

New NIGERIAN

"The Greatest Weapon is Truth"

Published since January 1, 1966

Vol. 6 No. 238

Friday 22nd December, 2023

Jamada Al-Thani 7, 1445 AH

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- Say Yorubas consume 8,760,000, cattie, worth over N9.6bn annually



From left: Osun State Governor, Senator Ademola Adeleke, Former Vice President, Yemi Osinbajo; Oyo State Governor, Mr.Seyi Makinde and New Soun of Ogbomosoland Oba Olaoeye Ghandi @ the Presentation of office to the new Soun of at the Soun Ogunlola's Stadium Ogbomosos. **Photo: AKINOLAARIYO**

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

Yoruba socio cultural group, the Council of Yoruba Elders (CYE) yesterday, called on South West state governors to without wasting time, enforce anti-open grazing Law across their respective states. The Yoruba socio cultural group in a statement by its Secretary General, Dr. Victor Taiwo in Ibadan, also pledged to invest N1trillion for the establishment of cattle ranches across Yoruba speaking states. CYE emphasized that there is the urgent need for the South West state governors to start the enforcement of the anti-open grazing law

in their respective states, adding that such enforcement will no doubt put an end to invasion of cattle herders who always feed their cattles with the crops and farm produces of helpless farmers in Yorubaland. "We the Yorubas have nothing against the peace-loving Fulani people of this country, but we can no longer tolerate any further the miscreants among the herders especially those from other countries perpetrating their menace on our people", it said. The Yoruba Elders added, "We are using this medium to compel the executive arms of the governments to enforce anti-open grazing law with immediate effect.

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Christmas: Tinubu Offers Nigerians Free Train Services

**NRC tells passengers to obtain tickets online*

By; MATTHEW UKACHUNWA, Lagos

In compliance with the directives of President Bola Tinubu, the Nigerian Railway Corporation (NRC) will begin free train services from Thursday December

1, 2023 to Thursday January 1, 2024.

NRC advised passengers to obtain their free tickets via the online e-ticketing platforms only.

Management of the corporation announced the incentive in a statement

made available on Wednesday.

"Tickets will not be issued at any of the Corporation's Train Stations. Please note that no commuter will be allowed to board the train without a ticket," the Corporation said.

It enjoined commuters to be orderly, obey security personnel and the laid down boarding instructions of the Corporation and those of its officials while at the station and onboard the train.

Buhari Present As Katsina Governor Empowers 3,623 Orphans, Vulnerable, Women, APC Mobilizers

By; SULAIMAN AHMED MISAU, Katsina

Governor Dikko Umaru Radda of Katsina State has launched an empowerment package for 3,623 orphans, vulnerable, women and grassroots mobilizers of the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) in Daura Local Government Area of the state under the physical presence of the former President, Muhammadu Buhari.

Initiated by the Speaker of the State House of Assembly, Alhaji Nasiru Yahaya Daura, Governor Dikko Radda reiterated his administration commitment to protect the integrity of ordinary man in the State.

Governor Radda appreciated the honest leadership of the former Nigeria's President Muhammadu Buhari, advising that, "all those in the elective positions needs to emulate his sincere leadership

style."

Governor Dikko Umaru Radda lauded the Speaker, Honourable Nasiru Yahaya Daura for committing over thirty four (34) million Naira to support the less privileged people of his Daura constituency.

The Governor however, appreciated some legislative members for responding to the needs of those who voted them into power through empowerment packages and urged them to remain firm in protecting the integrity of the electorates. On his part, the Speaker, Katsina State House of Assembly, Honourable Nasiru Yahya Daura promised to sustain the program to cover more vulnerables and poor in the constituency.

Speaker Yahaya Daura appreciated the the physical presence of the former president, Muhammadu Buhari at the occasion, said he had so far constructed eleven Islamiyya schools across

the local government area..

Earlier the state Chairman of the APC, Alhaji Sani Aliyu Daura Said the empowerment package was the tenth of it's kind initiated by the Speaker from his election to date.

However, the Deputy State Chairman of the Party Bala Abu Musawa urged other legislative members in the state particularly those at the national Assembly to initiate similar empowerment package to the orphans and vulnerable in their respective constituencies.

Alhaji Bala Abu Musawa thanked the former President Muhammadu Buhari for his transparent leadership worthy of emulation and stressed the need for all those in the elective positions at any level to exercise honest and transparent leadership.

Highlights of the ceremony includes:- the presentation of special award to the former

President Muhammadu Buhari and Katsina State Governor, Dikko Umaru Radda' for their outstanding commitment in transparency and commitment to the fight against Banditry and Education.

Former President Muhammadu Buhari was presented an award and a Bull while Governor Radda received an award and a horse.

Others presented with the awards includes:- the State Deputy Governor, Alhaji Faruq Lawal Jobe and the Speaker State House of Assembly, Nasiru Yahaya Daura among others.

In the meantime, Governor Dikko Radda alongside former President Muhammad Buhari had commissioned a new secondary school, mosque and a clinic constructed by a Nigeria counsel to Benin Republic, Muntari Ali in Yar'daje District in Zango Local Government Area.



Biu, Road Safety Boss

FRSC Deploys 800 Personnel For Yuletide Highway Patrol In Kogi

By; ADAMA JOHN, Lokoja

The Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC), Kogi Sector Command has said that it has deployed 800 personnel to patrol the highways across Kogi State as part of its "Operation Zero Road Traffic Crash for the yuletide".

The State Commander of the FRSC in the state, Mr. Samuel Oyedeji who disclosed this in a statement issued on Wednesday in Lokoja, said the operation which commenced on Dec.15 will terminate by January 15 next year.

The Sector Commander implored motorists to strictly adhere to and obey traffic rules to avoid unpleasant consequences cautioning that they should avoid dangerous driving, overloading and the use of cell phones while driving.

He said that enforcement of the rules will be "focused on checkmating and sanctioning traffic offenders so as to curb unnecessary loss of lives on the highways."

Mr. Oyedeji said 25 patrol vehicles, including three ambulances and one heavy duty tow truck were being deployed to ensure free movement of vehicles during and after the festivities, adding that regular and special marshals were being deployed.

"In addition to the manpower available in the state, not less than 40 personnel have been detailed from the FRSC Zonal Headquarters, Ilorin to beef up the manpower and senior officers from the RSHQ, Abuja would be on ground to monitor and supervise the exercise across the state.

"All these are in demonstration of our readiness to strengthen safety on the roads through series of operations aimed at ensuring free flow of traffic, curbing reckless driving and clearing the roads of abandoned vehicles which preceded the deployment for the festive season.

"These operations include: mobile court sittings, obstruction clearing on highways in the state in conjunction with the state government," he said.

Oyedeji stressed that four help centres had been setup in Ejule, Ajaokuta, Osara and Okene for prompt emergency rescue services as well as five camps in Lokoja, Koton Karfe, Zariagi and Okene for 24-hour traffic control operations in and around the areas.

He appealed to contractors handling emergency works on some bad spots on the roads to expedite action on the rehabilitation works to enable hitch-free movement of traffic given the expected increase in the number of road users during the festivities.

Yuletide: Kogi CP Bans Fireworks

By; ADAMA JOHN, Lokoja

The Commissioner of Police, Kogi State Police Command, Bethrand C. Onuoha, has ordered water-tight security across the state to ensure a crime-free Christmas and New Year celebrations.

The directive was the crux of his midweek briefing with the senior officers at the Police Command Headquarters, Lokoja.

The Commissioner of Police therefore, charged all the Area Commanders, Divisional Police Officers

as well as Operational and Tactical Commanders to beef up security ahead of the Yuletide celebrations to prevent any untoward situation in their Area of Responsibilities (AoR) throughout the period.

To complement the effort, he further directed them to implement the comprehensive crime prevention and control strategies adopted by the command to improve visibility policing and deploy human and other operational assets to carry out confidence-building and crime prevention.

This involves, patrols along the major highways, residential areas and other critical assets as well as undercover operations to black spots, criminal hideouts and flash-points to curtail all forms of crimes and ensure peaceful Yuletide observance in the state.

He reiterated the ban on the use of fireworks during the festive period advising parents and guardians to warn their children and wards to steer clear of such acts, warning that his men have been directed to arrest

anyone who violates this order.

Onuoha assured the people of the state that the police in corroboration with other security agencies are putting more efforts to ensure a peaceful festive period.

He called on all law-abiding citizens for their cooperation by reporting suspicious movements or any acts of criminality within their neighborhood to the security forces nearest to them for prompt attention.

Insecurity Affecting Extension Service Delivery In Nigeria - Stakeholders

By; SANI ALIYU, Zaria

Heighted incidents of insecurity (kidnappings, theft, banditry, cattle rustling, herders/farmers clashes etc.) have affected extension service delivery across the nation.

This was contained in a communique issued at the end of the 2023 National Agricultural Extension Review and Planning Meeting held at NAERLS/ABU Zaria.

The stakeholders expressed concern over extremely low Extension Agent (EA) to farmer ratio (1:6,238 National average as against 1:800 as recommended by the World Bank) because of non-recruitment of new extension workers.

The communique also observed that issues of food security are multifaceted, ranging from prevalence of undernourishment, child mortality, high susceptibility to diseases, increased social discontent, severe poverty and illiteracy.

"Also, high cost of farm inputs, labour and produce due to inflation and poor funding of ADPs and workers inventive.

"Inadequate support for research and development has been identified and inconsistency and poor implementation of government policies.

"While issues on food security are multifaceted ranging from prevalence of undernourishment, child mortality, high susceptibility to diseases, increased social discontent, severe poverty and illiteracy," it said.

The communique suggested that the federal and state governments should partner with private manufacturing

companies to produce tractors and simple labour-saving devices, using prototypes from National Centre for Agricultural Mechanization (NCAM). It also observed that provision of infrastructure and development of efficient irrigation systems will encourage all year-round agricultural production.

They observed that government should increase support for research, development and promotion of livestock and improved crop that are resistant to pests and diseases.

"Facilitating farmers access to financial and insurance service providers and markets for agricultural produce.

"Investment in access roads, post harvest equipment, storage facilities for crops and livestock to enhance productivity and efficiency.

"Enhance availability and adoption of climate smart agricultural technologies (resilient varieties, breeds and practices).

"All tiers of government should make more efforts to tackle the menace of insecurity in Nigeria.

"Government should ensure that most agricultural inputs are produced locally and subsidized and to encourage public and private partnership in extension service delivery using micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) driven extension approach.

"The Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security should advocate for accelerated passage of the new agricultural extension policy into law.

"Government should establish an Extension Trust fund and be consistent in their agricultural policies and implementations," the communique said.



Don't Hand Over Ajaokuta Steel Rolling Mill To Foreigners, SINET Advises FG

By; AMOS TAUNA, Kaduna

The Federal Government has been advised to respect the opinion of over 250 million Nigerians by halting any further transaction on the revitalization of Ajaokuta Steel Rolling Mill, aimed at transferring to foreigners through the back-door contrary to the national interest of protecting the heritage of the nation.

The Social Integrity Network (SINET), at the close of an emergency meeting held in Kaduna on Wednesday, lamented over the poor system of governance adopted by the federal government through its relevant agencies, the Federal Ministry of Steel Development and Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment among agencies of the government.

The group also lamented, "Despite the presence of highly intellectual personalities such as University Professors, Industrialists, members of national assembly, seasoned administrators, captains of Industries, technical and financial consultants among others, it is unfortunate that our leaders still allow foreigners to fool the entire nation with unrealistic proposals and business plans."

Its national coordinator, Ibrahim Issah, in a statement, SINET reminded the National Assembly Joint

Committee on Steel Development recently passed a resolution to probe the \$496million paid by the Federal Government to an Indian firm that failed to revitalize the Itakpe Iron Ore Company after three years.

According to the group, preference should be given to national companies who can run such plants, ensure employment generation, reducing imports and do away with siphoning out much needed forex and mineral resources.

He added that the Global Infrastructure Holding Ltd., GIHL took over the National Iron Ore Mining Company, NIOMCO, Itakpe, Kogi State in 2016 and got its agreement terminated in 2019 due to non performance, saying that GIHL dragged the Federal Government to court for breach of contract and it was awarded damages to the tune of \$496 million which had been paid.

