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- Insist Rule Of Law must be respected
- Say vote of every Nigerian must count
- Forum describes Appeal Court judgment in favour of APC as clear miscarriage of Justice.
- Express concern over independence of judiciary



Barrister Yusuf Ado Ibrahim, Chairman Northern Volunteer Lawyers and members of his forum briefing the press in Kaduna yesterday.

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Worried by what they termed as contradictory verdict of the Appeal Court in its judgment of the Kano State 2023 gubernatorial polls, 200 lawyers from the 19 states of Northern Nigeria and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), yesterday December 3, converged on Kaduna to express concerns, urging that the rule of law should be obeyed to ensure votes of every Nigerian counts during elections. Speaking on behalf of the lawyers under the auspices of Abba Kabir Yusuf Volunteer Lawyers Forum

For The 19 – Northern States And Abuja at a press conference at Arewa House, Kaduna yesterday, Barrister Yusuf Ado Ibrahim, Chairman Northern Volunteer Lawyers, urged President Bola Ahmed Tinubu and the Supreme Court should not allow Nigeria become a one party state as it is an unhealthy democratic practice.

"Historically, going by the antecedent of our dear country Nigeria, our past leaders like Sir Ahmadu Bello of blessed memory and others have always respected the rule of law and democracy and it is based on this that we call and appeal to our

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Kaduna Youth Demand Conducive Learning Environment In Schools

*Govt representatives assure, no cause for alarm

Nigerian Army Holds Recruitment Exercise In Kwara Dec 4-17

By; BILIQIS ONAOLAPO OLAJUMOKE, Ilorin

The Nigerian Army is to conduct recruitment exercise for 86 regular recruits intake in Kwara State between December 4 and 17, 2023.

The Nigerian Army announced this in a statement issued by its Directorate of Army Recruitment, Resettlement and Reserve in Abuja.

It stated that the exercise

will hold at Sobi Barracks Ilorin between 7.30am and 4pm each day.

The exercise, among other things, include documentation; preliminary physical inspection/medical examination; documents screening and verification of credentials; written aptitude test and marking of answer sheets; oral interview and announcement of final list of successful candidates.

PAU VC Advocates Govt, Private Sector Collaboration In Solving Sustainable Development, Climate Change Questions

By; MATTHEW UKACHUNWA, Lagos

A university don has said that the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and tackling of climate change challenges require the collaboration of government and private sector leadership to succeed.

Vice Chancellor of Pan-Atlantic University (PAU), Professor Enase Okonedo, proffered the solution at the annual dialogue-to-action forum, the International Sustainability Conference (ISC) 2023, organized by Lagos Business School (LBS) and IHS Towers Nigeria.

Okonedo said, "The urgency to transition to a more sustainable, equitable, and resilient future is underscored by a growing body of scientific evidence, environmental crises, and social disparities.

"Climate change, loss of diversity, resource depletion, and social injustices are challenges that no nation, organization, or individual can address in isolation."

She added that the theme of the conference, "The Leadership Imperative for Sustainable

Development," is apt, and stressed that sustainable development is no longer a mere aspiration, but also an imperative that demands prompt and concrete action that only leadership can inspire.

According to her, "It is the duty of leadership to provide answers to the questions we seek in our business and communities.

"The first is of course to determine the trajectory of Africa and the globe we want. In doing so, I think it is best to identify the challenges and burdens we must discharge, the innovation we must leverage and the learnings we must employ to arrive at the type of world that we want, and then ask questions, how can leadership galvanise men and resources to arrive at the destination we all seek, an Africa and globe that attains the SDGs 2030 (Sustainable Development Goals)."

Participants at the virtual conference called for focus on climate change resilience and creating shared value.

The event brought together stakeholders from various sectors and nationalities to dialogue on the advancement of sustainable development through business.

Driver Loses Control, Rams Vehicle On Bystander

By; IBRAHIMADAMU, Kaduna

A commercial driver on transit through Kaduna City Centre en-route Abuja on Friday evening, lost control of a Volkswagen-made mini bus, resulting to hitting a woman waiting for bus by the roadside.

The woman in her late forties who sustained no life-threatening injuries as a result of the impact, was rushed to St. Gerard's

Hospital, located about a kilometer from the scene of the accident.

According to an eye witness, Musa Gudu who was close by when the accident occurred, the woman was standing just by the Zenith Bank roundabout after using the ATM.

"She decided to wait for a bus after emerging from the ATM gallery and buying some sugarcane from a man pushing a

wheelbarrow.

"The next thing that we heard was a loud bang of an impact of a vehicle against a hard concrete barricade Zenith bank erected around the Naira Roundabout painted in the bank's colour and logo.

"Luckily, the woman was not directly facing the out of control vehicle, so her injuries were minor," he said.

Gudu noted that the driver who was obviously in

struggle to control the vehicle to a safe place, couldn't evade crashing it on a concrete object.

"It would have been a disaster and fatal if it were a busy day such as Monday and had the barriers not stopped the moving vehicle from crashing into the fence of the bank while some gardeners and security personnel were on duty," he added.



Court Hits Again On Police, Orders N20m Damages To Victim

By; PATRICK TITUS, Uyo

The might of the law has again fell on the Assistant Inspector General of Police (AIG) Zone 6, Calabar and two others, over unlawful actions against the Village Head of Ikot Oku Ikono in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

The royal father, Eteidung Okon Nnanah Akpan, the court averred, was arrested and kept in detention by the police over an electric transformer in the village. Ruling on the matter, Justice Ntong Ntong of a High Court, Uyo, on Thursday, ordered the Police to pay the royal father N20m for arresting him on February 28, 2022 and April 28, 2022 at the

Anti Cultism Unit of the State Police Headquarters, Ikot Akpan Abia and continually harassing him till date.

Justice Ntong said of the amount, the respondents among them, one Jimmy Godwin, who instigated the Police against the Village Head is to cough out N10m, the Assistant Inspector General of Police, Zone 6, Calabar, who authorised the unlawful action, N6m, while the Investigative Police Officer, one Inspector Wofai Johnson of Anti Vice Unit, Zone 6, Calabar, who obeyed the unlawful order of the AIG, is to pay the Village Head of Ikot Oku Ikono N4m.

The trial judge in his judgment, said the action

of the Police has consistently made the village head to suffer aggravated and psychological harassment, just because he performed his constitutional functions for his community.

Justice Ntong said the Police chose to remain aloof after they were served the originating processes in the matter.

The Court said the Nigeria Police should now be more discreet and civil in their investigations especially where the matter is civil and contractual.

Justice Ntong found the Assistant Inspector General of Police, Zone 6 and two other respondents liable for breaching the fundamental rights of the

applicant.

Recall recently, a High Court sitting in Uyo ordered the Inspector General of Police (IGP) and five others to pay a housewife in Uyo, and mother of two children, Mrs. Peace Ekom Robert, the sum of N200m as damages for the unlawful arrest and detention.

The court also ordered the Inspector General of Police and five other "respondents to return the N15m collected from the applicant to the Chief Registrar of the Federal High Court, Abuja pending the hearing and final determination of the criminal charge against the applicant before the Federal High Court."

SURWASH: Maintain Facilities, Get More Projects, Kaduna Govt Assures Communities

By; ALEX UANGBAOJE, Kaduna

Kaduna State Government has assured communities benefiting from the Sustainable Urban and Rural Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene (SURWASH), of more projects if they can adequately maintain the facilities that will be provided for them.

Environmental Safeguard Officer, Kaduna State Programme Implementation Unit (SPIU), Halima Uba, gave the assurance at the weekend, when she led a team from SURWASH programme to Juji community in Kakau Ward of Chikun Local Government Area, to sensitize them about the water project coming to their community.

The team also visited Karatudu Gabas and Ungwan Madami all in Chikun LGA.

She emphasized that for the project to be sustained, there's need for each benefiting community to take full ownership and ensure adequate maintenance.

SURWASH is a World Bank supported program for Nigeria towards achieving the goal of ensuring all Nigerians have access to sustainable and safely managed WASH services as enshrined in the National Action Plan of the Federal Government of Nigeria.

