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Traders Lament Poor Patronage As Effect Of Subsidy Removal Hits Harder On Nigerians

By; IBRAHIM ADAMU, Kaduna

Traders have expressed dismay over poor patronage from buyers as effects of subsidy removal by the present administration continues to hit hard on Nigerians, particularly the low-income earners.

A cross section of traders interviewed by our correspondents, especially those not in the business of food items, have said that the level of patronage from buyers has drastically

dropped because, according to them, people prefer to spend more on essential edible items than luxury and non-essential materials.

A once bubbling line in the heart of Central Market, Kaduna, mostly occupied by dealers and traders in cosmetic and beauty materials has now suddenly become a shadow of itself as shop owners were noticed by our reporter, sleeping or pressing their mobile phones, a development a shop owner who simply

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L-R: Her Excellency, wife of Executive Governor of Kebbi State, Hajiya Nafisa Nasir Idris presented with an award by the Executive Secretary Kebbi State Primary Healthcare Development Agency, Dr. Abubakar Kaoje, as the Champion of Maternal Child Health during the flag-off World Breastfeeding Week 2023 in Basaura, Kebbi State. Photo: BASHIR BELLO DOLLARS

3 Feared Dead In Police, Suspected Robbers Gun Duel In Delta

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*Exempts those on essential duties

Over 500,000 Poor Citizens To Benefit From Kaduna Housing Scheme - Uba Sani

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Sanwo-Olu Pays Unscheduled Visit To Island Maternity, Monitors Health Palliative Services For Pregnant Women



Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu during the visit to Island Maternity

By ; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu, on Sunday, took an unscheduled visit to Island Maternity Hospital on the Lagos Island, catching the medical personnel unaware.

At 6:35pm, the governor walked quietly into the hospital's maternity ward, where two expectant mothers were being examined.

One of them, Odeyemi Omowunmi, is heavily pregnant but she is not yet due for delivery. The 37-year-old expectant mother was compelled to take admission weeks ahead of her scheduled delivery.

Odeyemi's forced hospitalisation was as a result of her unstable blood pressure — the condition that led to two previous miscarriages. In order not to lose the pregnancy, doctors advised Odeyemi

be placed under constant observation until she is due for childbirth.

Who bears the cost for her prolonged admission at the hospital?

The care is free of charge. The medical expenses are completely covered under the health palliative scheme declared by Governor Sanwo-Olu across the Lagos State-owned General Hospitals. The health scheme is part of the relief measures rolled out by the State Government to cushion the hardship being faced by residents as a result of fuel subsidy removal.

The health palliative covers the cost of normal pregnancy delivery, Caesarean section and antenatal care done in the State-owned hospitals. Sanwo-Olu was at the Island Maternity Hospital to monitor compliance of the State's medical staff.

In a chat with the

Governor, Odeyemi said: "My husband and I live in Abule Egba, where I started antenatal care at a private clinic. I was seven and half months into my pregnancy when they discovered that my blood pressure was too high. My husband feared that I might lose the pregnancy again, having had two successive miscarriages.

"We were referred to Island Maternity Hospital for advanced medical examination when doctors told me I must be admitted for continued observation. My husband did not want me admitted initially because of the cost. But we were told the care is completely free. We didn't believe it until I started getting treatment without anyone asking us to pay a dime."

Since the free medical services commenced on the first day of August, hundreds of pregnant

women have benefited from the free delivery and antenatal care across the Lagos-owned hospitals.

Sanwo-Olu was conducted around the maternity ward by the Chief Matron in Charge, Akinsola Dorcas.

The Governor moved to Lagos Island Hospital, Odan, where he personally took an audit of facilities in the 10-storey Doctor's Quarters in which a house officer recently died from injuries in an elevator accident.

Sanwo-Olu conducted on-the-spot assessment of apartments, stores, and power supply system in the quarters. He was led by representative of the House Officers, Dr. Segun Ogunlana.

"I need to come and see things for myself to know where our intervention is specifically and generally needed," the Governor said.

Zaria Mosque Tragedy: NBAIS Registrar Extends Condolences To Kaduna Govt, Zazzau Emirate Over Death Of 12 Worshippers

BY SANIALIYU, Zaria

The Registrar/Chief Executive Officer of National Board of Arabic And Islamic Studies (NBAIS), Professor Yahuza Suleiman Imam has extended condolences to the Executive Governor of Kaduna State, Malam Uba Sani, the Emir of Zazzau, Malam Ahmed Nuhu Bamali, Iyan Zazzau and Speaker of the House of Representatives, Dr Tajudeen Abbas, as well as the entire people of Zazzau Emirate over the tragedy that befell some worshippers observing Asar Prayer inside the historic Zaria Central Mosque last Friday which claimed 12 lives.

Reacting to the tragedy,

Professor Yahuza described it as sad, pathetic, and a great loss to Zazzau Emirate, Kaduna State and Nigeria as a whole.

According to Prof. Yahuza, the unfortunate event has created a vacuum that no one can fill, especially to the families of the deceased.

He prayed to Allah to forgive their shortcomings, accept them as martyrs and grant them Aljannatul Firdaus.

To the families of the deceased, the NBAIS Chief Executive Officer, on behalf of the management and staff, prayed to Allah to grant them the fortitude to bear the irreparable loss of their loved ones.



Professor Yahuza Suleiman Imam

Subsidy Removal: UI Reduces Staff Work Days To 3 Weekly

**Exempts those on essential duties*

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

Management of University of Ibadan has directed the Institution's workers to be reporting for duty three days in rotation per week, with effect from Monday, 14 August, 2023. According to a statement titled Temporary Work Schedule Adjustment signed by the University of Ibadan Registrar and Secretary to Council, G. O. Saliu, the temporary work adjustment is to start with effect from Monday, 14 August, 2023.

The statement sighted on the institution's website Monday night titled, Temporary Work Schedule Adjustment, stated that staff are expected to work on site for three (3) days in rotation per week, with effect from Monday, 14 August, 2023 while those on essential duties " are exempted from this adjustment".

"The astronomical increase in the fuel pump price occasioned by the removal of subsidy by the Federal Government has imposed huge economic difficulties on the generality of Nigerians. Salary earners who have to commute to work every working day are faced with an aggravation of the condition, given the attendant hike in the

transport fare and cost of living", it said.

U.I Management added, " After a careful consideration of the situation, the University Management recommended a temporary work schedule adjustment for members of staff, which Senate at its meeting of Thursday, 03 August, 2023 considered and approved."

"Accordingly, members of staff are now expected to work on site for three (3) days in rotation per week, with effect from Monday, 14 August, 2023. It should, however, be noted that those on essential duties are exempted from this adjustment."

The statement stressed " it should be further noted that Management will review the arrangement as the situation improves", adding, " meanwhile, members of staff are to maintain commitment, open communication and cooperation towards ensuring a free workflow, including working from home where and when necessary."

" In light of the foregoing, Management seeks the understanding of all Deans, Directors, Heads of Departments and Units towards a smooth implementation of the intervention".

Retired Primary School Teachers In Akwa Ibom Demand Gratuities, Pensions

By; PATRICK TITUS, Uyo

Retired Primary school teachers in Akwa Ibom State have taken a bold step towards achieving self liberation as they demand immediate payment of their gratuities and pensions.

In a communique endorsed by Rev. Felix Cookey and Hon. Emmanuel S. Udoka, the retired teachers demanded swift action to resolve all long-standing issues related to their gratuities and pensions.

The momentous gathering of over 2,000 retired primary school teachers from across Akwa Ibom

State was the 3rd Quarter General Meeting held on August 9th, saw the appreciation of Gov Umo Eno for being dedicated to their welfare.

While commending the governor for the release of N1 billion for prompt payment of gratuity and regular pension disbursements, they urged Gov Eno to maintain this commitment in the future. They stressed the urgent need to settle their pension arrears accumulated between 2013 and 2020, totalling approximately N800 million, noting that many local government areas faced severe delays, particularly in 2015, with some retirees waiting for

over ten months to receive their pensions.

They regretted the unjust withholding of their leave grants for the years 2012 to 2018, which they said, violated the Public Service Rules and called upon the State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) to utilize the N800 million naira allocated by the governor to promptly clear the outstanding arrears.

The retired teachers equally emphasized the importance of receiving a refund of the 7.5% deducted from their salaries under the Contributory Pension Scheme, during their years of service.

The communique reads thus in parts: "We urge the government to prioritize and swiftly address our concerns. We have faith in their commitment to our welfare as retired teachers."

"Our loyalty remains unwavering, and we expect the government to honor our demands. We dedicated our lives to the education sector and deserve the support and respect owed to us."

The retired teachers insisted that failure to comply with this demand would leave them with no option than taking a collective action to reclaim what is rightfully theirs.

Community Pharmacists Association Inaugurates Chief Dotun Sanusi Grand Patron

**Over 500 people in Ilaji Community benefit from free medical screening*

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

The Association of Community Pharmacists of Nigeria, (ACPN) over the weekend, inaugurated Chief Dotun Sanusi as the Grand patron of the association

Speaking at his investiture as the ACPN Grand Patron, Chief Sanusi commended the association for fishing him out based on his numerous community-led activities. Chief Sanusi stressed that he has accepted the responsibilities that go with such an honour, promising to use his personal network to advocate for the Pharmacists in the state and ensuring the profession is accorded her due place of recognition.

Delivering a keynote address, the National Chairman of ACPN, Pharm Adewale Oladigbolu, examined the benefit of Community Pharmacists to the community.

The investiture of Chief Sanusi witnessed activities included conducting free medical screening for the people of Ilaji community, in Akanran-Ibadan, Oyo State by members of the association headed by

Pharm Adebayo Gbadamosi

Activities lined up for the investiture began with health outreach where hundreds of indigenes of Akanran, Ona Ara Local Government were attended to by the Community Pharmacists and were supported with basic health services and medications.

The screening which includes blood pressure, blood glucose, malaria, hepatitis and HIV catered for 500 beneficiaries within the Ilaji community with the event anchored by the executives of ACPN Oyo State Branch was also graced with the presence of Fellows of PSN, Distinguished Pharmacists Awardees, Merit Award Winners, leadership of PSN Oyo State, Young Pharmacists group and the who is who in Pharmacy in Oyo State.

Chief Dotun Sanusi is the



Engr Dotun Sanusi at the Investiture.

Chief Executive Officer of Ilaji Hotels and Sport Resorts, a sprawling edifice that is house to relaxation and training events in Ibadan. A palatial resort with hundreds of rooms for out of town rejuvenation, retreat, gaming, sporting events and all that are fit for revitalisation of body and soul. Ilaji Hotel & Sport Resort is house to over 300

youths in her Football Academy and not rivaled by any Resort in the Southwest Nigeria.

The investiture of Engr Dotun Sanusi, as a grand patron with unique personality who has deep interest in developing his people at the grassroots contribute in no small way to the aspiration and services of the association.



Traders Lament Poor Patronage As Effect Of Subsidy Removal Hits Harder On Nigerians

identified herself as Mama Chika attributed to hike in prices of virtually every household item, affecting the purchasing power of individuals.

"People now prioritize their needs, according to the size of their purses, due to astronomical rise in prices of essentials and dwindling earnings of workers, making it difficult for most average families to maintain their usual life routines.

"Many have cut down on their expenditures, spending mostly on basic needs such as food, medicine and laundry items," she observed.

When spoken to, a trader in female beauty articles, Mr. Bright White simply shrugged his right shoulder, asking our reporter to direct his questions to the government which he accused of being insensitive to the plight of the masses whom he noted, queued up under the sun to elect the present crop of political leaders.

"They have now turned

our tormentors instead of saviours of the masses, despite promising us to make life easy and worthwhile.

"You can see for yourself how deserted the once ever busy Central Market of those days where shop owners and other traders were kept busy all through the day.

"The current situation is not funny at all as more and more of our colleagues in business are fast relocating to other ventures," Mr. White said.

Our correspondent on his tour of the market, crossed over to the section of dealers in grains, beef, fruits and vegetables, where the story of poor patronage was similar to places visited earlier.

Though, the narrative here was slightly different as buyers and sellers were seen locked in sporadic transactions.

A dealer in millet, maize and beans, Alhaji Musa Zaria informed our reporter that the place used to be a beehive of activities as buyers had to sit down

and wait for their turns to be attended to, adding that all that has now changed.