He lamented that it is outrightly against the way the federal government is deliberately and ignorantly selling out its national heritage without recourse to the yearnings and agitation of Nigerians especially at this crucial period when the nation is battling with economic stability among other challenges.

The statement noted that almost five decades of lost opportunity towards strengthening large scale Steel Production in Nigeria,

failed attempts without proper road map, pointing out that it is also on record that Russians and Ukrainians supplied already obsolete technology then in 1970s.

It also noted that another blunder was committed by handing over Ajaokuta, Itakpe mines with all the infrastructure and Delta Steel plants to Global Infrastructure Holding Ltd (GIHL) India, alleging that they took over the plant and siphoned out all the resources from country and eventually country did not get any benefit.

It also alleged that GIHL was never serious in running the plants and mines at Ajaokuta Steel Company Limited, Delta Steel Company and Itakpe but later sold its stakes in Delta Steel Company to Stallion Group under a SPV to Premium Steel & Mines Limited, saying that the acquisition was also a marvel of financial engineering by PSML to hide black money generated and siphon out of country through their other businesses.

Comrade Issah further stressed that when stallion did not get support from the former President Muhammadu Buhari-led government, they had to shutdown the PSML Warri business around 2020, saying that sadly, for the third time, the Federal Government is trying to bring in Indian company to

loot the resources from Ajaokuta, Delta steel plants and Itakpe mines.

Interestingly, the statement observed that the immediate past government had paid the sum of \$496million to GIHL as compensation even despite massive public outrage, while the investors were merely looking at Itakpe mines to cater their offshore companies at much cheaper rate of iron ore supplies.

While confirming that Jindal-India has been asked to work out takeover proposal back-door without public notice knowing well that several injunctions have been in different Courts of Law, SINET warned the federal government to understand that Ajaokuta and Delta Steel Company are very old and obsolete technologies and any company claiming to run and earn profit is just misleading the nation with nefarious intentions.

The statement advised the federal government and it's concerned Ministries to carefully dig deep into their Detailed Project Report, Elaborated Business Plan, Capital Outlay and Cash Flow Projections by involving independent agencies and champions of business here in Nigeria, assuring that the so-called 5B investment from Jindal is a faux pass and outrightly exaggerated number that will put Nigeria, her assets, resources and general public in total mess again.

Grazing: We Will Invest N1trillion For Establishment Of Cattle Ranches In South West - Yoruba Elders

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"The Fulani herders should transform themselves from their archaic and primitive ways of breeding their cattle to the global norm of ranching system. They should negotiate for land purchases from their host state governments for the ranching of their cattle." CYE stressed, "While we are not declaring any economic war on the people of any section of the country, we however, do not know any sane society that must insist on buying a product which you can produce on your own without stress from outside source more so from the monsters who will destroy your own means of survival, kill your children and wives and cut off your arms, and you will still resort to patronizing such monsters." It also warned, "bandits and the criminally-

minded Yorubas that are found of kidnapping our people for rituals and ransom should know that their days are numbered within the geographical space of Yorubaland as we have instituted a high-powered security system to be coordinated by our highly respected patriot Barrister Bola Longe (AIG Rtd) and Mr. Marcus Omuiyadun (Rtd CP) ably supported by the leaders of our various youth and security-inclined organizations." "According to a well conducted, impeccable, unambiguous and verifiable research, the number of cows the Yoruba people of Yorubaland consume on daily basis is 24,000. Get it multiplied by 365 days it gives us 8,760,000 per annum. The financial implication is ₦984 billion per annum." "We need to ask

ourselves some questions about the cattle ranches provided for us in Yorubaland by the late Sage Obafemi Awolowo, then we have more than enough cattle ranches that can cater for our daily consumption, then we used to have Fasola Farms Oyo in the current Oyo State on 1,200 hectares, Akunu-Akoko of now Ondo State on 8,061 hectares of farmland running through Ikakumo Ise, Auga-Akoko to Edo State boundary, Imeko in now Ogun State on 4,000 hectares, Ayedun-Ekiti (Oke Ako) now Ekiti-State on 12,000 hectares of farmland through Ikun-Ekiti, Saki in now Oyo State on over 16,000 hectares of farmland, Ibarapa farms in Oyo State on 5,000 hectares, Agege in Lagos State was not left out just as we also had the Dairy Farm in Ibadan."

"All the ranches mentioned above have gone into extinction, Where are our governors who succeeded Awolowo both old and current? Let them ascribe to themselves the praises that they think they deserve respectively, Aside the cattle ranches bequeathed to the successive governors which have all evaporated, let our governors tell us where the various investment companies and industries Awolowo bequeathed to them are. They need to explain the factors for their deaths." "To the effect of the above, the CYE has decided to invest, for a start, a sum of ₦1 trillion on the establishments of cattle ranches and general animal husbandry across the Yoruba states. All hands are already on the machine spinning in this direction." Taiwo stated.



Dr. Victor Taiwo

Group Calls For Fervent Prayers For Security Agencies

By ; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

Nigerians irrespective of tribe, religion and political affiliation have been urged to be united in praying for the safety of the Armed Forces and other security agencies as the Yuletide season climaxes.

A group, under the aegis of Prayer and Support For the Nigerian Armed Forces and other Security Agencies (PSNAFSA), made the call in a statement by its convener, Ambassador Mary Abayomi-Fatile yesterday in Lagos.

Fatile, a Lagos based renowned broadcast journalist, said the appeal became necessary, following the doggedness with which terrorism and other violent crimes in Nigeria are being tackled.

Her words, "Come rain, come shine, these people are there. As I speak, these military personnel are in the trenches, jungles and

creeks protecting us and the nation's assets.

"Some of them have not gone home for years, let alone seeing their loved ones".

Mrs Fatile therefore, appealed to Nigerians to always show love rather than castigating and criticizing them.

Speaking further, Fatile said, "it would be nice to also extend the love to the personnel's extended family.

"In the United States of America, security agents are celebrated and honoured" she stated.

She expressed condolence to traditional rulers and people of Tudun Biri Community in Igabi Local Government Area of Kaduna State, that lost their loved ones.

In an emotional laden tone, Fatile, said, the Lord Almighty will comfort them and heal the wounded ones.

"Affliction of such will never arise again".



Ambassador Mary Fatile addressing an audience

Ambassador Fatile, appreciated the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), General Christopher Musa and the Service Chiefs for

their good work in the onslaught against insurgency, since they assumed office, expressing optimism that with the efforts put

in place, insecurity would be addressed.

Professionalism: CIPMN Inducts 200 Members

By; PETER NOSAKHARE, Kaduna

Chartered Institute of Project Managers of Nigeria (CIPMN), on Tuesday inducted 200 members to boost the professionalism and accountability of project management in the country.

The institute also pledged to put an end to the rising cases of abandoned projects in Nigeria.

Speaking at the induction ceremony held in Abuja, the registrar of the institute, Mr. Henry Mbadiwe said it was pertinent for anyone delivering projects in Nigeria to become a member of the institute.

He said, "We are going to begin to see fewer abandoned projects as long as they are managed by the individuals just inducted today".

"Our job is now to begin to get them to that point

where they can be licensed. CIPMN makes sure that you cannot deliver projects in Nigeria unless you're a member of the institute. So the job of these individuals is now to start leading projects in Nigeria, and it is the law."

Speaking in an interview with our correspondent, the keynote speaker at the event, Saidu Njidda, said the vast majority of issues bordering on project failure would be addressed by making the institute a professional body in Nigeria.

Njidda said, "Things are going to change in Nigeria. We have to do what is being done globally so that our projects will be successful in Nigeria, like every other part of the world."

Mbadiwe encouraged project managers who were not members of the institute to formalise their practice by joining the CIPMN.



Remain Beacon Of Hope, Gov Lawal Charges New Zamfara Sharia Court Khadis

By; IMRANA ABDULLAHI, Kaduna

Governor Dauda Lawal has charged the three new Khadis of the State Shari'a Court of Appeal to be honest and committed, while discharging their duties.

The Chief Judge of the State swore in three new Khadis of the Zamfara State Shari'a court on Wednesday at the Council Chambers, Government House, Gusau.

A statement by the spokesperson for the Zamfara Governor, Sulaiman Bala Idris, said

the Sharia courts play a significant role in the state's legal system.

According to him, the Shari'a courts in Zamfara were expanded in 1999 to handle criminal and other matters and have since been at the forefront of dispensing justice.

During his speech, Governor Dauda Lawal urged the newly appointed Khadis to maintain the integrity of their office.

"I believe your appointment as kadis of the Sharia Court of Appeal is in recognition of your vast experience, Islamic jurisprudential expertise,

and commitment to upholding the tenets of Shari'a.

"You have a role to play in ensuring an equitable dispensation of justice to people. Yours is therefore a great trust. As kadis, you should always remember that you will ultimately account for all your judicial decisions before Almighty Allah on the Day of Judgment."

Furthermore, Governor Lawal tasked the new Khadis with upholding the people's trust in the Sharia legal system and ensuring that the courts remain a beacon of hope, especially

for the vulnerable. "In line with the Rescue Mission of my administration, I assure you that we shall remain committed to the implementation of sharia across the state, both in terms of legal adjudication and undertaking projects. "With your swearing in today, you should bear in mind that you have a great task of maintaining the integrity of our Sharia system. Justice must be done to all manners of people irrespective of their political, economic, and social status."

Kogi Lawmakers Pass 2024 Budget Into Law

By; ADAMA JOHN, Lokoja

Kogi State House of Assembly has passed the 2024 Appropriation Bill of over N258.2 billion Naira into law.

The passage followed the adoption of the report of the House Standing Committee on Appropriation, Budget Monitoring, and Economic Planning.

At the clause-by-clause consideration by the committee of supply, the

Speaker, Aliyu Umar Yusuf said the bill had in it an authorised recurrent expenditure of over N145.7 billion naira, while the authorised capital expenditure stood at over N112.5 billion Naira.

He said that the bill which shows the allocation of funds to each ministry, department, and agency, will take effect on January 1, 2024, and ends on December 30, 2024.

Katsina Govt Moves To Regulate Mining

By; SULAIMAN AHMED MISAU, Katsina

Katsina State Government has reaffirmed its determination to organize mining activities in the state to ensure things are done properly in accordance with the laid down rules and regulations.

The State Deputy Governor, Honorable Faruq Lawal Jobe made this known when he led the state committee to identify mining sites on inspection to Dabar-hajia mining site

of Rafin -Gora in Danja Local Government Area. Honourable Lawal Jobe who was briefed on the huge gold and coalin deposit at the site warned that who ever found guilty of illegal activities would be prosecuted.

He said the state government had earlier directed all miners in the state to present their documents for recruiting, regretting that, "a number of them alleged to have been illegal miners failed to show off."

Briefing the Deputy Governor, Chairman

Katsina State Solid Minerals Mines and Processors Cooperative Society in Danja, Dahiru Dan kande said his members had since suspended their mining activities at the site following the expiration of their operation licence in 2017.

Dahiru Dan-Kande said all those currently operating at the site are now on their own.

He pleaded with the State Government to regulate mining activities in the state through providing

machines for easy discovery of the target mineral.

Also speaking Garba Lado Danja who admitted of illegal digging of coalin at the site.added that, each bag of the coalin is being sold at between one thousand two hundred and above.

The Deputy Governor, Honourable Faruq Lawal Jobe with other members of the committee inspected mining sites and some isolated areas where gold is being polished and ready for the buyers.

Kogi Courts Active In Curbing Menace Of Gender-based Violence— CJ

By: ADAMA JOHN, Lokoja

The Chief Judge of Kogi State, Hon. Justice Josiah Majebi has assured Kogites that the ills of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in the state are receiving judicial attention just as all categories of courts, with jurisdiction over the matter, have been asked to be diligent in handling them.

The assurance came midweek in Lokoja, when the number one legal officer in the state received in audience, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) that are acting in concert to combat menace posed by GBV in the fledgling State.

Organisations in this fight are, The Challenged Parenthood Initiative (CPI), Women Advocates Research Centre and Kogi Women Constituency and Women Advocates Research and Documentation Centre (WARDC)

Others in the crusade include, the State chapter of the International Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA) while the African Women Development Fund (AWDF) provides funds for the operations.

The coalition had, through the Executive Director of CPI Ms. Eunice Abimbola Agbogun, advocated the establishment of a designated court for GBV cases but was told through the relevant heads of the respective directorates in the High Court of Justice that all courts saddled

with the responsibilities of discharging such cases are at their best in line with the philosophy of the Council of Judges of the state.