The programme breaks with prior infrastructure-centric projects by introducing a result-based approach that simultaneously incentivizes establishing and operationalising key policies, regulations, and institutional reforms required for improved sector performance alongside necessary infrastructure construction and rehabilitation.

The development objective of the Program is to increase access to water, sanitation, and hygiene services and to strengthen sector institutions in 2 result areas in the seven participating states of Nigeria (Kaduna, Delta, Ekiti, Gombe, Imo, Katsina, Plateau). The strategy aims to ensure that all Nigerians have access to sustainable and safely managed WASH services by 2030, in compliance with the sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 6.1 for water and 6.2 for sanitation.

According to Halima, the program is being piloted in 15 communities within 6 LGAs of Chikun, Igabi, Jaba, Jema'a, Sabon, Gari and Soba in Kaduna State.

She noted that the state government is very much interested in making sure every community enjoys social amenities, adding that the project will provide them with quality water.

She advised that when the facilities is provided, they should



ensure that toilets and dustbins are not built or sited close to it because it could be contaminated.

The Safeguard Officer, also charged them to secure the facilities and ensure it is well protected, adding that children should not be allowed to play with the facilities.

According to her, the program is counting on each community to provide space where the facilities will be sited and that they are expected to supervise

and provide security for the workers that are coming to mount the facilities.

Reacting to the submissions by their visitors, Village Head of Juji, Mr. Bitrus Samari, appreciated the team from SURWASH, and assured them of the community's full commitment to the project.

He said community will meet and agree on the best location for the project.

He thanked the state government for choosing their community to

be part of the pilot, pleading with the government to keep to its promise of siting the project in their community.

No fewer than 6,100,000 people are expected to gain access to basic drinking water services under this program, 1,400,000 people provided with access to improved sanitation services. 500 communities to get verified of Open Defecation Free (ODF) and 2,000 schools and Health Care Facilities to get improved WASH service.

Rivers Police Arrests 13 Officers Over Indecent Dressing

*Says killing of Ahoada DPO will not be swept under carpet

By; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

No fewer than 13 police officers are now cooling their feet in the custody of the Rivers State Police Command for indecent dressing. The officers were said to have been arrested over the weekend by the Monitoring Team of the Command during patrol operations in various parts of the State.

The Rivers State Commissioner of Police Olatunji Disu made the disclosure in a release on Sunday.

According to a statement by the Rivers State Police Command Spokesperson, Grace Iringe-Koko, the Police Commissioner said that the arrest is part of an ongoing efforts to eradicate indecent dressing by officers of the command.

CP Disu also revealed that the head of the Units or Divisions

where the arrested Police officers are serving will be vicariously liable too, for the personnel's action. He disclosed that the arrested officers are in detention.

Meanwhile, CP Disu has assured that the killing of SP Bako Angbashim, late Divisional Police Officer (DPO) of Ahoada Police Division will not be swept under the carpet.

Recall SP Angbashim was killed by suspected Iceland cult members led by Gift David aka 2Baba.

CP Disu gave the assurance in a radio programme organized by the Force Public Relations department in Abuja which was monitored in PortHarcourt on Saturday December 2, 2023 by our reporter.

CP Disu said he was overwhelmed by the concern shown by members of the public on the of killing of the DPO. The

Rivers Police Boss disclosed that he is in talks with stakeholders in Ahoada

On his objective for the command, CP Disu said his objective is to have Police officers that are effective and friendly.

"As Police we cannot succeed without cooperation, partnership from members of the public."

"I have started fostering partnership between the Police and members of the public. I had meeting twice with traffic section of the Police to remind them that they must be civil in their dealings with members of the public.

"I want to work with members of the public so they can trust us and give us information"

On security threats associated with end of year, December, CP Disu said the command is aware that there tend to be increase in crime by persons who did not

work from beginning of the year but want to make money by all means

He said security measures is in place to counter any security challenge that may arise during the period.

He explained that all the road coming in and out of the command have adequate Police personnel on it. Entrances in and out of the command is adequately secured, CP Disu stated.

The Rivers Police Chief also revealed that the Police is embarking on meaningful raid of known black spots and has also deployed plain clothe detectives to gather intelligence.

The Commissioner of Police explained that Police officers on routine patrol intercepted a tinted vehicle with four men inside. He said on approaching the vehicle tactically, they came out and ran away while the

Policemen searched the vehicle, recovered fully loaded AK 47 raffle and also impounded the car. On effective monitoring of his personnel to curtail human rights abuse, CP Disu explained that he just changed the person in charge of CP X-squad. He also urged members of the public to bring their complaints about his officers to him through dedicated lines as it will be promptly addressed.

CP Disu added that if members of the public do not report erring members of the Police command, he will think everything is okay and he will not be aware.

On the complaints on issues of cultism raised by a caller from Bori axis in Khana LGA, the Police Chief stated that he will call the officer incharge of Anticultism to discuss with them to ensure they do what is right.

115,000 Still HIV Positive In Kaduna - KADSACA



By ; **ALEX UANGBAOJE, Kaduna**

The Executive Secretary Kaduna State Aids Control Agency (KADSACA), Dr Neyo Iliyasu, has said that despite efforts to eliminate HIV/AIDS in the state, over 115,000 people are still living with the virus. The ES, explained that out of the number which accounted for 1.1% of the state's population, only 63,000 of them are on treatment due to severe challenges in the state.

Dr. Neyo, made the disclosure on Friday during a road walk with the State Deputy Governor, Dr. Hadiza Balarabe, to commemorate the 2023 World AIDS Day with the theme "Let the Communities Live" and also to close the 16 days of activism to end Gender Based Violence.

According to him, "HIV is very prevalent in Kaduna State, Nigeria and the World at large. In Kaduna

State, the Prevalence is 1.1% when translated to the population in the state it is one hundred and fifteen thousand people infected with the virus.

"Stigma is something that has to be stopped not only in Kaduna but all over the world. Because of its prevalence in Kaduna State, we are faced with the challenge of stopping it, but we have a target for 2030.

"Some people from Brinin-Gwari come to Kaduna for their treatment and medications. Even though there are interventions in Brinin-Gwari because of stigma and discrimination, people travel far to get these medications, treatment and support.

"Nobody should be in his/her closet, everyone should come together and ensure we support interventions, give out information and facts that will help stop stigma and discrimination against people living with Hiv.

That way we will have more people being screened for the Virus and get the interventions and required treatment."

In her remarks, the Deputy Governor, noted that HIV/AIDS is still a menace in the society and can be interpreted as something that would be violence against women and children.

"Please take this message of HIV to communities, neighbours, friends, everybody. We cannot fight this as individuals, we need to put our hands together, speak with one voice, be focused and remind one another each time that AIDS is still with us and we need to do something.

"If we do, everything we have laboured for will come to fruition. Thank you very much as you take this message of Gender Base Violence and HIV/AIDS prevention down to your various places." She appealed.

On her part, Aisha Usman,

Coordinator Muslim Women Living with HIV/AIDS in Kaduna, said the association currently houses over 400 women living with HIV and plenty orphan children living with the virus.

"Because of stigma not all women would like to come out for support group meetings. But those that come out we have about four hundred women in the support group.

"When you hear a child is HIV positive and that child is an orphan, the community doesn't want to take care of the child, they allow the child to die.

"So at Al-Ummah support group, we have a home of Children living with HIV/AIDS, that means we adopted only children living with HIV/AIDS and the Ministry has been supporting us, Jam'iyyar Mata Arewa has been supporting us, Ministry of Health has been supporting us with the drugs, infact we're all doing good." She said.

Empower Youth To Explore Creative Opportunities, Prof Ekekwe Advises Nigerians

By ; **MATTHEW UKACHUNWA, Lagos**

The government and people of Nigeria have been advised to move from invention society to innovation economy in order to harness the country's unbounded potentials for the achievement of green economy.

Professor Ndubuisi Ekekwe, Lead Faculty, Takedia Institute and Chair, Takedia Capital, expressed the view at the second edition of the Naija Youth Sustainability Forum which was organized by Lagos Business School Sustainability Centre (LBSSC) on Tuesday, 28th November 2023 at Lagos Business School (LBS) and virtually.

