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You Have Abandoned Nigerians, National Youth Alliance Tells Atiku, Kwankwaso, Obi

■ Says they are watching them die socially, economically

By: JACOB ONJEWU
DICKSON

A frontline group, National Youth Alliance, has chided top presidential candidates in the 2023 Presidential elections, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, Former Vice President of Nigeria and People's Democratic Party (PDP), Senator Dr Rabiu Musa Kwankwaso, New Nigeria People's Party (NNPP) and Mr Peter Obi, Labour Party (LP) for allegedly

abandoning citizens of the country.

The group expressed this in an open letter signed by its National President, Ambassador Aliyu Bin Abbas, with a copy made available to our correspondent yesterday.

"We have been provoked, our patience abused, our sensitivity insulted and our loyalty taken for granted.

"Going forward, we resolved to ask the frontline personalities

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Benue Govt Demands
Retraction, Apology,
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Northerners Made
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Group Urges North
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To Back Reduction
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Transparency

UfitFly Boss Bags NANTA Award, Charges FG On Tourism Development, Says Oil Will Dry Up

By Ayo ojedokun Lagos

The team leader of the top destination management firm and owner of the UfitFly brand, Evang. Ajibola Ogunkeyede, has lamented the slow pace of development in the tourism and aviation sectors in Nigeria, reminding the Nigerian government that "oil will dry up one day, but tourism goes nowhere".

The UfitFly boss, who was one of the personalities that was honored recently with an award of excellence by the National Association of Nigeria Travel Agencies (NANTA) at the association's end-of-the-year dinner, disclosed this in a brief chat with newsmen.

Evang Ogunkeyede however called on the government to reconsider its stand on investment in the sectors, also described foreign exchange as the major challenge presently facing the travel and tour industry in Nigeria, noting that the Nigerian government has not tapped into the wealth inherent in the aviation and tourism industries.

"In terms of airlines, we are lagging behind, while we have not tapped into the tourism industry at all. But countries like the UK, America, Saudi Arabia, Israel and Jordan, among others, have continued to

make good revenue from tourism and aviation sectors, Nigeria is greatly missing out, because Nigeria hasn't explored 0.01% of the potentials of the money-spinning sectors."

"Nigeria still relies on oil while all other countries don't; even Saudi Arabia has abandoned oil, and is seriously exploring the tourism and aviation industries, hence, they are changing most of their laws. For Instance, women can now drive, while entertainment and football activities, among others, are now booming because they realized that oil will dry up but tourism goes nowhere."

Evang. Ogunkeyede, who commended the Minister of Aviation and Aerospace Development, Festus Keyamo for positive steps he has taken so far to reposition the sector, expressed optimism that he will follow up just the strides.

"Gone are the days that airline operators will just cancel flights and there will be no penalty. The Minister has mandated the airline operators to give notice before any flight cancellation."

The UfitFly boss however appealed to the Minister to work on making Nigeria Air functioning. This, he said, will become a



competitor to all other destination careers.

"There are cheaper flights in Cotonou, but in Nigeria, you'll pay triple what you pay there because we have no airline of our own, while all those foreign airlines are sucking us, and we call ourselves the 'Giant of Africa. We need to work out something as fast as possible."

"We can also co-partner with private airline operators like Air Peace, among others, to ensure our visibility all over the world. It will help our economy. This is not about oil or Agriculture, but Tourism, which will positively change the economy.

Meanwhile, Evang Ogunkeyede, noted that the tourism industry cannot thrive without the

help of the aviation sector. "And without the presidency working more on security and properly funding the tourism ministry, we will just be paying salaries.

"Can you see the way God has used me to change the Nigeria Pilgrimage Commission; today it is one of the government agencies to be reckoned with because we want to ensure that every Christian home has a JP. And we will achieve it in Jesus' name", he enthused.

The Chartered tour broker however commended the NANTA Western Zone's leadership and the event's organizing committee for recognizing his personality and his organization, as he prayed that NANTA will continue to grow higher and higher.

Hijrah Organisation Sensitizes 150 Chief Imams In Kwara On Policy Of Preaching

By ; BILIQIS OLAJUMOKE, Ilorin

The Hijrah Organisation of Nigeria, National Headquarters in Ilorin has sensitized about 150 Chief Imams across the 16 local government areas of Kwara State on policy of preaching.

The sensitization took place at the 2nd Workshop For Chief Imams in Offa Center for Arabic and Islamic Studies, Offa Local Government Area.

Dr Yusuf Jimoh, a lecturer at Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin, who spoke at the occasion, explained that Islamic preaching is a common means of religious promulgation and knowledge transfer.

He stated that Imams are responsible for pastoral guidance and communication between believers, and as a source of negotiating religious issues, power relations, and societal topics.

He charged the Islamic clerics to be actively involved in educational endeavours, imparting religious knowledge and promoting deeper understanding of Islam.

Dr Jimoh commended Imams who engage in charitable activities, working to address social issues and uplifting the less fortunate.

The lecture underscored the responsibilities of Chief Imams in guiding and setting examples for their congregations. Speaking Earlier, Prof. Badmas Yusuf the Chairman, Hijrah Islamic Organization, reminded the clerics that their primary responsibility is to lead the Muslim congregation in prayer.

"You are mandated by Islam to promote what is good and forbid what is evil. You are Shepard to the muslim Ummah and you must ensure that there is no segregation among the ummah," he said. Yusuf charged them to discharge their duties and responsibilities diligently with the fear of Allah and service to

humanity, so as to attain salvation on the day of judgement.

The New Nigerian Correspondent reports that over 150 Chief Imams and clerics from various mosques and organization attended the workshop.

The platform provided avenue for dialogue, knowledge-sharing, and fostering a sense of communal responsibility.

While interviewing the host of the event, Chief imam of Offa, Sheikh Muhyideen Salman Hussein, he expressed happiness, said that the presence of the imams made him happy and feel honoured.

"The imams that we are doing workshop for today are so valuable personality in the midst of my brothers in Islam.

"My advice to the chief Imam today is that, whatever they preach, they should follow it too and lead by example.

"Also, they should be kind hearted and humble so they can be able to talk to people in a subtle way," he said.

While speaking further, he said that the chief imams of each mosques should refrain from talking about the negative things in the community.

In his speech, he emphasized and gave his advice to Nigerian leaders that they should treat them as humans, animals.

"Whatever they do now for the people is the legacy, not what they are looting and keeping for themselves and their families. They should prioritize the happiness of the citizens by making life easy for everyone," he said.



Chief Imam Offa Mosque

Pfizer Committing \$1m Into Kaduna Health Sector - Uba Sani

By ; FUNMI ADERINTO, Kaduna

In a bid to deliver quality, timely and affordable healthcare services, Governor Uba Sani on Monday, had a strategic meeting with the top management team from Zipline on the launch of the biggest health

commodities distribution centre - the KD2 - in collaboration with the Kaduna State Government.

The team was led by its President and co-founder, Keller Rinaudo Clifton.

Discussions at the meeting centered on forging a long term

partnership that leverages on investment from development partners, one which will complement the state's investments in primary health care.

Uba Sani said, already, Pfizer is committing \$1million into the Kaduna health sector to help in the distribution

of health commodities, especially vaccines and blood.

"Zipline has been delivering on-demand medical commodities via drones where needed in due time, saving lives, reducing cost of inventory and serving health facilities across Kaduna State.

Kaduna PDP Suffers Setback As Chieftain Sardaunan Badarawa Dumps Party, Joins APC

By; IBRAHIM ADAMU, Kaduna

It was another setback for People's Democratic Party (PDP) in Kaduna State as a chieftain and former Senatorial contender in 2023 general election, Hon. Usman Ibrahim, known as Sardaunan Badarawa announced his decision to dump the party.

In a statement signed and made available to journalists in Kaduna, Sardaunan Badarawa said he was leaving the PDP due to lack of direction and mass exodus of key, loyal and committed members of the party to other parties, particularly APC.

He mentioned in specific terms giant strides and commitments of Governor Uba Sani at state and Tinubu's commendable performance at federal level in providing succour to the people after years of disaffection as reasons for severing ties with his former party.

He also stated that he was

encouraged by political allies in National Assembly and federal cabinet to bring forth his wealth of experience and ability of grassroots mobilization into the APC.

The politician noted that the most honourable and deserving thing to do in the interest of Kaduna State was to join hands with Uba Sani in quest to continue the good job he had began of putting smiles on faces of the masses.

"I have made wide and far-reaching consultations with important stakeholders and my supporters across the state and beyond before arriving at the decision to exit PDP for APC in our determination for growth and development of my Constituency, Kaduna Central and by extension the entire state.

"We can't shy away and pay nonchalant attitudes to the ongoing political development of Kaduna State where Governor Uba Sani has demonstrated a high stake in governance that has never

been seen in many, many years in our contemporary politics.

"The Governor has within a short time done so much for the people by positively touching their lives.

"The clamour for joining APC due to exemplary leadership of Uba Sani is overwhelming all over the state as more and more grassroots politicians are in large numbers entering the ruling party.

"Our political philosophy has been service to the people and ensuring their welfare is accorded attention wherever we find individuals with similar direction we do not hesitate to identify with them as We are doing with the present administration in Kaduna State.

"PDP is now peopled by self-centered individuals with no interest of the masses at hearts.

"I can't just stay back in a toxic place with no direction and clue on how to take the state forward, hence my decision to join the APC," he declared.



Peaceful Conduct Of Kogi Guber Polls Reflects Ododo's Acceptability, Says Bisi Akande

**Ododo'll fulfill campaign promises - Gov Bello*

By: ADEBOYEADO, Akure

Former Governor of Osun State, Chief Bisi Akande, has attributed the peaceful conduct of the November 11 governorship election in Kogi State to the acceptability of the party's candidate, Usman Ododo, among the people.

The chieftain of the All Progressives Congress (APC) said this while receiving the Governor of Kogi State, His Excellency, Yahaya Bello, CON, and the Governor-Elect, Ododo, at his Abuja residence yesterday. Baba Akande commended Governor Yahaya Bello for

overseeing the election, widely adjudged peaceful, and urged the governor-elect to stay true to his promises and commitment to the vehicle that conveyed him into office.

Governor Yahaya Bello, while speaking during the visit, assured citizens and party stakeholders that the state's governor-elect, Usman Ododo, would fulfill his campaign promises to the people with increased development in the state.

He also emphasised Ododo's commitment to delivering on electoral pledges. Governor Bello acknowledged the significant roles played by Baba

Akande before, during, and after the November 11 governorship election in Kogi State, where Ododo emerged as governor-elect.

Bello highlighted the peaceful, free and fair election, attested by both local and foreign observers and reiterated his unwavering trust in Ododo, citing his critical role as the former Auditor-General of Local Government, which provided insights into the grassroots' needs.

Bello confidently anticipated that Ododo would fulfill the promises of good governance and deliver democracy dividends to the people.

He said, "Your Excellency, remember when we were looking for ticket for our candidate for the November 11 governorship election in Kogi State, we came to you for your wise counsel and support. You gave everything to us.

"We have won that election, which is adjudged to be the most peaceful, freest and fairest

election in recent times by both foreign and local observers. Ododo is someone I have so much trust in to deliver good governance to the people of our dear state. He had served in a very critical area of my administration, that is as Auditor-General for Local Governments.

"He feels the pulse of the people at the local government level and I am very confident that he will fulfill his promises of good governance and democracy dividends to our people. Today, we are here to thank you and to further seek your kind guidance and prayers."

Ododo expressed gratitude to Baba Akande for his support and prayed for long life for the respected APC leader.

He commended Akande for his visionary leadership and uncommon wisdom in founding and nurturing the APC, now the largest political party in Africa and reiterated his commitment to fulfilling electioneering promises for the people of Kogi State.



L-R: Ododo, Akande and Yahaya Bello during the visit in Abuja yesterday.

Only Bold, Courageous Leader Can Put Nigeria On Track - Anglican Communion

**Expresses hope in Tinubu-led FG*

By: BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

The Primate, Church of Nigeria, Anglican Communion, Most Reverend Henry Ndukuba yesterday, said only a leader that is bold, courageous can take the right steps that will put Nigeria on the path of better future."

Primate Ndukuba stated this at the dedication of new Bishops Court, Chapel, conference hall, chaplain and drivers apartment at the Bishops Court, Moyede, Akobo, Ibadan.

Represented by the Archbishop of Ibadan Ecclesiastical Province and Bishop of Osun North, Most Reverend Abiodun Olaoye, Primate Ndukuba maintained that, "the situation at hand needs a leader that is bold and courageous, adding that only God can grant leaders such.

Emphasizing that there is the need for Nigerians to pray for more courage for political leaders in the country, he said, "Our leaders still need boldness, fear of God to act now. If they have the fear of

God, the boldness will be there to do what is right and just"

While expressing hope in the President Bola Tinubu led Federal government, the Primate stressed that people must learn to look at God and not the government to bring about a change in their situation.

" President Bola Tinubu cannot do it alone, he needs God's guidance and enablements. Our leaders need God's guidance, we need to pray very much in our nation, Nigeria. The level of corruption is too much, and that is what is destroying our nation. We need to pray to God to bring in righteousness, justice and truth to this nation so that things may work", he said.

Primate Ndukuba added, " Nigeria is a great nation, God has made this nation a great country but he is still looking to our leaders to call upon him because the situation that is happening now is beyond any human power, only God can intervene and when we cry to God in unison, he will answer us and grant our request, and

Nigeria will still see better days".

" As the country is, this is a proof that God provides for his own. When we put our trust in Him, when we rely on him, he supplies our needs. Most of the time, we look up to the government, but it is God that we should look up to. When we look up to God and cry out to him, just like the people of Ibadan North Diocese did, they cried to God, they prayed to him because what has happened today is as a result of answered prayers".

Stressing that "So, when we call upon God, he answers us. So, in the situation that we find ourselves in Nigeria, we have to pray, call upon God, he is the only one that has solution to what is happening in this country", he said, " We will still see glorious and better days in Nigeria. God will still make us happy in this nation. The Primate enjoins all of us to pray and put our trust in God."

Expressing optimism in the future of Nigeria, he said "Certainly there is hope. Where God intervenes, there is hope.

When God intervenes in a situation, he turns the situation around. That is why the Primate ask us all to cry to God and have hope in him. It is only God that can guide our leaders aright, touch their heart, give them the wisdom needed to direct their affairs of this nation and even give them boldness because every leader in this nation needs boldness to act without any fear or favour of anybody but to act, trusting that God will assist.

Speaking on the activities to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of the Diocese of Ibadan North (Anglican Communion), he said "We thank God for what is happening today in Ibadan North Diocese, it is a great event because we can see the wonders that God is performing in His Church. Its a miracle that within just 16months, five buildings were completed by Ibadan North Diocese.

Earlier, the host, Bishop Williams Aladekugbe, said the event is to celebrate God's faithfulness and the members who have supported and served the Diocese since it was created in 1998.