Worthy of note however, is that the establishment of the Family Court in the state was meant to address related matters as a core mandate, while the offences are already being handled by the High Court and Magistrate Courts that have jurisdictions on the matter.

The establishment of courts, particularly specialised courts, undergo processes and attract enormous funding which must equally pass through budgeting processes.

Since it involves huge amount of finance to establish the court, the advocates were advised to direct all actions to the Family Court in the meantime.

The Chief Judge consequently directed that all registrars at the magisterial level must be submitting monthly returns on such matters and all other cases that are related to gender-based violence in the state for proper documentation and assessment of their nature and volume before courts in the state.

Earlier, Agbogun presented the CJ what the CSOs termed the Kogi State Multi-Sectorial Costed Action Plans for effective implementation of the Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Law of Kogi State signed into law in June 2022.

The law is for the elimination of violence in private and public life, prohibition of all forms of violence against persons, protection of victims and punishment of offenders and other matters connected thereto in Kogi State.

According to her, the next step for the effective implementation of the law was for Kogi State to have a Multi-Sectorial Costed Action Plan for MDAs and CSOs and the designated court.

A Costed Action Plan (CAP) is a multi-year road map designed to help the state to achieve its goal of eliminating violence against persons.

"It's a critical tool in transforming the state's broad goal of zero tolerance for violence against persons into concrete activities and policies.

CAP also determines the human, financial, material and technical resources needed for policy implementation" she added.

One of the many rationales for costing action plan is that it "is a practical application of gender responsive budgeting framework to ensure equity in resource allocation", she said.

While about four other states, including Lagos, have model costed action plans, she said "many donors are prepared to fund activities on the implementation of the Kogi State VAPP Law but the challenge is that Kogi State does not have costed action plan" against



Justice Ariwoola

gender based violence. The CJ who praised Nigerian women for their steadfastness in trying to engender discipline and morality in Nigerian societies

encouraged the group to also take time to periodically evaluate performances of courts on GBV so as to be well informed on how the courts are performing.

Yuletide: Governor Inuwa Orders Immediate Payment Of Workers' Salaries, Pensions

*Felicitates Christian community

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

In his resolve to ensure that workers in the state prepare for, and enjoy the Yuletide, Gombe State Governor, Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya, CON has directed the immediate payment of December salaries of all civil servants in the state and their counterparts at the local government level.

A statement signed by the Director-General (Press Affairs) Government House Gombe, Ismaila Uba Misilli, made available yesterday, said that the governor directed the state Ministry of Finance and the Office of the Head of Civil Service to ensure that all workers and pensioners are paid their wages yesterday December 21, even if it means putting in extra hours of work.

Governor Inuwa Yahaya reiterated his administration's continued commitment to the welfare of civil servants through prompt payment of salaries and other entitlements.

It is worth noting that Gombe State has consistently upheld its responsibility towards its workers as exemplified by the prompt payment of salaries as well as continuous disbursement of the 10,000 naira palliative to all categories of civil servants. This act of care has persisted even when other states are yet to implement similar measures.

The Governor extended season's greetings to the citizens and wished the Christian community a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year in advance.

Notorious Kidnapper, Accomplice Gunned Down As Rivers Police Smashes Gang, Rescues 4 Victims

By: RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

The Rivers State Police Command has given details of how a notorious wanted kidnapper and an accomplice was killed, with four kidnapped victims rescued.

The command in a statement by the Spokesperson, SP Grace Iringe-Koko disclosed that they were killed in a gun battle with the police.

According to her, the gang members numbering six were engaged in a shoot out on Wednesday along Port Harcourt Road, where they had kidnapped their victims.

It reads, "In the early hours of Wednesday, December 14, 2023, men of the Rivers State Police Command engaged a notorious gang of kidnappers and rescued four victims from their clutches.

"Gunshots rang out as the four blindfolded men scrambled in confusion. When the gunshots ceased, the four men were eased off their blindfolds and realized that they had been rescued by the Police from an ordeal in which they had lost hope. Despair had immediately translated to jubilation. They had just been rescued after spending 48 gruelling hours in the den of an infamous kidnapper and his gang. "According to one of the victims, a commercial driver, he was on one of his routine trips back to Port Harcourt when he noticed an obstruction caused by a large tree trunk placed across the road.

"He was driving a Sienna, and an Audi car was

in front of him. Whilst he was contemplating reversing, some men emerged from the bush and fired bullets at the tyres of his vehicle and that of the Audi.

"The men, numbering six, asked them to lie on the ground but grabbed them and took them through strange bush paths as they noticed a Police van approaching. The Police shot several times, but they had been taken too deep into the forest.

"The kidnappers tortured them and extracted funds from them via their ATM cards and from their families. They removed the sum of Eight Hundred Thousand Naira (NGN 800,000) from one of the victims' accounts and One Million Nine Hundred Thousand Naira (NGN 1,900,000) from another.

"Throughout their stay, the kidnappers only gave them tiny pieces of bread and sachet water. The victims also informed the Policemen who rescued them that they had been blindfolded all through their travail.

"The Policemen on Patrol on the day of the kidnapping did not stop searching for the victims and were pleased to discover the camp of the kidnappers on the third day of searching. "They proceeded to conduct prompt but thorough surveillance to eliminate the incidence of collateral damage before engaging the criminals. oss encouraged everyone intending to visit the state for Christmas to do so without fear.

Demolition Responsible For Low Revenue Generation In Kaduna Markets - Traders

By; ALEX UANGBAOJE, Kaduna

A network of Non-Governmental Organization known as Tax Justice and Governance Platform took its campaign for tax compliance to two popular Kaduna markets, where traders forwarded reasons Kaduna State Government is not getting reasonable revenue from the markets.

Kaduna State chapter of the network recently launched the use of Theatre for Development in educating business owners and other citizens on the importance of tax payment took the drama sensitization to Kawo and Kujama markets in Kaduna North and Chikun local government areas respectively on Wednesday.

However, leaders of the traders at the markets who responded positively to the sensitization, said they are ready to pay the required taxes, but the government is currently not getting the required amount of revenue because of the demolition and reconstruction of their markets, which has become unaffordable to majority of them.

Speaking on behalf of the traders, Chairman Traders Association at the Kawo Market, Muhammad Idris said the demolition of the Kawo Market has crippled a lot of businesses, as many wholesalers who were hitherto shop owners, have become petty traders who only live from hand to mouth.

Idris explained that, "the problem started from the market demolition. The government of the previous administration of Malam Nasir El-Rufai came and persuaded us to allow them demolish and rebuild our market, with a promise that all the shop owners would be given priority consideration after the reconstruction of the market and that, the market will be completed within eight months. It is now five years, the market has not been completed.

"Now, the completion of the market is not even the major challenge, the challenge is that, most of the shop owners who had capital of N5million and above, who were displaced by the demolition have lost their capital in the process and become petty traders.

"The government has sincerely taken census of the old shop owners, but they are not to be given the new shops free. The government is asking us to pay N5.5million for the big shop, and N2.5million for the small shop. The truth of the matter is that, we cannot afford these shops at those rates. We want the government of Senator Uba Sani to come to our rescue by subsidizing these shops, so that traders can move in and start paying the required taxes," he appealed.

Corroborating Idris' argument, Vice Chairman of the Traders Association, Umar Sanda said the market which use to have over 3,000 shops with tax paying traders, who have now been



exposed to trading under the sun, rain and breeze, cannot generate required revenue to the government.

Earlier in his remarks, the Coordinator Kaduna State chapter of Tax Justice and Governance Platform, Simeon Olatunde said the platform was working in collaboration with the Kaduna State Government to enable it generate enough internally generated revenue for government to perform its social contract role.

He said the campaign to the markets was in realization of the importance of tax payment, as

Internally Generated Revenue is the most sustainable source of revenue generation. "We are here in the market because we have realized that people are not given to voluntary tax payment, particularly among the informal sector."

"So, we have discovered that the best the place to reach the informal sector is the market place, where we can reach both buyers and sellers coming to do business on daily basis. We are reaching out to them to know their roles and obligations, as well as how let them know how they can engage the government

to deliver good governance to them."

Olatunde assured the traders that, the Kaduna State Government has put in place mechanisms to ensure that, taxes paid by the citizens are not embezzled, but channeled to delivery democracy dividends to the citizens.

The sensitization drama which was displayed at the Kawo and Kujama markets' square, enlightened the citizens on the importance of tax payment to the delivery of social services like education, healthcare, water and roads.

Senator Wamakko Tasks Media Professionals To See Selves As Servants To Humanity

By; IMRANAABDULLAHI, Kaduna

Senator Aliyu Magatakarda Wamakko has charged media practitioners to remain fearless, objective and credible as servants to humanity.

"The media must always drive its cause in a positive direction for humanity and general stability of the country which belongs to us.

"Doing this, will surely earn you remarkable reward both on earth and the hereafter.

"Your services are as significant as those of humanitarian organisations," he said.

Wamakko who is also the Chairman Senate Committee on Local and Foreign Debts, made the remarks in Sokoto on Tuesday, shortly after the Appeal Court verdict that affirmed his election.

Wamakko, an APC third term Senator who represents Sokoto North Senatorial District, also noted that media professionals are driving force to reckon with in the journey for a prosperous nation towards the peace and stability of the country.

"The society has confidence on you as tool for development in defence of their rights.

"You are their ears, eyes and voices through which their hope, aspirations and yearnings could be realised.

"Your role is key in stabilising the country and in defence of truth with patriotic mind.

"We all owe Nigeria a duty to project its image and citizens in good light without compromising our responsibilities to their wishes and aspirations", he said.

According to Wamakko, "we have to appreciate your unflinching role of uniting our diversity through your professional responsibility as the fourth estate of the realm", he pointed out.

Wamakko who holds the Sultanate title of "Sarkin Yamman Sokoto", stressed the need for all and sundry to extend helping hands to those in need, especially the less privileged in the society, painting out that, "no matter how little one can afford to support those in need, it will surely help and will not go unrewarded".



Katsina Governor Signs 2024 Budget Into Law

By; SULAIMAN AHMED MISAU, Katsina

Governor Dikko Umaru Radda of Katsina State has signed year 2024 budget of 454,308,862,113.96 billion Naira into law as earlier presented to the state House of Assembly. Speaking after assenting the budget at the Council Chamber of General Muhammadu Buhari (Government) House, Katsina, Governor Dikko Radda admitted that, the level of insecurity in the state has reduced to the minimum of over sixty per cent (60%).

Governor Dikko Umaru

Radda appreciated the State House of Assembly for passing the budget in about 33 days after carefully scrutiny.

Governor Umaru Radda expressed gratitude to the state Deputy Governor, Faruk Lawal Jobe and members of the state executive council as well as all those who supported in putting up the budget.

Chief Justice of the State, Justice Musa Danladi Abubakar, the state Grand Khadi, Dr Kabir Abubakar, Members of the state Executive Council and legislative members were among the personalities witnessed the signing of the budget.

Governor Radda promised that his administration would ensure adherence to the laid down procedure in implementing the budget, stressing that, "Resources would be allocated according to the needs and priority."

Governor Radda' pleaded for more cooperation of the legislature to make the budget a reality through working hand in hand with government Agencies.

He thanked the legislative arm for passing about ten executive bills into law within the last seven months of the state administration such as:- Assets management bill,

Katsina State Enterprise Development Agency, and the one provided for the establishment of Irrigation Authority among others.

Earlier, speaking before presenting the budget, the speaker of the State house of Assembly Alhaji Nasiru Yahaya Daura said the Budget had followed all the legislative procedures before it's final passage.

Speaker Yahaya Daura appreciated Governor Dikko Umaru Radda's Administration for allowing the house to exercise it's constitutional mandate without interference.



Governor Dikko Umaru Radda of Katsina State signing year 2024 budget.

10 Indigent ABU Students Get ASUU Scholarship

By; SANIALIYU, Zaria

Ten indigent students of Ahmadu Bello University (ABU) Zaria have received Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) two million Naira scholarship grants. The branch Chairman, Prof. Haruna Mohammed Jibril, made this known in an interview with newsmen in Zaria.

He said the union during its National Executive Council meeting at Gombe State University in February 2018, instituted a scholarship scheme for indigent students at all the branches of the union.