"We must move from an invention society to an innovation society era where we use the knowledge we have to create products and services which are beneficial to all across sectors," the professor buttressed.

He highlighted that no nation can rise faster than her ability to create knowledge, adding: "Knowledge creates markets, and the right knowledge combines factors of production to create these markets."

He emphasized that the wishes of nations come

true when the youths arise to the challenges of their country.

Ekekwe pointed out that challenges hold many opportunities, stressing that exploring those opportunities present frictions that must be overcome to advance sustainable development.

He said, "The future is about young people and the wishes of nations can only come true when youths arise to the challenges of nations.

According to him, nations depend on young people to move them into the growth phase of "parabolic markets."

The Takedia Institute scholar said that all sectors present latent opportunities for good things to happen to unleash abundance for all. The knowledge and innovation forum was held by Lagos Business School Sustainability Centre to demonstrate green economy opportunities for young Nigerians.

"This initiative aims to foster connections, create opportunities, encourage learning and collaboration among young people to channel their skills and interests into advancing sustainable development in society," LBSSC authority explained.

"We must move from an invention society to an innovation society era where we use the knowledge we have to create products and services which are beneficial to all across sectors,"

Kaduna State Working Hard To Eradicate Drug Abuse In Society - Dep Gov

By; **FUNMI ADERINTO, Kaduna**

Deputy Governor of Kaduna State, Dr. Hadiza Sabuwa Balarabe has said they are working hard to eradicate the challenges of drug abuse children face in the society.

Dr. Balarabe made this known when the Medical Women's Association of Nigeria (MWAN) Kaduna State chapter paid a courtesy visit to her office at Sir Kashim Ibrahim House in Kaduna.

The Deputy Governor who is also a medical professional and member of MWAN, urged the leadership of the association to focus attention towards addressing the menace of drugs

abuse which she said, is on the rise.

According to her, the state have contributed to policy that have affected the children and women in the state.

She congratulated them for the leadership coming to the northern part of Nigeria, we thank God that it went the way we plan for the benefit of the state.

Dr Balarabe stressed the need to enrol more activities, adding that I will be very glad for MWAN to liaise with Commissioner for Ministry of Human Services and Social Development for the betterment of the society.

She however, said, "we deal a lot with children, a lot of problem

we have in our society is drug challenges and I am not happy about it, unfortunately it has moved from traditional men we know to women in the society.

"Consequently, Kaduna State is a state that has people, we need to address the issue, we need to take out the supply side, as women we have children and it brake my heart as we see children facing this challenges."

She said, "we are all working together for the good of the state, urging them to plan for our children by fighting drug abuse."

Dr. Hadiza assured them that she will do her very best, "let us not sit at table but do the right thing at the table," she added.

Earlier, President of the Association, Medical Women's

Association of Nigeria (MWAN) Kaduna State chapter, Dr Zainab Kwaru said the visit is to thank the Deputy Governor for her motherly support to them and to outline the association's vision and programmes going forward. According to her, "we have a team and a slogan which is healing with a love of a mother.

"We are group of medical women from different sources of specialty in medicine including dentist, dentistry, we are together to give birth to the society.

"We have adopted health facility where we provide services free of charge for vulnerable group of populations.

"At the national level, we see substance abuse and drug abuse

as a key challenge that is affecting the lives of not just families, but entire communities and the society.

"However, our women are increasing getting involved and this is a huge challenge if nothing is done about it".

Dr. Zainab Kwaru appealed to parents and residents that, "we all have to play our roles right from the family level, at the community level, various structures that we have, various constituencies that we have, we need to put hands together.

"In addition, the government and none government associations have to put in collective efforts to be carried out, we need to address them, hence we put an end to drugs abuse in society."



President, H.E Bola Ahmed Tinubu and the judiciary to save our democracy and ensure the votes of the electorate as enshrined in the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria.

This is not unconnected to the fact that the good people of Kano have voted massively in favour of H.E Abba Kabir Yusuf so as to allow him carry on the good work his predecessors have started in Kano State," the group said.

The group at the briefing, also demanded a reworking of the Electoral Act.

"It is pertinent to state here that the Electoral Act needs a holistic reworking in order to address these anomalies of our judicial system and democracy, if we must save it. Pre-election matters must be seen to be addressed as no longer litigable issues after the winner of an election has been declared.

"The issues are too numerous to mention. But we are all seated here believing in the strong will of a free and fair judicial system. We believe honestly in the powers of true democratic system and are still optimistic in the judicial system so much so that we admit the fallibility of our justices as humans. We are hopeful that the apex Court would do the right thing devoid of any sentiments and paying attention to happenings of the just delivered judgments.

"It is our optimism that the lot of the common man in Kano State will be protected and the yearnings of our people respected. We strongly believe that the Apex Court will do justice by affirming and categorically stating that the duly elected governor of Kano State is His Excellency Engr. Abba Kabir Yusuf, whose adequate votes were casted by the populist approval of the people of Kano State.

"And on this hope, we volunteer as private legal practitioner across the 19 Northern States of this Country to participate in Solidarity for His Excellency Engr. Abba Kabir Yusuf at the Supreme Court of

Nigeria, to represent the Truth in the fight to reclaim his mandate and that of the people of Kano State.

"We have all seen, for those of us that have read the Judgment, how the final closing decision of the leading Judge in this case, specifically at page 67 where 5 paragraphs were contradictory, one after another. These cannot be an oversight. If it is a mistake as they have stated, it is indeed an unforgivable one.

"We passionately and respectfully call on the Supreme Court to resist any form of external interference either from the Executive or any other body to protect the image of the judiciary and uphold the rule of law," the group they appealed.

"We depend upon a system that is clearly set to bring us to an inevitable end. Almost every judgment or decision will be replete with traces of unimaginable conclusions. Truth be told, you are no longer sure of the outcome of the courts decisions in this country even if you are a legal practitioner no matter how knowledgeable you may be," the group lamented.

The forum expressed worries that recent judgment handed down by the honourable justices of the Court of Appeal sitting in Abuja between Abba Kabir Yusuf (the duly elected governor of Kano State) and the APC is a clear miscarriage of Justice.

"This is my humble opinion, even though it might not necessarily be the popular opinion.

"The first trace of this error by the Honourable Justices started with the disposition of the trial tribunal, when on the date of the Court's judgment, it avoided a full court and open hearing of its judgment while resorting to the nature of mistrusted venture by rendering the decisions of the Court via internet.

Fielding questions from newsmen, another member, Barrister Usman Ashafa, said that the contradictory judgment of the Appeal Court leaves much to be desired.

He said the errors discovered in the CTC in five paragraphs is unforgivable in law..

Kano 2023: Don't Cage Nigeria Into One Party State, 200 Lawyers Urge Tinubu, Supreme Court

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*Forum describes Appeal Court judgment in favour of APC as clear miscarriage of Justice.

*Express concern over independence of judiciary



Barrister Yusuf Ado Ibrahim, Chairman Northern Volunteer Lawyers and members of his forum briefing the press in Kaduna yesterday.

Panic In Iseyin As NNPC Tanker Bursts In Flames While Offloading

By: BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

An NNPC tanker yesterday afternoon, caught fire while off loading at a filling station located at Agip area of Iseyin, in Oyo state.

It was learnt that trouble

started when the tanker loaded with Petroleum Motor Spirit (PMS) caught fire while offloading its content at the filling station

The situation resulted in residents of Iseyin community trooping out watching the fire incident

with fears with most of them scrambling for safety with their vehicles.

A source at the filling station confirmed that nobody was injured in the confusion arising from the fire incident but sought the immediate response of the

State fire fighters in the community.