He blamed the sad development on hike in cost of transportation which he noted had driven upward the prices of edible food in the market.

Commenting further, Alhaji Zaria called on the present administration to be sensitive to the plight of the masses whom he said had to cut down their daily intake of meals due to the present economic hardship.

"Our customers have drastically reduced because they can't afford to buy as they used to.

"Government should realize that our economy is oil-driven - any adjustments in pump price would instantly affect every consumer product, goods and services.

"Many who were buying grains in bags are now buying in piecemeal- these are family men with an average of 10 members in their households.

"Something needs to be urgently done to provide

succour to the poor majority of whom have lost hope in the leadership of the country," he stated.

A buyer who identified herself as Uwa Mai Waina who said she came to buy maize, a primary material for making local food mostly popular in the Northern part of the country and patronized by Hausa speaking people.

The woman in her fifties recalled with nostalgia good days a measure of maize was sold at 300 Naira which she noted had steadily climbed up and now being sold for 1,400 Naira.

She expressed disappointment in elected representatives of the people whom she described as selfish and self-centered who only paid attention to their needs and those of their families while the poor who elected them wallowed in abject penury and perpetual poverty.

"Where is equity, fairness and equality which should be basic ingredients of democracy in the whole of these?" She lamented.

Mosque Collapse: Mamman Lagos Extends Condolences To Governor Sani, Emir Of Zazzau

By; IBRAHIM ADAMU, Kaduna

Commissioner for Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs Kaduna State, Sadiq Mamman Lagos has extended condolences to Governor Uba Sani and Emir of Zazzau, Ambassador Nuhu Bamalli over the collapse of Zaria Juma'at Mosque in which scores of worshippers lost their lives.

In a statement, Sadiq Mamman Lagos also expressed sympathy to families of the deceased and prayed that God will grant the casualties rest in Aljannatul Firdausi and

wished the wounded speedy recovery.

Meanwhile, the commissioner in addition, condemned the killing of two individuals and abduction of others at Kofar Gayan Zaria during an attack by suspected bandits on Saturday night.

While expressing sadness on the sporadic attacks, he called on security agents to beef up security to safeguard the lives and property of citizens.

While sympathising with families of the victims, Mamman Lagos urged security agents to fish out and prosecute the culprits to serve as deterrence to other criminals in the society.



Sadiq Mamman Lagos

this is a CARTOON PICTURE FROM 1925

by minor



One day they'll wake up

Almost 100 years ago, famous U.S. cartoonist Bob Minor had a realization: Western nations ruled the world because they were rich in money and guns. China, India, and Africa were poor in money and guns, but rich in people. One day, the balance of power would shift. Minor drew this cartoon in 1925. Now, 98 years later, the people of the world are waking up and realizing something has changed.

FLASHBACK

By Minor

One day they'll wake up

Almost 100 years ago, famous U.S. cartoonist Bob Minor had a realization: Western nations ruled the world because they were rich in money and guns. China, India, and Africa were poor in money and guns, but rich in people. One day, the balance of power would shift. Minor drew this cartoon in 1925. Now, 98 years later, the people of the world are waking up and realizing something has changed.

Kaduna Electric MD Commiserates Emir Of Zazzau Over Mosque Collapse

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The Managing Director/CEO of Kaduna Electric, Engr. Yusuf Usman Yahaya has described the collapse of the part of the roof of the Zaria Central Mosque, which resulted in the death of about ten worshippers as "a painful tragedy and a very sad day in the history of Zazzau Emirate"

Engr. Yahaya made the assertion on Sunday in Zaria, when he led the Management of Kaduna

Electric on a condolence visit to the Emir of Zazzau, Ambassador Ahmad Nuhu Bamalli.

He said the management and entire staff of Kaduna Electric share in the pains and agony of the families of those who lost their lives and those who sustained injuries.

"On behalf of the management and entire staff of Kaduna Electric, we hereby express our deep and sincere condolence to His Royal Highness, the Emir of Zazzau, families and loved

ones of the deceased and the people of Zazzau Emirate in general over the unfortunate incident that occurred on yesterday; we pray to Almighty Allah to grant the deceased eternal rest and the injured speedy recovery", he said.

In his response, the Emir of Zazzau, Malam Ahmad Nuhu Bamalli thanked the electricity Boss and his entourage for standing by the Emirate at this trying moment.

The Emir of Zazzau also expressed appreciation of the Emirate Council for

the long standing cordial relationship existing between the Company and the Zazzau Emirate.

"We sincerely thank the Management of Kaduna Electric for sharing our pain and tribulation as well as the long standing cordial relationship existing between the Company and the Emirate Council", the Emir said.

High point of the visit was the inspection of the collapsed mosque and special prayers for the repose of the souls of those who lost their lives in the incident.



Zaria Mosque Collapse: Kaduna CAN Commiserates With Muslim community

By; AMOS TAUNA, Kaduna

The Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), Kaduna State chapter, has expressed shock with the collapse of the ancient and historic Mosque at Kofar Fada, Zaria Local Government Area of the state, leading to the loss of

lives and others injured. A statement issued by Rev Joseph John Hayab and Rev Ma'aji Caleb, Chairman and Secretary respectively, said, "We received with grief the sudden collapse of the ancient and historic Mosque at Kofar Fada, Zaria on Friday, 11th August, 2023, during

ta'asar prayers. This resulted to the death of many worshippers that were observing their obligatory prayers and many sustained various degrees of injuries."

The statement explained that CAN, the state chapter on behalf of the Christian community, commiserates the Emir of Zazzau and all

the Muslim Ummah in the state over the unfortunate incident.

The association prayed that God would grant the departed Aljanah Firdausi and grant all the fortitude to bear the irreparable loss and graciously heal all those that were injured.

Minister: Nominate Dr Durunguwa As el-Rufai's Replacement, Group Begs Tinubu

By; ISRAEL BULUS, Kaduna

Group under the auspices of Southern Kaduna Renew Hope Movement (SKRHM) has appealed to President Ahmed Bola Tinubu to appoint Dr. Abdulmalik Durunguwa as Malam Nasir el-Rufai's replacement for inclusiveness.

The group in a statement jointly signed by its National Coordinator and Secretary, Comrade Yusuf Kanhu, and Abubakar Jamilu respectively, issued to newsmen in Kaduna on Sunday, said nobody from the Southern Kaduna region has been made a minister under the APC administration since 2015. According to them, Dr. Durunguwa remains one of the greatest contributors and mobilizers that brought the APC-led government to power in Kaduna State, stressing such individuals deserve to be rewarded with a bigger responsibility.

"Since the return of Democracy in 1999, there has been a gentlemanly agreement, when the office of the Governor goes to zone one, naturally, the deputy governorship position and Minister should go to Zone 2nd or 3rd Senatorial zones to ensure that all the 3 Senatorial zones be fully represented at both the state and the Federation.

The group decried that the gentleman's agreement was distorted and thwarted by Nasir el-Rufai's 8-years administration.



Dr. Abdulmalik Durunguwa

"Despite the countless contributions made by the APC-led administration, the region has been overlooked and neglected in the allocation of ministerial positions under the ruling party.

The group explained that the region had rich cultural, vibrant communities with untapped potential, noting that it deserves representation at the Federal level.

"None of these influential positions have been occupied by individuals hailing from Kaduna-South under the APC Government."

"We are appealing to President Tinubu to hasten the nomination of Dr. Abdulmalik Durunguwa, from Kaduna-South who was recently appointed by President Muhammadu Buhari as the Federal Commissioner of National Population Commission. The group further noted that they are coming together was not based on a political party but rooted in the realism that they're stronger together if the Ruling Party wants to maintain its position to enthrone an inclusive leadership that will secure and unite Nigerians.

"Dr. Abdulmalik Durunguwa is an astute academician, civilized and morally oriented seasoned administrator with the requisite experience and strength of character to pilot the affairs of any office in Nigeria having served as the first Executive Secretary of the Kaduna State Emergency Management (SEMA) under the Governor Ahmed Makarfi, Lecturer and 2023 APC Gubernatorial Aspirant.

"He has held so many positions before his recent appointment as the Federal Commissioner of National Population Commission by the Buhari Administration. Kanhu maintained that the present administration had shown signs of being a people's oriented Government, as he pleaded that someone like Abdulmalik from the Zone be considered.

You Can Remove Billboards, But Can't Remove All Eyes On Judiciary - Atiku's Aide

**Says even the arbiters of justice know that all eyes are on them because of the historic nature of their assignment*

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Frank Shaibu, the Special Assistant on Public Communications to Atiku Abubakar says the destruction of billboards which put up adverts that read, "All Eyes on The Judiciary" was clear evidence of President Bola Tinubu's authoritarianism and assault on freedom of speech.

Shaibu said this while reacting to the directive by the Advertising Regulatory Council of Nigeria (ARCON) to pull down all billboards carrying the advert across Nigeria.

ARCON also dissolved the Advertising Standard Panel which is the statutory panel under the Council charged with the duty of ensuring that advertisements conform to the prevailing laws of the Federation as well as the Code of advertising ethics of the advertising profession.

Shaibu said the entire incident reinforced the argument that election cases in court ought to be completed before

beneficiaries of questionable elections are inaugurated.

He further wondered how a message like: "All Eyes on the Judiciary" would translate to a threat to society.

"The basic principle of social justice is about the people. The advertisers of the bill boards only did what the norm is in civilized climes. It was the agents working to impress an interest that read meanings to that innocuous advert. Otherwise, it is a basic principle that eyes must be on the wheel of justice. Eyes must naturally be on the wheel of justice because when justice is delivered, it must be 'seen' to have been just! In any case, both Tinubu and the APC are before the same court. It is curious how they find this particular message upsetting. Anyway, even if they pull down the billboards, they can never stop all eyes from being on the judiciary at this historic time."

He said ARCON had already begun acting like the Lagos State Signage and Advertising Agency (LASAA) which had built a

reputation of denying Nigerians the right to carry adverts which the Lagos State government deemed "unfavourable".

Atiku's aide said, "Tinubu has, once again, put his dictatorial tendency on public display. How has a simple message that says "all eyes are on the judiciary" suddenly become offensive? This is a clear case of abuse of office and reinforces the argument that court cases ought to be concluded before inauguration so that beneficiaries of fraudulent elections would not be able to manipulate the system in their favour.

"Billboards are used in displaying educational messages. Is there any offence in alerting Nigerians to the fact that all eyes should indeed be on the judiciary? In any case, is there any Nigerian that does not know that the judiciary is hearing the case challenging Tinubu's fraudulent victory? Even the justices themselves are aware that all eyes are on them because of the historic assignment that

they are saddled with. If Tinubu had nothing to hide, why would he be afraid of such a message?

"Nigerians can now see what the people of Lagos have been facing all these years where LASAA denies the opposition the use of billboards just to please their master. It has become so bad that Tinubu's son is the one that has exclusive rights to billboards on the Lekki axis. Who can forget that the company where Tinubu's son enjoys commanding heights admitted to turning off the billboard lights during the #ENDSARS protests? And the only ridiculous explanation for such a dastardly act is that it wasn't in bad faith."

Shaibu said it was ironic that Tinubu claimed to be a democrat and even boasted of funding the June 12 struggle only for him to transform into an intolerant authoritarian after the election.

Atiku's aide added that it was hypocritical for the same man to be championing democracy in Niger while at the same time denying Nigerians the most basic

form of democracy which includes freedom of speech and expression. He needs to be reminded that charity begins at home.

He said the statement at the Senate screening by Dele Alake, that 'social media would be regulated soon' was just another evidence that Tinubu had no regard for democratic norms.

Shaibu added, "While we keep calling on the judiciary to restore the mandate of the people, we cannot but ask the citizens to be vigilant as the corn-man tries to undermine our democracy.

"Having failed in his last 70 days in office, which has increased Nigeria's inflation and destroyed the value of the naira, systematically denied Nigerians the right to protest or go on strike. "Under the watch of this administration, inflation had climbed to an 18-year high.

"He wants to regulate social media so that his failures would not be amplified. You can't flog Nigerians, and expect them not to cry. This will never happen."

