was expressed in a statement signed by the President, Ochetoha K'Idoma Youth Wing World Wide, Obande Gideon Obande, made available to our correspondent in Kaduna on Thursday August 17, 2023.

"The beauty of any society is the collective efforts of its members to uplift one another and one individual who has exemplified this characteristics to the fullest is Chief (Dr) Benjamin Omale, the Ohonyeta of Idoma kingdom, a business tycoon per excellence and a distinguished philanthropist.



Chief Benjamin Omale:

"The Ochetoha K'Idoma Youth Wing, an association dedicated to galvanizing the interests of Idoma youth in Nigeria and the diaspora is proud to acknowledge and celebrate the remarkable contributions of this great individual to the growth and development of the Idoma nation, Benue state and Nigeria as a whole," it said. According to the statement, Chief (Dr) Benjamin Omale's journey as a benefactor to the people of the Idoma nation and Benue State began with the establishment of the O H O N Y E T A FOUNDATION through which he has been able to provide countless

scholarships to indigent students, offering them the opportunity to pursue career of their choices both in the formal and informal education thereby, acquiring skills to be self-reliant.

"This selfless act of human kindness has earned him the esteemed chieftaincy title of "Ohonyeta of Idoma Kingdom," a title that aptly translates to "the savior of Idoma Kingdom" bestowed on him by the Idoma Area Traditional Council, under the chairmanship of His Royal Majesty, the Och'Idoma.

"The impact of Chief (Dr) Benjamin Omale's humanitarian gestures goes beyond educational support because his various companies like; Edi-Jen Group of Companies Nigeria limited, Jeny-Owi Company Nigeria Limited, Ejeg Company Nigeria Limited and Sai Allah Construction and Engineering Company Nigeria Limited have all contributed in no small measure to the economic growth of

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