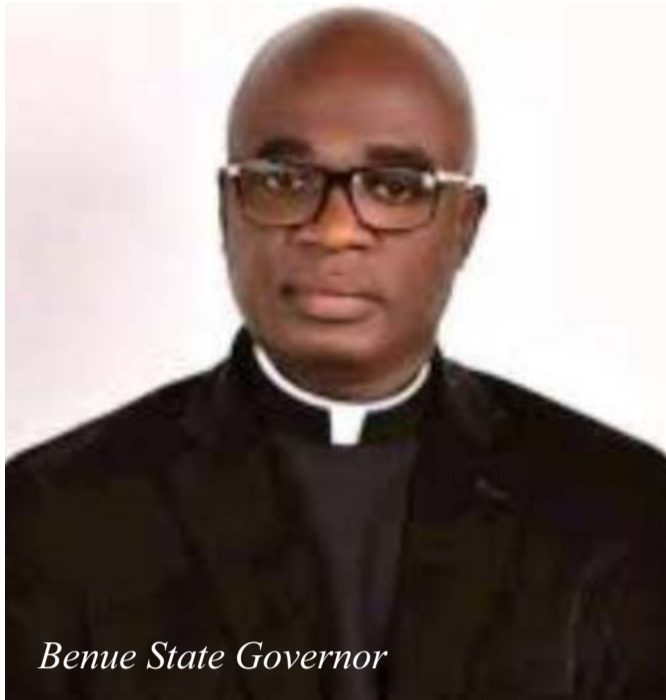
According to the source, "The fire started when the consignment that just arrived was being offloaded, we thank God no life was lost and no one was injured,"



Scene of the tanker fire

Benue State Govt Accuses Abba Moro Of Feeding Senate With Lies

*Calls on Sen Moro to tender unreserved apologies



Benue State Governor

By; ARCHIBONG ESUENE, Makurdi

The Benue State Government has accused Senator representing Benue South, Patrick Abba Moro of feeding Senate with barefaced lies concerning the true state of local government system leadership in the state.

In the same vein, the state government accused the Senator of manipulating the Senate that Governor Hyacinth Alia dissolved democratically elected leadership when he knows very well that they were sacked by the State House of Assembly after proper investigation.

According to a statement issued by the Chief Press Secretary to the governor, Mr Tersoo Kulas, the Senator also misinformed his colleagues on the status of the court case between the former chairmen of the 23 LGAs vs Benue State Government, which was decided by the Industrial Court and is now at the Court of Appeal.

The statement explained that the local government chairmen were investigated and found culpable of unprecedented fraud by the Assembly as vested with constitutional powers to legislate over local government areas.

According to the Press Secretary, the Assembly did this in exercise of their constitutional responsibility as enshrined in Sections 7 and 8 of the 1999 constitution of the

Federal Republic of Nigeria as amended.

"The appointment of caretaker committees by the governor was to avoid lacunas that would have been created following recommendations of the Benue State House of Assembly who investigated, indicted and sacked the 23 elected chairmen who were found to have perpetrated monumental fraud in their councils in active connivance with various councilors," it said.

The statement also revealed that the Benue State Government appealed the judgment of the Industrial Court. The appeal was filed on the 24th November, 2023 and numbered, Appeal No. CA/MKD/155/2023

The government also noted that if not for political undertones, and avowed interruption as is obvious in his outing in discourse, when did Moro realize appointing caretaker committee is "erosion of Democracy" when during the PDP reign in the state between 2015-2023 he participated as major stakeholder in lots of moments LGA were run by caretaker committees.

"We call on Sen. Abba Moro to tender unreserved apologies to the people of Benue state and Nigerians for misleading the Senate to pass resolutions on a matter they lack the constitutional powers to legislate upon" the statement said.

LOC For 17th National Council On Environment Meeting naugurated In Katsina

By; SULAIMAN AHMED MISAU, Katsina

Eleven member Local Organizing Committee (LOC) for the meeting of the National Council on Environment has been inaugurated by the Secretary to the Government of Katsina State, Barrister Abdullahi Garba Faskari.

Inaugurating the committee on behalf of Governor Dikko Umaru Radda, the Secretary to the Government of the State, Barrister Abdullahi Garba Faskari said that the 17th National Council meeting

on the Environment was scheduled to take place between 11th and 16th December, 2023.

Director Press, Office of the Secretary to the Government of the State, Abdullahi Aliyu Yar'adua in a statement, said Barrister Abdullahi Faskari has disclosed that, the LOC is to liaise with the Main Organising Committee to determine the number of delegates and other participants coming to Katsina for the meeting.

The committee he said, is to also source and provide befitting accommodation and transport facilities for

the delegates and participants of the meeting.

Other terms of reference of the committee includes:- provision of adequate publicity and security for the meeting.

The state Commissioner for Environment, Alhaji Musa Adamu Funtua and the Permanent Secretary, Political and Common Services, Governor's office, Alhaji Abubakar Mamman Gege would be Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Committee respectively.

Other members are:- Permanent Secretaries from Ministries of

Environment, Alhaji Muntari Kado, Agriculture and Livestock Development, Alhaji Muhammad Rabi'u Muhammad, Health (Tertiary Institution), Hajia Safiya Ya'u Yamel and Works, Housing and Transport, Mannir Talba. The rest are:- Permanent Secretary Cabinet and Security, SGS office, Alhaji Salisu Abdu, Executive Director, SEPA, Alhaji Kabir Amoga, Director Protocol, Alhaji Isa Duwan, DAS, office the Head of Civil Service of the State, Alhaji Lawal Abdullahi and Nura Ibrahim from the SGS

NCCSALW Tours Northwest States To Create Awareness On Small Arms Proliferation

By; USMAN NASIDI, Kaduna.

The Zonal Coordinator North West National Center for the Control of Small Arms And Light Weapons, Air Vice Marshall, Haruna Umar Mohammed (Rtd) has assured that the center is dedicated to rid the Northwest Zone of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons through the help of other sister agencies.

The Zonal Coordinator gave the assurance while on an official working visit to both Jigawa and Kano states respectively.

According to AVM Mohammed (rtd), the center is saddled with the responsibility of formulating and implementing strategies, plans and policies for the eradication of the proliferation of small and light weapons.

He mentioned that more than five thousand arms and light weapons were recovered last year, in addition to the more than twenty thousand dangerous live ammunition of different calibre handed over to the agency.

Part of the engagements by AVM Mohammed (rtd)

was his visit to the Government House Dutse where he informed the state Governor, Malam Umar Namadi on the activities of the Center and as well solicited for government support to have a weapon free society for enhanced socio economic development and improved well being of the citizenry.

"A lot is being done, most of these small arms and light weapons that are being recovered have trade markings on them. We will know the source of the manufacturers so we are working round the clock and by the grace of the Almighty, we will achieve our mission."

The Zonal Coordinator while in Jigawa, visited the 26 Armoured Brigade Dutse, Department of State Security Services, DSS, the Jigawa State Police Command, Nigerian Security and Civil Defense Corp, National Drug Law Enforcement Agency.

Other security outfits visited in Jigawa include, Nigeria Immigration Service and the Nigerian Correctional Center.

Highlights of the visit was a demonstration of the

activities of the center for small arms and light weapons to about one thousand eight hundred newly sworn in corp members held in the NYSC orientation camp in Dutse.

The coordinator said it was in recognition of corp members as critical stakeholders in the fight against proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

While in Kano, AVM Mohammed (rtd) also toured security formations considering the zone's peculiar security challenges ranging from kidnapping for ransom to banditry and farmer herder crisis among others.

Although Kano is relatively calm, it however shares boundary with other states of the zone that are affected by the challenges that are largely fueled by the availability of small arms and light weapons in circulation.

It is the mandate given to the centre for the control of small arms and light weapons of the office of the National Security Adviser, to end this vicious circle for a safer Nigeria.

According to the Zonal Coordinator, the above background informed the

decision of his team to visit the various formations in Kano, with 3 Brigade Nigerian Army as the first point of call.

The Zonal Coordinator told the Commander Brigadier General, Jami'u Are of the activities of the Center, especially taking over of small arms and ammunition recovered by security agencies within the zone.

He also drew the attention of all security agencies visited to the activities of some illegal bodies parading themselves as those mandated with the prevention and control of small arms and light weapons in the county.

He emphasised that the centre is the only body mandated with such roles in the country.

He added that persons that want to voluntarily surrender illicit weapons could do so without fear of litigation.