Yoruba Elders To Tinubu: Suffering In Nigeria Sharper, Hardship Deeper Among Masses

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

The Yoruba Council of Elders (YCE) yesterday, alerted that the suffering in Nigeria at this time is getting sharper and hardship is getting deeper among the masses.

YCE while raising the alarm in a communique signed by its Secretary-General, Chief Oladipo Oyewole issued at the end of its emergency meeting in Ibadan, however, affirmed its total support for President Bola Ahmed Tinubu.

According to YCE, "the cost of petrol has increased, cost of transportation and cost of foodstuff have gone up", adding that there is the need for federal government to put in place more pragmatic, practical and visible ways of easing the pains.

"While associating fully with the management abilities and capabilities of the present administration, it is of concern to YCE that the Federal Government of Nigeria should put in place more pragmatic, practical and visible ways of easing the pains and general hardship which Nigerians are presently contending with.

"We see a good outcome for the tightening of belt in Nigeria as it were, whilst we call for effective management and monitoring

such that our people would not have suffered for nothing."

On the situation in the country, YCE said the Niger Republic issue should be pursued and addressed with high level

Diplomatic measures devoid of bringing crisis or war.

"The Yoruba Council of Elders stands firm in the resolve that the situation in Niger Republic should be pursued and

addressed with high level diplomatic measures to forestall any action which may escalate into a situation of a war that may consume the West Coast of Africa," the group said.



Yoruba Council of Elders in a group photograph after their meeting in Ibadan.

Kogi 2023: Media 'Mismanagers' Unwittingly Knocked SDP Candidate Out Prematurely - Former Dep Gov's Spokesperson

***Says 'beyond lies, wild allegations, party has no image making strategy for candidate'**

By: ADEBOYE ASO, Akure

Spokesperson for a former Deputy Governor under the People's Democratic Party (PDP), in Kogi State, Abu Michael, has berated the Social Democratic Party (SDP) in Kogi State, especially its media handlers, over what he described as spurious lies and continuous unfounded allegations being churned out by them, mainly in the social media, as against constructive campaigns, which responsible Kogites are looking forward to.

Abu who was the Chief Press Secretary to Arc. Yomi Awoniyi, Deputy Governor to former Governor Idris Wada, said those he called "media mismanagers" of the SDP governorship candidate, Muritala Yakubu, had continued to display ineptitude as regards communication matters by sticking to an outdated strategy of cooking up lies against a sitting government to gain public sympathy.

He said in a statement released on Monday that, while the people of Kogi State were looking forward to issue-based campaigns of what the opposition would want to do better, what the state had witnessed in the last couple of months "is a reckless SDP campaign hinged on ethnic agenda with absolutely no blueprint for development." He noted that, instead of this helping their cause, it had inadvertently portrayed their principal "as not having any other vocabulary in his dictionary other than violence", and might have also knocked him off the list of serious contenders prematurely.

According to him, "what people are insinuating is that the SDP might be trying to create an air of importance around their Principal, probably because they are aware that he may be the weakest contender in the governorship race in terms of track record and capacity."

The media practitioner said it was high time well meaning Kogites called the SDP to order, saying, "It is very unfortunate that besides fanning ethnic discords in a heterogeneous State like Kogi and making wild allegations that responsible media houses will not touch with a long pole, they have no image making communication strategy for the candidate of their party."

The statement reads in full: "It is no longer news that the Kogi State Governorship Election is a



Abu Michael

few months away. What is however becoming worrisome is the attempt to overheat the polity, particularly by the media managers of the Social Democratic Party.

"The need to begin to show concern over the spurious lies churned out in the name of propaganda or attempt to curry sympathy by the SDP media managers has now come to the fore if we must forestall breakdown of law and order as well as ethnic crisis.

"It is unfortunate that in Kogi State, the SDP has chosen to heighten tension in the state with spurious allegations, mainly fabricated lies, for no just cause, while other opposition parties have chosen to focus on issues.

"It is strange that, aside from the SDP, none of the others, including the PDP candidate, Sen. Dino Melaye, Hon. Leke Abejide of the ADC, Olayinka Braimoh of the AA, Hon. Hassan Baiwa of NNPP, Jibrin Usman of Accord, who are key contenders in the race, have been engaging in outrageous propaganda filled with lies.

"As a media professional, one skilled in the art of conflict sensitive reporting, I find it rather unfortunate that the SDP media managers have chosen the path of dishing out unfounded information and making

unsubstantiated allegations, where others are showcasing what they have to offer the people different from what the current government is doing.

"What people are insinuating is that the SDP might be trying to create an air of importance around their Principal, probably because they are aware that he may be the weakest contender in the governorship race in terms of track record and capacity.

"It is high time responsible Kogites from around the world called to order, these so called media managers. It is very unfortunate that besides fanning ethnic discords in a heterogeneous State like Kogi and making wild allegations that responsible media houses will not touch with a long pole, they have no image making communication strategy for the candidate of their party.

"It won't take too long for their principal, Alhaji Muritala Yakubu, to discover that his media managers have, with their offensive communication style, been inadvertently portraying him as not having any other vocabulary in his dictionary other than violence.

"While the people of Kogi State are looking forward to issue-based campaigns of what the opposition would want to do better, what we have since

witnessed, in the last couple of months, is a reckless SDP campaign hinged on ethnic agenda with absolutely no blueprint for development.

"Having been privileged to witness all elections held in Kogi State, since the advent of the current democratic experiment, I make bold to state that no section of the state has ever had the opportunity to produce a governor of the state without crossing the divide and building bridges with other ethnic groups of the state. But, in this their journey, they have chosen to alienate others in their propaganda around a certain agenda.

"I also find it laughable that those stoking the unwarranted tension in the state in the name of media managers are quick to mention the name of Gov. Yahaya Bello for every political misfortune.

"This could easily be linked by those concerned to the rejection they may be facing and their inability to cover some political mileage they might have envisaged with the ethnic card.

"They have continued to churn out lies on a daily basis with a view to misleading the public, to the extent that even major contenders in the next election from Kogi East have drawn the attention of Igala people and well meaning Kogites, in general, to

these lies.

"Aside from the social media with no gate keeping tenet, no Editor worth his salt in the mainstream media would risk libel and unprofessionalism, going by the spurious and unfounded lies that have formed the bedrock of the strategies of the SDP mismanagers.

"In every society, particularly in election seasons, overzealous, unscrupulous elements do politically unethical things. But the manner in which the SDP guys have made propaganda and clout chasing their watchwords, it is easy for right thinking people to wonder if those attacks purportedly carried out by opposition were not perpetrated by SDP themselves to create content for their strange media strategy.

"When a state government facility was attacked in Kogi East by hoodlums recently, and properties carted away, the state government did not accuse opposition, it simply said the perpetrators would be fished out and dealt with. That is the hallmark of a government mindful of security. One area the administration of Gov Bello has received applause within and outside the State is in the area of securing lives and properties in the state. No amount of propaganda can take this fact away. And I'm sure, Kogites would not fold their arms and watch selfish and tactless politicians take them back to the old, chaotic days.

"For instance, while a recent action culminating in the attack on the Campaign Secretariat of the SDP will continue to remain condemned in strong terms, if truly it was not stage-managed, with strong appeal on security agencies to fish out the perpetrators, attributing the action to the Chief Executive Officer of the State with unprintable names and unsubstantiated claims, underscores the quality of the SDP campaign.

"It is important to state that it is within the constitutional right of the opposition SDP Governorship Candidate, Alhaji Muritala Yakubu Ajaka, to seek to wrestle power from the APC. However, those who are his genuine supporters should re-engineer his public exposure if Kogites must count him among serious contenders.

"Right now, it seems his media mismanagers have unwittingly knocked him out prematurely."

Gombe Governor Calls For Comprehensive Rehabilitation, Reconstruction Of Gombe-Bauchi Road

***Wants To Permanently Address Recurrent Road Washouts, Collapse of Bridges
...Laments Slow Pace Of Ongoing Repair Work, Tasks Contractor To Speed Up, Make Road Motorable Within Days
...Vows To Escalate The Matter To President Tinubu For Urgent Intervention**

Governor Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya CON and Chairman of the Northern Governors' Forum has called on the Federal Government to take urgent measures to permanently solve this recurrent problem of collapsed bridges and road washouts along Gombe-Bauchi road. These issues, he noted, have rendered the road unsafe and impassable for travelers in the North-East.

According to a statement signed by the Director-General (Press Affairs) Government House Gombe, Ismaila Uba Misilli, made available on Monday August 14, 2023, the road connects Bauchi, Gombe, Adamawa, Taraba, and parts of Borno states, making it a critical transportation route for goods and services.

During his inspection visit to the site of the road washout/collapsed bridge at Kalajanga, Kirfi LGA of Bauchi State, Governor Inuwa underscored the crucial role of maintaining this infrastructure, emphasizing its significance in the socio-economic activities of the people of the North East sub-region.

The Governor likened the road to an essential artery connecting vital regions, highlighting its vital role in the economic activities of the people.

"This road is like an artery that connects the heart with the brain supplying blood and oxygen, if it breaks no part of the body can function. This is what the road is to the sub-region.

"I believe the governor of Bauchi was here, and don't be surprised tomorrow to see the governor of Adamawa or Borno here because of the importance of the road to the entire region", he added.

He stressed the need for comprehensive rehabilitation and reconstruction, noting that the road, nearly 50 years old, requires bridges and thorough restoration.

Governor Inuwa observed that traveling through alternative routes is both expensive and time-consuming, underscoring the urgency of completing the repair works to ensure smooth transportation across the Northeastern states.

Governor Inuwa stressed the importance of the road to the socio-economic development of not only Gombe State but the region as a whole while attributing the poor condition of the road to environmental factors and increased human activities.

He explained that since his assumption of office, he has been following up to see that the road receives the necessary rehabilitation.

"I had, in the past visited the Ministry of Works about four times on this issue trying to draw the attention of the Federal Government to take immediate measures to permanently solve this lingering problem. Even yesterday, I had to call the Permanent Secretary, of the Federal

Ministry of Works on the issue.

"The FG has to come in as a matter of urgency and address this issue because the livelihoods of millions of people depend on this road", describing the situation as an emergency that begs for immediate measures.

Governor Inuwa pledged to escalate the matter to the President, seeking a permanent solution to the problem. While acknowledging the ongoing work by the Federal Road Maintenance Agency (FERMA) and their efforts to create a temporary walkway, he expressed optimism that continuous efforts could lead to the road becoming operational again in a matter of days.

Responding on behalf of the Federal Ministry of Works, a staff in the ministry overseeing the project, Engr. Bitrus Dauda said the ministry is doing everything possible to make the road motorable while assuring to push for the construction of bridges along the road.

"We have since lodged complaints to the Federal Ministry of Works over the condition of the road especially the sites where large bridges are needed. We are now waiting for the design to take on the construction work" he explained.

Also in his remarks, the Sector Commandant, Federal Road Safety Corps, Bauchi State, Mr. Patrick Ikaba said, the command has concluded plans to install warning signs at strategic places to prevent accidents, while advising motorists and other road users to take alternative routes for safety purposes.

The recent incidence of the road washout occurred on Saturday after hours of heavy downpours that resulted in a flash flood overpowering the capacity of the existing bridge at the site.



Meeting with BESDA master trainer's in Funakaye L.G.A Gombe State

Mosque Collapse: Buratai Foundation Commiserates With Victims' Families, Zazzau Emirate

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The TY Buratai Humanity Foundation has expressed sadness following the collapse of the 150-year-old Zaria Central Mosque in the ancient city of Zaria in Kaduna State which claimed 12 lives between Friday and Saturday.

Several others sustained injuries during the incident which happened about 4pm on Friday while worshippers were praying.

The foundation during a condolence visit led by its Chairman, Ibrahim Dahiru Danfulani, who's also the Sadaukin Garkuwan Keffi, while sympathising with the victims families at the Emir's Palace in Zaria on Sunday, described the incident as tragic.

The chairman also commended the Zazzau Emirate Council's resilience and unity in the face of such adversity, noting that, "It is through the collective efforts of individuals and organizations like ours that we can rebuild and heal together."

He said, "On behalf of the TY Buratai Humanity Care Foundation, I write to express our deepest condolences and heartfelt sympathies to you and the entire Zazzau Emirate over the tragic incident of the mosque building collapse during the Asr prayer. We were deeply saddened to learn about the loss of lives and the injuries sustained by several individuals.