ABU Assumes Presidency Of International Institute Of Online Education

**Vice-Chancellor accepts challenge with all sense of responsibility*

By: SANIALIYU, Zaria

Ahmadu Bello University (ABU) has assumed the Rotating Presidency Unit of the International Institute of Online Education (IIOE) for 2024 with the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Kabiru Bala, accepting the challenge with all sense of responsibility and pledging to do the best to move the institute forward during the period.

In a statement by the Director Public Affairs Directorate of the University, Malam Auwalu Umar said with it's assumption of the rotating presidency, ABU is expected to closely collaborate with UNESCO-ICHEI and IIOE secretariat by providing strategic guidance and support for the development of IIOE and digital transformation of higher education in various regions.

ABU's selection as the 2024 IIOE Rotating Presidency Unit was announced during the International Institute of Online Education (IIOE) Global Partners Summit held at Shenzhen, China from 7th – 9th December, 2023.

The institution now takes over from University Putra Malaysia (UPM) as the IIOE rotating presidency unit for the year 2024.

The IIOE rotating presidency unit plays a crucial role in the governance structure of IIOE and it has been in place since its inception in 2019, rotating annually among partner universities in different regions.

Since the launch of IIOE in 2019, four IIOE partner universities have successfully served as the rotating presidency unit.

These institutions are Ain Shams University, Egypt (2020); University of Engineering and Technology, Lahore, Pakistan (2021); University of Nairobi, Kenya (2022); and Universiti Putra Malaysia (2023).

In his acceptance speech, the Vice-Chancellor, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Prof. Kabiru Bala, said that ABU was greatly honoured to be offered the opportunity to serve as the IIOE Rotating Presidency Unit for the year 2024.

"It is indeed humbling that you have found Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and myself worthy of undertaking this responsibility.

"We have accepted this challenge with all sense of responsibility and pledge to do our utmost best to move the IIOE forward in 2024.

"We will also strive to onboard more HEIs on the ever-growing IIOE network", he said.

The Vice-Chancellor noted that the emerging digital technologies, AI, and other associated tools are already playing a big role in the digital transformation of higher education teaching, learning, and research.

"We must then be prepared to retool ourselves as teachers because as Carl Rogers said 'The only person who is educated is



the one who has learned how to learn and change'.

"And as administrators, we must develop strategies and guidelines to ensure ethical, safe, and accountable use of these technologies and tools that will ensure equity, accessibility and inclusiveness.

"We must do all it takes to ensure that our students are competitive on the global stage and we can achieve this by working together, especially in the area of the use of AI in HE", the Vice-Chancellor stressed.

Ahmadu Bello University, according to Prof. Bala, would work closely with UNESCO-ICHEI in 2024 to support all IIOE partner HEIs is developing micro-certification courses and encourage the HEIs to find ways of incentivizing them so that teachers could be encouraged to utilize them for continuous

professional development.

He also said that ABU is already committed to collaborating with UNESCO-ICHEI to develop at least two micro-certification courses for teachers, stressing that the University would use the experience from the co-creation to develop micro-certification courses for non-teaching staff.

The Vice-Chancellor congratulated Prof. Jin Li on his recent appointment as the second Director of UNESCO-ICHEI and expressed hope that they would work together to further the spread and impact of the IIOE worldwide.

Prof. Bala also acknowledged the foundation laid by Prof. L. Ming, the first Director of UNESCO-ICHEI, saying that ABU would forever remember Prof. L. Ming for his strong commitment towards the progress of UNESCO-ICHEI.

The IIOE Global Partners Summit was rounded off on Saturday, 9th December, 2023 with enterprise visits to various places and sub-forum.

The Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Kabiru Bala, was accompanied to the Summit by the Director, IIOE Nigeria National Centre, Prof. M.B. Mu'azu; and Head of Department of Computer Engineering, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Prof. Adewale Adedokun.

The Ag. Executive Secretary of the National Universities Commission (NUC), Mr. Chris Maiyaki, and African Centre of Excellence National Focal Point Leader and Project Coordinator, National Universities Commission, Dr. Joshua Atah, also attended the three-day summit.

Kaduna State Governor Engages Citizens In Town Hall Meeting For Public Presentation Of 2024 Budget Draft

By: FUNMIADERINTO, Kaduna

The Kaduna State Governor, Senator Uba Sani on Tuesday, took an important step towards inclusive governance by engaging citizens, civil society organizations, and professional bodies in a town hall meeting for the public presentation of his draft 2024 budget.

Tagged, "Budget of Rural Transformation for Inclusive Development," Governor Sani emphasized that the proposed budget represents a paradigm shift aimed at positively impacting the lives of every citizen of Kaduna State.

In his address, Governor Sani highlighted several key points regarding the proposed budget and its implementation targeting rural revitalization by emphasizing on the importance of transparency and good governance in the budget process.

He announced that town hall meetings would be held in each of the three senatorial zones every two months, to engage with citizens, monitor, and advise on the implementation of the budget.

"I urge citizens and civil society organizations to channel projects they consider significant to the Ministry of Budget and Planning for consideration as parts of our efforts in involving citizens in the decision-making process", the governor stated.

On social interventions and financial inclusivity, Governor Sani revealed that his administration aims to facilitate financial inclusivity by targeting one million unbanked people to open bank accounts, thereby bridging the gap in access to financial services.

The proposed budget places a strong emphasis on key sectors such as education, agriculture, health, and security, which are set to receive the lion's share of the budget. This underscores the administration's commitment to rural transformation and inclusive development.

Earlier, the Commissioner of Planning and Budget, Muktar Ahmed highlighted that citizen input fosters partnership and builds trust between the state and its citizens.

He said the proposed budget of 458,271,299,477.66 is aligned with the 7-point agenda of the Governor and is designed to translate into tangible rural transformation.

He said the state government proposed 139,434,722,889.34 as recurrent expenditure while 318,836,576,588.28 as capital expenditure.

During the meeting, members of civil society organizations commended Governor Sani for his commitment to open governance and expressed confidence in his ability to implement the draft budget once it is passed into law by the State House of Assembly.



Infrastructure Devt, Social Welfare Top Chart As Kwara Gov Presents 2024 Budget

*CAPEX takes 61% of budget, recurrent 39%

*Roads, housing, health, education, minimum wage in focus

*Gov to unveil 18,000 hectares Smart City project in new year

*Gov thanks Kwarans for support, promises more

By; BILIQIS ONAOLAPO
OLAJUMOKE, Ilorin

Kwara State Governor, AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq yesterday, laid before the parliament, a N296.4bn fiscal plan for year 2024, with the capital expenditure guzzling a whopping 61% of the proposed spending and recurrents keeping the balance of 39%.

The budget is 15.5% higher than the budget of the outgoing year, and has an opening balance of N25bn, according to the Governor, who heralded his speech with "profound gratitude" to God, appreciation to the people of Kwara and his party, APC, for another win at the last general elections, and acknowledgement of the supportive role of the legislators.

Deputy Governor Kayode Alabi led the Governor's entourage that also comprised top heads of statutory commissions, government officials; first class traditional rulers; security commanders; party elders; business executives; and citizens.

The budget session was presided over by the Kwara State House of Assembly Speaker Rt. Hon. Yakubu Danladi-Salihi. "I begin this budget speech with profound gratitude to Almighty Allah for His enduring mercies that again saw us through the recent electioneering process with yet another resounding 100% victory. I dedicate that victory and the success of our first tenure to the good people of Kwara State who walked with and trusted us with another mandate, and to you, members of this hallowed chamber, for your understanding, maturity, and love for our state," the Governor said.

"Together in four years, we brought socioeconomic and political stability to our state and restored the dignity of the human person. We have redefined public education in human resource and infrastructure, basic healthcare delivery, social security, public service, rural development, sports and recreational development, while measurable steps have been taken to make Kwara a hub of innovation, creativity, and viable economic activities in Nigeria.

"The next four years will serve to consolidate on the gains of our first term, expand the economic base of this lovely state through completion of ongoing infrastructural projects and commencement of new ones, make the state more self-sustaining by widening the



Kwara State Governor AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq CON laying the 2024 appropriation bill before the state House of Assembly, in Ilorin, on Thursday.

revenue base, create more private sector-driven jobs, and better the lots of our people. In the new year, we will formally inaugurate our flagship projects like the garment factory, visual arts centre, Tunde Idiagbon bridge, innovation hub, sugar film factory, the two campuses of Kwara State University, sheabutter factory in Kaiama, among others.

"These, in shaa Allaah, will create tens of thousands of direct and indirect jobs in the new year, and spread collective prosperity on a sustainable basis.

"This is why next year's fiscal document has been christened the budget of 'economic expansion and collective prosperity'. The size of the budget is N296.4bn, with an opening balance of N25bn. The capital expenditure takes the lion share of N180.0bn, representing 61% of the total fiscal plan, while the recurrent component gets N116bn, or 39%.

"This fiscal plan will prioritise the completion and unveiling of several of our legacy projects, and introduction of a few other ones that centre around the welfare of the people. I am glad to inform this Honourable House that the Ilorin Capital City Master Plan will officially produce what we call Ilorin Smart City Satellite Town, which will cover an area estimated at 18,000 hectares. This city is modelled after sustainable, green cities around the world, such as Washington DC. The groundbreaking of this huge project will be done next year, God willing.

"Some other highlights include the

establishment of the Kwara State University Teaching Hospital; Kwara State University of Education; completion of the first phase of the industrial park at Eiyenkorin; MSMEs Support Funds; rehabilitation of Ilesha Baruba Waterworks and others elsewhere in the state; construction of statewide rural access roads through RAAMP; rehabilitation of Isanlu Isin Waterworks and extension of pipes; rehabilitation of Pampo waterworks and extension of pipes, among others; construction of new wards and expansion of maternity unit at civil service clinic; expansion of 13 hospitals across the state; construction of 250 housing units under the proposed mass housing scheme of the State Government; construction of CBT Centres across the 3 districts; wholesale curriculum revitalisation and training under KwaraLearn; payment of UBEC counterpart funds for 2022 and 2023; and some sports facilities statewide.

"Also covered in this document is our preparation for a new minimum wage, which is due for negotiation next year, completion of KWIRS modern headquarters, among other things. We will also begin the implementation of life-changing programmes like the Adolescent Girls Initiative for Learning and Empowerment (AGILE), livestock development centre at Lata; special agroprocessing zone and L-PRES project, which seeks to provide infrastructure and the environment to curb the conflict between herders and farmers.

"This document is predicated on the estimated crude oil price of \$77.96; daily oil production of 1.78million barrel per day; exchange rate of N750/USD; GDP growth projection of 3.76 percent; and 21.4% inflation rate. "Further details on the budget estimates are contained in the full version of the fiscal plan, which would be issued later.

"The budget will be funded from an assortment of sources, especially the internally generated revenue and receipts from the federation accounts, among other channels."

Danladi-Salihi, for his part, said the Governor did so well in his first term to deserve the popular mandate he got to govern the state for another four years.

He said the legislature will peruse the budget and act in accordance with the public good.

"Let me acknowledge and commend Your Excellency for transparency, accountability, and fiscal discipline exhibited in the implementation of the budget in outgoing year 2023," he said.

"It is on record that this administration has completed many people oriented projects in all parts of the state as captured in the budget. The desire is to consolidate on the modest achievements recorded during your first term seems to be on course, considering the religious pursuit of the overall development of the state that has come to be a cordial objective of your administration since your second coming. "I feel fulfilled with the magnitude of completed projects, ongoing projects, and others nearing completion.

"It is also noteworthy and commendable that Your Excellency has sustained the zeal with which you resuscitated the fulfillment of the state to counterpart funds in all sectors. The result of these is visible to every Kwaran to energise sectors such as basic education, rural roads, water supply and sanitation, health and many others that were almost dead before you came on board and have since experienced a rebirth as the people of the state now have a new lease of life.

"It is my hope that the year 2024 appropriation bill contains realistic projections both on revenue and expenditure that all critical sectors of the economy are accorded adequate attention. It is only by doing this that the administration will consolidate on the achievements recorded in the first four years."

He assured the Governor of the readiness of the House to work round the clock to ensure timely passage of the budget after thorough legislative scrutinies.

Professionals Need To Be Socially Responsible - Prof Mailafia

By: SANIALIYU, Zaria

The Chairman Association of National Accountants of Nigeria (ANAN) Zaria Branch, Professor Luka Mailafia has said that all professionals including accountants need to be sensitive to environmental and societal challenges, and be socially responsible, an act that has the potentials to support the socio-economic development of a nation.

He stated this at a double-barrel programme to mark the International Accountants Day as well as the Corporate Social Responsibility Day, held at the CBN Centre for Economic and Finance, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, as well as a paying a visit to Ahmadu Bello University Teaching Hospital (ABUTH) Zaria. This year's celebration was kick started with a lecture by Barrister Hadiza Ali whose paper focused on "Removal of Fuel Subsidy": Which way to go?

The paper was highly topical, quite engaging and thought provoking and It justified the need for fuel subsidy removal although raised concerns on the sudden approach to its withdrawal, and x-rayed the viability of possible remedial actions.

Barrister Hadiza Ali



charged Nigerian government to work on fixing the trust deficit already in the mind of citizens, towards building public trust and confidence in the citizenry.

She further urged government to address the issues of unemployment through enabling policies and creation of social investment programmes. According to her, good governance and accountability can be achieved by transparently managing the transition, redirecting savings to benefit citizens and implementing measures to prevent corruption.

She noted with concerns that removing fuel subsidy is a complex policy decision with potential

economic and political challenges.

The guest lecturer acknowledged that the general impact is holistic and not necessarily only the rural poor because of the spiral effect associated with the high price of fuel, which cuts across the board.

The association also paid a visit to the Accident and Emergency Ward, and Children Emergency Ward of the ABUTH Teaching Hospital (ABUTH) Shika by members of ANAN, Zaria Branch.

As an act of corporate social responsibility, the Zaria Branch of ANAN donated some items to the patients at the ABUTH Shika. Some of the items included a wide variety of

hospital consumables such as Paediatrics and Adults IV canulae, plaster, syringes, toiletries, fruits, water, among others.

The branch chairman appreciated the high level of commitment exhibited by members of the Branch, which he found to be very encouraging, and urged them to continue with this kind of gesture.

The leadership of the branch was quite overwhelmed with the enormous corporate efforts of all members of the Branch.

Professor Luka urged members to keep the good works and redouble their contributions towards humanity, aimed at achieving societal goals, and making the world a better place to live in.

Two-Year Old Allegedly Killed By NDLEA Operative Laid To Rest In Delta

By: UTEBOR PETER, Asaba

A two-year-old boy, Ivan Omhonria, who was killed by operatives of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), in Delta State, has been buried by family.

Addressing journalist in Asaba, the deceased's father, Mr Fidelis Omhonria, disclosed that the family is going through trying times.

Mr Fidelis said, "We just finished the funeral service now at the St. Vienna Catholic church, DBS road.

"And he has been laid to rest at burial ground. He has gone to his maker. Our concern now is how to treat the child (his sibling)."