Adding that under the scheme, the national union awards N200,000 to

two beneficiaries of the grant to assist the indigent students in their academic pursuit.

The chairman said the national union encourages branches to emulate the gesture, accordingly, ABU Chapter offers additional scholarship to two students from 2018 to 2022.

"This year, when we came back from our meeting at Kaduna State University, we briefed the congress and the congress approved the upward review of the grant to N1.6m," he said.

He added that the N1.6m for eight beneficiaries was in addition to the initial N400, 000 for two beneficiaries from the national body

which brings the total to N2m.

He further explained that the ASUU ABU Chapter disbursed the grant because the students had commenced registration for the new session hence its decision for early release of the funds to beneficiaries.

According to him, the beneficiaries were bright students who have a minimum CGPA of 3.0 and they also have a history of financial challenges.

The branch Chairman said besides the scholarship grants to indigent students, ASUU had also provided N50m worth of palliatives to the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) across northern Nigeria.

APC Chieftain Distributes Christmas Gifts Worth N10m To Party Faithful In Kaduna

By; AMOS TAUNA, Kaduna

Arc. Sani Abbas, Sardauna Chikun and Chairman, All Progressives Congress (APC) stakeholders, Chikun Local Government Area of Kaduna State, has donated about N5 million and food items worth N5m as Christmas gifts to some party members in the area. The money was shared among ward chairmen, EXCO and other beneficiaries to help them in their Christmas celebrations.

Speaking during the distribution of the Christmas gift in Kaduna on Wednesday, Dauda Abdulkadir, the Coordinator of Azumi Foundation, enjoined all members to embrace the true spirit of Christmas and continue to spread love, hope, and happiness with everyone they encounter. He further explained, "As we witness this act of kindness and generosity, let this serve as an inspiration for all of us. Therefore, this Christmas, let us not forget the true spirit of the season, which is all about giving and sharing love."

He thanked the Chairman of the Azumi Foundation, Arc Sani Abbas, Sardaunan Chikun, for making the event a reality and for the foundation's commitment to spreading love and joy during the festive season.

He urged all and sundry to extend helping hands to the less privileged, to share love, and to spread joy during the Christmas season, saying, "It may be through acts of kindness, charitable donations, or simply spending time with those who need it most. By doing so, we can collectively make a positive impact on the lives of others and create a more harmonious and caring society."

He said that it is rare privilege to flag off the distribution of gifts by the Azumi Foundation to their beloved security operatives, market women, and political party leaders, stressing that

Christmas embodies the ideals of peace, hope, and love for all humanity and served as a reminder for all to extend a helping hand to those who are less fortunate and to share the blessings with others.

The Azumi foundation, he explained has exemplified these ideals by organizing this meaningful event, bringing smiles to the faces of our dedicated security personnel, hardworking market women, and influential political party leaders.

"Our security operatives are the unseen guardian angels who work tirelessly day and night to ensure our safety. They sacrifice their comforts to protect our lives and property, often away from their families during this festive season. The simple act of giving gifts to these brave men and women is a way to express our gratitude for their selfless service and to show that we care for them and equally appreciate their sacrifices," he emphasized.

The market women, the Coordinator observed are the backbone of the economy, supporting their families and the community through their entrepreneurial endeavors, pointing out that at this Christmas, the Azumi Foundation recognizes their significant contribution by acknowledging their hard work and dedication and desires that their little gifts will not only bring joy to their hearts but also serve as a testament to the appreciation for their commitment and resilience.

"To our esteemed political party leaders, he said that they have been playing a vital role in shaping the nation's future, stressing that their leadership and decision-making influence policies that impact the lives of citizens, as the the Azumi Foundation's decision to appreciate them with little gift to demonstrate that unity and solidarity are not limited to any particular sector," he said.

Kano CIBN's Annual Dinner Colourful, Assures More CSR

By; JABIRU A. HASSAN, Kano

The Chartered Institute Of Bankers Of Nigeria (CIBN) has reassured that the institute would continue to promote corporate social responsibility (CSR) in order to assist the needy, especially at present when the rate of poverty is becoming more alarming. This was contained in a special remark by the Kano CIBN chairman, Aliyu Wada Nas during this year's annual dinner held at Palace Restaurant Nassarawa Kano, where he disclosed that the Chartered Institute Of Bankers Of Nigeria is making good effort to assist the less privileged in every sector.

He stated that they have successfully offered many helping hands in different aspects of human endeavours, citing an example on their visit to Murtala Mohammed Specialist Hospital where they donated money to some patients to cover some medical expenses, which is one of the CIBN's organised humanitarian aid that gives relief to the needy.

Malam Aliyu Wada Nas called on public spirited citizens and related organisations to consider humanitarian assistance as an important responsibility that needs everybody's support because all hands should be on deck to ensure

that peace and unity is promoted in this respect.

"On behalf of the executive officers of our great institute, I thank all those who trooped into this hall to celebrate with us. We are happy to witness this special day where we hold our annual dinner and flash back in showcasing our achievements in 2023, which is a great success to all of us that lead CIBN in Kano," he said.

Malam Aliyu Wada Nas commended the paper presenter who is also the Regional Manager of Jaiz Bank, Hajiya Naimatu Abdullahi HCIB for presenting an interesting paper on how financial institutions are playing important roles towards the economic growth in the society and promoting self reliance through various small and medium entrepreneurship based on capital management.

In his closing prayer, the Kano CIBN Public Relations Officer, Mr. Vinacius K. Okpareke stressed that this year's dinner was aimed at putting heads together to showcase the success stories achieved by the Kano CIBN executive in order to plan for the forthcoming period to actualize more progress.

He thanked all those who graced the colourful dinner and reassured that more developmental plans would be brought to make things better.



NAPRI Finishes Tops At 2023 National Agricultural Show In Poultry

By; SANIALIYU, Zaria
The National Animal Production Research Institute (NAPRI) Shika, Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria, has won first position in Poultry at the 2023 National Agricultural Show held in Nasarawa State.

A statement issued by the Public Affairs Directorate of the university said, the event took place at the National Agricultural Show Ground, Km 28 Abuja – Keffi Road, Tudun Wada, Karu Local Government Area, Nasarawa State.

The theme of the 2023 Agricultural show was, "Realisation of Presidential Declaration of Emergency on Food Security".

NAPRI has fully participated at the event where it showcased its research findings in poultry, rabbitry, pasture seeds both native and introduced, round and square hay bales, diary and food products, and publications.

The institute's stand attracted both national and

international stakeholders in animal agriculture.

The Chairman, Board of Trustees, National Agricultural Foundation of Nigeria (NAFN), Arc. Kabiru Ibrahim, conferred the award on the Institute at the closing ceremony of the Six day agricultural show.

The NAPRI was presented with a plaque as the winner of the "1st Position on Poultry" and a certificate of participation.

The Animal Research Institute was represented at the Agric show by Dr. M. Ishiaku, Assistant Director, Extension and Linkages; Abubakar Sadiq, Head of Publications and Information Unit; and some staff from the Poultry, Rabbit, Feed, and Nutrition Research Programmes.

The Institute's Executive Director, Prof. Muhammad Rabi'u Hassan, expressed appreciation to the Vice-Chancellor, Ahmadu Bello University, Prof. Kabiru Bala, members of the University Community for their support towards achieving food security in Nigeria.



Take Aways From COP28 Climate Summit, Call On Countries To Move Away From Fossil Fuel Tops

By; IBRAHIMADAMU, Kaduna
Member nations of UN Climate Treaty rose from Climate Change Summit in Dubai, United Arab Emirates with non-binding resolution on countries to move away from fossil fuel to save the world from global warming. The Summit tagged COP28 hosted by the UAE saw attendance from leading industrial nations, responsible for over 70 percent of greenhouse gases emissions into the

atmosphere, believed to be a major cause of penetrating the Ozone Layer which serves as a primary shield against direct impact of Sun rays on the planet.

Nigeria's President Bola Tinubu who was present at the summit said the most populous Black nation on earth was already taking measures to minimize reliance on carbon emission energy, adding that the country would be pleased to uphold and identify with resolutions reached

at the gathering.

Though, no definite mention of precised date of completely ending the use of fossil fuel in the World at the summit, experts believe that the resolution would only be a drop in the ocean, considering hundred of millions barrel of oil exports, with United States pressuring oil rich nations to increase their outputs. Sultan Jaber, President of the Dubai Summit while hitting the gavel, signalling the reaching of consensus among member nations to scale down the use of fossil fuel described the midnight deal of transitioning from carbon energy as historic and monumental.

The Summit began in 1992 in Rio de Janeiro in Brazil with then Present Bill Clinton charting the way for drawing attention of World leaders to the devastating effects of greenhouse gases and its negative consequences on global warming and rise in sea level.

Several others summit followed in Oslo, Copenhagen and Paris among others.



Man, 42, Bags Life Jail Over Rape Of 2 Underage Cousins

By ; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

An Abuja based businessman, identified as Chika Adionye is to spend the rest of his life in prison over the rape of two of his under aged cousins.

The 42-year old rapist was on Friday, found guilty of the alleged offence and sentenced accordingly by an FCT High Court sitting in Maitama, presided over by His Lordship, Justice Samira Bature.

He was said to have raped the victims, who were aged seven and eight years old respectively at the time he committed the atrocious act.

This was contained in a statement by the Press Officer of NAPTIP, Adekoye Vincent, and made available to journalists at the weekend. According to the release, the convict was arrested by the operatives of the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP), in 2016 at Kara Majiji Community of Airport Road, a suburb of the FCT, following a petition by the mother of one of the victims.

" Chika Adionye lured both children into his apartment shortly after his wife left home and violently raped them, one after the other.

" He was charged to court for rape and offensive conduct contrary to Section 1 and 5 of the Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act (VAPP),

2015 and the trial began in 2016 but the case suffered a setback including the convict jumping bail and fleeing to Imo State. He was, however, tracked and re-arrested a few years later.

" He was arraigned on the 7th of February 2022 on a 4-count charge. On the 15th of December 2023, he was found guilty and sentenced to life imprisonment", it stated.

While delivering the judgment, the judge said, "Having considered all evidence adduced by the prosecution in this case, the prosecution having proved its case beyond reasonable doubt and following the sentencing guidelines in line with Section 1 of the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act 2015, I convict you as charged and sentence you to Life Imprisonment."

Speaking on the development, the Director General of NAPTIP, Prof. Fatima Waziri-Azi, PhD, commended the judiciary for delivering a commensurable punishment.

While appreciating all frontline respondents who collaborated with NAPTIP throughout the progression of the case, Prof. Fatima Waziri-Azi assured that NAPTIP shall continue to ensure a violence free nation.

This is the second life imprisonment conviction for rape and the fourth rape conviction in 2023.



The convict

DUFUTH Set To Reverse Medical Tourism In Nigeria - CMD

By; M K P U M A ENYINNA, Abakaliki

The Chief Medical Director (CMD) of David Umahi Federal University Teaching Hospital (DUFUTH), Prof. Mrs. Uzoma Agwu has said that the world-class hospital with state-of-the-art facilities is ready to reverse medical tourism in Nigeria because the brand new hospital has all the medical facilities and manpower to offer exceptional medical services to patients in any part of the world.

Prof Agwu made this known while addressing newsmen in her office recently at DUFUTH.

The CMD stated that the hospital is ever-ready and has all it takes to provide all the medical services needed in any part of the globe.

According to her, DUFUTH which is located at Uburu in Ebonyi State has gone far in providing medical treatments to people since all the departments have been activated to function effectively to provide quality medical services to

patients at affordable rates.

To ensure the welfare of staff, the CMD explained that all staff of the hospital have been registered into the IPPIS platform and National Trust Fund Agency of the Federal Government of Nigeria so that they can be paid as Federal staff.

"DUFUTH is the most beautiful hospital in Nigeria. We have state-of-the-art facilities. We started about a year ago. I looked at the beautiful structure and said to myself, this is a calling not just an appointment.

"By the grace of God, this institution will reverse medical tourism in Nigeria because we have state-of-the-art facilities and manpower, and so there will be no need to leave the shores of this country to any other facility to receive medical care.

"We set out to build a hospital that can provide everything. And we started registering our staff into the IPPIS platform of the Federal government so that they can be paid as Federal staff. As a brand new institution, we also set

up all the departments.