"The TY Buratai Humanity Care Foundation was established to honour the exemplary humanitarian efforts of the former Chief of Army Staff, His Excellency Amb (Lt Gen Rtd) Tukur Yusufu Buratai CFR, Betaran Biu, Garkuwan Keffi.

"Our foundation's mission is to assist the underprivileged, orphans, and widows, while also recognizing community contributions that positively impact people's lives.

"We understand that this unfortunate incident has caused immense grief and distress within the Zazzau Emirate. Our foundation would like to extend our visit to families of the deceased for condolence and also visit the injured in the hospital.

"Furthermore, we would like to express our admiration for the resilience and unity of the Zazzau Emirate community in the face of such adversity. It is through the collective efforts of individuals and organizations like ours that we can rebuild and heal together."

He added, "Once again, please accept our deepest condolences and know that our thoughts and prayers are with the families of the deceased and the injured. We will remain in close contact with your Emirate to discuss the most effective ways in which we can extend our future projects.

"The foundation also commiserated with the Zazzau Emirate over Saturday night attack by unknown gunmen that claimed two lives."

After the Emir's palace, the foundation visited deceased individual's residents and later visited the injured in the various hospitals.





COMMUNITY FOCUS

When Navy Logistics College, Kano Honoured Dawakin Tofa Council Boss

By; JABIRU A. HASSAN, Kano

The Nigerian Navy Logistics College Kano, has honoured the Executive Chairman of Dawakin Tofa Local Government Council, Ado Tambai Kwa for consistency in the promotion of good relationship with relevant security agencies in his domain.

In a colourful event held at the college, Ado Tambai Kwa reiterated his council's determination towards the continuous institutional cooperation between Dawakin Tofa Local Government Council and all the relevant security agencies located in the local Government Area. He announced that, "

Our administration would continue to work hand in hand with the federal and state security authorities in order to ensure that all programmes that are directly related to the security are attended to, and I am certain with cordial working relationship, our security systems would become more successful and committed to the promotion of peace and unity in our catchment areas," he assured.

Ado Tambai thanked the college management for its dedication to keeping the flag of the Nigerian Navy flying with success, where he declared that the award given to him would serve as an encouragement to him and the council to maintain the momentum.



Muhammed Garba Appointment As Chief Of Staff To APC National Chairman, Acknowledgement Of Hard Work, Loyalty - VICCDA

**Says his choice as Chief of Staff would greatly help in reengineering APC*

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

The Vision Centre for Communication and Development Advocacy (VICCDA) on Sunday, described the appointment of former Kano State Commissioner for Information and Home Affairs, Mallam Muhammad Garba as Chief of Staff to the National Chairman as an acknowledgement of hard work and loyalty. VICCDA, a media based NGO in a statement by its

acting Chairman, Otunba Gbenga Onayiga also hailed the appointment stating that Mallam Garba's choice as Chief of Staff would greatly help in reengineering the political party, According to Otunba Onayiga, "Mallam Garba's wealth of experience as a union leader, accomplished journalist, astute administrator and public servant would surely propel the leadership to reposition the party" He pointed out that

Mallam Garba's commitment, diligence and exemplary leadership had left an indelible mark in NUJ where he was National President for two terms and in Kano State where he served meritoriously as Commissioner for Information and Home Affairs for another two terms to the delight of all. "Mallam Muhammad Garba has always been steadfast, dedicated, unwavering and committed to upholding

the values of integrity and excellence. Indeed, he is a man of the people and remains a shining example for all. No wonder the present national leadership of NUJ last year honoured Garba as a good ambassador of the profession and a Media Icon", he said The VICCDA Acting Chairman prayed for continued God's wisdom and protection for Garba to make a success of his new position.

Subsidy Removal: Gombe Governor Flags-off State-wide Distribution Of Food Items, Agricultural Inputs, Targets 450,000 Beneficiaries

**Promises More Social Interventions To Stimulate Growth, Counter Economic Challenges*

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

In keeping with his administration's commitment to the welfare and wellbeing of the people, Gombe State Governor, Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya, CON has flagged off distribution of food items and agricultural inputs palliatives to cushion the effects of the economic hardship occasioned by the removal of fuel subsidy in the country.

According to a statement signed by the Director-General (Press Affairs) Government House Gombe, Ismaila Uba Misilli, made available yesterday, the distribution ceremony, held in Dadinkowa at the Palace of Emir of Yamatu, demonstrates the Governor's strong belief in shared values of compassion and solidarity during challenging times.

In his remarks, the Governor explained that the launching of the distribution of palliatives was a comprehensive effort aimed at aiding over 450,000 beneficiaries across the state's 11 Local Government Areas.

"In phase one which we launched today, we are targeting 30,000 beneficiaries with each beneficiary collecting one bag of five Kilogram of rice, one carton of macaroni, two bags of fertilizer and two litres of pesticides".

"What sets this initiative apart is the strategic inclusion of agricultural materials in the palliative distribution. This decision resonates deeply with the reality that a significant proportion of Gombe's population relies on agriculture for their livelihoods. The provision of agricultural support not only guarantees bountiful harvests but also fortifies food security, especially in the imminent dry season". Recognizing the necessity of removing the fuel subsidy, Governor Inuwa acknowledged that it is a step towards ensuring long-term economic stability and development.

He said the insightful approach to the palliative programme reflects his deep understanding of the multifaceted challenges faced by individuals and households in Gombe State

due to the ongoing economic downturn.

More than just a distribution of goods, Governor Inuwa said, the palliative programme also exudes a sense of hope and solidarity and demonstrates his unwavering dedication to the welfare of every citizen of Gombe State.

He urged the people of the state to embody the values of compassion and solidarity in their interactions, extending a helping hand to those in need.

"Let us reach out to our neighbors, offering a helping hand to those in need and continue to uplift one another through a united spirit of communality"

The Governor called on the distribution officials and volunteers to carry out their roles with integrity and responsibility to ensure transparency and efficiency.

In addition to the ongoing palliative efforts, Governor Inuwa Yahaya assured the people that his administration is working on more social interventions to stimulate growth and counter the economic challenges faced by the people.

The chairman of the state steering committee on the distribution of palliatives, Abdullahi Haruna Abdullahi assured the Governor that the committee will discharge its assignment with the fear of God and to the benefit of humanity.

Abdullahi, who is also the Executive Secretary of Gombe State Emergency Management Agency, SEMA, revealed that sub-committees have been formed at the local government and ward levels to ensure effective delivery of the items to the most vulnerable in the state.

Earlier in an address of welcome, the Secretary to the State Government, Professor Ibrahim Abubakar Njodi explained that the flag off of the distribution of palliatives is one out of the numerous interventions undertaken by the administration of Governor Inuwa Yahaya.

He therefore, appealed to the beneficiaries to make good use of the items given to them in order to boost their crop production and economic activities.

3 Feared Dead In Police, Suspected Robbers Gun Duel In Delta

By; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

Three armed men suspected to be either kidnapers or armed robbers have been neutralised by police operatives during a gun duel in Delta State.

One AK-47 rifle was reportedly recovered from the deceased suspects, said to have died as a result of the fatal gunshot injuries sustained during the encounter.

The Delta State Police Command Spokesperson, DSP Bright Efade in a statement yesterday, hinted that the incident occurred on Monday, 14th August, 2023 at about 9.19pm between the bandits and police operatives attached to Ebrumede Division, who were on visibility patrol along Ogbolokposo area.

The statement reads, "On 14/8/2023, at about 2119hours, operatives of Ebrumede police station while on visibility patrol along Ogbolokposo area in Ebrumede, they sighted a tricycle with four male occupants headed towards their direction.

"The operatives in their usual way flagged down the tricycle only for the occupants to jump down and took to their heels while exchanging gunshots with the Policemen.

"The police while chasing them, engage them in a shootout during which

three of them were fatally wounded and One AK-47 rifle was recovered. The injured suspects were taken to the hospital where they were confirmed dead by the medical doctor on duty. Investigation is ongoing.

In a related development, two armed robbery suspects were apprehended, with one locally made cut-to-size recovered from them.

Efade while confirming the incident said, "On 13/8/2023 at about 1.00pm, acting on credible intelligence received on some suspects involved in criminal activities in Ibusa oshimili north LGA, operatives of Ibusa division trailed and arrested one Musa Saliu 'm' aged 27yrs at Ibusa by-pass.

"When a search warrant was executed at his premises, one locally made cut-to-size gun was recovered. Preliminary investigation revealed that one Zulka Muhammed 'm' aged 29yrs who resides in Ibusa community is a



CP Wale Abass

member of the gang.

"Suspects led the operatives to Umudafe in Ibusa where the said Zulka are arrested. The suspects are in custody and investigation is ongoing.

The Police image maker also disclosed that a suspected drug dealer was nabbed in a similar manner, with weeds suspected to be Indian hemp recovered from him. His words, "On 12/8/2023, at about 1800hrs acting on an actionable intelligence gathered on a notorious black spot in Otu Jeremi in Ughelli South LGA that

majorly deals on sales and distribution of illicit drugs, and weeds suspected to be Indian Hemp.

"On the strength of the information, detectives of the CP monitoring unit stormed the black spot where two suspects namely Matthew Richard 'm' aged 32yrs, and Sampson Mashama 'm' aged 37yrs both from Otu-Jeremi were arrested, and several packs and wraps of weeds suspected to be Indian Hemp were recovered. Investigation is ongoing".

NNPCL Sponsors 60 petroleum Scientists For Sequence Stratigraphy Workshop At ABU Centre For Inland Basins Studies

**Training scheduled for August 20*

By; SANIALIYU, Zaria

A total of 60 petroleum scientists drawn from 30 Nigerian universities have been nominated by the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited (NNPCL) to attend a five-day sequence stratigraphy workshop scheduled to hold at Centre for Inland Basins Studies (CIBS), Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria from August 20 to 24, 2023.

According to a statement from the Public Affairs Directorate, Office of the Vice-Chancellor, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria on Monday August 14, 2023, specifically, the NNPCL-sponsored short hands-on train-the-trainer (TTT) workshop is targeted at geologists, scientists, reservoir engineers, and other professionals.

The centre, built and commissioned by the Nigerian National Petroleum Company (NNPCL) in March last year, is expected to share at the training workshop some reflections on the benefits of the application of sequence stratigraphic techniques (SST) for the delimitation of petroleum systems of inland sedimentary basins, with special focus on Sokoto basin.

The workshop, "Application of Sequence Stratigraphy to Petroleum Exploration: A Case Study of the Sokoto Basin", has 60 participants drawn from 30 universities across the six

geopolitical zones of Nigeria, and it is to hold at CBN Centre for Economics and Finance, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. All the participants are academic staff mainly from Departments of Geology, Geophysics, Physics, and other related fields in their respective universities.

The participating universities from the North East are University of Maiduguri, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi; Gombe State University, Gombe; Modibbo Adama University of Technology, Yola; and Nigerian Army University, Biu.

Those from the South East are, University of Nigeria, Nsukka; Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka; Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki; and Enugu State University of Science and Technology, Enugu.

Others are those from the south south, which include Delta State University, Abraka; University of Calabar, Calabar; University of Benin, Benin; Niger Delta University, Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State; University of Port Harcourt, Port Harcourt; and Federal University of Petroleum Resources, Effurun.

The ones from the South West are University of Ibadan, Ibadan; University of Lagos, Akoka, Yaba, Lagos; and Ladoko Akintola University of Technology, Ogbomoso, Oyo State.

They also include, universities from the North Central Zone that



are, Federal University of Technology, Minna; Nasarawa State University, Keffi; Federal University Lokoja and University of Jos.

The universities participating from the North West are, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria; Usmanu Danfodio University, Sokoto; Federal University, Gusau; Federal University, Birnin Kebbi; and Aliko Dangote University of Science and Technology, Wudil, Kano.

Significantly, sequence stratigraphy is a branch of stratigraphy that deals with the order, or sequence, in which depositionally related stratal successions (time-rock) units were laid.

It has been extensively used by the academia and industry as a

valuable tool in basin analysis and modelling of the several parameters that govern sedimentation, and frontier exploration of hydrocarbons in the inland basins.