"NDLEA personnel from operational headquarters and others were present at the burial ground and they were helping us to fast track the visa to the United States for further treatment.

"The Delta State Government has written to US embassy to fast-track the process so that the boy can go for treatment."

It would be recalled that operatives of NDLEA, Delta Command allegedly shot two brothers. It was also gathered that trouble started on Thursday July 13, 2023, when the operatives were chasing drug peddlers and purportedly shot

sporadically into the air in Okpanam, a suburb of Asaba, Oshimili North Local Government Area of the state.

It was learnt that the children were in their mother's shop, a cake baker and owner of Hillsi Cakes N More Academy, after closing from school when the incident occurred. It was gathered that a stray bullet touched the younger of them on the eye while the older one was hit on his abdomen but they were been rushed to the Federal Medical Center (FMC), Asaba, for surgery.

Reliable information on Friday July 14, 2023, at the hospital, revealed that the one stray bullet touched on the abdomen, died same date the incidence occurred.

It would also be recalled that the police in the state arrested a happy trigger operative of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), whose stray bullet killed a two years old boy, Ivan Omorhiakogbe, on July 13, 2023 at Okpanam, during a raid to arrest drug peddlers.

Meanwhile, the Nigerian Police Force, Abuja, has taken over investigation into the case of the Edo-Delta based family killed by a stray bullet from an operative of the NDLEA, in Okpanam, Oshimili North Local Government Area of the State

Northerners Made Mistake In Trusting Sanwo-Olu's Fake Promises Says AYCF

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The Arewa Youth Consultative Forum (AYCF) has expressed concerns over the marginalization of Northerners living in Lagos and the inequitable distribution of goods and services by the government of Babajide Sanwo-Olu.

The AYCF is hence, calling on the government of Lagos State, under Sanwo-Olu's leadership, to address the concerns of Northerners living in the state.

"They demand fair representation in key positions within the government, as well as the equitable distribution of goods and services.

"The AYCF stresses that failure to address these concerns, may have significant political consequences in the upcoming elections," the group said.

The forum's President General, Yerima Shettima, in a statement, made available to our correspondent yesterday, warned that the Northern population in Lagos will reject any candidate with a similar tribal

extremist view as Sanwo-Olu or any person remotely connected to him in the 2027 elections due to growing dissatisfaction with his biased brand of leadership.

According to Shettima, the Northerners trusted Sanwo-Olu's campaign promises and pledges, supported and invested heavily in his candidacy, which led to a significant majority of votes in his favour.

"However, these promises have turned out to be mere lies and deceptions," Shettima said.

The AYCF argued that the Northerners who played a significant role in Sanwo-Olu's victory were ultimately marginalized, betrayed, and let down by the administration.

One of the key issues raised by the AYCF is the bias in appointments and patronage. Shettima claimed that Sanwo-Olu favoured Southerners over Northerners in terms of appointments, while even the Igbo, who massively supported and overwhelmingly voted for Peter Obi,

received more favourable treatment.

"This bias in appointments has further fueled discontent among Northerners in Lagos, resulting in growing dissatisfaction with Sanwo-Olu's leadership. The AYCF also expressed concerns over the inequitable distribution of goods and services by the San-Olu's administration.

"The Northern population, being a significant part of Lagos State, expects to receive a fair share of resources and development projects in the communities where they predominate. However, the Northern communities in Lagos have been neglected, with resources and projects disproportionately allocated to Yoruba indigenes and residents.

"This imbalance has exacerbated economic challenges and deepened the sense of marginalization among Northern communities." In March 2023, Northern voters in Lagos entrusted their faith in Sanwo-Olu to address their limitations

and guide them towards a secure and prosperous future.

"They believed that their votes would result in a united Lagos state, where resources and appointments would be proportionately shared. However, months into its inception, the administration has proven to be controlled by Yoruba regional jingoists," said Shettima.

"The Northerners cannot be marginalized elements in Lagos. They are a people with immense potential, rich resources, and a vibrant population. Dismissing the Northerner's concerns and aspirations would be a grave mistake, as it would undermine the future success of any political party Sanwo-Olu may associate with. Failure to lead with justice, sensitivity, and recognition of Lagos' plural nature may result in Northern voters turning their backs on Sanwo-Olu and his party, just as they did with his predecessors," Shettima added.

Osun School Food Poisoning: Gov Adeleke Orders Full Investigations

**Orders stoppage of further food cooking at the affected school*

By: BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

Osun State Government on Tuesday, ordered full investigations into the alleged cases of food poisoning at St James Primary School B, Owoope Osogbo on Monday, affecting about 18 pupils.

New Nigerian gathered that about 18 pupils of the school were rushed to various hospitals by their parents few hours after eating food served them by O'Meal programme vendors.

It was learnt that the pupils were reacting to alleged contaminated food that they were served by O'Meal programme vendors resulting in repeated throwing up and defecating after consuming the food comprising of cooked rice and egg.

The state Commissioner for Information and Public Enlightenment, Kolapo Alimi, in a statement on Tuesday, declared that Governor, Ademola Adeleke has directed immediate investigation into the matter

Mr Alimi said Gov Adeleke has subsequently directed stoppage of further food cooking at the affected school pending the outcome of the investigations.

"The Governor has subsequently directed

stoppage of further food cooking at the affected school pending the outcome of the investigations", he said.

Mr Alimi added, "The affected cooks in the said schools alongside the Planning officer for the O-Meal programme have also been summoned to a meeting by Tuesday morning"

"Additionally, the Governor has directed enforcement of food standard and control as well as the auditing of the O-Meal structure to forestall future occurrence".

The Commissioner stressed, "Meanwhile, the Government is settling the medical bills of the affected students as narrated by the Chairman of the Local Government Education Authority, Mr Nathaniel Ojetola.

"The LGEA Chairman who was at the forefront of the intervention efforts disclosed that a total number of 18 students were treated and discharged. The total student population of the school is two hundred while one hundred and three are within the population receiving food from the O-Meal Programme".

Mr Alimi maintained further that "A government delegation is also visiting families of the affected students,".

CHRDEI Trains 228 Students On ICT, Web Design At NOUN Kaduna

By: USMAN NASIDI, Kaduna.

The Centre For Human Resources Development, Empowerment Initiative (CHRDEI) Kaduna in collaboration with the Centre For Human Resources Development (CHRD), National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), has graduated 228 students trained on various skills acquisition, free of charge.

During the graduation ceremony of the students with which focus more on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Web Design held at NOUN Kaduna Auditorium hall on Saturday, the Vice Chancellor National Open University of Nigeria, Prof. Olufemi Peters in his remark, tasked the students to make use of the knowledge impacted on them wisely. NOUN VC represented by Prof. Isaac Butswat Deputy Vice Chancellor, explained that they are very happy as for the first time in history, that they are co-partners to produce graduates in the homogeneous graduation ceremony of only person's who have acquired certificate in ICT and web design.

According to him, "ICT is the moment and for anyone who thinks what he's saying is wrong, if they have an Android phone, they should throw it away and see whether they can have a good night rest because virtually everything we do in these life



today is ICT."

He added that, NOUN is an online university and the most outstanding universities in Africa and they have the largest in Nigeria, while have no competitor as they are just trying to build people who will offer the kind of services they offer Nigerians.

"However, I want to let you know that this is just the beginning for CHRD, but by January this year, we intend to mound series of other certificate programmes that could be run online among which include, the care keeper certificate that will be introduced by and where ever you are across Nigeria, you are at liberty to register and you will be trained to be a professional care keeper."

Similarly, while delivering his speech, the founder CHRDEI, Hon. Dr. Muhammad Ali disclosed that CHRDEI lives up to its mandate of training the youth in various skills development with a view to

reducing unemployment, underemployment, the challenges of insecurity and creating a sense of belonging contentment, peace and peaceful coexistence in all faces of our society.

Dr. Ali added that they had a total of 289 registered students, but 61 were at various time withdrawn following vetting report on results they presented during admission process or offences they committed against the institutions standing order or social values.

He said, "it is also important to note that what we are doing in the CHRDEI has become necessary in view of the challenges Nigeria is facing, particularly North West Nigeria, which includes but not limited to the economy of violence which are byproduct of the lack of social and economic mobility for our youth population in a society that thrives on consumption,

corruption, nepotism and abetted by the unwholesome attitude of certain members of the larger society.

"This is the 27th graduation in 12 years and we are hoping for as we intend to give back to the society for free what was also given to us free of charge. And In this way, entrepreneurs could help address some of socio-psychological problems, delinquency, drug addiction and cultism that arise from joblessness and the challenges of insecurity," he added.

Finally, the founder CHRDEI, Hon. Dr. Muhammad Ali, urged the students to see the opportunity given to them by CHRDEI, CHRD and NOUN in order to better themselves and aim high in their future endeavors, and to strive hard to be good men and women that the country will be proud of them.

Group Urges North West Citizens To Back Reduction In Governance Cost, Transparency

By: USMAN NASIDI, Kaduna.

Nigerians in the North West zone have been urged to be part of the debt justice campaign across the seven states of the zone, aimed at suggesting governance cost reduction and transparency in borrowing funds to boost productivity and foreign exchange.

Mr Emmanuel Bonet, of AID Foundation, asserted this during a press conference held in Kaduna after a debt justice campaign across the seven states of the North West.

The campaign in partnership with CISLAC and support from Christian Aid, opined that it is a planning meeting to have the zones make input into the debt justice campaign.

Bonet added that given this, government, civil society, professional bodies, and academia from the North West,

converged on Kaduna to validate the debt profile of their states and upcoming activities aimed at amplifying citizens' voice around debt management.

The group said there has been a lot of ongoing discussions with the recent plan of the federal executive to borrow more funds despite the alarming debts and debt servicing rates in Nigeria.

He said, "the findings of the investigation showed that there are ongoing conversations on five other lending programmes which include: \$300 million for IDP and host community solutions, \$500 million for rural access and agricultural marketing project-scale up, \$750 million for Nigeria distributed access through renewable energy scale-up, \$700 million for sustainable power and irrigation, and \$500 million for NG accelerating resource mobilization for

reforms.

"It is also important to note that Nigeria received \$1.95 billion in World Bank loans in President Bola Tinubu's first four months. Nigeria owed \$14.51 billion to IDA and \$485.75 million to IBRD by Q2. Another analysis shows Nigeria has N54.13tn in domestic debt and N33.25tn in external debt. Domestic debt is 61.95 per cent and external debt 38.05 per cent.

"The North West grapples with mounting debt burden amidst government's transparency challenges and payment decoupling raking second in the country after the South West. Total debt of this zone is ₦1,221,147,361,723.62. Kaduna tops the league with 43.07% or ₦525,918,683,902.58 of the total. Kano comes second with 16.41% contribution to the zonal total, while Sokoto State is third at 9.78%. Jigawa, which is the

lowest nationwide, is also the lowest for this zone."

According to them, the total foreign debt in North West is ₦657,068,360,096.64. Kaduna tops the league with 66.76% or ₦438,636,196,321.92 of the total. Kano comes second with 11.88% contribution to the zonal total, while Katsina State is third with a 5.94%. Jigawa, is the lowest for this zone with just 3.08%.

Similarly, the total domestic debts for the Northwest zone stands at the rate of ₦564,079,001,626.98. Kano is on top with 21.69% or ₦122,361,942,618.03 of the total. Zamfara comes second with 17.07% contribution to the zonal total, while Sokoto State is third with a 16.25%. Jigawa, is the lowest for this zone with just 7.65%."

Finally, the group called on all citizens to be part of the campaign as they join hands in making the country better.

Kwara Cabinet Okays Teaching Hospital For KWASU

- * Approves wholesale remodelling, rebuilding of Kwara Hotel
- * Govt begins reconstruction of Folawiyo road, builds new flyover at Unity
- * Says work won't affect private properties
- * To fix, divert traffic through Obbo, Coca Cola, Police Roads
- * N40bn 'advance' for contractors on 294km roads in Kwara North, South
- * RAAMP roads to begin soon across state
- * As rehabilitation work continues on 70 internal roads

By; **BILQIS ONAOLAPO OLAJUMOKE, Ilorin**

Kwara State Executive Council has approved the setting up of a teaching hospital to support the training of medical students and related professionals by the Kwara State University, a major step that involves huge facility upgrades at the General Hospital Ilorin (GHI) which has been adopted for the purpose as well as legislations to guide its operations.

Commissioner for Health, Dr. Amina Ahmed El-Imam told a press conference on Wednesday, that the council observed that recent facility upgrades under the Abdulrahman AbdulRazaq administration had earlier qualified GHI as a postgraduate training health institution and went ahead to approve additional N906.7m seed fund to push through the historic transition.

"The proposed seed fund will meet cost of infrastructural facelift and construction of new ones, equipment upgrades, administrative changes, and address manpower needs to support training of medical students, which is complementary to the ongoing postgraduate training," El-Imam told reporters, adding that "this will be of immense benefits to the people of Kwara State and the nation at large."

She said the council approved for the government to present a bill on 'establishment of the Kwara State Teaching Hospital and related matters' to the House of Assembly.

At a council meeting on Wednesday, the government also approved the award of redesigning and wholesale rebuilding of the iconic Kwara Hotel to Craneburg Construction Company Limited to a five-star hospitality facility at the sums of N17b.8bn for a duration of 24 months, according to Commissioner for Business, Innovation and Technology Hon. Damilola Yusuf.

To be done through contract financing model to ensure prompt delivery, the construction and furnishing will be the most comprehensive since the legacy was constructed by the Brigadier-General David Bamigboye regime in 1975, clearly giving it an edge over any other facility in the entire North Central.

"The contract award followed a long procurement process that began in September 2023," Yusuf told reporters.

That comes as the Kwara State Ministry of Works and Transport also announced immediate reconstruction works on the Wahab Folawiyo (Unity Road) Road in Ilorin, the state capital, following the state executive council's approval of the overhauling of the major artery road that empties into downtown Ilorin.

Coordinating Commissioner for Works and Transport AbdulQuawiy Olododo told reporters that phased works on the road, such as asphalt milling, will begin from next week with minimal drags on vehicular traffic at every stage of the work.

The contractor will complete work on one lane before working on the other to reduce traffic gridlock, Olododo added.

He said dozens of traffic management officers will be deployed while government — to lessen the impacts — will also divert traffic through Obbo Road, Coca Cola Road, and Police Road. Some bad spots on the three are to undergo immediate fix, Olododo added.

He said further information on traffic management will be communicated to the public as preparation gets underway, assuring the people of adequate care while the work lasts.

"We are not demolishing any private properties and business premises not sited on government's setbacks will not be eaten into in any way," according to Olododo.

The road, which history began in 1976, is a great legacy of late Colonel Ibrahim Taiwo and George Agbazika Innih.

The cabinet observed that the artery road has outlived its lifespan as it has started failing after decades of heavy use.

The council approval of the work fell under the urban renewal and developmental road projects of the administration, conceived to lessen travel time, boost economic growth, give a new look to the capital city, and improve the living conditions of the people.