In all the security agencies visited in Kano, it was the message of commendation for the success recorded through kinetic and non kinetic approach following intense collaboration and the need to sustain the tempo to ensure illicit arms free and safer Nigeria.

Governor Yusuf Uncovers Diversion Of Palliatives In Kano

***Vows to punish those involved**

***Orders Police to takeover the alleged warehouse in Sharada**

***Two suspects in connection with the scandal arrested**



By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Governor Abba Kabiru Yusuf has uncovered a warehouse where food items meant for palliatives were being diverted at Sharada industrial estate in the state.

Leading government officials and journalists to the isolated warehouse, Governor Yusuf was conducted round the facility, where supposed hijacked food items were kept alongside drums of chemicals.

The governor expressed shock and vowed to punish who ever is involved in the scandalous act of diverting the palliative food items consisting of maize and rice.

He immediately directed the Commissioner of Police to take over the warehouse and conduct swift investigation to fish out all suspects involved.

The incidence occurred following a tip off from some community members in Sharada when discovered suspicious movements of unknown people around the warehouse in question and reported the matter to Sharada police division.

While briefing the governor on the spot at the warehouse, one of the Sharada community leaders, Mr. Rabiu Amour

said thousands of bags branded with the governor's portrait and designed as palliatives were discovered to have been re-bagged.

"We know these food items are meant to be distributed to less privileged people, therefore we decided to make a whistle blow. This is our contribution to the good efforts of the governor, he is trying his best to help the downtrodden but some people within the system are sabotaging him"

Shortly after the inspection, the Governor directed the state Commissioner for Agriculture, Danjuma Mahmoud to brief the media, the commissioner who told journalists that government has discovered an isolated warehouse where released palliatives have been diverted, said investigation has commenced immediately.

Although, the Agric Commissioner disclosed that investigation will further reveal the magnitude of quantity hijacked and diverted to the warehouse, he said the food items are being rebagged and reold in the market.

He said the specific portion of the Rice and Maize being hijacked and diverted to the warehouse are meant to be distributed to people with physical

challenge and widows of armed forces and other security agencies in Kano.

Although, the commissioner declined to reveal the identity of the culprits, he confirmed that two suspects have been handed over to the police in connection with the crime. He said government has set up investigation team to unravel the root course of the development.

" You will recall that after the official unveiling of distribution of food items meant for the less privilege as palliatives to crushing the impact of fuel subsidy removal, the government later set aside another large portion of the palliatives specifically to be distributed to people with special needs like in the society.

"Besides people with special needs, the last round of palliatives were also meant for families and widows of members of the Armed forces, the Army, Navy, Airforce, police, and that of the sister agencies like Immigration, Prison services, Customs, Civilians defence, Road safety, Hisbah Vigilante.

"Incidentally, the government discovered that several bags of these food items have been hijacked and diverted to a warehouse in Sharada industrial estate where intelligent reports revealed that those food items are being

rebagged and to be sold in the market". The commissioner said.

Kano State Police command has confirmed arrest of one Tasiu Al'amin Roba, a Senior Special Assistant (SSA), to the Governor, attached to Office of the Secretary to the State Government and other person named Abdulkadir Muhammad who are already in police custody at Sharada division.

Following the directive of the Governor, the suspect are expected to be transferred to the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) for further investigation into the matter.

You may recall that the Governor of Kano State Engr. Kabir Yusuf set up a strong Compliance Committee for Palliatives Distribution headed by the Secretary to the State Government and the his Chief of Staff with six other relevant commissioners as members to ensure that all palliatives items get to the right beneficiaries.

While inaugurating the committee, Governor Yusuf emphasized that no political appointee under his government will benefit from the palliatives as it is meant to be distributed to the people who need it the most

President Bola Ahmed Tinubu presenting 2024 preparation bill to joint National Assembly members at the Complex, in Abuja on Thursday. Photo: BASHIR BELLO DOLLARS





COMMUNITY FOCUS

NSCDC Gombe State Command Receives Bojude Community, Seeks Synergy.

By; ABUBAKAR RABILU,
Gombe

Gombe State Commandant of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) Muhammed Bello Mu'azu, has received the audience of the leadership of Bojude Community in Kwami Local Government Area of Gombe State on a courtesy visit in appreciation of the corps' presence and activities in the area.

In his address during the visit the Commandant Muhammad Bello Mu'azu, assured the community of more outposts, to guarantee more security of lives and property.

Mu'azu tasked the community leaders to provide a befitting office and house accommodation for his officers, assuring that "As soon as you provided us with a suitable office and home accommodations, I guarantee you, I shall deploy my men there".

While appealing for more support and cooperation from the community members to security agencies, the commandant charged Bojude residents to report any suspicious movement and



strange faces to nearest security agencies for prompt actions.

Bello Mu'azu cautioned members of the community against accommodating

criminals and their informants, maintaining that the informants are even more dangerous than major culprits. He advised traditional leaders of the community to device

means of profiling strangers and new settlers in their domains, for onward notification to security agencies.

While commending the synergy between communities and security agencies in the state, the NSCDC Commandant appreciated the state governor Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya for his commitments to security and safety

of citizens.

Speaking during the visit, the district head of Bojude Engineer Muhammad Ibrahim, said following the establishment of an NSCDC outpost and its subsequent upgrade to division, Bojude Community and environs can sleep with their two eyes closed.

He said the presence of NSCDC officers and Men has greatly improved the security architecture of the area, especially in taming the lingering farmer/herder clashes in the area.

The district head said the community has provided additional lands for the establishment of more NSCDC out posts in the community, especially along its border axis with Nafada,

Funakaye, Dukku and Akko local government areas.

He commended the NSCDC, Governor Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya and other security outfits in the state for their commitments towards ensuring peace and security in Bojude and Gombe State at large.

In their separate responses, some elders of the community appreciated the State Commandant for being instrumental in the establishment of the Bojude NSCDC outpost, describing it as a major step that make the community more peaceful and secured.

They appealed to the state government to provide more support to the corps, especially through the provision of utility vehicles, equipment and fire arms.



Add Value To Your Communities Through Engagements, PERL Tells Youth

*CALPED explains why budget is critical to development

*Kaduna Youth Demand Conducive Learning Environment In Schools

*Give Us Feedback On Projects In Your Areas, Kaduna Govt Tells Youth

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Youth have been urged to engage in constructively with government, in ensuring service delivery and open governance partnership to translate to development of their respective communities.

Team Lead, Partnership To Engage, Reform, Learn (PERL), Kaduna State, Mr. Abel Adejor gave the charge in his welcome address at the opening of a two-day session in Zaria, organised by #OpenGov Youth Innovation Hub with support from PERL, on Friday December 1, 2023.

"What are the values that you intend to add to your respective

communities. You must think of an area to engage constructively to impact your community.

"We can't bring the entire Kaduna here but with representatives here, you can take message back to your respective communities," he said.

Mr. Abel Adejor said he is excited to bring the youth together.

He said PERL is a project that has worked all over Nigeria for seven years.

"We have supported Open Government Partnership (OGP) in Kaduna, which made the state the first sub national that signed on to OGP.

"PERL has supported a lot of

accountability mechanisms, to ensure citizens needs are met.

"We have also supported citizens to go and engage the Kaduna State House of Assembly, which has influenced the budget of Kaduna State Government. We work deeply with Kaduna State University and other tertiary institutions in the state, to build mentorship," he said.

According to him, during last electioneering campaign, PERL engaged governorship candidates, including the present governor and influenced his manifesto.

"I want to welcome all of you, feel free and ask questions, OGP has got five thematic areas, take interest in one to engage," he

advised.

In his goodwill message, Bello Hayatu, SA Students Matters to Kaduna State Governor, Senator Uba Sani said that he will remain committed to bringing development to students of Kaduna State.

*Why Budget Is Critical To Development -CALPED

The annual budgets prepared by governments is one of the most critical aspects of governance and a law that is only second to the constitution of a country.

Speaking on Understanding Budget, Equitable Budgeting and Advocacy Entry Points in the 2024 Budget Process, the session in Zaria on Friday December 1, 2023. Head of

Leadership, Governance and Advocacy Coalition of Associations for Leadership, Peace, Empowerment and Development (CALPED), Yusuf Ishaku Goje described the budget as a very important document, next to only the constitution.