The workshop aims to help participants gain a thorough understanding of the concepts and practical application of sequence stratigraphy to hydrocarbons exploration – using the Sokoto basin as a case study.

The five-day course combines classroom lectures with practical exercise that illustrates the application of sequence stratigraphy as a tool for hydrocarbon exploration.

In general, the workshop will greatly help the participants in utilizing sequence stratigraphy as a predictive tool in identifying

hydrocarbons plays, to improve the estimation of play and prospect risk in Nigeria's inland sedimentary basins that consist of South-eastern sector of Lake Chad basin, the Lower, Middle, and Upper Benue Trough, Anambra basin, the Mid-Niger (Bida) basin, and the Sokoto basin.

Expectedly, the workshop is to be declared open by the Vice-Chancellor, Ahmadu Bello University, Prof. Kabiru Bala, with the Group Chief Executive Officer of the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited (NNPCL), Mele Koko Kyari, as the Special Guest of Honour.

The Director, Centre for Inland Basins Studies (CIBS), Prof. Umar Adamu Danbatta, who released the itinerary of the five-day workshop, assured that all was set for the event.

Nigerian Military Loyal, Committed To Democracy, Says Defence HQ

By; IBRAHIM ADAMU, Kaduna

Nigerian Armed forces over the weekend, debunked a report in some social media, suggesting that the military had received a request to effect a change in leadership of the country.

The request for coup report was described as twisted, false

and wicked in a statement on August 13, 2023, signed by Director Defence Information, Brigadier General Tukur Gusau.

"The Defence Headquarters is concerned about a false and disturbing social media reports twisted to state that the Armed Forces of Nigeria (AFN) received request to effect

change of leadership in the country.

"We want to use this opportunity to reiterate that the AFN never received nor made such declaration at any time to anyone or any group. We believe this statement came from those who do not wish the nation well. It is surely the wicked imagination of a few

who are not happy with the progress and well-being of our dear country.

"The AFN is very comfortable with democracy and remain loyal to the President, Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria His Excellency President Bola Ahmed Tinubu GCFR.

"The military is always willing and ready to defend the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

"We urge those peddling such falsehood to desist from such or face the law. The Military and indeed other security agencies are on the look out for these agents of doom," the statement added.

Salihijo Transforming The Rural Electrification Agency With Unprecedented Achievements

By; TOM GARBA

About three years ago, when the Managing Director (MD) of the Rural Electrification Agency (REA), Engr. Ahmad Salihijo Ahmad was appointed, not many would believe that the seemingly moribund federal government organization can get the fastest development reawakening because of the young looks of the present MD.

Many have concluded that former President Muhammadu Buhari gave Ahmad the appointment for obvious reasons of his close relationship with the family, but now the wailers and those expecting nothing much from the agency are praising the astute managing director for performing beyond expectations.

Salihijo has not disappointed, especially by upholding the vision of the REA established by an Act, which is to be an organization providing excellent electricity services and administration to Nigerian rural communities.

Salihijo was appointed the Managing Director of REA on 31st December 2019, by this appointment he is in charge of the Agency with the constitutional mandate to electrify Nigerian rural communities.

On assumption of office, he hit the ground running by unveiling the blueprint of his administration and articulating them in a short long-term agenda. Chief among them is to fight and eradicate corruption by making sure contractors at the site must work within agreed specifications, strategic engagement with the stakeholders, relationship building, reorientation of the mindset of people, creation of relationship feedback base with communities and the agency amongst others.

So far he has been able to achieve these laudable objectives through his purposeful and staff centered policies.

During the period under review, the REA MD has been able to rekindle hope and trust in the Agency and this has engendered stakeholders' respect and confidence in the Commission.

He has ensured that staff have been embarking on training and retreat unhindered, allowances of staff are paid as at when due and promotion of staff has been regular under his leadership

For the first time since the establishment of the REA, the MD normally toured all states to make sure ongoing work is done according to specification and meets agency's standard.

Against all odds, Salihijo brought sanity in the agency. He maintained a policy of integrity that is sharpening and growing well the REA that will span to generation because of the love he has for the country.

The patriotism in Salihijo has made him one of the greatest achievers since the formation of REA in the last three years. He has an unflinching commitment



Engr. Ahmad Salihijo Ahmad

to ensuring the agency work by providing electricity in many rural communities despite the challenges and despite lack of operational funds.

Recently the REA Managing Director welcomed the world Bank President Ajay Banga who Visited Nigeria To Support Energy Access And Economic Development.

Because of what Salihijo is doing in REA Ajay during his visit reaffirmed support for the bank's aspirations "for Nigerians to live with dignity in a prosperous and climate-resilient Africa".

Ajay stated World's bank commitment to partner with Nigeria by supporting the country with expertise and knowledge and their experience from many markets. Assured to maintain a robust friendship and partnership not just with their money, but with their minds and their hearts.

Discussion on crucial role electricity plays in the country's economic

development. The World Bank notes that 85 million Nigerians lack access to electricity, and if left unaddressed, this figure is expected to rise to 94 million by 2030.

This where Ahmad Salihijo revealed REA readiness to be part of the World's Bank project in Nigeria and joined Banga, Ogunbiyi, and other stakeholders on a visit to Petti Village in Abuja, on Saturday. They have "through the World Bank-funded Nigeria Electrification Project, deployed a 60 [kilowatt peak] KwP solar mini-grid, closing the energy gap in this vibrant, agrarian community". The World Bank tweeted it aims "to assist in funding the construction of 1,000 mini solar power grids in partnership with the Nigerian government and the private sector".

The Young and visionary MD once said that : "We need to see a lot more participation with an emphasis on implementation. This we can achieve by

being innovative and focused".

Ahmad's vision is to also provide solar powering systems to support Mobile classroom project of organisations and foundation having projects in different communities across the country.

The REA's mandate under Ahmad of improving the quality of life and economic opportunities for unserved and underserved communities contributing to five Sustainable Development Goals has been one of his focused agenda.

Desirous to change the narratives, he designed a template that will guide the agency implement projects in all the local government area councils in the country. The template is receiving a tremendous boost because the stakeholders and the federal government are people-oriented.

The Executive Management Director has also been consulting experts, consultants and senior government officials. It is worthy of note that for the first time paid a visit to the Vice President, Senator Kashim Shettima, GCON, to extend courtesies and provide an update on the advancements within the nation's renewable energy sector.

During the meeting, the CEO presented a comprehensive overview of REA's strategic initiatives, notable achievements in Nigeria's

off-grid renewable energy sector, and outlined the agency's proposed measures to mitigate the impacts of the recent removal of fuel subsidy.

Obviously, the giant strides of REA Executive Director who is regarded as a core developer of Human and bundle of Human services are obvious and worthy of commendation. Indeed, Ahmad has been able to enthrone purposeful and visionary leadership within these three years in the saddle.

He is leaving an indelible mark in the sands of time as far as REA is concerned, just within three years in the saddle. Raise the cup and clink the glasses for this astute administrator.

Tom Garba is a journalist, a political analyst, and an opinion writer. He writes from Yola-Adamawa State, and he can be reached via, tomgarba5@gmail.com and 08172570959

Over 500,000 Poor Citizens To Benefit From Kaduna Housing Scheme - Uba Sani

By; FUNMI ADERINTO, Kaduna

Kaduna State Governor, Senator Uba Sani yesterday, said that Qatar Sanabil Project (a mass housing project for low income earners) is a multi million dollar project that will impact positively on the lives of over 500,000 poor underserved and vulnerable citizens of Kaduna State.

Governor Uba Sani expressed this at the site of the project groundbreaking of the Qatar Sanabil Project (a mass housing project for low income earners) held at Millennium City, in Kaduna.

Senator Uba Sani, joined by the Qatar Ambassador to Nigeria, H.E Dr. Ali Bin Ghanem Al-Hajri, said, "It is a great pleasure for me to be here to witness and perform the groundbreaking of the Qatar Sanabil Project in Kaduna".

He said, "this ceremony marks a significant milestone in our collective determination to realize this project that will provide mass housing for the less privileged, as well as the construction of an Economic City in Kaduna.

According to him, "Our sincere appreciation to the Embassy of State of Qatar and Qatar Charity for matching their words with actions. The story of Qatar Charity is deeply inspiring. It is a story of kindness, empathy and compassion."

He pointed out that, "A group of Qatari philanthropists, alarmed by the rising number of children orphaned by wars and conflicts in neighbouring countries, came together to form a community initiative called 'The Committee of Qatar for Orphan Sponsorship.'

"Eight years later, an International NGO was set up under the name 'Qatar Charity' to scale up the initiative, broaden its range of activities and augment its outreach. Almost four decades later, Qatar Charity has grown to become one of the largest humanitarian and development organizations in the world.

"This groundbreaking ceremony is a clear indication that our administration's drive for investments in order to revitalize the economy of the state is beginning to yield results. Our vision is to make Kaduna the leading economic hub in the North.

"We want to create a business cluster that will drive competition in the Northern Region. Kaduna State is rich in natural and human resources.

"It is the gateway to many parts

of Nigeria. It is a transportation hub. The immediate past government worked assiduously to upgrade the infrastructure in the state. We are determined to build on that legacy to fast track the economic development of the state.

"The Economic City will provide world class infrastructure and make Kaduna a reference point in modern and affordable accommodation, adequate security and conducive atmosphere for business activities.

"The Economic City will facilitate international trade. It will serve as a platform for entrepreneurs and traders. It will help harness product value chain opportunities and improve economic growth.

"In the Economic City, there will be houses for the poor, clinics, shops, poultry farms, farmlands for rainy season and irrigation farming."

Governor Uba Sani further said, "The Mass Housing Project for the less privileged is a major contribution towards putting roofs over the heads of the poor, underserved and vulnerable in our state. This will go a long way in addressing a major gap in our Interventions in the Housing Sector over the years.

"Other empowerment programmes that the poor, underserved and vulnerable in Kaduna State will benefit from Qatar Charity include: scholarships for orphans and children of the poor, distribution of sewing machines, welding machines, irrigation pumping machines, salon kits, and drilling of hundreds of boreholes across the 23 local government areas of Kaduna State.

"The Qatar Sanabil Project is a multi-million dollar project that will impact positively on the lives of over 500,000 poor, underserved and vulnerable citizens of Kaduna State.

"The Kaduna State Government will give Qatar Charity all the support it needs to accomplish these two important projects.

"I call on other investors to avail themselves of the opportunities existing in our dear State. The incentives are very attractive. Our people are welcoming. Our Ease of Doing Business is second to none in Nigeria. Our doors are wide for genuine investors.

"It is now my honour and privilege to perform the groundbreaking of the Economic City and mass housing project for the less privileged.

"I thank you all for your participation in this groundbreaking ceremony."



The FIRS's Tax Collection Revolution

By: SALISU NA'INNA DAMBATTA

It is akin to a revolution: welcome to the big paradigm shift in Nigeria's tax collection. The shift is from consistently low, inadequate and below targeted tax collection to a record-setting collection of N10.1 trillion in 2022. And the trend of raking in more revenue to finance people-oriented projects continues.

Since his appointment as the Executive Chairman of the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) on 9th December, 2019, the country has witnessed and benefitted from his expertise in tax matters. This is unsurprising given his professional and career pedigree. As immediate past Chairman of the African Tax Administrators Forum (ATAF), Mr. Nami led the birth of a consciousness in the continent that technology was the future of taxation. He has carried that philosophy and campaign to the Commonwealth Association of Tax Administrators (CATA), where he has been President since 2021.

The Bayero University Kano graduate, Nami is a trained and skillful Tax, Accounting and Management Professional with high qualifications and professional practicing licences from relevant professional bodies. He has been in the business of Auditing, Tax Management and Advisory Management Services to diverse clients in the Banking, Manufacturing, Services, Public Sector and Non-Profit Organisations for around three decades.

He has transformed the revenue collection for Nigeria by deploying his vast experience, deep knowledge and patriotism to bear on his role as Chairman of the FIRS and Joint Tax Board.

The improved tax collection in the country since his assumption of office as Chairman of the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) to date is evidenced in Tax Statistics/Report the institution has released from 2020 to date.

Whereas the FIRS raked in N10.1 trillion in 2022, the highest ever so far; the same Service could only generate N3,741.7574 trillion out of a modest target total revenue of N4,572.2090 trillion in 2015. The total collection for 2015 at N3.714 trillion was the equivalent of slightly over one third of the 2022 collection.