Following extensive briefings, including procurement details, the council approved the total reconstruction of the busy Wahab Folawiyo four-lane dual carriageway (Unity Road) in Ilorin — a major step that

aligns with the concerns of Governor AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq that many of the roads in the capital city have long outlived their engineering lifespan, Olododo said.

The contract was awarded to the A-list Craneburg Construction firm at the cost of N1,513,528,195.18.

In what is a preparation for the future of one of the major traffic-prone axis of the metropolis with a concentration of banks and other businesses, the cabinet has also approved the award of construction of a modern flyover to collect the traffic at Unity roundabout to Craneburg Construction at the cost of N8.4bn for the duration of 12 months.

The approval comes with a clear instruction to the contractors to have careful plans to execute the project in manners that lessen the typical hitches of any urban renewal projects, Olododo quoted the Governor as telling the council.

"Because of the peculiarity of that axis of the metropolis, the Governor directed that contractors are to devise means to as much as possible avoid outright closure of the road. They are to pay extra attention to this. This is to ensure convenience for the people amid this huge development," the commissioner said.

The cabinet, Olododo stated, observed that the costs of the urban renewal projects in Kwara are characteristically modest, compared to similar infrastructural projects in other parts of the country.

The council, meanwhile, has approved the revocation and re-award or review of some ongoing road contracts, including Ilesha Gwanara and Owode-Ofaro-Alabe road, for poor performance or delay in their delivery, while it called for speedy completion of others, including the Orisa bridge in Oro Ago in Ifelodun local government area of the state.

The Governor has also directed that the approaching sections of the road to the Orisa bridge be fixed as soon as possible, while the Iyana Shonga Road in Edu local government are to be evaluated for rehabilitation works, according to the commissioner.

The government has secured multibillion naira road projects that connect different parts of the state, especially Kwara North and South, the Commissioner added.

"His Excellency informed the cabinet that work is to begin shortly on some major roads in Kwara North and Kwara South as contractors have been mobilised to site with at least N40bn. This is what His Excellency has attracted as our major gain from some recent policy initiatives of the Federal Government," according to the commissioner.

He listed the major roads as Kosubosu-Kaiama-Bode Sa'adu (130km); Lafiagi-Shonga-Bacita (83km); Okuta-Gwanara-Bukoro (32km); and Offa-Ojoku-Afin-Eiyenkorin (49km) which will burst out at Odo-Otin local government in Osun State.

The commissioner also said that some of the roads and river crossings captured under the Rural Access and Agricultural Marketing Project will soon begin, including Afon -Sapati Oko-Igbotele; Mondala -Yowere -Agbonna; Kpandarako -Ginda -Kusomunu-Kachitako-Tsakpata Lealea-Gulufu-Bacita; Lafiagi-Effagi-Pututa; Ajase Ipo-Igbonla-Agbamu-Osun boundary; Ojoku-Illa market; Ijagbo-Aperun-Adeleke-Igbawere; Igbaja-Ofarese-Wale-Agbeku; Gerewu-Eiyenkorin-Okolowo-Express-Peeke-Dongari-Ogundele; Kaiama-Kemanji; and Oro-Sanmora, among others.

Olododo, meanwhile, also gave updates to the council on some ongoing construction works, saying the General Tunde Idiagbon Flyover is going on steady and will be completed in the first quarter of 2024.

The government has also continued massive rehabilitation works on at least 70 roads within and outside the capital city in the first phase. The roads include Sawmill Garage; Olorunshogo; Adabata; Emir's Road; Taiwo-Surulere; Sefura Junction; Airport Sawmil-Taiwo; Ita Merin-Offa Grammar School road; Offa General Hospital; and Irra Road, among several others.

The commissioner also told reporters that the ministry has established a desk office contact for residents of the state to seek clarifications or report any issue to the government on ongoing projects. The contact telephone lines are 08106844487; 08132119543.



COMMUNITY FOCUS

KADBUSA Engages Rigasa Stakeholders On Need To Reduce, Eradicate Drug Abuse

By: USMAN NASIDI, Kaduna.

In an effort to sensitize and bring to an end various forms of drug abuses within and outside the state, the Kaduna State Bureau for Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment (KADBUSA), has engaged community leaders of Rigasa Ward of Igabi Local Government Area to discuss way forward in reducing or eradicating drug abuses in the community.

During an interactive session between the stakeholders of Rigasa Community at Government Day Secondary School (GSS) Makarfi Road, which comprised traditional rulers, religious leaders, youth groups, student forum's and the Rigasa Action And Awareness Forum (RAAF), the agency expressed the need for a drug abuse free society through awareness.

While speaking at the event, the Director General of KADBUSA, Mr. Joseph O Ike, explained that the reason for the visit was to discuss the situation in Rigasa on what they wanted to do as KADBUSA and the interest of the State Government under the administration of Governor Uba Sani as community engagement, hence they can't come and do a programme without engaging the community stakeholders.

He added that by engaging the relevant stakeholders, they have come up with what are the root causes and what are the drivers of drug abuse in the community and they were able to identify this as a group among them in that engagement and they were also able to divide the problems that they saw into different groups.

Mr. Ike said, "we met with the village heads and representatives of the different

sub groups within the Rigasa and other stakeholders in the community. So the village head's, RAAF, women and student groups each of us took a task that we'll work on in this community with the support of KADBUSA and Kaduna State Government supporting them towards dealing with this problem based on the solutions that were identified in the meeting.

"And we have agreed to meet again on the first week of February, 2024 to see how far we have gone with all of the things we have agreed on here. So this is the preferred method that this administration goes about dealing with this issue in the community.

According to the DG KADBUSA, the sole aim of the agency is to focus on the prevention and treatment of the people involved, so what they do is focusing on the demand and reduction of drug abuses, while NDLEA key mandate as a law enforcement agency is to work a lot on how to reduce the supply of the illicit drugs.

"Meanwhile, when people brought about the issues of the dealers during the meeting, they have agreed that they are going to get NDLEA involved to deal with the supplies, who are selling and making them available in the community to ensure they reduce or wipe out the supply of those substances.

"So, while we handle demand reduction through public health approach, NDLEA as a law enforcement agency will ensure the reduce of the supply, hence it will be very difficult for us to do what is expected of us without their support.

"Also, we believe that General Marwa



and the state commandant of NDLEA are doing everything within their powers to identify and root out those within the NDLEA that are supporting such kind of activities rather than doing what they are suppose to do and making this story a thing of the past as we are confident in them because they are strong partners of KADBUSA." Mr. Joseph, noted.

Earlier in their individual responses, the stakeholders complained about the high rate dealers are supplying illicit drugs among the youth, not minding the threat to their future and the results of their actions in the society, saying there's need for the government to impose a serious penalty against the suppliers.

Furthermore, they lamented the need for the government to create an avenue where the youth could have access to various skills that could be useful to them and the

entire society as the future upholds greater things for them to become relevant in their various communities.

According to the stakeholders, the major challenge being faced in the community is that of the politicians making use of the youth by sponsoring them financially and ensuring they back them up when apprehended over any form of crime during their activities.

However, they noted that in most cases, most of the youth involved in such acts no longer consider most elders in their communities to be worthy of emulation, especially when they know they have the backing of the politicians to set them free when apprehended by any law enforcement agency and give them monetary support.



NACA Calls For Active Youths Involvement In The Fight Of HIV/AIDS

By; AMOS TAUNA, Kaduna

The National Agency for the Control of AIDS (NACA) has called for active involvement of adolescents and young people in the country in the fight of HIV/AIDS.

Dr Gambo Aliyu, the Director General (DG) of NACA, in a call in Abuja during the National Symposium on HIV Prevention Models for Adolescents and Young People, with support from USAID through the Key Population Care-1 Project implemented by

Heartland Alliance and John Snow Incorporated (JSI).

Dr Gambo, represented by Dr James Anenih, the Director, Community Prevention and Care Service of the agency, saying that it was important for their voices to be heard, stressing that the government was developing initiatives to empower youths in the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS.

He further said that the youths should also be part of developing strategies in order to know what will work for them.

According to him, "Evidence compiled in the last year indicated that a huge part of the population generating HIV infection were adolescents and young people, and that the response now was to engage them in specific services that would be tailored towards prevention and treatment." Part of the strategy the government was deploying for adolescents and young people, he explained that it was to empower them to reduce behaviours that put them at the risk of contracting

HIV.

Dr Olawale Durisinmi, the Country Lead of JSI Research and Training Incorporated, explained that the organisation was providing technical support to the government on HIV prevention to ensure that interventions were designed in a way that would benefit Nigerians.

The organisation, he added, was also geared towards ensuring that the needs and challenges of the target key populations of the intervention were addressed.



Gov Alia

Gov Alia Emerges Leadership Governor Of Year

By; ARCHIBONG ESUENE, Makurdi

The Governor of Benue State, Father Hyacinth Iormem Alia has emerged Leadership Newspaper 2023 "Governor of the Year" for providing exceptional leadership to the people of Benue State are in dire need.

According to the management of Leadership Newspaper, Governor Alia has demonstrated sterling leadership qualities as exhibited in the prudence utilisation of State resources, blocking waste, and fighting corruption since he assumed office.

In a statement made available to New Nigerian in Makurdi by Mr Tersoo Kula, the Chief Press Secretary to the Governor, Leadership Newspaper also acknowledged increase in the state's IGR, which has given the people of the state a new lease of life.

Governor Alia's six months according to the media outfit has witnessed a downpour of commendable transformative achievements which have ignited hope, improved livelihoods, and rekindled the spirit of optimism amongst Benue people.

The Leadership Newspaper highlighted

some of the Governor's achievements in line with the priorities of his administration as enshrined in his Blueprint which includes timely delivery of fertilizer to farmers at subsidized rate, prompt and sustained payment of salaries, pensions, and gratuity.

The media house also acknowledged the new retirement age and length of service for primary and secondary school teachers which Governor Alia has approved, the recovery of numerous looted vehicles, tens of hectares of lands, and numerous landed properties from the previous administration, as well as approved training of 10,000 training of Benue Youths in ICT.

Other achievements mentioned by Leadership are improved monthly allowances of N15,000 for National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) members and N100,000 for NYSC doctors serving in Benue State irrespective of State of origin.

The statement from the CPS also mentioned the ongoing construction of 16 roads measuring 15.39 kilometres within the Makurdi metropolis, and donation of 100 buses to Benue Links Company to ease movement and cushion the effect of fuel subsidy removal.

Benue Govt Demands Retraction, Apology, N5bn Over Publication

By; ARCHIBONG ESUENE, Makurdi

The Benue State Government has demanded a retraction, an apology and five billion Naira as compensation from the publishers of New Telegraph Newspaper, over over what it described as a defamatory publication on the person of Governor Hyacinth Alia.

New Nigerian Newspapers recalls that the online edition of the New Telegraph Newspaper had on Monday, December 11, 2023, published a story with the caption '2027: Alia Joins Forces With Rotimi Amaechi - ...Donates Lexus LX 600 SUV To Former Transportation Minister.'

In a correspondence to the publisher of the newspaper, Attorney-General and Commissioner for Justice and Public Order, Barr F.B. Mnyim, described the said publication as false and fabricated, insisting that it was done to demean the character of the governor and to paint him bad as someone using state funds to offer gratification and

compensation for personal favours.

According to the commissioner, the defamatory story has made the governor to appear as someone who is insensitive to the plight of the Benue people and party men who supported and voted him into office as the Governor of Benue State on the platform of All Progressives Congress (APC).

"The publication made available online portrayed our client as unprofessional, unprincipled, unethical, and dishonorable, unreasonable and prejudiced public officer who is insensitive, indifferent, and apathetic to the plight of the Benue people and party men who supported and voted him into office as the Governor of Benue State on the platform of All Progressive Congress (APC).

"The said publication was with a clear intent and motive to vilify, malign, denigrate, disparage and defame our client and portray him in bad light in the eyes of reasonable members of the public, especially to incite the Benue people, members

of the All Progressives Congress (APC) and the general public against our client.

"The publication was made in an invidious, unpleasant, insidious, sinister and treacherous manner and it has inflicted and caused grievous pains, shock, anguish, psychological torture and trauma, humiliation, degradation, dishonor, embarrassment and dehumanization of our client, and reviling and holding our client up to public obloquy, lowering him in the estimation of the public, and exposing him to disgrace, dishonour and contempt" part of the letter by the Attorney General insisted.

According to him, it was done in total disregard for the Code of Ethics for Nigerian Journalists and is injurious to the person of the governor and the government of the state, especially as the governor is someone who is seen as a noble man of sound character, who commands respect in his spheres of influence, among the citizens of Benue State and the general public.

He called for the withdrawal of the publication, accompanied

by a clear and unqualified apology published in the newspaper within the next 24 hours as well as N5 Billion as compensation for the injurious publication, of which failure to do so will attract a court action.

"On account of the foregoing, our client has instructed us to request and or demand, and we do hereby perfect those instructions, that: (a) You withdraw the offensive publication forthwith accompanied by a clear and unqualified apology to be published conspicuously in the next issue of your publication. (b) You pay compensation to our client in the total sum of N5 billion only for the damage caused to our client's reputation, integrity and character. (c) You are to act within 24 hours of the receipt of this letter.

"Take notice that if our client's demands herein are not addressed, resolved or fulfilled within the time prescribed, our client shall be at liberty to seek redress in a court of law, in accordance with the remedies outlined above, without further recourse to you," stated the Attorney General on behalf of the state government.



Gov Radda

Katsina Governor Appreciates Inter-religious Relationship

By; SULAIMAN AHMED MISAU, Katsina

Governor Dikko Umaru Radda of Katsina State has expressed appreciation on the level of inter-religious relationship among followers of two major religions, of Islam and Christianity in the state.

Governor Umaru Radda was speaking according to his Spokesman, Ibrahim Kaula Mohammed when he hosted a team of Catholic bishops led by Bishop Hassan Mathew Kukah of Sokoto Diocese on courtesy call.

Governor Radda observed that there was never a serious religious crisis between Muslims and Christians in the state.

This the governor said, proved the high level of religious tolerance between them and hoped for its sustenance.

Governor Radda who congratulated the Christian leadership for having a new Catholic Diocese of Katsina, promised more support toward the successful installation of an

indigenous Bishop to take charge of the diocese.

Earlier, the leader of the delegation Bishop of Sokoto Catholic Diocese, Bishop Hassan Mathew Kukah said they were in Katsina for the installation of Mamman Musa an indigene of Katsina State as the Bishop of the newly established Diocese.

This, development Bishop Kuka said, has made Katsina separated from the Sokoto Catholic Diocese to operate independently.

Bishop Mathew Hasaan Kukah thanked Governor Radda for his support to the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) in the state.

In his remarks, the new Bishop for the Catholic Diocese, Mamman Musa reaffirmed his preparedness to collaborate with the state government in restoring peace and harmony in the state.