"When we came in here, we were handed over a brand new hospital but right inside the hospital, we don't have seats and tables, and that is why we started setting up the departments with things that human beings can use to carry out their function effectively.

"We were able to correct some other things that we were not able to put right in the structure; you know when you start using a new structure, you are bound to correct some mistakes to get it right. We have a 5 storey building here and we activated all the floors we have.

"We have a medicine department, ONG department, surgery, dental, and community medicine amongst others have been activated. We were also able to get the manpower that we needed to provide services to patients. Initially, we have full-time consultants, about 31 of them.

"But because they were not enough, we went ahead to get specialists in other areas like gynecologists,

neurosurgeons, pediatricians, family physicians, and many others to complement what we have.

"After the enrollment, activation of all the departments, and full payment of my staff. We also registered our staff into the National Trust Fund Agency so that the welfare of my staff is assured because I am staff oriented CMD. My priority is my staff first before any other thing. When you have a nice and well-motivated staff, your patients will lack nothing.

"We were able to activate the renal, eye, oncology, physiotherapy, and cancer centers, amongst others have started providing medical services to people.

"We have also commenced the electronic recording of everything we do in this hospital. We also have a Radiology department; we have a full complement of radiological services for people. We have CT scans, X-ray machines, mammograph machines, MRI, etc. All of them have been activated." Professor Agwu explained.

Gov Makinde Presents Staff Of Office To Oba Olaoye As 21st Soun Of Ogbomosho

**Describes him as a visionary leader*

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

Governor Seyi Makinde, on Tuesday, presented staff of office and certificate to Oba Ghandi Afolabi Olaoye, as the 21st Soun of Ogbomosho.

Presenting the staff of office, Gov Makinde described Oba Olaoye as a visionary leader, an entrepreneur and motivational speaker, who has the capacity to take Ogbomosho land to the next level of development.

The governor tasked the new Soun of Ogbomosho to use his wealth of experience, exposure and ingenuity to further enhance infrastructural development of the ancient town.

Speaking, former Vice President, Professor Yemi Osinbajo, described the new Soun as a friend, who always speak the truth even when it was not convenient to people around him.

Oba Olaoye in his response, tasked the people of Ogbomosho to support his vision of taking Ogbomosho to the promised

land, pledging to embark on notable developmental projects that will make life meaningful to all.

The new Soun of Ogbomosho declared that he has come to serve the people of the town, irrespective of religion or tribe.

Present at the presentation of staff of office, included the Ooni of Ife, Oba Adeyeye Enitan Ogunwusi, the Olu of Warri, Oba Ogiame Atuwatse Oluwo of Iwo, Oba Abdulrasheed Akanbi; Timi of Ede, Oba Gbolahan Lawal; Ewi of Ado, Oba Rufus Adejugbe; Orangun of Oke Ila, Oba Adedokun Abolarin.

Others are the immediate past vice president of Nigeria, Professor Yemi Osinbajo; Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF), George Akume, represented by former Military Administrator of Oyo State, General Oladayo Popoola (Rtd), Members of the National Assembly from Oyo State, Oyo State Executive Council members, present and past Oyo State House of Assembly members.

EFCC: Court Jails 75-yr Old Investment Fraudster in Ibadan

By; BAYO AKAMO Ibadan

An Oyo State High Court sitting in Ibadan has convicted and sentenced a 75 years old man, Olaniyan Gbenga Amos and his firm imprisonment for multiple investment fraud.

Olaniyan Gbenga Amos convicted alongside his firm, Detorrid Heritage Investment Limited were prosecuted on 35-count charges by the Ibadan Zonal Command of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, (EFCC), bordering on obtaining by false pretences, contrary to Section 1(1) (a) and punishable under Section 1(3) of the Advance Fee Fraud and Other Fraud Related Offences Act 2006.

According to EFCC, Count 35 of the charge reads: "That you Olaniyan Gbenga Amos and Detorrid Heritage Investment Limited on or about the 20th of

February, 2020, at Ibadan, within the jurisdiction of this honourable court, with intent to defraud obtained the sum of N1,540,000 (One million, Five Hundred and Forty Thousand only) from Akinlabi Qasim Dada, when you falsely represented to him that the money was meant for registration and investment with Crime Alert Security Network with a promise of 30% return on investment in six weeks (30 working days), which representation you knew to be false and thereby committed an offence of obtaining money under false pretence contrary to Section 1(1) (a) and punishable under Section 1(3) of the Advance Fee Fraud and Other Fraud Related Offences Act 2006."

Another Charge reads: "That you OLANIYAN GBENGA AMOS and DETORRID HERITAGE

INVESTMENT LIMITED on or about 27th of August, 2020, at Ibadan, within the jurisdiction of this Honourable Court, with intent to defraud obtained the sum of N170,000 (One Hundred and Seventy Thousand Naira) only from Alhaji Mukaila Odunayo, when you falsely represented to him that the money is meant for registration and investment with Crime Alert Security Network with a promise of 30% return on Investment in 6 weeks (30 working days), which representations you knew to be false and thereby committed an offence of obtaining money under false pretence contrary to Section 1(1) (a) and punishable under Section 1(3) of the Advance Fee Fraud and Other Fraud Related Offences Act 2006."

The defendant pleaded "not guilty" to the charges when they were read to him and in view of

his plea, EFCC Counsel, Sanusi Galadanchi opened the case on February 17, 2022 and called six witnesses, tendered eight exhibits and closed the case on January 24, 2023.

At the end of the prosecution's case, the defendant filed a "no case submission" which was overruled by the court after which the defendant opened and closed his case by calling three witnesses.

Justice Bayo Taiwo reserved judgment in the matter till December 14, 2023 and at the resumption of the trial Justice Taiwo convicted and sentenced the defendant to fifteen (15) years imprisonment on each of counts 27, 32, 33, 34, and 35 but discharged and acquitted the defendant on counts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9; 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19; 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, 29; 30 and 31 respectively.

Justice Taiwo ordered that the sentence should run concurrently and the defendant should also reconstitute the victims.

It was learnt that Amos has three other ongoing trials before Federal and State High Courts in Ibadan, Oyo State.

EFCC recalled that the convict's journey to the Correctional Centre began when he was arrested and arraigned before Justice Bayo Taiwo on December 14, 2021 by the EFCC.

He swindled several individuals through fake investment ventures that led to the loss of money to the tune of over N1 billion by investors.

Amos reneged to meet up with the agreements he made with his investors, by not paying the agreed "Return on Investment" to those who invested in "Crime Alert Security Network", a security investment programme under the umbrella of his firm.

Christmas Palliatives: Borno First Lady Doles Out Gifts To 600 Christian Women, Widows, Others

By ; SADIQ
ABUBAKAR,
Maiduguri

Borno State First Lady, Dr. Falmata Babagana Umara Zulum, on Wednesday, reached out to Christian women, widows and vulnerable families in the society at the Multipurpose Hall of the Government House Maiduguri, ahead of the Christmas festival.

She said the gesture is a support to the Christian families to enable them have a successful and fulfilling Christmas celebration next week.

The gifts distributed include, 25Kg bag of rice, one gallon of vegetable oil and cash gifts to each beneficiary.

The First Lady also wished all the Christian faithful in the state and beyond a Merry Christmas, and Happy

New Year in advance.

Earlier in her welcome remarks, the Honourable Commissioner Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development, Hajjia Zuwaira Gambo, commended the First Lady for sustaining the kind gesture done to womenfolk, girls and the vulnerable in the society over the years, with passion, love and affection towards promotion of unity, live and peaceful coexistence among the entire people of the state.

Chairperson of the Borno State Widows Association, Madam Asabe, thanked the first lady for identifying with the Christian community at this festive period.

She further added, "We want to assure you that by the grace of God, the celebrations will be marked peacefully in the state".



Christmas Palliatives: Borno First Lady Doles Out Gifts To 600 Christian Women, Widows, Others



Arewa Group Demands Inclusion Of Lami Ahmed In Tinubu's Govt

By; USMAN NASIDI, Kaduna.

A socio-economic group, under the aegis of Concerned Citizens of Nigeria (CCN), has appealed to President Bola Ahmed Tinubu to consider Lami Oyani Ahmed in his government.

The group said that the call became imperative, considering the role Mrs Ahmed played while in office as the Director NNPC, North Central before her tenure was cut short, adding that she is a competent hand that the nation cannot afford to miss in government, especially at a critical time like this that the president's quest is to put the country's economy on the right footing.

While addressing a press conference in Kaduna on Sunday, the leader of the group, Sani Yero explained that the group found it expedient to bring Mrs Lami Oyani Ahmed to the fore, considering her antecedent in the oil and gas sector.

"It is no longer news that one of the factors that attracted both the youth and the old to the candidature of Tinubu/Shettima was the fact that they emphasised



the inclusiveness of competence and corrupt free persons to be part of their government, and on this note, we are calling on the president and his vice to consider the qualities in Lami Oyani Ahmed.

"Record has it that amongst other Directors who served under the immediate past administration of Buhari, Mrs Ahmed was the best, following her commitment and show of patriotism towards nation

building and reviving the sector.

"While in office, she had equally used her position to stabilised youth activities, promoting peace and social justice, not only in the North, but in all the geopolitical zones of Nigeria.

"Mrs Ahmed is a woman of impeccable credentials and who enjoys a lot of goodwill from across the divides. Lami Onayi Ahmed has over 30 years

working experience covering the entire value chain of the oil & gas industry."

The group however, said that Tinubu is a result-oriented leader whose quest is to ensuring that the nation economy is stabilised; hence the need to work with competent hand like Mrs. Lami Ahmed whose record of competence and diligence can not be over emphasised.

No Room For Polarization In Our Party, Oyo APC Warns Returnees

*Cautions against dog fight over executive committee position at all levels

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

The All Progressives Congress (APC) leadership in Oyo State on Tuesday, warned its existing and returning members against any action capable of polarising the party.

In a statement in Ibadan by its Publicity Secretary, Olawale Sadare Oyo APC cautioned the returning members to shun any divisive tendencies particularly as it relates to parallel meetings and engagement in dog fight over executive committee position at all levels since According to the party, 'it is poised to continue with its reconciliation efforts in spite of the recent return of a good number of former members who defected to Accord in 2022'.

Oyo state APC charged all other former party members who are yet to return to rescind their decision to either stay put in Accord or join the ruling party on account of grievances picked with handlers and leaders of the thumb party.

"We do not want any of our people to remain outside the fence now that the storm is over. So, we are appealing to the concerned individuals who stayed away from the last Friday event to return home without further delay", it said

The party added, "We must appreciate the efforts of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu and our National Chairman, Dr. Abdullahi Ganduje, in supporting the reconciliation drive of Oyo APC as this has facilitated the return of many of our members who abandoned the party

over 18 months ago".

"We can say categorically that all stakeholders including our three Senators, nine members of the House of Representatives and four members of the State House of Assembly have resolved to work together with the new members with a view to making the party stronger and more virile ahead of future challenges".

It noted, "Meanwhile, it is important for the returning members to shun any divisive tendencies particularly as it relates to parallel meetings and engagement in dog fight over executive committee position at all levels since it has been agreed by all parties that modalities would be worked out to address some grey areas which might affect total integration and harmonious coexistence". Oyo APC stressed that "The status quo should be maintained across the 351 Wards and 33 LGAs until further notice from the appropriate quarters", adding, All the new or returning members need do is to report at their respective Ward meetings and make open announcement while none should be discriminated against on account of events that had happened in the past".

According to the party, "Feelers across the state indicate that residents are tired of the present nothing PDP administration which has prioritized sale of choice heritage and public properties to satisfy some privileged individuals' love for illicit wealth acquisition and official corruption."

NGO Disburses Fund To Over 500 Beneficiaries In Kogi

By; ADAMA JOHN, Lokoja

Women from Adavi, Kogi-Koton Karfe, Okehi, and Okene local government areas of Kogi State benefited from the Connected Development (CODE) scheme that gulped millions of Naira. The development is part of the post off circle election of November 11 governorship election engagements of the non governmental organisation to empower women in the state with cash to improve their livelihood.

The programme, which was a major aspect of the post election sensitization advocacy to the grassroots, emphasised the need to sustain the existing peace and set an agenda

for the incoming administration.

Addressing the beneficiaries in Okene last weekend, founder and Chief Executive Officer of the group, Ambassador Hamzat Lawal said the empowerment is a token to appreciate women for coming out en masse to cast their ballots peacefully during the November 11, 2023 off-cycle governorship election.