Three years later in 2018, the revenue target for the FIRS was N6,747.0344 trillion. However, that target proved ambitious as the Service was able to generate only N5,320.8914 trillion that year. The total revenue for 2018 was just above half of the N10.1 trillion generated by Muhammadu Buhari and his team in 2022.

While briefing the National Economic Council (NEC) recently, the top tax man attributed the high tax collection success in the first half year to three factors



namely: improved voluntary tax compliance by taxpayers; the continued improvement of automation of tax administration processes, including the updated VAT filing processes; and strong engagement with stakeholders in both the formal and informal sectors of the economy.

He assured the NEC that, "the

performance in the second half of the year would be better considering the continuing improvement to our tax administration processes."

It is heartwarming that the January to June 2023 tax collected in the sum of N5.5 trillion is more than the entire collection of N5.320 trillion in 2018.

Also the N5.5 trillion was more than the

target of N5.3 trillion set for the first six months of this year. And the FIRS joyfully celebrated it as the largest tax collected for any six months since tax collection started in Nigeria.

Muhammad Nami disclosed that the non-oil sector contributed more revenue than the oil sector, "Tax revenue collected from the oil sector from January to June 2023 stood at N1.73 trillion, as against a target of N2.3 trillion; while non-oil tax collection stood at N3.76 trillion, as against a target of N2.98 trillion."

It is important to remember that he was appointed Chairman FIRS in December 2019. In that year, the revenue target was N8,802.3860 trillion. But the total collection for that year was below six trillion: it was N5,261.9163 trillion. There was a shortfall of over N3.5 trillion.

In 2020 his first full year in office, FIRS collected N4.95 trillion a shade below the target of N5,076.8518, at 98 per cent performance. It was achieved amidst a recession, the COVID-19 worldwide economic shutdown, low oil revenue and the economic disruptions caused by the EndSARS protests.

The NBS affirmed that the FIRS collected N6.405 trillion in 2021. The target for that year was N6.401 trillion. It was a 101 per cent success story. But it was triumphantly dwarfed by the N10.1 trillion best-ever collection so far achieved in 2022.

Salisu Na'inna Dambatta wrote from Dambatta town.

"It is heartwarming that the January to June 2023 tax collected in the sum of N5.5 trillion is more than the entire collection of N5.320 trillion in 2018."

Questioning The Religious Representation Of Tinubu

By; Ambassador ALIYU BIN ABBAS

The concern surrounding our President's actions has transformed him into a national security topic of utmost importance, especially when his decisions seem to pit the very region that supported him against their own people, all in the pursuit

of marching on Niger. Equally worrisome is the potential of his actions to sow discord within the armed forces - an entity he commands - and which comprises individuals of both Islam and Christianity.

It is worth considering the implications of a Muslim-Muslim ticket, led by the President and his



Ambassador Aliyu Bin Abbas



Tinubu

vice, despite the President having a Christian spouse. This raises questions about his comfort level with having a Christian in a leadership role. Given the contentious landscape of Nigeria's official religions, one must acknowledge that adherents of both Islam and Christianity, including those in the armed forces, might feel disregarded if leadership choices fail to reflect a balanced representation of these two pivotal religions.

The imperative here is to maintain a harmonious equilibrium, acknowledging the sensitivities and interests of both official religions in Nigeria, even within the Armed Forces. This delicate balance is crucial when discussing matters of leadership options and decisions, particularly when they involve our country's national security.

This status quo does not have to persist; room for improvement exists. Deliberate consideration and thoughtful decision-making are essential to ensure that leadership choices not only acknowledge the diversity within our society but also respect the constitutional rights and beliefs of every citizen.

This reflections are offered in the hopes that our country's leadership will recognize the importance of embracing a united, balanced, and inclusive approach to matters of national significance. Only through such a mindset can we navigate the complex interplay of religion, politics, and governance, ensuring a stable and prosperous Nigeria for all.

Ambassador Aliyu Bin Abbas is the President of the National Youth Alliance



Worries Over Niger

By Safiya I. Dantiye

There is palpable tension that the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) would invade Niger Republic to restore President Mohamed Bazoum who was deposed by soldiers from the presidential guards on July 26, 2023. The coup leader, Abdourahamane Tchiani, who was the head of the presidential guards, is now the self-acclaimed leader of the military junta there.

As a result of this, the ECOWAS Authority and Heads of States and Government met on July 30, 2023 and issued a number of resolutions by sanctioning Niger, and gave the military junta a seven-day ultimatum to return power to President Bazoum. But by far what has caught the attention of almost everybody was the one about military intervention.

The Western countries seem keen to back ECOWAS led by President Tinubu which make some people worry and hope that Tinubu would tread carefully and not allow himself to be pushed into something he would regret. The military rulers of Mali and Burkina Faso have declared their support for the Niger military junta. They have visited Niger and said any military action against Niger was against them as well.

People are very worried that military intervention would worsen the situation and it is like a brother fighting his brother as some people from the northern part of the country don't really see Niger as a foreign country, but rather as an extension of Nigeria. They share the same language, religion and culture.

In fact, some years ago, I was listening to a radio where a professor in Niger was saying that the Hausa people had their origin in Niger.

Pictures and songs resurfaced emphasising the closeness between the two countries that one is bound to ask if indeed Nigeria is declaring a war on Niger.

There are scrambles to explain that the ultimatum was not issued by President Tinubu but by the ECOWAS. Some may however not agree with this assertion, as the President of Nigeria is the ECOWAS Chairman. Also, that 'Nigeria is ECOWAS' as some say, since it is the major funder of the organisation among other influential roles it plays.

Nigeria had cut off electricity to Niger among other economic sanctions to make the military junta feel the squeeze, but unfortunately for the ECOWAS, instead

they are rallying people about defending their country against external aggression. Religious organisations and others are prevailing on President Tinubu not to toe the line of war but to use diplomacy, especially since Nigeria is battling its internal monsters of insecurity.

It is no doubt that military coups have become outdated and should not be brought back in the name of fighting corruption and so on, only for the military to keep postponing their stay in power or to be elected 'civilian' presidents. As it is in the West African sub-region, there are military rulers in Mali, Burkina Faso and Guinea

Even though ECOWAS should observe its protocols on such matters, some feel that we should not cry more than the bereaved by taking military action in order to restore democracy there.

Therefore, whatever the breach of the rules by a member country, war is not an option. Africa has many problems that hinder its development such as corruption that should be tackled head on.

As it is, Nigeria has many displaced persons chased away from their homes by bandits in the North West. If a military intervention happens in Niger, only God knows the Nigeriens that would run to Nigeria.

While it may be the ECOWAS decision, Nigeria would carry the burden coupled with many internally displaced persons that it cannot cater for, it would be a huge cost that the Nigerian economy cannot afford.

The Western countries seem keen to back ECOWAS led by President Tinubu which make some people worry and hope that Tinubu would tread carefully and not allow himself to be pushed into something he would regret. The military rulers of Mali and Burkina Faso have declared their support for the Niger military junta. They have visited Niger and said any military action against Niger was against them as well.

In case of a war, it would not be carried out in the UK or the US. The death, devastation, displacement and the criminality that would follow will all be here in Africa, in Niger and Nigeria.

Therefore, whatever the breach of the rules by a member country, war is not an option. Africa has many problems that hinder its development such as corruption that should be tackled head on.

We don't need wars that we would not know when they would end and the catastrophe they would bring!

Katsina Gov Signs 8 Security Challenges Containment Orders Into Law

By: SULAIMAN AHMED MISAU, Katsina

Governor Dikko Umaru Radda of Katsina State has signed Eight Security Challenges Containment Order.

They include, the ban of lorries, trucks carrying firewood and cattle from the forest; suspension of the sale of cattle at the markets of Danmusa, Kankara, Batsari, Faskari and Sabuwa; clearance on the transportation of cattle from Katsina State to any state in the country must be thought through the district village or ward head as the case may be, and the ban on the riding of unregistered Keke-NAPEP tricycles, motorcycles and high-speed motorcycle (popularly known as Boko Haram) throughout the state.

Similarly, the order of total ban on carrying more than four persons in tricycles; all motorists and cyclists are ordered to not later than August 31, 2023, ensure registering their vehicles, failure to do so will amount for committing an offence, re-enforcement of the the total ban on the sale of petrol in jerrycans at filling stations, any person who contravenes to provision of this order commits an offence punishable under Section 114 of the Penal Code Law.

According to the governor, the order was made in the interest of security and public safety

Governor Dikko Umaru Radda charged people of the state to ensure strict compliance. warning that, any person that default the order would be arrested.



From left, Principal Consultant, Peculiar People Management, Mr. Olamide Ajomale, Osun State SSG, Hon Teslim Igbalaye, Osun State Governor, Senator Ademola Adeleke, Osun State Deputy Governor, Prince Kola Adewusi, Mrs. Dela Omatsola and Osun State Commissioner for Commerce and Industry, Revd Bunmi Jenyo at the leadership retreat for executive of Osun State Government held at the Laim Hotel, Osogbo. **Photo: AKINOLAARIYO**

Ebonyi Deputy Speaker Calls For Synergy With Govt

By: MKPUMA ENYINNA, Abakaliki

The Deputy Speaker of the Ebonyi State House of Assembly, Rt. Hon. Comrade Chinedu Onah has implored the people of the state to ensure stepping down the various programmes and policies of the state government down to the hinterlands for such programmes to have the desired positive effects.

Speaking to the leaders and delegates of Ngbojeogu Leaders Council who paid him a solidarity visit at the Assembly Complex, Rt. Hon. Chinedu Onah maintained that it is the duty of all and sundry to ensure tranquil atmosphere at their domain for development to take place because according to the sayings, peace brings about development.

The State Deputy Chief Lawmaker appreciated the Ngbojeogu leaders council for the visit adding that he always remember all his electioneering promises to represent and help develop not only the Ngbo clan but the entire Ebonyi State and he is still on the same page.

Rt. Hon. Comrade Onah used the opportunity to strongly condemn the attack on the Neighbourhood Watch Commander in Ohaukwu Local Government Area and urged the Ngbojeogu Leaders Council, as the apex body supervising the activities in Ngbo clan to use all their machineries in conjunction with all relevant authorities to fish out the perpetrators of the dastard act.

Earlier, the President of Ngbojeogu Leaders

Council, Dr. Okey C. Okey told the Deputy Speaker that apart from good representation, he should seek for ways of liaising with well meaning sons and daughters of Ngbo clan to promote ideals and objectives that would make Ngbo clan greater.

He congratulated the Deputy Speaker for the amiable position he occupied in the State Assembly and pledged the continued supports of the Ngbojeogu Leaders Council for the present administration under Rt. Hon. Chief Francis Ogbonna Nwifuru.

In a similar development, the National Association of Ebonyi North Students led by its President, Comrade Collins Nduhuisi Ogbonna has paid a courtesy visit to the Deputy Speaker urging him to continue with his non-discriminative approach adding that in no distant time, the Deputy Speaker should help them to address some problems confronting them which include the registration of the Association, payment of indigent students' school fees among others.

Responding, the Deputy Speaker, Rt. Hon. Chinedu Onah implored them to be studious and shun act inimical to their studies.

He promised to partner the association in ensuring the welfare of the students and equally ensure that the association is registered.

Comrade Onah thanked them on behalf of the Speaker of the Ebonyi State House of Assembly, Rt. Hon. Chief Moses Ije Odunwa for the courtesy visit.

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ADVERT RATES FROM JANUARY 1, 2022

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

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- All adverts are expected to be prepaid in cash or bank draft in favour of New Nigerian Newspaper's Limited.
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- 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.
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TECHNICAL DATA

6 COLUMNS

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

POLITICAL RATE

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

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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

Unity For Development: Supporting Executive Governor Of Niger State, Mohammed Umar Bago In Ongoing Projects

By; MUSA ABUBAKAR MAI-BABBANALJIHU

Good and inclusive governance requires that all hands are deck for the yearnings and aspiration by the governed and for the needed development to take place in every civilized society, citizens are duty bound to be part of the development by way of obligation and to respect the constituted authority of the land, irrespective of what views, religious and party affiliations and support the government of the day, by providing constructive criticism and proffer solutions for the good of all and sundry.