Katsina State Chairman of CAN, Shuaibu Liti said the creation of the Katsina Diocese would bring about growth of the church and overall development of the state.

A'Ibom State Govt Receives New Airbus A220-300 For Ibom Air

By; PATRICK TITUS, Uyo

Akwa Ibom State government has taken delivery of the brand new Airbus A220-300 ordered by Ibom Airline.

In a ceremony held at the Victor Attah International Airport, the State Governor, Pastor Umo Eno noted that the event was a celebration of vision, passion for professionalism and effective service delivery.

He added that the journey of the state-owned airline started four years ago with two CRJ 900 Bombardier aircrafts in its fleet.

The governor said Ibom Air has steadily recorded progress and has become the most preferred airline for travelers across the country.

According to him, "At the Dubai Airshow in November 2021, the State Government, led by the visioner of this project and my worthy predecessor, the immediate past Governor, Mr. Udom Emmanuel, CON, signed a contract for the purchase of ten brand new Airbus A200-300 series. Today, ladies and gentlemen, we are gathered here to welcome to the fleet of Ibom Air, the first of those ten Airbus aircrafts that we had ordered.

"Let me use this opportunity to thank our

past leaders for the various works they did to move our dear state from its humble beginnings 36 years ago, at its creation to today, where we are easily ranked as a subnational with the best road network and other infrastructural amenities in the nation.

"Let me particularly celebrate and thank my worthy predecessor for his vision in conceptualizing and breathing life into this pride of Akwa Ibom and pride of Nigeria in the aviation industry, Ibom Air.

"When this idea was first announced, the usual naysayers had dismissed it as a flash of wishful thinking. But as he always would say: The answer to doubters is success that shocks and confounds.

"Today, Ibom Air is the leading brand in the Nigerian aviation industry, a mere four years plus after it started commercial operations," he added.

Governor Eno who is a seasoned entrepreneur and passionate about furthering development in the State through investments, assured everyone that government will continue to support Ibom Air to achieve the desired benefits for the State.

He said, "my administration is dedicated to supporting the giant strides the airline

has made. We have kept faith with all previous financial obligations entered into, with Airbus, by the immediate past administration and the result of that, is the event we are witnessing today.

"Since we came on board, we have provided the funds for the training of pilots and the deepening of the already first-class Cabin services of the airline.

"We have done extensive work on the Airside perimeter fencing of the airport, and the continuous funding of the 8.5 km Airside Patrol Road, which is now ready for commissioning.

"We have equally continued the funding of the parallel Taxiway Rapid Exit, the Apron Construction, International Terminal Building, the Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MRO) facility, the VIP Car Park, Access Road into the Terminal Building and the underground drain alongside the CCTV Control," the Governor said.

He appreciated President Bola Tinubu, Minister of Aviation, Festus Keyamo, SAN, all past governors in the State as well as the management and staff of Ibom Air for their respective support and contributions to the Akwa

Ibom project.

In his remarks, former Governor and progenitor of aviation investment in the State, Obong Victor Attah applauded his successors for sustaining and furthering his vision in the industry.

He made reference to the Scripture in 1 Corinthians 3:6, "I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow," saying that it was a true reflection of the trajectory of the state.

Obong Attah whom the Airport is rightly named after, expressed delight with the continuous development trend and urged all the actors in the sector not to relent but keep faith and double their efforts for more success stories.

Earlier, the MD/CEO of Ibom Air, Captain Mfon Udom noted that the process of acquiring the Brand New Airbus A220-300 started in 2020, and was signed in 2021.

He noted that though the cost of acquiring the Brand New Airbus A220-300 could afford five of the regular aircraft used around the country, there are numerous advantages especially, fuel economy, eco-friendly design and ability to be used for both long and short haul flights. Highpoint of the event was the dedication of the brand new Airbus A220-300 and the tape cutting ceremony.



Pastor Umo Eno inside the new Ibom Air Air bus

IHSOSA Elects New National Executive Committee

***University Don, Dr Busari emerges National President**

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

Old Students Association of Islamic High School, Orita Basorun, Ibadan at the weekend, elected a new set of National Executive Committee that will pilot the affairs of the association for the next two years.

The peacefully conducted election was held based on the delegate system, resulting in the emergence of the 8-man executive committee.

At the election held at the

Orita Basorun premises of the school, a university don, Dr. Bayo Busari elected as the national president.

Also elected into the executive committee were Lateef Adesina and Muftau Olaniyi Zubair, who were returned as vice president, and general secretary respectively for a second term of office.

Other members included, Omowumi Emmanuel as assistant general secretary, Olubisi Abiola Davies Ojo as public relations officer, Ismaila Oyebayo Bello as

treasurer, Quadri Olorunseun Ishola as financial secretary while Nafisat Yetunde Adejumo was elected welfare officer.

In a short acceptance speech, the new National President, Dr Bayo Busari expressed his appreciation to the founding fathers of the Association and the outgoing Executive Committee for sustaining the cord of development for the school.

Emphasizing the pivotal role that old students' associations have played

in the education sector of the state, Dr Busari called on the state government, under the leadership of Engr. Seyi Makinde to further partner old students' associations as "government alone can not fund education in the state."

The election was witnessed by elders in the association, delegates and observers from various sets, as well as the school principal, Alh. Abdullahi Fasasi, who is also an alumnus of Islamic High School.

Islamic Cleric To FG: Include Quran, Arabic Studies In Primary, Secondary Schools Curriculum To Curb Social Vices

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

The Director of Ali Institute for Quran Memorisation (AIQM), Ibadan, Mallam Ali Abdulssalam has advocated inclusion of Quran and Arabic studies in the curriculum of primary and secondary schools in Nigeria.

Speaking at the 4th graduation ceremony of the institute held at the International Conference Centre, University of Ibadan, on Monday, the Islamic cleric said this will among others make the young children to be useful in the society.

Mallam Abdulssalam disclosed that this is necessary in order to reduce the increasing rate of social vices among the youths in the country.

"The government should consider including Quran and Arabic studies into the curriculum of all primary and secondary schools in Nigeria", he said.

Mallam Abdusallam added, "This will go long way in inculcating the pristine teachings of Islam in these kids at young age, making them willing and useful citizens'.

The Islamic Cleric while also stressing the need for the government to provide employment for graduates of Arabic and Quranic schools tasked the authorities to give formal recognition and support to schools of Quranic and Islamic Studies, so as to reduce crime and promote societal values in the country.

According to him,

recognition of the schools would help to ensure that youths are fed with required spiritual diet and thereby reducing crime and promoting uprightiness in the society.

"We use this opportunity to also reiterate the need for the government to create employment for graduates of Arabic and Qur'an schools in the country. This will also go a long way in sanitizing our society as the more God-conscious youth get employed the more the criminality is reduced in the society".

The Islamic Cleric stressed further, "Considering our contributions to the society's uprightiness, we call on the government to give appropriate recognition and support to all schools of Qur'an and Islamic studies as we are doing a great service to the nation by ensuring the youth are well fed with the required spiritual diet thereby reducing the rate of crimes in the society".

The Asiwaju Adinni Musulumi of Ibadan, Alhaji Hassan Giwa, while speaking with journalists at the event, called on the graduands not to relent in constantly studying the Quran for them not to forget what they were taught.

Dignitaries at the event included the representative of senator representing Oyo South District, Barrister Sharafadeen Alli, Chief Medical Director, Federal Medical Centre, Keffi, Nasarawa State, Dr. Yahaya Adamu, the Asiwaju Adinni Musulumi of Ibadan, Alhaji Hassan Giwa, Consultant Neurological Surgeon from

You Have Abandoned Nigerians, National Youth Alliance Tells Atiku, Kwankwaso, Obi

■ Says they are watching them die socially, economically

some salient questions and we demand for urgent but sincere, patriotic and honest response," the group said.

According to them, "Are we been used? Are you all just deceiving Nigerians, most especially, the youths and the masses by pretending you are with us while you are actually behind the electoral victory and government of Bola Ahmed Tinubu and APC?"

"Are you developing a cold feet? Hence, the loud silence and gentle men opposition?"

"Could it be what we perceived as obvious insensitivity to the Socioeconomic woes that is confronting the masses?"

"Yes, we agree that there are pocket of recalcitrant individuals among the youth class who has chosen to be subservient to the antics of the rulling class, the big question is, what is their ratio to those that are day and night looking up to your excellencies for political redemption and salvation?"

"Why are you watching us dying socially and economically? Why are

we abandoned and ignored? Are you telling us indirectly to wait till 2027 before the commencement of ideological movement and revolution? Are your excellencies declining the acceptability and acknowledgement of the Readiness of those who are ready for the safe Nigeria movement? Why are they not called upon?"

"Unarguably, You are made, you are settled and you may not need anything from Nigeria, the question is "what happens to those of us who genuinely believe in your philosophies and ideologies? Those of us that have been affiliating with you even without deserve acknowledgement and Recognitions, unlike those moles and dubious characters among those parading themselves as your loyalists, what becomes their fates?"

"Like I stated at the beginning of this letter, your silence is in no doubt provoking our patience, frustrating our loyalty and Messing up our sensitivities.



Ambassador Aliyu Bin Abbas

"I don't think it will be wise enough to wait until we begin to use our presumptions to campaign against your excellencies.

"There is palpable tension in the land, Nigerians await your urgent intervention like we see in other part of the world especially African nations, how Leaders stand before the ruling party on behalf of the people to demand for socioeconomic and

political justice without necessarily waiting for election to come.

"The struggle for socioeconomic and political freedom should not just stop at election petition tribunals, that is as a matter of fact the basis for ideological revolution.

"Angers is brewing up and this certainly will spare nobody if the metamorphosis is allowed to complete," it said.

LBS, GRI Partner, Launch Agric Sector Standard for Sustainability Reporting in Nigeria

By; MATTHEW UKACHUNWA, Lagos

Lagos Business School Sustainability Centre (LBSSC) has partnered with the Africa regional hub of the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) to launch GRI 13 Sector Standard in Nigeria.

The GRI 13 Sector Standard was designed to enhance the quality, consistency and comparability of reporting sustainability impacts for agriculture, aquaculture and fishery sectors.

The sector specific reporting standard will come into effect on January 1, 2024, Jonathan Ikeolumba, Affiliate Researcher, LBSSC, said, "It will spotlight for businesses in the sector ways to enable sustainable agricultural practices that

enhance fair trade, improve competitiveness and promote responsible business conduct," Ikeolumba clarified.

The launching took place on Thursday, 30th November 2023 at the George Hotel, Lagos, doubling as the launch of the new reporting standard and a platform for stakeholders dialogue.

The Sector Reporting Standard was developed to provide information that applies to organizations involved in crops, animals and fisheries production, the Director of GRI Africa, Douglas Kativu, explained while speaking on the topic, "Driving Responsibility and Accountability in Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fishing."

The Sector Reporting Standard has 26 likely

material topics for the sectors grouped under climate change and environment, human rights and communities, equitable livelihoods, ethics and governance, food and health, employment and farming and fishing practices, Kativu said.

"The topics align with many authoritative international instruments defining responsible business conduct as well as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030," the GRI director elaborated.

A high point of the event was a panel discussion on the topic: "Enhancing Competitiveness Through Responsibility, Traceability, and Shared Value."

Panelists proffered solutions to the various

traceability and standardization challenges plaguing the sector in Nigeria.

GRI is a global standardization organization which has developed and delivered the global best practice for how organizations communicate and demonstrate accountability for their impacts on environment, economy and people.

"GRI provides the world's widely used sustainability reporting standards which cover a wide range of topics from biodiversity to agriculture to health and safety and everything in between," LBS management wrote in a statement titled, "GRI, LBS Sustainability Centre Host Nigeria Launch of Agric Sector Standard for Sustainability Reporting."

LASTMA Sacks 5 Officials, Calls For More Complaint On Misdemeanors

By; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

As a rider to the ratification of the recommendations of the Personnel Management Board by the Lagos State Civil Service Commission (C.S.C) on the seven indicted Lastma officials, the Lagos State Traffic Management Authority (LASTMA) has terminated the appointment of the affected officials.

They were issued the termination letters at the Oshodi headquarters of Agency on Friday.

This happened, just as the Acting General Manager Mr. Bakare-Oki Olalekan urged the motoring public to always report perceived misdemeanors of the officials with evidence. The Director, Public Affairs and Enlightenment Department of LASTMA, Mr. Adebayo Taofiq made the disclosure in a statement made available to journalists at the weekend.

Adebayo confirmed that every recommendations made by the Personnel Management Board on indicted Lastma officials during a meeting on Tuesday, 19th of August, 2023 were ratified by the Lagos State Civil Service Commission.

"While Five Lastma Officials indicted for corruptions received letter of Termination of appointment', remaining two received letter of 'Reprimand' for absence from duty posts without leave", the LASTMA spokesperson stated.

Similarly, the Acting

General Manager of LASTMA, Mr. Bakare-Oki Olalekan has stated that the disciplinary action taken was in line with the extant rules as guided by the Lagos State Civil Service Rules and Regulations.

Mr. Bakare Oki maintained that the Agency would only get better if and when members of the public shared their experiences, including positive ones, and provided evidence where applicable of perceived misdemeanors. He implored road users in Lagos to always comply with the State Traffic Law in order not to run foul of the law, which will attract penalties as stated in the law.

According to him, "This is necessary for all of us to promote a Greater Lagos for the benefit of all and for the realization of Governor Babajide Olusola Sanwo-Olu's objectives in the First Pillar of the THEMES Plus Development Agenda (Traffic Management and Transportation)".

"We wish to add by informing well-meaning and concerned Lagos residents and the motoring public that we have various windows through which complaints can be channelled for prompt action - 08100565860, 08129928515, 08129928503, (08129928597 WhatsApp only) & Provost on 08129928490

He assured that such complaints shall be investigated dispassionately with despatch.

While enjoining every motoring public to abide

by the Lagos State Transportation Sector Reform Law 2018, Mr Bakare Oki disclosed that cases against remaining 14 indicted Lastma Officials are undergoing additional administrative review.



Acting General Manager LASTMA
Bakare-Oki Olalekan

No Room For Gender Based Violence In Oyo State, Gov Makinde warns

*Leads walk in Ibadan

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

Oyo State Governor, Engineer Seyi Makinde on Monday, hinted that the state government will not give room for Gender Based Violence, (GBV) in the state.

Governor Makinde dropped this hint while leading campaign against sexual and Gender Based Violence (GBV) walk in Ibadan together with his wife, Mrs Tamunominini Makinde, representative of Commissioner of Police, the Commissioner for Special Duty, Alhaja Faosat Sanni, Commissioner for Youth and Sport,

Wasilat Adegoke, and Commissioner for Women Affairs, Toyin Balogun among others.

The governor said the campaign was to draw the attention of people of the state to vulnerable groups in the state, and to demonstrate that Gender Based Violence (GBV) will not be tolerated in the state.

Emphasizing that the state government will not tolerate any acts of Gender Based Violence, he cautioned against capitalizing on the prevalence of poverty in the society as an excuse to engage in such acts as the government will at all times protect the vulnerables in the society.