The international election monitor, noted that as a philanthropist he has to complement the efforts of the state government in eradicating reducing poverty at the grassroots and urged other spirited individuals and corporate organizations to consolidate on what government had been

doing to ameliorate the suffering of the less privileged in the state.

"Recently, Kogi State Governor Yahaya Bello launched ministry of humanitarian affairs and started with palliative and empowerment programme and I think that as CSO, individual and private sector we should consolidate on what government is doing to eradicate poverty especially at the grassroots.

"This cash empowerment, which is N5,000 per recipient. We targeted 500 people in different wards across the state. We have reached out to 100 vulnerable people in Koton-Karfe at Ohimeyge Igu's palace, 200 people at Oboroke in Ihima, 100 beneficiaries at Abuga

Ozuja ward in Okengwe and 100 people at Onyikoko ward in Okene.

"This empowerment is mainly meant for women because they are peace builders and the fabric of the society. I am using this medium to appeal to women to prioritize the education of their children and wards. I am here today because of how much my mother has invested in me through education, and I want every parent to do same," he said.

Ambassador Lawal also took the post election advocacy to Onoziomi central mosque in Adavi LGA, where he charged Muslim faithful to remain peaceful even in the face of provocation, saying that Islam is a religion of peace.

5,000 Housing Units To Be Provided For Customs Officers Across Nigeria - Comptroller General

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

Comptroller General of Nigeria Customs Service (NCS), Mr Bashir Adewale Adeniyi on Monday, disclosed that 5,000 housing units are to be provided for Customs officers across the country. The Comptroller General said this at the commissioning and hand-over of houses to beneficiaries of Coop Pacesetter Estate built for Customs officers in Oyo/Osun Area Command at Ajoda, Ibadan.

He stated that this is part of the efforts of the Nigeria Customs Service to ensure the overall welfare of the officers, adding that the provision of the welfare packages is to boost morale of customs officers across the country remains his priority.

"NCS has embarked on ambitious projects which aim to construct 5,000 housing units

nationwide. The visionary initiatives seek to provide a stable foundation imploring them to invest in their families and future", he said.

The Comptroller General added, "NCS has instituted an array of welfare programmes initiatives, recognition and awards instituted to celebrate exceptional performance, dedication and achievements which serve as catalyst to boost morale and motivation."

"Concurrently, community engagement initiatives actively encourage our officers to partake in social responsibility support programmes recognising the interconnectedness of personal and professional lives, extend services and benefits to the families of our officers."

Mr Adeniyi maintained further that "Through these initiatives, Customs will foster an environment where our officers would

not only flourish in their professional capacities but also experience profound sense of well-being and fulfilment".

He stated that in addition to array of welfare programmes outlined for officers of NCS, in order to cushion the harmful effects of the fuel subsidy, he had signed a document for the payment of N35,000 to all officers of Customs starting from September this year.

"It is part of our efforts to prioritize the welfare of our officers. We are focusing on mental, physical and overall welfare and wellbeing of our officers to ensure optimum performance. We have institutionalized array of welfare packages to boost morale of officers across the country. We are empowering our officers to involve in community activities and community services so as to foster harmonious relationship between the customs and

the public".

The Comptroller General stressed, "in our efforts to address the problem faced by officers while looking for accommodation, we have decided to build 5,000 housing units in Lagos, Kaduna, Kano, Ibadan, Giri, Masala and Port-Harcourt. This in turn will provide a foundation of stability for our officers, allowing them to invest in their families and futures and ultimately serve our nation even more effectively".

Leader, Cooperative Society of Nigeria, Mr Ayeola Tajudeen, and another partner, Mr Kabir Ayinde disclosed that the project is intended to cover 5,000 housing units and it will cost N90 billion and that in every quarter of year 2024, 250 housing units will be provided and this will provide jobs for Nigerians.



89 Pharmacists Graduate From UNILORIN, 27 Bag Distinction

By BILIQIS ONAOLAPO OLAJUMOKE, Ilorin.

A total of 89 pharmacists of the 2021/2022 set on Wednesday in Ilorin, graduated from the University of Ilorin, as 27 of them bagged distinction.

Speaking at the 8th Induction and Oath-taking Ceremony, Prof Wahab Egbewole, the Vice Chancellor of the university felicitated the graduands, while urging them to be good ambassadors of the institution wherever they find themselves.

The Vice Chancellor who was represented by Prof Sulaiman Ambali, the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Management Services, emphasized the importance of pharmacy in healthcare delivery in Nigeria.

He described pharmacy as very unique in healthcare delivery system.

Egbewole advised the graduands to be diligent and uphold the professional ethics and value.

The VC therefore appealed to the necessary regulatory agencies and bodies to step up fight against fake drugs.

In her keynote presentation, Prof Margaret Afolabi, a Professor of Clinical Pharmacy Administration, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ife enjoined the graduands to inculcate professional values.

According to her, the

professional guiding ethics dictates that pharmacists must be disciplined, responsible, honest, respectable and diligent.

She advised them against indecent dressing, while emphasizing the need to stand out by being modest.

"Don't take advantage of your clients who are in vulnerable state. Integrity is a cornerstone of the profession.

"Hard work will take you far and places of high level. You must avoid error as much as possible and ask for clarification if you don't understand handwritten prescription from medics," she said.

The expert in pharmacy also admonished them to consult colleagues and senior colleagues.

Afolabi who observed that there is proliferation of fake drugs in the country, tasked them on trustworthiness and help the country overcome the challenge.

Also in his address, Mr Ibrahim Ahmed, the Registrar of Pharmacy Council of Nigeria (PCN) urged the graduands to maintain high ethical standards and discharge their duties for a sustainable healthcare system in Nigeria.

Ahmed also enjoined them to take their internship training seriously, adding that there is no limitation to their practice as they can see themselves in hospitals, publishing and journalism as well as governance.



Lagos Council Boss Disburses N25m To Indigent Households

By; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

No fewer than 1,000 vulnerable households were gifted the sum of N25 million by Chairman of Oriade Local Council Development Area in Lagos Hon. Ramotalai Akinlola-Hassan as cash palliatives, to cushion the effect of fuel subsidy removal.

Aside the indigents, widows of two deceased traditional rulers and some late political leaders totalling 50 were given

N100,000 each, including the son of a dogged party supporter killed during the campaign to the 2021 Local Government Election, who got N1 million.

Hassan, who made the presentation on Monday, hinted that the disbursement of palliative to the indigents will be held every three months till she leaves office.

Aside the fact that the cash palliative is aimed at reducing the pains of fuel subsidy removal, Hassan stressed that it is also

deliberately given to the beneficiaries to enable them put food on their tables during the Christmas and New Year celebration.

The LCDA boss appealed to all the beneficiaries to spend the money wisely.

She emphasised that the gesture, since inception of her administration, is a testimony of its total commitment to the wellbeing of the generality of Oriade residents.

While assuring that the dividend of democracy will be surely extended to

all residents, she assured those yet to benefit from the poverty alleviation scheme that her administration will take care of their interest in due course.

The programme, which took place at the secretariat of the LCDA at Oriade had in attendance four traditional rulers, the former Council chairman Hon. Ibrahim Sanusi, Apex leader of All Progressives Congress (APC) Alhaja Memunat Ajao, amongst others.

APC-IGG National President Bags FAPPA Award For Promoting Good Governance

By: JABIRU A. HASSAN, Kano

In a colourful event, the Association Of Public Policy Analysis (FAPPA) has honoured the National President, APC Initiative For Good Governance (APC-IGG) for his contribution to good governance and national development,

The ceremony which was graced by prominent personalities, recorded success especially when the awardees were selected based on their various degrees of contribution towards the development of the great country without bias.

Earlier in the nomination letter sent to Ambassador Musa Mohammed Tsoken before the

event, the organisation said that, "you deserve praise for your public policy analysis which has advanced civilisation, your capacity to handle complex policy issues, promoting transparency and ensure accountability, has helped promote the good governance respectively".

The organisation opined that Ambassador Musa Mohammed Tsoken's efforts will continue to shape a better society in public policy and government, where the FAPPA Africa Regional Representative, ZemsMathias, PH.D on behalf of the governing council, congratulated the awardee for being a true nationalist.



Ambassador Tsoken with other recipients



From left: Osun State Deputy Governor, Prince Kola Adewusi; Osun State Governor, Senator Ademola Adeleke, Osun State SSG, Hon Teslim Igbalaye and Speaker Osun State House of Assembly, Rt Hon Adewale Egbedun during the inspection tour of the ongoing dualisation of the Old Garage - Okefia - Lameco Roads Osogbo at the weekend. Photo: AKINOLAARIYO

Responding to our correspondent shortly after the ceremony, Ambassador Musa Mohammed Tsoken said that the recent award has encouraged him to double efforts towards the national development under the aegis of APC-IGG as one of the most formidable APC supports groups.

"As an awardee of the FAPPA'most active promoter of good governance 2023, I would double my efforts to see that Nigeria becomes more progressive under the stewardship of our dynamic president, Bola Ahmed Tinubu who is trying his best to ensure

that our fatherland remains more competent to developing world, and I cannot conclude my remarks without commending our able SGF Senator George Akume for giving his all to national growth and development"

Pensioners Commend Benue Govt For Regularising Monthly Pensions

By: ARCHIBONG ESUENE, Makurdi

Benue State Governor, Rev. Fr. Hyacinth Alia has been commended by Pensioners in the State for prioritising their welfare through regular payment of their monthly pensions.

This was contained in a statement by Bridget Ikyado, Principal Special Assistant to the Governor on Media, Publicity and Strategic Communications recently in Makurdi

The group under the auspices of 'Concerned Pensioners Association of Benue' gave the

commendation recently, during a solidarity rally in support of the Alia-led administration.

In an address read by the Chairman of the group, Hon. Akosu Orban Alexis at the Government House, Makurdi, the Concerned Pensioners recalled how they had highlighted their problems and grievances occasioned by the outgone administration in the state to Governor Hyacinth Alia and had pleaded with him to address same which according to them, it took the governor a short while to provide solutions to such

grievances.

"You regularised payment of our monthly salaries which was paid 3 times in one year by the previous administration. You placed all the pensioners on the payroll immediately after retirement. You cleared the gratuity of those retired during your administration to pave way for you to face only the arrears incurred by the previous administration."

While highlighting some of the achievements of the governor in office, such as construction of road networks within Makurdi and other towns, provision of 100 buses to

Benue Links Company.

Others include reconstruction of Benue State House of Assembly Complex, payment of WAEC and NECO registration for Benue State indigenes schooling in all government schools across the state.

They group noted that the good governance offered by the present administration in the state was the reason most of the cases instituted against the state government by pensioners have been withdrawn, calling on the governor to implement the report on the harmonization of

the pension rates as enshrined in the 1999 constitution

Responding, Governor Hyacinth Alia said the solidarity rally by the Concerned Pensioners was a big defining moment for the administration.

Represented by his Chief of Staff, Rt. Hon. Paul Biam, the governor thanked the pensioners for trusting him with their votes and also for withdrawing the cases that were instituted against the government, promising to do more not just for the pensioners but for all the workers and entire people of the state.

Oborevwoiri Receives Man Who Cycled From Yobe To Delta

By; UTEBOR PETER, Asaba

Governor Sheriff Oborevwoiri of Delta State has received Samuel Erukoghene Okoro who cycled for 10 days from Damaturu in Yobe State to Asaba.

Okoro, a Deltan from Orhuwhorun in Udu Local Government Area of the state and resident of Damaturu, embarked on the journey on Saturday, December 9, and arrived Asaba on Wednesday December 20.

Welcoming the cyclist, Gov. Oborevwoiri congratulated him for the successful journey and assured that he would continue to deliver the dividends of democracy to Deltans who entrusted him with their votes.

According to him, "to ride on bicycle from Damaturu in Yobe State to Delta State for 10 days is a big risk and I want to assure all Deltans that with all the love and risk people took to support me, I will not disappoint Deltans.

"I know times are tough but we are trying our best and in the past six months we have done quite a lot.

"People have stake in this

government, the youths, the women and even residents. I want to assure you that the peace we are enjoying now in this state, we will sustain it and we will do more for Deltans.

"There will be more infrastructural and human capital development. So we will do our best".