"Most businesses depend on the budget to survive. Most civil servants, survive on things purchased on debt, paying at month end. Hence they depend on budget, because if the salaries are not paid, those who collect items, cannot pay.

"Just as you cannot stay without breathing, government cannot stay without budget. Anything you will do in the government,



Add Value To Your Communities Through Engagements, PERL Tells Youth

requires the budget.

"In budgeting, priority is accorded the most important needs. In budgeting there must be revenue and there must be expenditure. Government generates revenue and spends on its priority. For Kaduna State Government, they have to budget for 10 million people, unlike an individual budget," he said.

He explained that although most people place more emphasis on output of budget in Nigeria, however, development means the reduction in problems like reduction in maternal mortality and others.

"Government generates revenue through IGR, fines, loans, which is ways to finance budget. Loans are not bad, it depends on how it is used. If the loan is not applied the right way, then the loans will go down the drain," he explained.

He added that, when the money is gathered, they then look at priorities and spread them between recurrent and capital expenditure.

"As you are seated here, you are advocates of millions who don't have a voice, hence the need to engage and influence

development to your areas," he told the youth.

He told them that as civil society, they are obliged to find out if the government is actually spending on what they were budgeted for.

In his presentation titled, "Leveraging Civic-Tech to increase Youth Participation in Budget and Service Delivery Process", Emmanuel Odeh Adikpe of IHIFIX Technology, said that digital platform is an amplifier to showcase what people can do.

He explained that the gap between governance and civil society is civic-tech. There are lots of opportunities you can derive from civic-tech.

"Just with a tweet, you can amplify something. You don't need to go to government house, government house will come to you. You are not here to be shown how to attack government, but to ensure there is service delivery," he said.

He explained that historically, there has been a lack of active involvement among young individuals in governance.

"Civic-tech is the interaction of technology and civic engagement. It encompasses a range of digital tools and



platforms designed to enhance

citizen participation in government processes.

"Civic-tech includes mobile applications, social media platforms, open data initiatives and visualization tools that enable easy and faster reach of target audience," he added.

According to him, best practices for civic-tech include, user-centric design, training and support and data privacy and security.

"Success indicators you should look out for include, increased participation, policy impact, while challenges include, digital divide and sustainability," he informed.

In his presentation titled, "Understanding the OGP Reform Initiative and Journey So Far in Kaduna State", Jeremiah Tara from OGP Secretariat said that the partnership is supposed to bring everyone on the table so that they can sit and engage.

"OGP tries to harness resources to solve issues like poverty. When you solve a problem with technology, it goes global and encourages partners and countries to replicate.

"When you go to Estonia, a population of just 1.3m people,

their institutions are working. They believe in keeping to time. This is a country where robots do traffic control and in the evening, they go and charge themselves.

"OGP values include allowing citizens to know what government is doing through access to information.

"There are basic ways OGP is being operated. If your government does not

"The role of citizens and CSOs is critical to developing, securing and implementing OGP reforms and that reformers inside and outside government must build broad coalitions to achieve change," he said.

An activist, Bako Abdul Usman in his presentation titled, "Understanding Community Development Charter (CDC) Process" said that community development charter is a social accountability tool that contains written details of needs of individual communities.

He explained that steps involved include, community entry point, by identifying stakeholders. and be friendly with the community, as well as using the language they understand.



4,365 FUDMA Students Graduate At Combined Convocation

By: SULAIMAN AHMED MISAU, Katsina

No fewer than 4,365 students of Federal University Dutsin-ma (FUDMA) in Katsina State graduated at the weekend during its 7th and 8th combined convocation ceremony with various honour degrees and three prominent individuals conferred with honorary doctorate degrees.

Former Governor of the State, Barrister Ibrahim Shehu Shema, Emirs of Daura, Dr Umar Faruq Umar and Bichi in Kano State Dr Nasiru Ado Bayero were the prominent figures who received the Doctorate degrees for their outstanding contributions to the development of the Society and the University.

Speaking on behalf of the recipients, at the venue of the event in Dutsin-ma, Barrister Shehu Shema who was conferred with a Doctor of Law (Honoris Causa) by the University credited FUDMA with shaping his journey in life and expressed gratitude to the educators

for their guidance. acknowledging that, the university laid the foundation for his success.

Barrister Shema assured to uphold the University's values and enjoined graduands to be the symbols of the privileges that a well-tailored education offers.

Shema who narrated how he convinced former President Jonathan to establish the University in Dutsin-ma, commended its management for excellence in education and service to the people of Dutsin-ma, Katsina and Country in general.

Speaking at the occasion, Katsina State Governor, Dikko Umaru Radda said his administration's commitment to the education sector remain unwavering, saying that, since coming into power his Government has rehabilitated three hundred and sixty one public schools at the cost of over two billion Naira.

Governor Umaru Radda reiterated that, his government has also employed over

seven thousand teachers and constructed seventy five secondary schools under AGILE programme.

Governor Dikko Umaru Radda emphasized that, three special model schools for talented children have been established in Katsina, Daura and Funtua Zones respectively.

Chancellor of the university his Majesty king Dandeson Jaja of Opobo complained that, the university was seriously facing security challenge.

King Opobo who is also the Chairman Council of Traditional Rulers in Rivers State, said FUDMA was unable to utilize the structures and other facilities at the main campus due to the fear of bandits attack.

However, Vice Chancellor of the University Professor Armaya'u Hamisu Bichi said, the university Commended Barrister Ibrahim Shehu Shema for his foresight and contribution the development of the Institution.

Professor Hamisu Bichi while

appreciating the efforts of Governor Dikko Radda on his commitment on education, acknowledged the mutual understanding between the University and its host Community." the University is graduating four thousand three hundred and sixty five students," Professor Bichi added.

Highlights of the event was the donation of an ambulance by President of Maryam Abacha University in Niger Republic, Professor Adamu Abubakar Gwarzo in honour of Barrister Ibrahim Shehu Shema to the Federal University Dutsin-ma.

Dignitaries present at the 7th & 8th Combined Convocation Ceremony of the Institution's includes:-Emir of Katsina, Alhaji Abdulmumin Kabir Usman, Former Governor of the State, Aminu Bello Masari, Speaker, Katsina State House of Assembly, Right Honourable, Nasiru Yahaya Daura, Chairman National Hajj Commission, Dr Jalal Arabi and Former Deputy Governor of the State, Barrister Sirajo Dan Yaro Damari.



Alia Hands Over 100 Buses To Benue Links

By; ARCHIBONG ESUENE, Makurdi

Benue State Governor, Reverend Father Hyacinth Alia has commended President Ahmed Tinubu-led federal government for introducing the banquet of palliatives from which his administration has used to address transportation, which is considered a palliative need of the people.

Governor Alia stated this during the official handing over ceremony of 100 buses purchased by his administration, held at the headquarters of Benue Links Nigeria Ltd, in Makurdi.

He noted that the initiative by Mr President has assisted government to purchase the buses, expressing optimism that the buses would no doubt ease transportation challenges among Benue populace and other travellers.

He said purchase of the 100 unit of buses was in fulfilment of his earlier campaign promises to Benue people that his administration would provide vehicles to move passengers and goods at



Reverend Father Alia

cheaper rates, adding that his administration is eagerly awaiting the federal government's Compressed Natural Gas, CNG, powered buses to boost efforts of his administration in the transport sector.

"As we handover the new buses, it is our hope and expectations that more routes would be opened and fares dropped for interested passengers",

According to the governor, government desired that farmers, market men and women, civil servants and indeed all Benue residents have better traveling experiences with the unleashing of the new buses

He also urged management to be very strict in monitoring activities with a view to checking arbitrary hike

in fares, over loading and possible disregard for traffic rules and regulations.

In his remarks, General Manager Benue Links Nigeria Ltd, Alex Fanafa, promised to sustain the gesture of government by ensure strict monitoring of the vehicles and commended governor Alia for the procurement of the buses.