Commending the

security agencies in the state for their roles in the fight against GBV, the governor said the menace won't stop if security agencies are not up and doing.

Wife of the governor, Mrs Tamunominini Makinde while addressing the gathering said the walk was to sensitise the public against sexual and Gender Based Violence. Mrs Makinde noted that there is the need to unite and prevent violence against women in the state, adding that the walk was not only to raise awareness, but also to consolidate steps already taken by the state government towards ending gender based violence in the

society.

She stressed that the walk would serve as a reminder that fight against Gender-Based Violence (GBV) requires not only people's attention but a call to action for the society to unite against the issue of violence that has affected many life's..

Participants at the walk which started inside Agodi government house were seen carrying placards having inscriptions like "Every Voice Counts", "Zero Tolerance to Gender Based Violence", and "Oyo State Say no to Gender Based Violence" among others.

Poverty Alleviation: Kaduna Reps Member Doles Out N50k Each To 175 Market Women, Others

By: EMMANUELAGBO, Kaduna

Nigeria's House Committee Chairman on Sports, House of Representatives, Hon. Ekene Abubakar Adams, has empowered 175 market women and other petty traders in his constituency with cash.

Ekene, a federal lawmaker, representing Chikun/Kajuru Constituency in Kaduna State, under the platform of Labour Party, (LP) presented a cash amount of N50,000 each to the beneficiaries in his constituency office in Kaduna on Tuesday, to fulfill his campaign promises given to the people, in 2021 while in APC.

The Lawmaker who was represented by his Director of Finance, Constituency Office, Kaduna Mr. Alexander Adanu said the program is tagged, "Let's Get Empowered" with the aim to assist market women especially petty traders and other people who are into various kinds of trade for self-reliance.

Adanu disclosed that the beneficiaries were selected from across each political wards of Chikun/Kajuru Federal constituency, regardless of tribe, religion, political affiliation and other differences, adding that the Lawmaker is committed to ensure that everyone in the constituent get something that will enable them to do businesses of their choice.

He appealed to those who did not benefit from the first phase of the grant to be patient, assuring them that they would benefit during the second phase of the grant in no distant time.

"Today is a special day. It will shock you to know that this program is a long time promise of about two years ago when he was campaigning in 2021 under the platform of the All Progressive Congress, (APC) he promised the people, "Let's Get Empowered" and because of his nature as someone who keep to his words, he has decided to bring it up today to fulfill the promise.

"The beneficiaries cut across all the different wards in Chikun and Kajuru Local Government Areas, in Kaduna state that made up the Federal Constituency, with the aim to bring the dividends of democracy to the grassroots.

"In this phase of our Empowerment scheme, everybody as far as you are living in the constituent you are a beneficiary, no matter your gender, tribe, religion or political party.

"What we did was a ballot, where some people picked Yes or No. Those with the 'Yes' Tag are the ones we are empowering today and we have over 175 of them, smiling home with a cash amount of N50,000

"By the special grace of God, we will still have another program because it's a continuous process. It does not end here. It's just a way of kick-starting and as we continue in the governance process we will still have more of this to come." Alex said.

One of the beneficiaries, Mohammed Jibril, from Kujama ward, said the cash will enable him to grow his business even as he recounts series of unfortunate challenges that has hamper the growth of his business for some time now.

Another, Mimi Aluka from Sabo ward in Chikun Local Government Area, a poultry farmer said she will invest the money into her farm for maximum profits, while appreciating the Honourable Member for his kind gesture and prayed God to grant him his heart desires both in time and in eternity.



Group Demands Arrest Of Traditional Ruler, Chief Over Alleged Blockage Of Road

By: BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

A human rights group, Save the Poor and Needy Charity Initiative (SPANCI) yesterday, called for the arrest of a traditional ruler, the Elerinmo of Erinmo land, Oba Micheal Odunayo Ajayi Arowotawaya and Saba of Erinmo, Chief Taiwo Agbonmagbe over alleged blockage of Erinmo to Efon Alaaye Road.

SPANCI in a statement by its President, Comrade Yemi Ezekiel Bello yesterday, alleged that the traditional ruler and his chiefs ordered their men to block Erinmo to Efon road and other roads leading to Orioke Agbara Emimimo Efon Alaaye in Ekiti state. The group maintained that some thugs on the order of the traditional ruler stopped people going on the mountain threatened and assaulted them.

In the statement, the group alleged that the hoodlums accosted and assaulted the family members of late Prophet Joseph Odeyemi Eyinafe Bojesomo who were coming to inform the Zone 11 AIG of the recent attack on them.

"We in Save the Poor and Needy Charity Initiative (SPANCI) frown our face on the breakdown of law and order coupled with assault and unlawful road blockage allegedly perpetrated by the Elerinmo thugs yesterday on Erinmo to Efon Road

other places leading to Orioke Agbara Emimimo Efon Alaaye via Erinmo popularly called Orioke Erinmo on the order of Oba Micheal Odunayo Ajayi Arowotawaya, the Elerinmo of Erinmo", it said.

The group alleged further, "These thugs stopped people going on the mountain threatened and assaulted them. They told the bikers to fear their lives by stopping picking people coming to the said mountain with motive to create fear and stop late Prophet Joseph Odeyemi Eyinafe Bojesomo's burial".

"We want immediate arrest and prosecution of Elerinmo, Chief Saba and his thugs for unlawful blockage of federal government road and access to road, attempted murder of Mr Akin Bojesomo, assault, breach of public peace and breakdown of law and other which we alleged in our press release on 10th and 11 December".

"We want a neutral and higher authority who will do justice and not connive with Elerinmo to take over the matter"

New Nigerian recalls that the group had earlier called on President Bola Ahmed Tinubu and the Inspector General of Police, Kayode Egbetokun to provide maximum security during the burial of Prophet Joseph Odeyemi Eyinafe Bojesomo.



Gov Bello Presents N258.2bn 2024 Kogi Budget

By: ADAMA JOHN, Lokoja

Gov. Yahaya Bello of Kogi State has presented N258.2bn as Kogi State's 2024 Appropriation Bill for approval by the state House of Assembly Monday.

The budget is comparatively higher by N60.67bn to N197.59bn Revised Approved Budget of 2023.

Furthermore, the budget has N145.73 billion as Recurrent Expenditure and a Capital Expenditure of N112.54 billion.

Governor Bello during the budget presentation rituals to the lawmakers, said that the budget Christened "2024 Budget of Consolidation and Continuity for Inclusive Growth", was purposed for consolidating on the gains of 2023 fiscal year.

"As I bid farewell to this honourable assembly today, I wish to extend my heartfelt gratitude again for your dedication to our state and people over the years and commitment to the growth and success of our dear state.

"As Jan. 27, 2024, when I will wind down my administration approaches, and we all prepare to welcome the new Government of

Governor-Elect, Usman Ododo, it is my heartfelt desire that you extend even greater levels of cooperation to him (Ododo)," he said.

On sectorial allocations, Bello said that administration had N64.3bn; economy, N82bn; law and justice, N14.97bn and social affairs, N96.98bn.

To him, the objective of the budget was to improve the quality of education at all levels and make it accessible to all citizens and to produce the bulk of skilled manpower necessary for economic transformation of the state locally.

He opined that it is to further democratise access to healthcare by sustained improvement in the efficiency of healthcare delivery system, ensure food security and generate a high proportion of the GDP from agriculture.

"It's also aimed at exploiting the full potentials of our economy and expand trade and commerce in the state to have access to markets locally and internationally.

And it is "to ensure gainful employment of youths and create opportunities for the development of their talents and to achieve

sustainable development and promote social and economic development through culture and tourism.

"It's to establish the necessary framework for a robust Mining and Solid Minerals Sector, to brand Kogi as the foremost solid minerals mining destination in Nigeria and improve the road network in urban and rural areas.

He said the network would be improved through construction of new roads, bridges and rehabilitation of existing ones.

"It's to ensure sustainable use of the environment and continuous management of environmental challenges such as pollution, deforestation, flooding, degradation, gully erosion and other ecological problems.

"Despite notable hiccups, we have become a family that cannot be broken. We will work through any problems we may have with each other and find common ground from which to mentor our successors and move on to the next levels of our own lives and careers."

He expressed his gratitude to President Bola Tinubu, for his exemplary leadership within the past seven months during

which "some really hard but necessary decisions have been taken which will no doubt help Nigeria to work better for all Nigerians".

Speaking earlier, Speaker Umar Yusuf expressed gratitude for the collaboration enjoyed by the house with the executive under Bello's leadership.

Yusuf assured that the incoming administration of Usman Ododo would enjoy even a better synergy for the growth and progress of the state.

The speaker, however, assured of a closer working relationship in thoroughly examining the new budget before its passage.

"I seek the cooperation of heads of ministries, departments and agencies of government in ensuring due diligence is done to give the document accelerated passage.

"On behalf of my colleagues, I hereby assure you that we are committed to the progress of the state and therefore, ready to drop everything on our tables to concentrate on passing the budget in record time for the growth and development of the state."

"We want a neutral and higher authority who will do justice and not connive with Elerinmo to take over the matter"

ITF Trains 270 Youth On Cyber Security To Frustrate Scammers In Kaduna State.

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The Industrial Training Fund (ITF) has trained 270 youth on cyber security and coding to address the negative activities of scammers in Kaduna State. The Area Manager ITF Kaduna Office, Engineer Garba Hassan stated this during an interactive forum with stakeholders with the theme "artificial intelligence and the future of human resource development in Nigeria" held at the office of ITF Kaduna. He explained to the gathering that the fund financed the training of the 270 youth for six

months, their transportation's allowance and the start-up packs they received during their graduation. "If those youth whom were trained on cyber security and equipped with start-up packs utilized it positively, Kaduna State would not be safe for scammers and criminals". He said. Engineer Garba Hassan said within the year under review, Kaduna Area office of ITF had trained seven thousand youth on tailoring, fashion design, leather work, beauty care and cosmetology, graphic design and photography, solar installation

among others. He thanks all their partners for always being there and also assured them that his doors for partnership are always open for human capital and economic development. In a paper presentation, a part-time lecturer at Kaduna State University, Malam Umar Faruk said companies were adopting artificial intelligence because it helps them to improve efficiency and productivity as well. "Artificial technology is able to automate tedious, repetitive, and time-consuming tasks that were previously done manually" he added.

In their separate remarks, the representatives of Bank of Industry, Northern Nigeria Development Company, Bank of Agriculture, Nigeria Railway commended ITF Kaduna Area office under Engr Garba Hassan and the management for their effort particularly in training their staff in different capacities. In his vote of thanks, the Head of Training ITF, Kaduna Area office, Mr. Daniel Jamgbade assured their partners that the fund would continue to do it's best in the area of training in human development. At the end of the event, ITF Kaduna Area office presented an

award of outstanding performance to Bank of Industry, Nigeria Railway Corporation as the best in in-house training and District Head of Doka, Alhaji Balarabe Muhammad as the best Community Development Leader. Others are, Al-Rissalah Printing and Publishing Company Nigeria as the best in training contribution (without variance) and the Terraina Construction Nigeria Limited as the most outstanding in training contribution.



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

TERMS OF ADVERT PLACEMENT

- All adverts are expected to be in cash or bank draft in favour of New Nigerian Newspaper's Limited.
- Series discount is subject to the stipulated number of insertions, and it is payable only at the end of a campaign (to be deducted from balance pay).
- COPY DATE:** for all the Title Heads is three working days for the North and four working days for the South.
- Cancellation of previously booked advert will be accepted in writing within four working days notice, less than 24 hours to the date of publication will attract 25% surcharge.
- Advertisers/Agencies are to provide their Camera ready artwork in electronic copies, in PDF, or JPEG format.
- Advertisers will be surcharged 20% of the applicable rate where artworks are not provided.
- Adverts may not be published if the visuals given are considered too poor as to affect the reproduction.
- Alterations to original order should be conveyed in writing at least 24 hours to desired alteration date.
- Colour guides are to accompany coloured adverts.
- The management of New Nigerian Newspapers Limited reserves the right to reject an advert or any publication in any of its titles where such materials are considered distasteful for public exposure or libelous.

TECHNICAL DATA

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

POLITICAL RATE

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

LOOSE INSERTS

S/NO	SIZE	RATE	VAT	TOTAL
1	Handling for the first 40 copies	120,000.00	9,000.00	129,000.00
2	Per 1000 Copies (1 Page)	28,000.00	2,100.00	30,100.00
3	Per 1000 Copies (Magazine)	50,000.00	3,750.00	53,750.00
4	Per 1000 Copies (Magazine)	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 W RAPA ROUND	6,750,000.00	506,250.00	7,256,250.00
HALF W RAPA ROUND	4,500,000.00	337,500.00	4,837,500.00
PA GE 2 O R 3	400,000.00	30,000.00	430,000.00
PA GE 4 O R 5	375,000.00	28,125.00	403,125.00
PA GE 6 O R 7	325,000.00	24,375.00	349,375.00
FR ONT PA GE M A S T H E A D E A R P I E C E	215,000.00	16,875.00	231,875.00
FR ONT PA GE S O L U S	312,500.00	23,437.50	335,937.50
FR ONT PA GE S T R I P	375,000.00	28,125.00	403,125.00
B A C K PA GE E A R P I E C E	200,000.00	15,000.00	215,000.00
B A C K PA GE S T R I P	250,000.00	18,750.00	268,750.00
C E N T R E S P R E A D (C O L O U R)	837,500.00	62,812.50	900,312.50
D O U B L E S P R E A D (C O L O U R)	700,000.00	52,500.00	752,500.00
C E N T R E S P R E A D (B L A C K & W H I T E)	575,000.00	43,125.00	618,125.00
D O U B L E S P R E A D (B L A C K & W H I T E)	590,000.00	44,250.00	634,250.00
FR ONT PA GE (10" X 6)	3,250,000.00	243,750.00	3,493,750.00
R O P S T R I P (C O L O U R)	125,000.00	9,375.00	134,375.00
R O P S T R I P (B L A C K & W H I T E)	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

16 Days Activism: Kaduna NLC Women Committee Seeks Severe Punishment Against Rape Case

By; USMAN NASIDI, Kaduna.

Considering the unending menace and high rate of rape cases in the society, the Kaduna State Council of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC), Women Committee has called on both state and federal government to impose a law that will inflict severe pains to anyone found wanting on rape cases.

Speaking during a press Conference in Kaduna, the chairperson of NLC Women Committee, Comrade Martha Banki Nok, lamented that the rate at which rape cases are being reported, is becoming alarming, considering proper actions are not being taken against the culprits.

She added that their plans is to see how gender based violence can be eradicated in our society as they observed the 16 days of activities that's from November 15 to the December 10.

Comrade Nok, added that through those activities, they embark on activism,

sensitization, run workshops, meetings with stakeholders and the communities.

She said, "Our greatest challenge is we still lack few opportunities to enlighten more people on the issue of gender base violence that the community will understand the effect it has for the society.