This is the story of our dear Niger State. It is not taboo for a state like ours to have the needed development and infrastructure as seen in other states of the federation, considering immense natural resources in the state.

Interestingly, Nigerlites are apparently in a hurry to see giants strides or score cards of His Excellency, Rt. Hon. Mohammed Umaru Bago, the Executive Governor of Niger State, just few months into his administration. It is quite realizable based on his blueprint for the possibility of the new Niger State, with the vigour and rejuvenation displayed by signing of contractual works billed to take place in the state, "as any good weekend is seen and felt from Thursday," a Hausa adage' says.

As things are presently, Nigerlites can be rest assured that Niger State is indeed in good hands, led by His Excellency, Rt. Hon. Mohammed Umaru Bago, the Executive Governor of the state.

His Excellency shouldn't be alone in his quest for a better Niger State, the royal fathers, traditional and religious leaders are not left out. Even the two confirmed ministerial nominees of Distinguished Senator Abdullahi Sahabi and the business mogul, Alhaji Mohammed Idris Malagi are men of intrinsic worth, who should be available at all times, providing needed ideas and support for the state modernization, which is anticipated after a long period of time.

My heart bleeds each time I visit any state younger than Niger as a political aficionado and development enthusiast.

Hence, we can provide the needed support in anyway humanly possible. I will support this administration as an expert in natural resources and tourism, amongst other things.

It is pertinent and incumbent upon me that, I am pleased to encourage the fellow youths in Chanchaga, my immediate constituency, all the senatorial districts of Niger State of our alloyed support for the administration of His Excellency, Rt. Hon. Mohammed Umaru Bago, the Executive Governor, driven by the shared aspirations we hold for our beloved state's progress and development.

Bago has shown purposeful leadership since his emergence as governor our dear Niger State. Our state is undergoing a



Governor Bago

remarkable transformation, thanks to the ongoing developmental projects initiated by the present government, which need support at this very point in time in the annals of the state.

As a passionate and lover of good governance, I strongly believe that our collective support and involvement in these projects can accelerate the positive change we wish to see in our dear state.

The progress that we desire is not merely a responsibility of the government alone, but a collective effort that requires active participation from us all, most especially the youths, the torchbearers of tomorrow.

The present government's commitment to infrastructure in education, healthcare, and job creation is evident in the

numerous projects underway. These projects have the potentials to not only enhance our quality of life, but also open new avenues of opportunity for us and the generations to come.

By rallying behind these initiatives, we can make a significant impact on our state's growth trajectory. Our support can take various forms, from spreading awareness about these projects within our circles, to participating in community-driven activities that complement the ongoing efforts. Whether it's volunteering for community clean-ups, organizing workshops, or even just being ambassadors for change, as every contribution counts.

Moreover, our unity in this endeavour can

send a strong message to our leaders that we are actively investing in the future of our state. Through our actions, we can foster a sense of ownership and pride in our community, leading to sustained progress and development.

I invite you to join me in this noble cause, a cause that transcends political affiliations and personal interests. Let us come together as a force for positive and progressive minded change, setting pace for others to follow.

I believe that by working hand-in-hand with the government, we can make Niger State a shining example of development, prosperity, and unity.

Let us build a legacy that future generations will look up to with admiration and gratitude. Together, we can transform challenges into opportunities and aspirations into accomplishments.

If you share this vision and wish to contribute to the ongoing developmental projects in Niger State, please feel free to reach out to me. Your ideas, energy, and commitment are invaluable assets to our cause.

Thank you for taking the time to read this piece. Let's stand united for a brighter, more prosperous Niger State.

Musa Abubakar Mai-Babban Aljihu, sent in from Minna, Niger State and can be reached via SMS on 07044116658

"As a passionate and lover of good governance, I strongly believe that our collective support and involvement in these projects can accelerate the positive change we wish to see in our dear state."

Niger Coup: Defending Democracy or Combating French Neo-colonialism

By Jibrin Ibrahim

THE ECOWAS emergency summit yesterday started well. Chairman Bola Tinubu, in his opening remarks, called for a focus on the use of diplomatic channels and negotiations. As I was writing this column to commend the new approach, news broke out that ECOWAS has ordered its standby force to restore constitutional order in Niger Republic.

There is a rising campaign, significantly facilitated by the Russian Wagner Group, that opposition to military rule is tantamount to supporting French and American imperialism. The narrative is presenting ECOWAS and Nigeria as the new lap dogs of French and American imperialism. Nigeria has not changed its position of support for democracy protection based on the ECOWAS Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance. These are our shared values which Nigeria and ECOWAS are insisting must be respected. The President of ECOWAS, Omar Aliou Touray, made the declaration while reading the resolutions of the meeting. He also called on the African Union, partner countries and institutions to support the resolution taken by the sub-regional body. ECOWAS condemned the continuous detention of President Mohamed Bazoum and his family members. It said all said made to dialogue with Niger Republic military junta have been defiantly rejected by coup leaders as they directed the committee of the Chiefs of Defence Staff to activate the ECOWAS stand-by force with all its elements immediately to restore constitutional order in the Republic of Niger. The path taken is that of escalation.

Niger Republic has already been hit by the most severe sanctions regime in the history of the region. Financial transactions have been blocked, the country is very dependent on food imports especially from Nigeria and that too has been blocked as is the case with drugs. The cut of electricity supply from Nigeria, breaking a treaty obligation, has had a devastating effect and hospitals cannot do operations as patients die. The long history of fraternal relations between Nigeria and Niger is unravelling within one week.

There is no surprise that a significant part of public opinion in Niger Republic is upset with Nigeria over the said threat of armed restoration of democratic order using the ECOWAS Standby Force. The Nigeriens are screaming at the top of their voices that this historical juncture is for the dismantling of French neo-colonialism not democracy.

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Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance. These are our shared values which Nigeria and ECOWAS are insisting must be respected. Nigeria should be concerned about the orchestrated campaign in the social and traditional media portraying Nigeria in a negative light as an agent of France and the United States. The strong presence of French, American, and to a lesser extent, Italian security personnel and assets, including a large US drone base, creates a situation that could easily transform an intervention for the restoration of democracy into a complex proxy war fought out by foreign interests engaged in the new geopolitical repositioning of world powers.

Nigeria may suffer considerably if Niger withdraws its role as buffer keeping out violent extremists from the Sahel. Cooperation with them on the Multinational Joint Task Force against Boko Haram would also suffer. I had hoped that the warm reception the putschists offered Khalifa Muhammadu Sanusi II, when he engaged in Track 2 diplomacy on Wednesday would have opened doors which Nigeria and ECOWAS would have reciprocated by rolling back some of the most severe sanctions affecting the supply of electricity, food and drugs so that dialogue and the search for a way forward can start in earnest. Reverting to the threat of the use of force will only make them more stubborn. The people in Niger are focusing on the immediate imperative of liberation from French imperial stranglehold and were expecting their friends and neighbours to be supportive.

We published an open letter to President Tinubu yesterday pointing out that Nigeria has high stakes on this matter because Niger is a very dear, brotherly and supportive neighbour and its people and measures taken should not be allowed to harm the Nigerien people. The cutting off of electricity supply to Niger, breaking a longstanding treaty obligation, may ultimately harm our national interest especially within the perspective of the Kandadji dam currently under construction by the Nigerien Government. The apparent rising wave of popular support for the putschists might create a situation in which the role of Nigeria is seen as being at variance with the interest of the Nigerien people and in support of external interests.

France has been the most malevolent of colonial powers that is not ready to give up control even after seventy years of "independence." Its Francafric policy has been known for its exploitative systems designed to profit from African resources, using pressure, capital, and frequently outright force to maintain control over its former empire. As a result, many African states, including Niger, continue to face poverty and underdevelopment. The time for revolt has come. France has blatantly refused to allow its colonies establish their own currencies, so its tactics are not even

hidden. Francophone Africa should however realise that it would be regressing if it sacrifices democracy to fight neo-colonialism. We require both freedom and democracy.

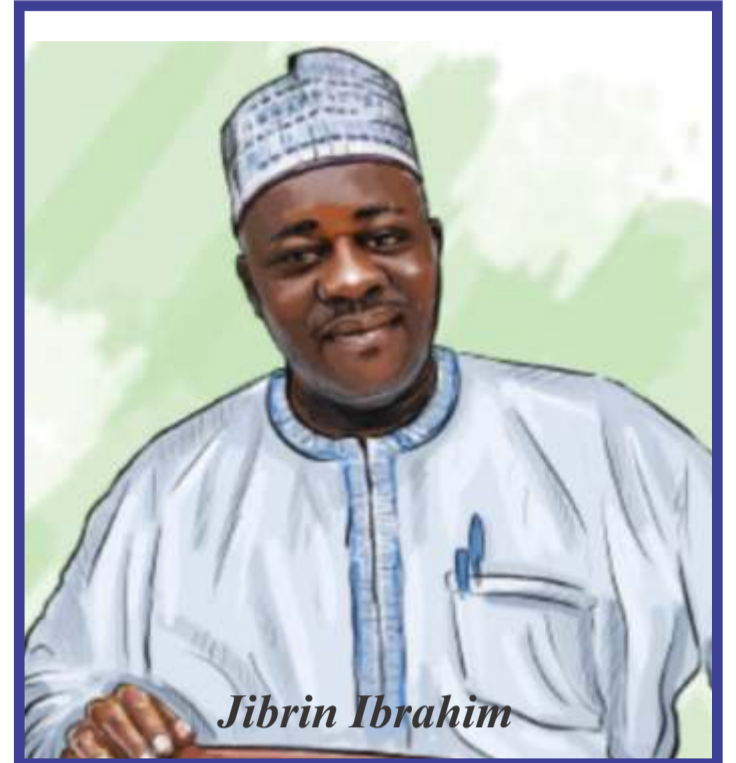
Nigeria should be concerned about the orchestrated campaign in the social and traditional media portraying Nigeria in a negative light as an agent of France and the United States. The strong presence of French, American, and to a lesser extent, Italian security personnel and assets, including a large US drone base, creates a situation that could easily transform an intervention for the restoration of democracy into a complex proxy war fought out by foreign interests engaged in the new geopolitical repositioning of world powers.

In this regard, the current security challenges of insecurity around the Boko Haram insurgency, farmer-herder conflicts, banditry and mass kidnapping might all be exacerbated as the flow of arms, violent extremism and armed banditry spread and deepen in our sub-region. It is therefore important that as a Nation, we align our approach to the restoration of democracy in Niger to our national interests.

In line with Tinubu's opening speech yesterday, we should have created conditions for the restoration of Track 1 as well as Track 2 diplomacy by making a gesture to the putschists through measures such as the withdrawal of the threat of use of force and cutting back at the most severe sanctions that affect the people. We should be providing assurances to the Nigerien people of Nigeria's commitment to maintaining friendship and fraternal relations with the government and people of Niger.

Over the years, France has demonstrated a pattern of intervening militarily – over 50 times since 1960 – in African countries to secure governments that remain compliant with French economic interests, particularly related to the continued use of the CFA Franc. The reality is that France has been dependent on Africa for its status as a world power for more than a century. It has imposed treaties that enslave them to France. As they combat the French, they should realise that we their ECOWAS neighbours are their friends who want them to enjoy freedom from France and democratic rights in the conduct of their affairs.

Nigeria also needs to improve its strategic communication showing actions undertaken are in tandem with our long-standing commitment to the protection and consolidation of democracy within



Jibrin Ibrahim

Nigeria, ECOWAS and Africa.

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Finally, Niger should remember that it has a lot of vulnerabilities and has benefitted enormously from support from Nigeria over the years. They should be aware that Wagner might make promises but its interest is also to exploit their mineral resources. It has to be less recalcitrant if a way forward is to be found.

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

Nigeria To Participate In Africa Women's Youth Handball Championship In September

By: AYO OJEDOKUN, Lagos

After successfully winning the IHF Women's Trophy Africa Continental Phase title, the Nigeria under 18 women handball team will participate in the 19 Africa Women's Youth Nations Championship which will

hold in Monastir, Tunisia from the 16th to the 23rd of September 2023.

In a brief draw ceremony held in Abidjan, Ivory Coast on Monday, Nigeria were drawn in group A alongside Guinea, Algeria and two times champion Tunisia. Group B has defending champion and the

most successful team in the championship with four titles, Egypt, three time finalist Angola, D.R Congo and Morocco.