Earlier, Okoro said the journey took him 10 days from Yobe to Delta, adding that he was motivated by the superlative performance of Governor Oborevwoiri in Delta State.

"I started this journey on December 9 and I started it from Damaturu, Yobe State.

"I was inspired by the works of Governor Oborevwoiri in the state. I flipped through Facebook and Google to see many of his numerous projects.

"So I decided to go for a 1,200 km bicycle ride in his honour and today I am grateful to God for arriving here successfully."

The State Deputy Governor, Sir Monday Onyeme and top government functionaries joined Governor Oborevwoiri to welcome Okoro and his family who joined him in Asaba



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

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

POLITICAL RATE

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

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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
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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	212,500.00	16,875.00	229,375.00
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

NPA Committed To Position Nigerian Ports For Competitive Edge At Global Market - MD

By; **RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos**

The Managing Director (MD) of Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Mr. Mohammad Bello-Koko has disclosed that the NPA is committed to continuous improvement in order to position Nigerian ports at a competitive edge in the global market.

Bello-Koko also hinted that Nigerian Port infrastructure has undergone significant improvements in recent years, modernising projects, policy reforms and investments in human capital even as sustainability has laid a solid foundation for future growth.

He added that the agency has upscaled its operation through automation and digitalization of its processes.

Speaking at the 2023 Conference and Awards ceremony of the Association of Maritime Journalists of Nigeria (AMJON), Thursday in Lagos, the NPA Boss however I insisted that continued collaboration between the NPA, government, private sector, and local communities will be crucial to unlock the full potential of Nigeria's maritime sector and drive economic prosperity.

Represented at the event by Mr. Charles Okaga, Port Manager, Lagos Port Complex Apapa, Bello-Koko who lamented that operators in the port system are yet to be fully connected digitally.

The processes that have been entry notice documentation



NPA Boss

automated include truck traffic management system e-call up, port ship reception and billing payment with the revenue invoicing and management system (RIMS), deployment of electronic manifest and ship

processes, operation of Oracle Financials and Oracle HR. Procurement of software for harbour automation is ongoing, the MD said.

He said automation facilities for integration; include Radar;

Automatic Identification System (AIS); VHF Communication; Meteorological and Tidal Sensor, Surveillance Cameras and VTMS.

Bello-Koko lamented the challenges of carrying out speedy maintenance of port access roads due to the responsibility vested on the Federal Ministry of Works & Housing, with no direct responsibilities to the port.

Other challenges, he said include conflicting legislations with sister agencies, inadequate funding and need for further infrastructural development.

According to him the Port Authority has created new businesses which created job opportunities for Nigerians, such as the Barge Operations services which apart from reducing pressure on the roads has grown into a N2 billion annual generation business both from direct investment and accompanying externalities.

He disclosed that licensing of additional Truck Parks to increase capacity of Truck Parks servicing the Lagos Ports, has brought about significant reduction in truck turn-around time due to successful implementation of the e-call up system.

The Ports Authority is also enforcing minimum safety standards on trucks which stipulate that all trucks accessing the ports are inspected, certified and issued safety assurance

clearance.

The MD also noted the establishment of Export Processing Terminals which are located in Lagos and Ogun states. The terminals, according to him, currently serve as Cargo consolidation points, Export documentation points, Quality control and Customs authentication and sealing.

Bello-Koko disclosed that the Ports Authority has put in place coordination of shipment of export cargo to ensure timely exportation, through equipment of terminals with Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) with terminal operators and shipping companies.

There is also installation of weighbridges at EPTs to ensure compliance with IMO instrument of Verified Gross mass (VGM) of export cargo and issuance of accompanying weight certificate.

He said, "Since the EPTs, the port of Apapa and Tincan have witnessed an upsurge in export volumes and 65 per cent reduction in the number of accidents recorded, arising from improved standards of trucks operating within the port premises.

The NPA MD further disclosed that there is standardization of operational procedures for different activities such as barging, private jetties, pilotage, vessel berthing/sailing etc.

Governor Nwifuru Pledges To Prioritize Welfare Of Elderly People

By; **MKPUMA ENYINNA, Abakaliki**

The Governor of Ebonyi State, Chief Francis Ogbonna Nwifuru has said that his administration will continue to prioritise the welfare of the elderly people and widows in the state in line with his social contract.

Governor Nwifuru gave the assurance last Saturday, at the Christian Ecumenical Centre, Abakaliki, during Elders and Widows Party organised at his instance.

The governor reiterated his stance on bettering the lots of people especially the elders and widows and other less

privileged.

The essence of the People's Charter of Needs, he explained, is to ensure an effective target mechanism that will eliminate leakages in the course of reaching out to the socio-economically disadvantaged.

He assured that his government will continue to honour the elderly and widows.

"We understand that when we honour our parents, God will honour us", he averred.

The Ebonyi State Chief Executive acknowledged the current economic realities and their attendant effects on the widows and elderly and pledged

an upward review of their upkeep.

"Let me assure you that I am with you, I am for you and I will work for you.

"We have taken a review of your allowances which is why we reviewed it upward".

He stressed the need for strict adherence to time, saying, "We have a tradition of keeping to time".

The State Commissioner for Local Government, Mr Uchenna Igwe said the Governor is committed to ensuring the welfare of all classes of Ebonyians, assuring that it will remain an annual event.



Gov Nwifuru



Nasarawa Assembly Urges Govt To Provide Communities With Potable Water

By; SAMSON YAKI, Lafia

The Nasarawa State House of Assembly (NSHA) has urged the state government to provide more potable water to communities across the state.

The House said provision of more water facilities, will improve on the standard of living of the people of the state and reduce the spread of diseases.

The Chairman of the Committee on Water Resources, John Ovey, made the call when the Ministry of Water Resources appeared

before the committee on its 2024 budget defence in Lafia.

He said that he who provides water provides life as human being cannot sustain their lives without water.

The committee Chairman assured the ministry of support to enable them provide more portable water and for effective service delivery.

"We want to assure you of our support. We will also synergize with you to tackle the challenges facing water sector and other challenges of your ministry," he said.

He urged the management

not to leave any stone unturned in providing water to communities across the state as according to him it will go a long way in reducing the spread of diseases.

Responding, Abubakar Akun, the Commissioner for Water Resources appreciated the committee for supporting its activities to succeed.

He said that the administration of Governor Sule is being up and doing in ensuring the provision of water and other dividends of democracy to the people of the state.

Also appeared before the

committee on its 2024 budget defence was the management of the State Water Board led by its General-Manager, Kana Ahmed Abubakar where he thanked the committee and the state government for giving their attention to the board to succeed.

The management of the Nasarawa State Rural Water and Sanitation Agency led by its General Manager, Dr Rowler Ayuba also appeared before the Committee for budget defence where he assured of their determination to keep the state clean at all times.

Kaduna: Group Launches Use Of Drama To Communicate Importance Of Tax Payment

By ; A L E X UANGBAOJE, Kaduna

A group, Task Justice and Governance Platform (TJ&GP), Kaduna State chapter has launched the use of theatre for development in educating business owners and other citizens on the importance of tax payment in the state.

The strategy which is aimed at promoting voluntary tax compliance geared at boosting Internally Generated Revenue, was launched at Makarfi market in Makarfi Local Government Area, on Wednesday, organized in collaboration with the State Internal Revenue Services (KADIRS).

Speaking during the flag-off, Simeon Olatunde, Coordinator of the network, said the campaign would be carried out in markets and business premises in the 23 LGAs across the state.

According to him, "we want to cover the entire 23 local government areas, particularly the major markets in the State, but we are starting in Makarfi, kudan, Giwa, Soba and other LGAs, and we will continue in other Senatorial zones."

"We really want to dive into the communities to make them aware and empower them on their roles in participating in governance. Social contract has two sides; the community which are the people and the government.

"For the system to work smoothly, both the people and the government must work together to make sure things work out; the people will contribute and the government will play its role.

"Apart from the contribution which is the obligation of the people, tax payment is paramount. So we want to encourage them to pay their task on time. By doing so, they make resources available for the government so as to provide amenities for them.

"For instance a lot of things are not in shape in the Makarfi Market. But with their task payment it will give them the power on the demand of shops

construction, good road network, security. The government will be obliged to provide these social amenities for them after they have paid their task." Olatunde explained.

Speaking on behalf of the market community, Vice Chairman of the Market Union, Suleiman Magaji, lamented that despite the level of tax compliance by traders in the market and the importance of the market in the zone, the state government has refused to bring in development to the market. Suleiman, said as big as the market is, they have only one toilet which is not even located in the market.

"There's no water here, no toilet, no roads inside the market and the only toilet we have here is very far away from the market, you have to go very far and that's what everyone that visit this market is using.

"Government is not doing anything for us, yet they come here every time to collect revenue from us. They really need to give this market attention to attract more revenue.

"People will be encouraged to pay tax here if they have access to toilets and water running with enough space to park their vehicles, especially those bringing goods into the market.

"So we are appealing to the state government to do something about it because traders in this market are really suffering. He pleaded.

On his part, Ahmed Abdullahi, who works as a tax collector for the union, noted that taxes are legal and civic obligations of citizens, and paying it enables one to be a contributor to national development.

He commended the Network for organising the sensitization describing it as the best thing that has happened to the market in recent times because it will ease his job following the way people responded to the drama.

A short play that demonstrated how communities are benefiting from taxes and the need for people to comply to tax payment was performed by a theatre group.



Katsina Governor Presents Brand New Car To 2023 Teacher Of Year

By; SULAIMAN AHMED MISAU, Katsina

Governor Dikko Umar Radda of Katsina State has presented a brand new Peugeot 307 Car to Malam Usman Yahaya Tama the winner of the 9th edition of the state Maltina Teacher of the Year 2023.

Malam Usman Yahaya Tama, a Geography teacher at Government Day Senior Secondary School Natsinta Army Barrack Katsina, was among 1,499 teachers across the country who submitted their application to participate in Educational Trust Fund of the Maltina Company that aimed at

celebrating classroom teachers and recognized their efforts towards uplifting the educational sector across the country.

Malam Yahaya Tama, is an indigene of Bindawa Local Government Area of the state, but was born and raised in Katsina.

Malam Tama attended Ambuttai Primary School presently known as Musa Yar'adua model Primary School Katsina and Sir Usman Nagogo Collage of Arabic and Islamic Studies katsina.

Accordingly, Usman Tama proceeded to further his education at the Federal collage of education katsina where he obtained the National Certificate

in Education.

He then proceeded to Umaru Musa Yar'adua University where he obtained a Degree in Bsc.ed Geography.

Malam Tama further moved to Bayero University kano for a Masters Degree in Environmental Management(MEM).

Governor Dikko Umar Radda in his remarks appreciated and felicitated with the courage and zeal shown by Usman Yahaya Tama and called on other Teachers to emulate him.

Governor Radda then rewarded Usman Yahaya Tama with the Peugeot 307 to boost his morale and confidence.

The state Commissioner Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education, Hajiya Hadiza Abubakar Yar'adua on behalf of the Governor presented the keys of the Vehicle to Malam Usman Yahaya Tama at The Ministry headquarters in Katsina.

In related development the Commissioner Hajiya Hadiza Abubakar Lawal Yar'adua also presented to Governor Dikko Umaru Radda two (2) Secondary School students of Government Pilot Secondary School Daura.

The two Students are:- Buhari Suleiman and Abubakar Falalu who represented Northwest State at the just concluded National

Annual quiz Competition on Legislature, Democracy and Governance Grand finale organized by the National Institute for Legislature and Democratic Studies (NILDS) and accompanied to the event by one Ministry official Assistant Director Sports and the teacher from Daura Pilot.

Governor Dikko Radda pledged to sponsor their fees at University level and the Honourable Commissioner Hajiya Hadiza Abubakar Lawal Yar'adua shared the sum of One Million Naira (N1,000,000) to both the participating students and the two officials.



Bauchi FA Chair Commends Organisers Of Aisha Bala Mohammed U-15 Tourney

By; AYO OJEDOKUN, Lagos

Chairman of Bauchi State Football Association, Patrick Pascal has commended Youths Sports Federation of Nigeria (YSFON), organisers of the ongoing annual Aisha Bala Mohammed, FNCS (Sarauniyar Bauchi) U-15 Football Championship, for putting up a seamless competition

The competition being sponsored by the Bauchi State First Lady, kicked off on Monday with Pascal attending all the matches.