"We have lots of civilization taken place, lots of suicide, lots of children being demoralized due to such evil act being demonstrated by both gender as a whole because you hear men raping boys or girls, so it's not just about the women and girls because it also has to do with our boys but we seems to concentrate more on girls because women seems to be more vulnerable and lack means of expressing themselves, so we stands as their advocates to see how such menace can come to an end.

"So, we raise advocacy, we talk to students, women, children and try to build that confidence in them so that they shouldn't wait for



someone to speak for them because they too can speak for themselves and we want the society and the government to take greater action regarding those menace.

"We're calling on the government to create such

action to ensure that such punishment exists, being carried out and to ensure people who are doing such crime are punished physically to the eyes of everybody, not minding who they are or their positions.

closely together.

He added that, violence against women is inevitable, it is preventable by telling families, schools, communities, and work places, saying together, the message will be amplified, and our voices heard.

He said, "be supportive, keep yourself, your family and community healthy and protected. Say no to any form of violence psychological, sexual or economic violence.

"This campaign shows how the NLC Chairperson said the union care about ending violence against women and girls all over the globe, but particularly in work-places, immigrations, and in all employments and jobs."

He explained that convention No.190 and Recommendation No. 206 are the first International labour standards to provide a common framework to prevent, remedy, eliminate violence and harassment in the world of work, including gender-based violence and harassment.

The NLC State Chairperson, Comrade Ayuba Magaji Suleiman, called on governments, organizations and people to speak out against violence in all its forms.



Prof Jinadu And The Struggle Against Beaching Electoral Democracy

By Jibrin Ibrahim

LAST week, our mentor, friend and great advocate for electoral democracy, Prof Adele Jinadu, celebrated his eightieth birthday, (we share the same birthday), and a lot of us joined him in Lagos for the celebration. The palpable fear among the civil society participants at the event was that Nigeria currently has a reckless political class and judiciary that is ready to beach, (like the proverbial whale), electoral democracy and that all hands must be on deck to defend our hard-earned democratic system.

First on the matter of the more prosaic beach, I stayed in one of the beachside resorts – Landmark Hotel – built on land reclaimed from the ocean, which will certainly reclaim its property in the coming years. I find the new property developments in Lagos distressing. The entire beach is now a private commercial affair and you cannot get to the beach without paying a 6,000-naira gate fee. On one side of Landmark Beach is Good Beach and on the other, Oniru Beach, all three closed to access (without payment) by the public. Who plotted this wickedness against the good people of Lagos State and why were they allowed to get away with it?

Democrats should begin to mobilise as the return of the culture of the military coup and political instability across West Africa are not unconnected to the effect of electoral fraud, vote rigging, vote-trading as well as judicial distrust which we notice in Nigeria today. Growing judicial activism in depriving Nigerians their mandate won at the polls today constitutes a serious threat to the democratic order, good electoral governance and public trust in the electoral process. Citizens are beginning to ask themselves why should they vote if their mandate would be stolen subsequently.

These beach hotels are overpriced on the basis of being luxury accommodation. The reality is that they are health hazards with raw sewage being fed directly into the sea through pipes from the buildings every 100 metres. People cannot enjoy the sea because it is literally full of shit. Are there sanitation authorities in Lagos? How can such a health hazard be allowed to exist and why do the nouveaux rich think it's appropriate to flaunt their riches amidst human excreta?

In one of the side events around the birthday, the Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC)/Transparency International in Nigeria held a National Seminar on Targeted Electoral Reforms and Enhanced Judicial Integrity in Post-election Litigation. The Seminar aimed at bringing under one roof, legal

practitioners, electoral experts, electoral observers, civil society and the Media, to critically observe the areas enabling technicalities and challenges bedevilling the electoral system and conduct, in view of proffering holistic recommendations for adequate and all-inclusive reform that restores and preserves judicial integrity in Nigeria's electoral system.

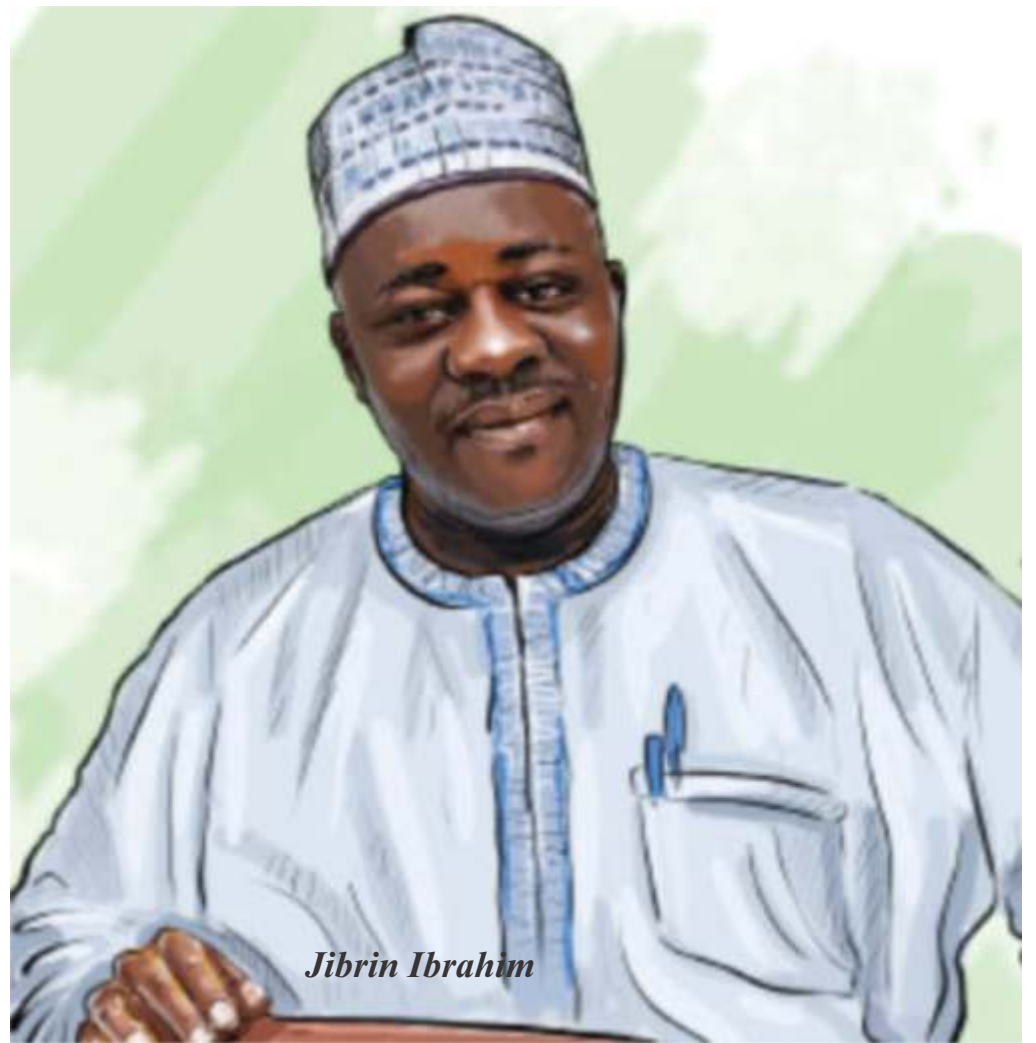
In his opening remarks, the Executive Director of CISLAC, Auwal Ibrahim Musa (Rafsanjani); castigated the judiciary for increasingly being perpetrators organising the theft of mandate won by candidates through the ballot and handing it over to ruling party candidates who had lost at the polls. Other speakers, including Dr Sam Amadi, Ebun-Olu Adegboruwa SAN, Nurudeen Ogbara, Prof Hassan Saliu, President, Nigerian Political Science Association (NPSA), Comrade Omoyele Sowore, Comfort Idika-Ogunye, Attorney Carol Ajie, Engr Y.Z Ya'u, the Convener Nigerian Civil Society Situation Room, Barr. Frank Agbedo, Hon. Uche Onyeagocha, Mrs Olajumoke Anifowoshe, Former Attorney-General, Ondo State, Prof Farooq Adamu Kperogi of Kennesaw State University, Georgia and yours sincerely were just as critical.

The key observations made were as follow:

Over the past few years, corruption has eaten deeply into the judiciary and this process has negatively affected Nigeria's electoral integrity as judges increasingly compromise the process of adjudication and appear to have lost their independence and professional ethics. The outcome is that the law courts are playing a more prominent role in the determination of political leadership through post-election litigations. The order of the day, says Prof Kperogi, is judicial coups against democracy, hence the need to refocus attention on the role of judiciary in electoral tribunal judgment.

Despite various legal reforms preceding the 2023 general and off-cycle elections, the conduct and outcomes of the elections demonstrate reduced integrity. One concerning factor is the appointment of politically partisan individuals into INEC thereby compromising the neutrality and independence of the electoral umpire.

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Jibrin Ibrahim

democratic order, good electoral governance and public trust in the electoral process. Citizens are beginning to ask themselves why should they vote if their mandate would be stolen subsequently.

Further develop and entrench in law the use of technology by INEC in the electoral process so that the institution can fully regain some of the public trust it has lost by demonstrating the transparency of its actions. Immediate amendments to Sections 41, 47 and 60 of the Electoral Act to provide adequate legal backing to whistle-blower and public interest litigations before, during and after the elections.

The people's mandate is also seriously affected by money politics. Political entrepreneurs now openly buy votes on polling day exploiting mass poverty in the land. Party nomination forms have also been commercialised and only the richest, meaning for the most part those who have stolen government money, can participate in the electoral process.

Key recommendations included the following:

Revive the spirit and methodology of mandate protection by citizens to prevent further theft of mandate through illegal means such as money politics, violence and thuggery and judicial coups against democracy.

Closely monitor the appointment of INEC national and state resident electoral commissioners and organise

campaigns against the appointment of partisan party card carrying and/or corrupt individuals. Advocate for a new process of appointment of competent persons with integrity into INEC through an open and competitive process as recommended by the Uwais Panel.

Further develop and entrench in law the use of technology by INEC in the electoral process so that the institution can fully regain some of the public trust it has lost by demonstrating the transparency of its actions. Immediate amendments to Sections 41, 47 and 60 of the Electoral Act to provide adequate legal backing to whistle-blower and public interest litigations before, during and after the elections.

Immediate amendment to the Electoral Act for enabling provisions that render pre-election matters not litigable after announcement of the winner of an election, while limiting post-election litigations to the conduct of the elections.

Wishing Professor Jinadu many more years of useful advocacy on advancing electoral democracy in Nigeria.

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

Culled from National Record.

Henry Kissinger: A Curse On Africa, Asia And Latin America

By Owei Lakemfa

HENRY (Heinz) Alfred Kissinger, the most infamous United States Secretary of State and National Security Advisor, passed away peacefully at 100 on November 29, 2023 and is guaranteed a marked grave. Not so for the tens of thousands of Africans, Latin Americans and Asians who experienced violent deaths in their youth and had no tomb stones in their names due to the policies formulated and implemented by Kissinger.

A prolific author, brilliant academic and highly cerebral intellectual, he, like his fellow German, Adolf Hitler, used his knowledge and skills to perpetuate unspeakable crimes against humanity.

He went on to deliver the killer punch: "Africa has come of age. It's no longer under the orbit of any extra continental power. It should no longer take orders from any country, however powerful. The fortunes of Africa are in our hands to make or to mar. For too long have we been kicked around; for too long have we been treated like adolescents who cannot discern their interests and act accordingly." With that and other speeches, Africa recognised the Angola government. Thirty-two days later, General Mohammed was gunned down in Lagos in an attempted coup.

One of the most vulnerable periods of Africa was in the 1970s, and tragically for the continent, it was the era Kissinger was most active, and perhaps most vicious, with no human compunction.

In that decade, Africa was in the struggle for life as a vicious regime in Portugal massacred Africans in Mozambique, Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau and Angola in an attempt to perpetuate its colonial rule. It was also the time, the Saharawi people led by POLISARIO, fought the Spanish for independence, and the Apartheid regime, assisted by the racist Ian Smith gang, tried to exterminate Africans in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) Namibia (South West Africa) and South Africa itself.

Kissinger was a major supporter of Apartheid and got the US to prop up that evil regime which was also invading various independent African countries.

An opportunity for freedom opened in 1974 when a Portugal in turbulence virtually abandoned its four to five centuries colonialism of Guinea Bissau, Mozambique and Angola.

However, rather than hand over to the main liberation movement, the MPLA led by Dr Agostinho Neto or organise elections, Portugal simply abandoned Angola.

Kissinger also told Ford that the continent must not be allowed to develop because "Africa is important to us. Many key products – coffee, cocoa, cobalt, chrome, iron ore, diamonds – come from Africa, 30 to 60 per cent of our consumption; and for our European allies, the figures are even higher. The radicalisation of Africa would turn the Europeans, vis-à-vis Africa, into

commercial enterprises rather than governments (we must) arrest the armed struggle in Southern Africa... The strategy was to slow down the struggle and get control of the process as we did in the Middle East." Cuba, led by Fidel Castro sent troops into Angola to stop the Apartheid-led push towards Luanda; that changed the tide of the war and led to the eventual collapse of the racist regime in Zimbabwe and the Apartheid regimes in Namibia and South Africa.

This gave the US and its Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) the opportunity to try stopping the radical MPLA from running the country. First, Kissinger helped revive an old CIA asset, Holden Roberto, leader of the FNLA who was living in Zaire (DRC) under his in-law, then President Joseph Mobutu Seseseko, to race to Luanda and take power. When the chances of Roberto did not appear bright, US propped up Jonas Savimbi of UNITA. When it did not appear these could stop the MPLA government, Kissinger engineered a combined force of the FNLA, UNITA, American mercenaries and the awesome Apartheid military, to seize power in Angola.

These forces pushed towards Luanda but Africa was angry that Apartheid was trying to claim another African country. A meeting of the Organisation of Africa Unity (OAU), (now AU), was called for January 11, 1976 to take a position. Kissinger flew to Africa, warning the African leaders not to dare recognise the MPLA government.

An enraged Nigerian Head of State, General Murtala Ramat Mohammed, who had previously decided to send his Deputy, General Olusegun Obasanjo, to represent him at the summit, changed his mind, deciding to personally attend.

In his blistering speech at the OAU, Mohammed regretted that: "Rather than join hands with the forces fighting for self-determination and against racism and Apartheid, the United States policy makers clearly decided that it was in the best interests of their country to maintain White supremacy and minority regimes in Africa."

One of the most criminal acts of Kissinger against humanity was the carpet bombing of Cambodia from 1969. The US was not at war with that country, yet it dropped about 500,000 tons of bombs on innocent Cambodians. Kissinger claimed that the bombs were targeted at Vietnamese soldiers whom the US suspected were hiding in that country. It was a precursor to the 2023 Israeli bombing and destruction of hospitals in Gaza because it had the



false belief that the Hamas is operating beneath hospitals.