Gov Makinde Will Present Staff Of Office To Aseyin, Soun Dec 14, 19 - Commissioner

**Says all set*

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

Oy o State Government has announced December 14 and 19 this year for the presentation of staff of office and coronation of the new Aseyin of Iseyin, Oba Sefiu Olawale Oyebola, Adeyeri III, Ajirotutu I and the Soun of Ogbomoso, Oba Afolabi Ghandi Laoye, Orumogege III. The Commissioner for

information and Civic Orientation, Prince Dotun Oyelade, made this known in a statement made available to journalists.

According to the commissioner, the state government has set up a coronation committee headed by the Chief of Staff to the Governor, Otunba Segun Ogunwuyi, including the commissioner for local government and chieftaincy matters, Mr

Segun Olayiwola.

Prince Oyelade listed other members of the Coronation committee as the Commissioner for Culture and Tourism, Dr. Wasiu Olatunbosun, the commissioner for information and civic orientation, Prince Dotun Oyelade and the Executive Assistant to the Governor on Security, Retired Commissioner of Police Sunday Odukoya as members of the

committee.

He stressed that the committee has been holding meetings with coronation committees from the two palaces over the past few weeks and had undertaken inspections of the venues for the events.

"All is now set for the big events", the Government representatives. The state government hereby seizes this opportunity to enjoin members of the public to show full support for the success of the events".

Three Traditional Rulers Die In Auto Crash In Orire

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

A ghastly auto crash on Friday, claimed three traditional rulers from Orire Local Government area of Oyo State.

New Nigerian learnt that the three traditional rulers Olodogbo of Odogbo, Onibowula of Bowula, and Alayetoro of Ayetoro, died in the auto crash which occurred along Arinkinkin area of Ogbomoso.

It was gathered that the traditional rulers met their untimely death while going to the funeral party of the mother of a brother to a traditional ruler in the area.

Sources said trouble started when the vehicle in which the traditional rulers were traveling rammed into an oncoming truck during the trip.

According to sources, the Olodogbo of Odogbo was said to have died on the spot, while the two others died later.

A source at the LAUTECH Teaching Hospital, Ogbomoso, who confirmed the incident to newsmen, added that their bodies have been deposited at the hospital's morgue.

It was learnt that the fourth victim, who sustained injuries, is being treated at the hospital, "but he doesn't look like an Oba,"

Contacted, Oyo State FRSC Sector Commander, Mr Joshua Adekanye confirmed the accident, saying, "we just carried out to rescue but we don't know who they are".

Mr Adekanye said four persons were in the vehicle but only three of them died.

LOC For 17th National Council On Environment Meeting Inaugurated In Katsina

By; SULAIMAN AHMED MISAU, Katsina

Eleven member Local Organizing Committee (LOC) for the meeting of the National Council on Environment has been inaugurated by the Secretary to the Government of Katsina State, Barrister Abdullahi Garba Faskari.

Inaugurating the committee on behalf of Governor Dikko Umaru Radda, the Secretary to the Government of the State, Barrister Abdullahi Garba Faskari said that the 17th National Council meeting on the Environment was scheduled to take place between 11th and 16th December, 2023.

Director Press, Office of the Secretary to the Government of the State, Abdullahi Aliyu Yar'adua in a statement, said Barrister Abdullahi Faskari has disclosed that, the LOC is to liaise with the Main Organising Committee to determine the number of delegates and other participants coming to Katsina for the meeting.

The committee he said, is to also source and provide befitting accommodation and transport facilities for the delegates and participants of the

meeting.

Other terms of reference of the committee includes:- provision of adequate publicity and security for the meeting.

The state Commissioner for Environment, Alhaji Musa Adamu Funtua and the Permanent Secretary, Political and Common Services, Governor's office, Alhaji Abubakar Mamman Gege would be Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Committee respectively.

Other members are:- Permanent Secretaries from Ministries of Environment, Alhaji Muntari Kado, Agriculture and Livestock Development, Alhaji Muhammad Rabi'u Muhammad, Health (Tertiary Institution), Hajia Safiya Ya'u Yamel and Works, Housing and Transport, Mannir Talba.

The rest are:- Permanent Secretary Cabinet and Security, SGS office, Alhaji Salisu Abdu, Executive Director, SEPA, Alhaji Kabir Amoga, Director Protocol, Alhaji Isa Duwan, DAS, office the Head of Civil Service of the State, Alhaji Lawal Abdullahi and Nura Ibrahim from the SGS office would served as the secretary of the Committee.

LASTMA Recommends 11 For Dismissal, Retirement Over Corruption

By ; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

At least, 11 officers of the Lagos State Traffic Management Authority (LASTMA) have been recommended for various punishment, ranging from dismissal, reduction in rank and Immediate termination of appointment from the State Public Service.

They were said to have been found guilty by a Disciplinary Panel of various corrupt practices levelled against them.

One of the accused officers, was however exonerated from the alleged offences.

The Director, Public Affairs and Enlightenment Department of the Agency Adebayo Taofiq made the disclosure in a release at the weekend.

According to the release, the Acting General Manager of LASTMA Mr. Bakare Oki Olalekan disclosed that the

disciplinary panel which was statutorily constituted with three Permanent Secretaries in attendance adjudicated on cases of corrupt practices levied against the 12 Officers and forwarded their recommendations to the State Civil Service Commission for ratification in line with the Public Service Rules.

He said the offences for which they were tried bothered on corrupt practices and absenteeism in line with the extant rules as guided by the Lagos State Civil Service Rules and Regulations.

" Mr. Bakare Oki confirmed that the panel recommended various punishment ranging from dismissal, reduction in rank and Immediate termination of appointment from the State Public Service.

"The Acting General Manager who was equally part of disciplinary panel confirmed that while 11

Officers were found guilty of corrupt practices levied against them, only one (1) Officer was exonerated with the report of the panel.

"Mr. Bakare Oki who read 'Riot Acts' to all Comptrollers, Commanders and Zebras of the Agency maintained that stiff and severe punishment would continued to be meted on corrupt Officers and men in his efforts to weed the agency of few bad elements tarnishing its image.

"We hereby call on residents especially motoring public to support the Agency in the on-going restructuring by promptly reporting any errant Officers via any of the Agency's complaints hotlines (08100565860, 08129928503, 08129928515 & 08129928597) with proof of evidence"

" The General Manager hereby warned all Officers

of the Agency to always carry out their duties without fear or favour in accordance with the stipulated laws guiding the authority as any operative caught in the process of bringing the Agency or the Government into disrepute shall equally face the consequence

"While commending Lastma Officials for their dedication, dutifulness, diligence and professionalism, Bakare Oki however, warned the motoring public to stop inducing traffic personnel with bribes in order to avoid been prosecuted as the law frowned on both the 'giver and the receiver'.

" For complaints/inquiries please, reach out to Lastma via these social media handles (Instagram -- ekolastma) (Twitter 'X' --- @followlastma), (Facebook --- ekolastma) and (Youtube --- LastmaTV)" it also stated.

Lagos MOTORPOL Rewards Hardworking Traffic Officers



Lagos State MOTORPOL CSP Oriyomi Oluwasanmi (Right) presenting a gift to one of the beneficiaries.

By ; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

The State Traffic Officer Lagos State Police Command (MOTOR POL) CSP Oriyomi Titilayo Oluwasanmi has rewarded two traffic officers for their exceptional performance. The two lucky officers, named, Inspector Adeniyi Opeoluwa, Motopol monitor 75 Ejigbo division, and an official of the Lagos State Traffic Management Authority (LASTMA), Adefolaolu Timothy were showered with gifts at their duty posts while controlling traffic.

Oriyomi said the gift items may not be much, but stand as a moral booster and encouragement to the receivers, while it will motivate others to do more.

" It is regular practice for me to go round the city of Lagos and monitor those who are helping me to control traffic. I give gifts always to people who are exceptional in their duties. For instance, the LASTMA official is know by people who pass through Alausa, he is always stationed at Radio junction. He is referred to

as dancing LASTMA official. People are talking about him, because you will always see him dancing and smiling while controlling traffic. He is not a policeman, but he is doing wonderfully well in his duty of traffic control. He is making my job easier.