According to the ex-international, who was a

product of YSFON, the oldest grassroots football organising body in the country deserves kudos and support of all Nigerians to enable them continue in their talent discovery just as he noted that the U-15 tournament currently going on in Bauchi, the Bauchi State Capital has lived up to expectation as the players are displaying good knowledge of the game.

"I'm happy with what YSFON is doing in talent discovery and the efforts of Her Excellency to give kids hope through football and I want to tell you that the tournament is living up to expectation.

"As a person who grew

through YSFON, it's equally important I appeal to government at all levels and corporate Nigeria to continue supporting YSFON through sponsorship of their tournaments as that's the only way we can get it right at the grassroots", he concluded.

Meanwhile host state, Bauchi has qualified for the quarter-finals of the tournament.

Other states who are through to the last eight are, Kebbi, Yobe, Jigawa and Nasarawa.

Others are, Kaduna and Gombe

All the quarter-final matches were decided yesterday, December, 21.



NWFL MD6: Heartland Queens Ends Year 2023 On High Note With Win Against Dannaz Ladies

*Climbs to top spot of NWFL group A table

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

A stoppage time goal by petite winger, Chinwendu Orji handed almost panting Heartland Queens the much sought after victory against hard-fighters, Dannaz Ladies in Wednesday's NWFL Premiership

matchday 6 clash at the Dan Anyiam Stadium in Owerri.

Outright and predictably a cagey affairs that turned out to be the make up of the first 45 minutes as chances at goal were scarce on both ends.

The first 25 minutes saw Heartland Queens pinned their guests to their half in desperate search for the match opener with series of throws and free kicks.

Intermittently, the visitors sprang some surprises aimed at rattling their illustrious hosts but the backline were alert to avert any form of

damage.

Dannaz Ladies' Zainab Raji almost stunned the Owerri mainstreams in the 23rd minute but her foot was wrongly guided.

Thereafter, the Owerri side witnessed catalogue of sore misses and the culprits at that occasion were Chinedu Chinaka, Chimebere Opara, Oluchi Okwara, among others to see off the first 45-minute actions.

On resumption, Opara made an instant amend to an early sore miss with a sumptuous goal in the 46th minute ably assisted by bullish and rampaging attacker, Chinaka to give her side a cushioning breather.

The goal brought out the beast in the visitors as they surge forward in their numbers into the vital areas of the homers in search for the equaliser. Dannaz Ladies' trio, Zainab Raji, Delight Isaac and Omotoke Ogunfuwa were indeed a delight to watch in their attack.

And they were not to wait for long as their efforts paid off in the 76th minutes when in-form forward and tormentor-in-chief, Ogunfuwa beat the Owerri side goalie, Uchenna Chukwu to score for her side the consolation as it turned out to be.

The Owerri landladies pulled out off-colour winger, Onyinyechi Kalu and brought in the eventual match winner, Chinwendu Orji. Faith Samson also came

in for the petite midfielder, Joy Enamino.

And when it looked like another draw is on the table, super substitute, Orji out of nothing sprinted past the Lagos side shots stopper, Selimot Jimoh in a goal mouth scramble to net the match winner to the relieve of her side that have endured back to back draws to Confluence Queens and Naija Ratels.

Heartland Queens dedicates the victory to Imo state Governor, His Excellency Senator Hope Uzodimma who through the commissioner for Youths, Sports and social Development, Honourable Emeka Okoronkwo has not relented in offering unwavering support to the team throughout the year, which in turn has yielded a successful footballing year for Heartland Queens and the victory is the team's way of saying "Thank you".

Speaking to the club's media After the 2-1 victory, Okoronkwo hailed the team's doggedness and team spirit while urging them not to relent in their remarkable performance.

The hard-fought victory takes the Owerri topflights to the top of the group's log on a princely 11 points same as the challengers, Nasarawa Amazons and Confluence Queens on superior goals going into the festive breaks.

Heartland Queens will on restart of season after the breaks wrap up the first term campaign at Gombe against Adamawa Queens.



CFASF Relishes Success, Holds Annual Congress Dec 29

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

While announcing that it's 2023 Annual Congress will hold on December 29 at the prestigious Ahmadu Bello Stadium Kaduna, the Coach Felix Academics and Sports Foundation (CFASF) is excited by the successes recorded so far this year. CFASF founder, Coach Felix Oseibe expressed this in a statement made available to our correspondent yesterday. "As preparations are well underway for next season, we take a look back at how the CFASF fared in 2023. "This year has been eventful from the word go with a wide range of activities. "Both athletes and management have been kept busy with lots of quality training sessions, competitions and programs," he

said. According to him, while they are always proud of the CFASF Annual Congress, they are particularly proud that this year, because of the extraordinary sacrifice, perseverance and achievement demonstrated by their athletes, individuals, parents, partners and organizations throughout to the foundation in 2023, they also want to say a big thank you to everyone who contributed to the success of our programs all through 2023. "As part of CFASF mission; "Create and maintain a culture that encourages family and community involvement". "Throughout the world, thousands of children are kept in orphanages. We had planned this year to help them selflessly to make their lives better which eventually satiate our soul and

gives us a sense of fulfillment. We must prove to be a part of the betterment of society. "We started with a visit in February 14th this year to Adonai Orphanage Home to share love and spend some time with the them," Coach Felix explained. He stressed that over the period, they noticed the young children in the orphanages are deprived with the ability to showcase their talents in athletics. "They too hold a part of our future generations in the sports," he added. According to him, helping them in any way to stardom, gives a sparkle of achievement in the eyes of those children and confidence to themselves in order to make their life worthwhile. "That is why CFASF decided to include the Orphanage Talent

Hunt in the Annual Congress," he added. According to him, the 7th edition of the CFASF Annual Congress which will be taking place on Friday December 29, 2022 at the Ahmadu Bello Stadium in Kaduna State by 10am, will feature events ranging from the Orphanage Talent Hunt of 100m and 4x100m. He added, "The men's and women's are expected to compete in 600m, 150m and 4x100m. Awards presentation across all categories and a specific award to outstanding athletes and coaches who have done well in contributing their own quota towards the growth and development of humanity in the state". Coach Felix said that the event will also feature notable speakers, sharing their experience with the orphans and athletes and also encouraging

them ahead the coming season. "Princess Mabel Madojiemu (All African Games Gold Medalist) is the Matron of the foundation, while Mr and Mrs Samuel Onikeku will be the special guests of honour. "Hon. Idris Dibis the SA on Sports to the Executive Governor of Kaduna State, Sen. Uba Sani will also serve as special guest of honour," he informed. According to him, the event will be under the Chairmanship of Eng. Musa Nimrod (President, Nigeria Volleyball Federation). "It will be powered by Stardom Sports Academy Ltd, MicroManna Computers Limited, The Cavendish School, MA Athletics, Teworh Foundation and Enviplan International Limited. "To be part of this year's success, our doors are opened!" He declared.



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Published since January 1, 1966

Vol. 6 No. 237

Friday 22nd December, 2023

Jamada Al-Thani 7, 1445 AH

Mastercard, Jumia, Providus Bank Collaborate To Elevate Customer Experiences With Innovative Payment Card

- *Card to provide year-round discounts on Jumia.
- *Partnership to promote cashless payments, and boost e-commerce across Africa.
- *Customers to enjoy quick delivery of physical card at no cost.

By; ISAAC ODEH, Kaduna

Mastercard has announced a partnership with Jumia and ProvidusBank to introduce the Jumia Mastercard, an innovative payment card that enhances the shopping experience for customers, offering year-round price incentives and discounts on Jumia, an African leading e-commerce platform.

This partnership will see the introduction of a customer reward system which will serve to elevate purchasing power and foster lasting customer loyalty on Jumia's platform throughout the year. Furthermore, the payment card improves the overall shopping experience on the platform, offering exclusive discounts to loyal customers.

Prospective customers can also easily acquire virtual cards within minutes, with an optional physical card available within five business days, thereby ensuring flexibility and choice.

"Our mission at Mastercard is to connect and power up a world beyond cash that benefits everyone, everywhere through transactions that are safe, simple, smart, and accessible. Our partnership with ProvidusBank and Jumia aims to elevate the value proposition for consumers by providing a payment solution that is both seamless and convenient, coupled with unique price incentives and discounts. We look forward to further collaborations with our partners to continue



From Left to Right: Elliott Sangoleye - GH, eBusiness ProvidusBank, Victoria Ilevbare - Head of Payment Services Jumia Nigeria, Kari Tukur - Vice President and Head, Customer Solutions, East and West Africa, Mastercard, Lanre Ogundare - Head, Card Business ProvidusBank, Temitope Fafiyebi - Account Manager, Mastercard and Robert Awudu - Regional Head of Public Relations & Communication Jumia Nigeria.

delivering relevant solutions that will offer valuable benefits for Mastercard card holders," says Kari Tukur, Vice President and Head, Customer Solutions, East and West Africa, Mastercard.

The card supports the promotion of a cashless economy, allowing purchases on non-Jumia websites and at POS terminals while offering exclusive promotions and discounts that are only applicable on Jumia sites. Additionally, customers can activate a 10% discount-capped promo offer by shopping a minimum of N50,000 as new ProvidusBank account holders.

"As a future forward bank, ProvidusBank believes in encouraging and supporting partners through strategic alliances that can help these businesses maximize their potential. In addition to being a means of payment,

we consider cards as one of our vital products for promoting togetherness and productive partnerships, which is why we are fully supporting this initiative." -Walter Akpani, MD/CEO ProvidusBank.

To obtain the Jumia Mastercard and unlock its benefits, customers must visit www.jumia.com, select their desired items, opt for payment using the Jumia Mastercard, and submit the requested credentials to open a ProvidusBank account. Upon verification, customers will instantly receive a ProvidusBank savings account number and a virtual Jumia Mastercard. Customers can also request a physical model of the payment card, which will be delivered to their location at no additional charge. At checkout, customers who meet the purchase criteria will be rewarded with a 10% discount capped at

N5,000, ensuring a swift and seamless process from onboarding to purchase.

The key factors fuelling this initiative include customer acquisition, year round incentives, and convenience, setting the stage for an enhanced shopping experience on Jumia. The card will be available starting from December 21, 2023, offering customers an opportunity to maximize their savings on the Jumia platform, perfectly timed for the festive season.

"We're thrilled about this partnership between Mastercard, ProvidusBank, and Jumia, an exciting initiative in Nigeria's digital payment evolution. Jumia has always prioritized convenient, secure, and rewarding payment solutions for our customers, and this collaboration underscores our commitment.

This card guarantees a seamless shopping experience on the Jumia platform, alongside exclusive discounts that make every purchase truly rewarding," Sunil Natraj, CEO, Jumia Nigeria. This initiative is poised to drive customer acquisition for Mastercard, Jumia, and ProvidusBank while promoting the cashless economy and nurturing valuable partnerships – underscoring the importance of collaboration in building an inclusive world and setting a new standard for e-commerce rewards.

Bauchi FA Chair Commends Organisers Of Aisha Bala Mohammed U-15 Tourny

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Trump Barred From Republican Primary Ballot

By; IBRAHIM ADAMU, Kaduna

In a historic ruling on Tuesday, Colorado Supreme Court disqualified former President Donald Trump from participating in Republican primary election scheduled for January 2024.

The Democrat appointed Justices of the Colorado apex court in their ruling, invoked Section three of the 14th Amendment which deals with the disqualification of election candidates if found guilty of undermining the Constitution of the United States.

The Justices subsequently indicted Trump for his role in the 6 January 2021 attack on Capitol Hill which led to a political upheaval, the first of its kind in the history of the oldest democracy in the world.

The judges described the attack as insurrection capable of causing

injurious harm on the nation's democracy of over two centuries.

In reaction to the verdict via his counsels, Trump declared his intention to appeal the ruling in American Supreme Court which reserves the final decision on presidential election matters.

He further described the ruling as an attempt to stop the American people from exercising their freedom through the ballot.

Trump, while addressing a crowd of supporters in Iowa in continuation of his bid to clinch the Republican Presidential ticket keenly contested by six other rivals, dismissed the ruling, calling it a victimization by the radical left to arm-twist the American public from expressing their wish.

All eyes are now on the United States Supreme Court for the final verdict that will shape the direction of the country's next presidential race of November 2024.



Donald Trump