He went on to deliver the killer punch: "Africa has come of age. It's no longer under the orbit of any extra continental power. It should no longer take orders from any country, however powerful. The fortunes of Africa are in our hands to make or to mar. For too long have we been kicked around; for too long have we been treated like adolescents who cannot discern their interests and act accordingly." With that and other speeches, Africa recognised the Angola government. Thirty-two days later, General Mohammed was gunned down in Lagos in an attempted coup.

At the US National Security Council Meeting of May 11, 1976, Kissinger told President Gerald Ford that his actions in Angola and Africa were because "a communist victory in Angola would quicken events in Southern Africa, encourage radicalism and discourage moderates." At the time of this Kissinger briefing, Apartheid South Africa was massacring African children in Soweto and here was Kissinger asking the US to prevent the collapse of Apartheid!

Kissinger also told Ford that the continent must not be allowed to develop because "Africa is important to us. Many key products – coffee, cocoa, cobalt, chrome, iron ore, diamonds – come from Africa, 30 to 60 per cent of our consumption; and for our European allies, the figures are even higher. The radicalisation of Africa would turn the Europeans, vis-à-vis Africa, into commercial enterprises rather than governments (we must) arrest the armed struggle in Southern Africa... The strategy was to slow down the struggle and get control of the process as we did in the Middle East." Cuba, led by Fidel Castro sent troops into Angola to stop the Apartheid-led push towards Luanda; that changed the tide of the war and led to the eventual collapse of the racist regime in Zimbabwe and the Apartheid regimes in Namibia and South Africa.

In Chile, Kissinger was a main co-

ordinator of the bloody 1973 coup by General Augusto Pinochet against elected President Salvador Allende. That coup took the lives of over 3,000 Chileans with tens of thousands imprisoned and over 200,000 fleeing the junta. As humanity raised its voice in horror at the massacres of the innocent in Chile, Kissinger lied that it was a communist propaganda against the Pinochet regime. Yet, with the CIA assisting Pinochet with the repression and the US having an embassy and diplomats in Santiago, Kissinger was well informed about the horrors being perpetuated in Chile.

If the world were built on justice, Kissinger would have spent the rest of his life in jail for crimes against humanity. But he was from God's Own Country. God bless America!

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In December 1972, the US, desperate to withdraw its troops from Vietnam, dropped over 20,000 tons of bombs on Hanoi over a 12-day period to force a quick peace accord. Kissinger said the bombing was designed to shake the Vietnamese "to their core".

The following year, the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to both the warmonger, Kissinger and Vietnamese revolutionary, Le Duc Tho. The latter, pissed off by such blatant hypocrisy, rejected the award.

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FCT Reconciliatory Committee Submits Report To SWAN President

- *Says all members must accept the supremacy of SWAN statutes in the conduct of future elections
- *Recommends banning both factional chairmen, secretaries from next polls
- *President assures of implementing recommendations

A committee set up by the President of the Sports Writers Association of Nigeria (SWAN), Isaiah Kemje Benjamin to reconcile its members in Abuja has been submitted, where they recommended that all members must accept the supremacy of SWAN statutes in the conduct of future elections.

This was contained in a statement signed by the SA Media to SWAN President, Okpani Jacob Onjewu Dickson, made available on Thursday December 14, 2023.

Submitting the report at the SWAN National Secretariat, Moshood Abiola Stadium on Thursday December 14, 2023, chairman of the committee, Ahaziah Abubakar Suleiman as part of the resolutions, said that the role of the national body must be emphasized as central to the conduct of any genuine and credible SWAN elections.

The committee suggested that there should be no interference in the affairs of the excos activities by non excos members or any external bodies or persons.

"Electoral Committee SWANECO should be set up comprising neutral members with integrity and impeccable character to organize elections which should be held

as soon as possible before the terminal date of the polarized excos which is April, 2024.

"That the national body should invite those that failed to honour the invitation of the committee to let them know the displeasure of the excos to forestall such in the future in the interest and good health as well as development of the Association not only in Abuja but in the country as a whole.

"There should be deliberate plans to train and re-train Sports Writers in Abuja through partnerships to help those joining the association newly understand the rudiments and ethics of the profession," the committee advised.

They further recommended that two principal actors should sign up to a peaceful resolution of the crisis with a caution to desist from dividing the association to forestall future occurrence.

"None of the two factional Leaders and secretaries should be allowed to contest in the new elections.

"Members who made efforts to reconcile the two factions should be identified and commended for their efforts in the past to put an end to the crisis," they advised.

They added that, the National excos should

call and preside over Abuja Chapter congress, where resolution- and findings of the committee will be presented to them to get the buying-in of all member for the unity and progress of the association not only in Abuja, but indeed nationally.

"All members must accept the supremacy of SWAN statutes in the conduct of future elections, and not that of the NUJ.

"The national excos should after the elections introduce the newly elected officials to all stakeholders including the Minister, NFF and all other Sporting Associations including the local FCT Associations making statement that these are the new Abuja EXCO Member who are recognized by all and sundry should henceforth deal with them only except when the National Body is involved," the committee advised.

Similarly, the committee said that the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) should be properly communicated to on the newly approved statutes of the association and the rules governing SWAN in the country in a polite and diplomatic way for cordial and amicable working relationship with the NUJ since all SWAN members are all journalists and mostly members of the union.

The committee commended those who honoured its invitation with their presence and gave recommendations on the way forward for Abuja Chapter of SWAN, particularly the two factional leaders who were open and down to earth, ready to embrace peace in what had happened in the past that led to the division we have in Abuja SWAN with good suggestions on the way forward.

They also called on elders who are also members of Abuja Chapter of SWAN to stop balkanizing the association and allow peace to reign as nobody should be seen to be above the statutes of SWAN, rules and regulations that govern the association.

Responding after receiving the report, SWAN President, Isaiah Kemje Benjamin commended the committee for doing a thorough job.

Represented by Secretary General Ikenna Okonkwo, he assured that the recommendations will be looked into and appropriately implemented.

Members of the committee are, Victor Iroele, Paul Atte, Ganiyu Oloyede, Asueliemen Osasuyi, Lucky Obewo-Isawode and Ben Ogbemudia who served as Secretary.



Kaduna Finishes On 17th Position As 2nd National Para Games Ends

*Closes with pomp and pageantry, as Bayelsa State emerges champs

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Team Kaduna with one gold, two silver and one bronze medals at the Second Edition, National Para Games 2023, which ended at the Moshood Abiola Stadium, Abuja yesterday.

This is just as Team Bayelsa picked 30 gold, 24 silver and 20 bronze medals to finish tops.

Second position went to Team Abia with 16 gold, 8 silver and 11 bronze medals.

Team Kano placed third with 15 gold, 12 silver and 17 bronze medals and Lagos fourth, with 12 gold, 11 silver and 28 bronze medals.

The resounding success of the 2nd edition of the National Para Games culminated in an exhilarating and grand closing ceremony at the Moshood Abiola National Stadium, Abuja. The week-long celebration of talent, resilience, and sportsmanship concluded on December 14th, leaving an indelible mark on the landscape of para sports in Nigeria.

The Honourable Minister of Sports Development, Senator John Owan Enoh, lauded the remarkable display of talent and dexterity exhibited by the para athletes throughout the Games. Expressing his delight, he commended the spirit of competition and the dedication of all participants.

"The National Para Games have once again showcased the

incredible abilities and unwavering spirit of our para athletes," Senator Enoh said. "The level of talent and determination displayed by these athletes is truly inspiring. They embody the essence of sportsmanship and perseverance."

"Through sports, we celebrate unity, resilience, and determination. The National Para Games have proven to be a platform that not only showcases exceptional talent but also fosters inclusivity and breaks barriers."

From December 8th to 14th, the stadium played host to representatives from all 36 states of the Federation and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). The atmosphere was charged with excitement as athletes showcased their skills, determination, and unwavering spirit, captivating audiences and leaving spectators in awe.



The closing ceremony was a spectacle of pomp and pageantry, featuring captivating performances, cultural displays, and heartfelt tributes to the athletes who epitomized

perseverance and triumph over adversity.

As the curtains drew to a close on this momentous occasion, the legacy of the National Para

Games continues to inspire a new era of inclusivity, empowerment, and recognition for para athletes across Nigeria.

2nd Para Games: Oyo Aquatic Boss Lauds Athletes For Sweeping Swimming Medals

By: AYO OJEDOKUN Lagos

The Chairman of the Aquatic Association of Oyo State, Dr. Akande Kazeem Babatunde has expressed joy over the sterling performance of the para athletes that represented the state in the second edition of the National Para Games in Abuja which ended yesterday.

Ayomide Adeleye, James Believe, Regina Friday Johnson and Akorede Moses who represented the Team Oyo at the event, swept most of the medals in the Para-Swimming, returning with one gold, eight silver and three bronze medals to dominate the table.

Dr. Akande, an astute businessman, humanitarian and philanthropist who has just been elevated to the position of Chairman of Aquatic Association of Oyo State has pledged to host the athletes upon their return and compensate them



for making the investment of the governor, Engineer Seyi Makinde worthwhile.

The Head of Coaches in the Oyo State Sports Council, Adeyinka Olotu who accompanied the para swimmers to the

games has thanked the Oyo Aquatic boss for his constant support to the development of the water sports, especially towards their successful outing in the Abuja game where they won 12 medals.

"I want to use this opportunity to thank our loving and kind Chairman of Aquatics Association of Oyo State, Dr Akande Kazeem for all his support, both physically and financially towards the success of this Para Game in Abuja, we love and appreciate you always sir," said Coach Adeyinka Olotu while speaking with newsmen from Oyo camp in Abuja. Oyo State Para athletes featured in para-cycling, para-athletics, para-swimming, para-canoeing, para-karate, para-powerlifting, para-table tennis, wheelchair basketball, and wheelchair tennis.

Kaduna Finishes On 17th Position As 2nd National Para Games Ends

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Corps Member Gets Automatic Employment For Donating 101 Wheelchairs In Nasarawa

By; SAMSON YAKI, Lafia

A youth corps member, Nwanga Johnhilary Chikumaga (NS/23A/0960) from Ebonyi State, has been offered automatic employment by Nasarawa State Government for donating one hundred and one wheelchairs to persons living with disabilities from across Nasarawa State, as part of his community service.

Governor Abdullahi Sule gave the offer while distributing the wheelchairs to persons living with disabilities drawn from across the state, in Lafia.

The governor also directed ministries, departments and agencies of the state government to offer employment opportunities to persons living with disabilities, as according to him, that would mandate the MDAs to provide accessibility to persons living with disabilities.

While appreciating the youth corps member for his laudable initiative, Governor Sule directed the Head of the Civil Service, Abigail Waya to liaise with the Commissioner,

Ministry for Special Duties, Humanitarian Affairs and NGOs, Hon Magret Elayo, with a view to properly placing Chikumaga in the state civil service.

"I want to thank you sincerely for the wonderful job that you are doing. When all of us serve in the youth service, we wanted to excel and do something special that we can be identified with. You have already paid your dues. You have already identified yourself as someone who has a lot of commitment, selflessness, and initiatives for this country.

"For you to leave Ebonyi State to come in another state. Other people would have said, let me acquire all these wheel chairs, I will send them to my home state. I will talk to my governor. You decided that where you are serving is your home. This is the wonderful thing that the youth service is all about.

"And with that, I want to tell you have automatic employment in Nasarawa State. Because you have shown the fact that you don't care where you are it's your home and you

are willing to work anywhere and the support all the people there," he stated.

The Governor further urged MDAs to make it a habit to offer employment to persons living with disabilities.

"Let us make it a habit to say that every ministry, department or agency, will have the opportunity to employ even if it's one or two people. The moment you do that then you will have the responsibility to create the opportunity for them to have access to the building," he added.

He equally appreciated all the persons living with disabilities benefiting from the donation, urging them to utilize the items for the purpose meant.

He called on the beneficiaries not to sell the wheelchairs.

In her remarks, Commissioner for Special Duties, Humanitarian Affairs and NGOs, Hon Magret Elayo, commended Governor Sule for his commitment towards inclusiveness.

Hon. Elayo equally commended the exceptional dedication of Corper

Chikumaga for his tireless efforts to transform the lives of those living with disabilities.

She appreciated the Beautiful Gate Handicap Centre Jos, for generously donating the wheelchairs which is in line with the principles of humanitarianism and social services that forms the core responsibilities of her ministry. The Commissioner announced that in line with the commitment of the Federal Government on inclusivity, the Federal Government has threatened to shut down all public and private buildings in Nigeria that violate the accessibility law on the movement of persons with disabilities effective January 2024.

She therefore called on Governor Sule to mandate all public and private offices within the state to observe the accessibility law on the movement of persons living with disabilities.

In a welcome address, Nasarawa State Coordinator of the National Youth Corp Service Scheme (NYSC),

Alhaji Abdullahi Jikamshi, said the occasion was spearheaded by Chikumaga as part of his community service, where 101 wheelchairs would be distributed to benefiting persons living with disabilities. Jikamshi said the essence of the NYSC lies not only in the academic and professional development but also in fostering community engagement and sustainable impact, with Chikumaga's initiative exemplifying the spirit of selflessness, commitment to better the lives of the physically disabled persons.

He used the opportunity of the event to appreciate Governor Sule for personally witnessing the event, which demonstrated the commitment of his administration towards inclusivity and community development.

He also thanked the Beautiful Gate Handicap Centre Jos for supporting the NYSC, adding that so far, the organization has donated 236 wheelchairs since 2021.

Prof Pate To Deliver Public Lecture As TGNews Set For Maiden Award

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Professor Umar Pate, the Vice Chancellor of Federal University, Kashere, in Gombe State, is billed to deliver a paper on media and national security at the maiden edition of TGNews Awards.

The erudite scholar who holds the traditional title of Kaigamman Adamawa will himself be conferred with a merit award of excellence during the occasion.

A statement by Mohammed Ismail, the chairman publicity sub-committee, noted that the

event is scheduled to hold on January 6, 2024.

He added that the theme for the lecture, "media and national security; the way forward" is deliberately chosen in view of the need to broaden conversations on the portents of social media on national security with a view to chart a way forward.

Top politicians, technocrats, traditional, religious leaders and even ordinary Nigerians will be given the award in view of their contributions to nation building and national security.

According to Ismail, the award is meant to

recognize and reward, merit, excellence, talent dedication and exceptional service delivery.

"The award which is classified into four distinct categories will serve as a morale booster for individuals to strive for excellence knowing that such strides are being noted and recorded.

"The four categories for the award include; award for excellence in leadership, meritorious service award, award for dedication and quality service and unsung heroes award," he said.

According to Ismail,

TGNews which started operations eight years ago has blazed the trail in the areas of providing factual and investigative news reportage making it one of the most viable source of news and reports not only in Adamawa State but the north east and Nigeria in general.

He noted that the news portal is currently repositioning itself to be a formidable force in multimedia operations that will compete favourably with other multimedia outlets across the globe.