Nigeria will be participating for the first time in the championship since they came second in the very first edition in the year 2000 in Abidjan, Ivory Coast and they will hope to take the form of the IHF Women's

Trophy into the Africa championship which serves as qualifiers for the 2024 IHF Women's Youth World Handball Championship.

Nigeria has never qualified for the world championship and this is an opportunity for the country to make history.



Medals, Gifts Galore For Victorious Kiddies, Others As 6th CCSF Invitational Tournament Ends

By: JACOB ONJEWU
DICKSON

Octagon TKD have emerged winners of the 6th edition of the Chika Chukwumerije Sports Foundation (CCSF) Invitational Taekwondo Open in Abuja.

The event which was held at Moshood Abiola National Stadium, Package B on Saturday, saw Octagon TKD top with 26 medals, including eight gold, seven silver and 11 bronze medals.

FCT-based Eagle TKD came second with five gold, six silver and 10 bronze medals.

While FCT came away with two gold medals to settle for the third position and Alamo TKD and Martial Arts finished fourth with one silver medal.

Niger's Prestis TKD was the only invited club that did not register on the medal table.

FCT's Uneh Unique clinched the female athlete of the tournament award, while the male athlete of the tournament award went to Octagon TKD's Jideofor Chukwumerije.

Chukwumerije's explosive final with Achu Franco of Alamo TKD and Martial Arts was adjudged the fight of the tournament.

A total of 82 competitors competed in 15 categories across kiddies, cadets and juniors levels.

In the kiddies male category (for four years), Fehintoluwa Fasominu of Octagon TKD took gold, while Zayd Idris also of Octagon TKD settled for silver.

In the kiddies male (for five to six years), Chukwuka Anafulu of Octagon TKD claimed the gold,



while Timi Tilley-Gyado also of Octagon TKD, took silver.

Chukwuemeka Anafulu and Mohammed Gwamna both of Octagon TKD settled for the bronze medal.

In the kiddies male (for seven to eight years), Jideofor Chukwumerije of Octagon TKD won gold, while Franco Achu of Alamo TKD and Martial Arts took the silver.

The duo of Joseph Ameh and Eze Anekwe of Eagle TKD settled for bronze.

In the kiddies female (five to six

years) category, Joanna Akpu of Octagon TKD won gold, while the silver went to Chimamanda Amaechi of Eagle TKD.

Michelle Ufot of Eagle TKD and Wuraola Dauda of Octagon TKD settled for bronze.

In the kiddies female category (for nine to 10 years), Serena Chukwumerije of Octagon TKD emerged winner, while Eniola Dauda also of Octagon TKD took home the silver medal.

Soteria Ihetuge and Paula Agbaya both of Eagle TKD settled for bronze.

The Cadet male category for 11 to 14 years (-37 kg) saw Brandon Agbaya and Kristian Akingboro both of Eagle TKD win the gold and silver medal respectively.

While Kelechukwu Ozuah and Brian Samuel-Abbas both of Eagle TKD settled for bronze.

Chijindum Chukwumerije of Octagon TKD emerged winner of the Cadet male category for 11 to 14 years (+ 61 kg).

Felix Akpu of Octagon TKD and Samuel Essien of Eagle TKD settled for silver and bronze respectively.

In the Cadet female category for 11 to 14 years (-47 kg), Maliaka Chukwumerije of Octagon TKD took the gold medal.

While Esther Ohaka and Esther Oduah both of Eagle TKD settled for the silver and bronze medal respectively.

In the juniors female for 15 to 17 years (-63 kg), Ituanya Obiefuna of FCT TKD won gold, while Ezimasife Okonji of Octagon TKD settled for silver.

CCSF founder and CEO, Chika Chukwumerije the foundation was totally committed to grassroots development of sport in the country, adding that the importance of fusing entertainment with sports cannot be overemphasised.

"The CCSF is a sports entertainment event that targets three things.

"We want to first and foremost

support grassroots sports development as well as raise awareness about the projects my foundation is involved in.

"The event also gives Nigerians an alternative to music, comedy and dance," he said.

The Beijing 2008 Olympic medalist added that his dream was to continue to fish out talents from the grassroots and raise more future Olympic champions in the country.

He noted that he was fully involved in the Tokyo Olympics 2020 where he personally supported and took one of the country's young athlete, Elizabeth Anyanacho, to compete.

"Getting the 21 year-old to compete at the games was a really tough journey for me and in 2021. I was also very involved in a lot of grassroots development projects.

"I am now fully focused on my foundation because I have a deep love for youth empowerment and sports development.

"We are going to focus on organising more sports entertainment events such as this and the next will be a very elaborate one in December.

"We want to also raise awareness and kick start an orphanage project to cater to underprivileged children," he said.



Thrills, Frills As CCSF Sports, Dance Show Delight Abuja Residents

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Beyond the competitive atmosphere, it was a moment to relax and enjoy unique ambience sportainment produced at the just concluded 6th Taekwondo invitational tournament staged by Chika Chukwumerije Sports Foundation (CCSF).

The sports event comprising Taekwondo, Table Tennis, Video Games, Bouncing Castle which metamorphosed to Dance galore on Saturday August 12, 2023 held inside Package B of the prestigious Moshood Abiola National stadium Abuja.

The weekend package full of fun and excitement kicked off with keep fit exercise amidst early morning downpour, before other sporting fiesta followed.

Later on, a known and celebrated dance group in the nation's capital triggered their usual "Dance Up" performance, a show that grinded the attention of both guests, athletes, parents and spectators who thronged the venue in large numbers.

Led by Gymnastics guru and tactician, Coach Tony Asuquo, the dance group performed in different colours, themes themed shades to the admiration of many with oozed thick but joyful applause.

Introducing his skillful team one after the other, Asuquo later told the gathering that candour the event gushed out was a bit of things to expect in subsequent editions.

Already, bigger sporting event, laced with variety of entertaining vibes is slated for December 2023.

"I tell you, we have what it takes to give everyone a feeling and experience that will stick a while. We don't just dance, we communicate and take all the stress and worries off you, because life shouldn't be about hustle and bustle.

"You don't need to just think of going to cinema, or visiting anywhere else. Here we give all in one package," he said.

He then commended the high level organisation of the events.

"I duff my cap for the first ever Taekwondo Olympian in Nigeria, Engr. Chika Chukwumerije. He is always coming out with something special always. He has been the big masquerade in Nigeria's sporting space and he has now produced another level with a mix of sports and entertainment options," he said.

On his part, Engr. Chika, founder and Chief Executive Officer CCSF said, "What you go and pay so much to get in form of entertainment, we have decided to give you even more free of charge. While you enjoy the vibes, you also have things like barbecue and other edibles to relax with."

Some of the people who shared their experiences including Mr. Patrick Idoko and Mrs. Ronke Ajibola said there were excited that they now have an answer to the kind of atmosphere they have been yearning for.

Commercial vendors who locked around with several goods and services said the events afforded them opportunity to engage in brisk sales which turned hugely profitable after all.

One of them, Ms. Winifred Orji, a chef and food dealer said, "I'm very happy that I didn't miss the opportunity to put smiles on the faces of people and in turn make good returns."



**Medals, Gifts Galore
For Victorious Kiddies,
Others As 6th CCSF
Invitational Tournament Ends**

Story on Page 22

Financial Inclusion Act: RAAF Organizes One-Day Programme For Rigasa Community

By: USMAN NASIDI, Kaduna.

In an effort to ensure proper awareness on the need for people to embrace the policy of Financial Inclusion Act enacted by the Kaduna State Government, the Rigasa Action and Awareness Forum (RAAF) has organized a one-day programme for the people of the community.

During the event held on Sunday at the Government Day Secondary School (GSS) Makarfi Rigasa, with the sole aim of orienting people of the community, the resource person, Ahmad Salisu explained that there's the need for people to embrace the policy with good faith to eradicate poverty.

Ahmed Salisu, who is an experienced banker with over 15 years experience both in Islamic Finance & conventional banking, disclosed that it's a welcome development that the RAAF found it worthy to inform its people of the need to be financially inclusive and it will go a long way in eradicating poverty and the people of Rigasa Community will be financially inclusive.

He added that, just like the word explains, financial and inclusion, they want people to be included in the finance, though it's not everyone that is inclusive in the non-formal sense, but once they are included financially, they want people to be included

formally, which is why the act was passed, hence that has been an issue that has been ongoing for the past 11 years because it started since 2012.

Ahmad said, "we want everyone to be formally financially inclusive, in the sense that they upgrade using formal ways so that they can have access to savings, have access to payment, have access to insurance and loans when the need arises.

"This policy was actually design to encourage the rural dwellers, especially the women to embrace the formal financial sector because they're actually exclusive and they lose a lot of opportunities. Now if they embrace this policy, they feed not only themselves, but their communities and it is hoped that poverty will be greatly minimized.

According to him, RAAF has really done well for themselves and the community which they represent, by ensuring that everyone in the community is financially literate and financially inclusive.

"We know how we suffer in poverty and we've the population and means to make sure we bring ourselves out of this poverty, and RAAF has gone a step further to ensure that it brings this knowledge to it community by creating awareness and what is required after this awareness is action just as the name indicate RAAF, so now that the people of



Rigasa are aware, it is hope that they will take action to be financially included to eradicate poverty in Rigasa community.

While responding, the Chairman RAAF Caretaker Committee, Yusuf Wada Muhammad, explained that they were told by some parties that the Kaduna State Government under the leadership of Senator Malam Uba Sani has enacted a law, Financial Inclusion Act, which is meant for individuals to be included in the financial regulations of the policy.

He added that, they came to realize that the same act has been on ground for so long, but they are not in the picture, therefore, they seek the consent of a resource person far away from

Zaria to come and inform them or enlighten them about it and how they are going to be included.

He said, "when he came, he gave us the insight of what financial inclusion act means because we don't even know that we also have capital to invest in other to benefit from the little money we have in the Banks, and we don't know that we can gain from it not until he came to inform us, so we are very much happy to be aware and we are trying our best to see that we inform our community, so that they too should be involved.

"This is not limited to those who have account at the Bank because those that do not have account in our conventional Banks, they can also have an e-

wallet from the various e-wallets that we have, because all they need is your phone number and an account can be opened for you in the e-wallet, then you can have access, while you can be included financially because they have various categories of inclusions depending on were you belong."

Yusuf Wada, advised the general public to try and understand actually what the policy is, what it means and how it will benefit all, while they shouldn't pull back but rather try to get themselves involved because almost majority percent of the people have account number, while in as much as they have an account, they can be included so that they can benefit.

Operation Safe Haven Troops Neutralise 2 Armed Robbers, Arrest 6 Gunrunners, Bandits, Kidnappers

**Recover several arms, ammunition*

By: BUHARI B. BELLO, Jos

As part of efforts to eradicate armed banditry and criminal elements from Operation Safe Haven (OPSH) Joint Operation Area, troops on Operation HAKORIN DAMISA IV have neutralised two armed robbers in Amere-Ududu of Tudun Wada village in Southern Kaduna.

They have also arrested 62 suspects in connection with armed banditry, gunrunning, kidnapping, armed robbery and other heinous crimes whilst recovering four locally fabricated rifles, two dane guns, 21 rounds of 7.62mm special, 13 rounds of 9mm, 11 cartridges, six AK 47 magazines, one pistol magazine, two cutlasses, one

knife, four mobile phones, two vehicles as well as two trailers conveying vandalized railway slippers from the arrested suspects.

The troops have also recovered 43 rustled cattle and 17 sheep, while a total number of 426 cattle were arrested for grazing on farmlands belonging to locals across Operation Safe Haven

Joint Operation Area, and were handed over to local authorities in the local government areas for settlement in liaison with the State Attorney General and Commissioner For Justice.

Furthermore, troops also rescued three kidnapped victims namely, Dr Bitrus Kim, Mr Ishaya Atang Yohanna and Malam Jibril Ibrahim who were among those

earlier kidnapped in Barkin Ladi area of Plateau State.

Meanwhile, OPSH has continued to appreciate the good people of Plateau, Bauchi and Kaduna states for the prompt dissemination of actionable information to enhance quick responses.