" I still have some traffic officers that I will still reward for their hard work. It is a continuous exercise. I will not stop. I am proud of anyone who makes my work easier. I am happy that some of my best officers are being nominated for Awards. On December 7, two of my officers will be receiving Awards at a special event, put together by the Crime Reporters Association of Nigeria (CRAN). I will also be rewarded.

" I am happy that people are noticing us . I am so happy that people are really recognizing what we are doing . The Award is a very big challenge. The Award is encouraging us to do more for the society. I will continue to make traffic move. Lagos must move forward ". Lagos MOTORPOL said.



Erring officers during the trial

Delta Police Arrests 2 Notorious Church Robbers, Recovers Stolen Musical Instruments

By; **RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos**

Two suspected criminals said to specialise in breaking into and stealing church property have been apprehended by police in Delta State.

The suspects are said to be notorious and unrepentant thieves who specialize in burgling churches, shops, and homes.

Twenty big loudspeakers; three generator sets; fifteen large mixers amplifiers; four keyboards; twelve power amplifiers; ten industrial standing fans; one complete drum set; one guitar; one power mic; two standing freeze; two plasma televisions; two home theaters; one watching machine; three stabilizers; three handsaws; one clipper; one microwave; one small oven; and one gas cylinder. The Delta State Police Command Spokesperson DSP

Bright Edafe who made the disclosure yesterday in a stateheht made available to journalists.

It reads, " The Oorerokpe Divisional Police Headquarters of the Delta State Police Command arrested two suspects for their infamous strings of church break-ins in Delta State. Police received information on 17/11/2023 at about 1600hrs about a break-in at Redeem Christian Church of God, a.k.a "Dominion Mega", where several church musical instruments were carted away from the church. Sequel to the report, the DPO Oorerokpe Division, CSP Paul Obaware swiftly mobilized and led his operatives to assess the scene of the crime.

" Afterward, an operation was planned and executed on the strength of the items that were carted away. Consequently, on 19/11/23, Patrick Emete posted

one of the stolen amplifiers for sale on his Facebook page. Immediately detectives offered to buy the said item, lured and trailed the suspect to Effurun Roundabout, where he was apprehended at about 1304hrs of the same date.

"Following the confession of the 36-year-old apprehended suspect, Patrick Emete of Ughoton Community, one of his associates, Alex Uwagbafor, aged 45 years of New Era Clinic Deco Road, Warri was also arrested.

"Preliminary investigation revealed that these suspects are notorious and unrepentant thieves who specialize in burgling churches, shops, and homes. Items recovered from suspects are twenty big loudspeakers; three generator sets; fifteen large mixers amplifiers; four keyboards; twelve power amplifiers; ten industrial standing fans; one

complete drum set; one guitar; one power mic; two standing freeze; two plasma televisions; two home theaters; one watching machine; three stabilizers; three handsaws; one clipper; one microwave; one small oven; and one gas cylinder.

"In sequence to the ongoing investigation, a clergyman (name withheld) also alleged that his church was burgled. On 30/11/23 at about 1632hrs, upon questioning, the suspects admitted and further led the operatives to Eburu Street Warri, where more stolen items were recovered.

" These items include eleven big loudspeakers; five professional power amplifiers, six professional mixers; one Serato DJ deck; one Pioneer DJ deck; one plasma TV; four big generators; one generator without a tank; one power microphone set; one projector; two sets of English mini drums;

and one big stabilizer.

Meanwhile, frantic efforts are ongoing to recover more stolen items. The suspects are in custody and will be prosecuted accordingly, upon the conclusion of the investigation.

" As we edge closer to the year's festivities, CP Abass wishes to dispel any notion that seeks to cast doubt on the work of the command's effectiveness in eradicating crime in Delta state.

" He assures that efforts are being solidified to boost and enhance the effectiveness of the men during the festivities and beyond.

" Lastly, he again calls for the support of the public in fighting crime within the region. On this note, credible information can be shared with the police through the nearest police station, or the office of the Police Public Relations Office", the statement said.

Adamawa Reps Member Thanks Speaker Abbas For Naming Him Chair House C'tee On Police

By; **TOM GARBA, Yola**

Member, House of Representatives representing Fufore/Song Constituency, Honourable Aliyu Wakili Boya has appreciated the Speaker, Rt Hon Tajiudeen Abbas for naming him the House Committee on Police Institutions Chairman.

While expressing his deepest appreciation to Speaker Abbas, for entrusting him with the crucial role, Boya said the esteemed responsibility comes with a profound sense of duty.

According to him Abbas' confidence on his abilities to deliver is not taken lightly and he is dedicated to justifying the trust through diligent service and unwavering commitment.

Announcing his new role in the Lower House of the National Assembly, the young lawmaker said that he is well-positioned to ensure effective oversight of matters concerning police institutions across the nation.

He reiterated that he belongs to many House committees, as a

member, especially the House Committee on Federal Colleges of Education, maintaining that he is fully aware of the multifaceted responsibilities that come with legislative oversight.

He said the unique nature of his new role requires a special emphasis on the oversight of police schools, academies, and colleges nationwide.

"My oversight responsibilities extend to the Police School Academy in Wudil, as well as all other police colleges and training schools across the country. Additionally, I will be overseeing the operations of the Police Service Commission, ensuring that its activities align with the highest standards of transparency, accountability, and efficiency.

"The scope of my duties encompasses a broad range of issues related to police personnel training and development. I am committed to working tirelessly to ensure that our police force receives the necessary support, resources, and training to uphold the highest standards of professionalism and

service to the Nigerian people." Boya said.

In his letter of appreciation to the Honourable speaker Boya stressed the importance of fostering a strong and symbiotic relationship between law enforcement agencies and the communities they serve. Through collaborative efforts, he said they can address challenges, implement reforms, and build a safer and more secure Nigeria for all.

"I am optimistic about the positive impact we can achieve together, and I look forward to collaborating with my esteemed colleagues, stakeholders, and the Nigerian public to fulfill the mandate of the House Committee on Police Institutions.

"Once again, I express my gratitude to Mr. Speaker and my fellow Members of the House for this opportunity to contribute meaningfully to the development and oversight of our nation's police institutions.

"Thank you, and may we collectively strive for a safer and more prosperous Nigeria." He Said



Speaker Abbas

Five Perish In Auto Crash On Akwa Ibom Highway

By; PATRICK TITUS, Uyo

An auto crash that occurred on Calabar/ Itu Highway in Akwa Ibom State has claimed the lives of five passengers made up of three females and two males.

The accident which occurred at about 3pm, involved a Nissan Caravan with Registration number GWB532XY and a Mark Truck with NO registration number.

According to a statement yesterday, signed by the Public Enlightenment Officer of Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC), Akwa Ibom State Command, Mr Paul James the accident occurred due to overspending.

James stated that the accident could have been avoided if the motorists had adhered to safety regulations while on road. The statement reads in part "A Fatal Crash occurred on Saturday 2nd December, 2023 along Itu - Calabar road by Ayadehe at about 1510hrs.

"The crash involved a Nissan Caravan with Registration number GWB532XY and a Mark Truck with NO registration number.

"Eleven Male and Five Female were involved, and Three out of the Five female and Two out of the Eleven Male involved were confirmed dead,

while the remaining Eleven Male and female sustained injuries of various degrees.

"When report of the incident was received, the FRSC operatives mobilized and moved over to attend to the situation. Upon arrival at the crash scene, the injured ones were moved to nearby Hospitals for prompt medical attention while the bodies of the deceased were deposited at the morgue.

"When inquiry was made as to the cause of the crash, it was gathered that the causal factor to the crash was speed related according to eye witnesses. After evacuation of the victims, the road was cleared of the wreckage to enable free-flow of traffic." The statement revealed.

Meanwhile, the Sector Commander, Mr. Matthew Olonisaye has warned road users especially motorists against over speeding, Wrong-way Drive and Indiscriminate Parking.

While reiterating the need for safety consciousness among drivers, the sector commander advised passengers to ensure that drivers are not ignored when deviance to road safety is observed.

He commiserated with the families of the deceased, and wished the injured quick recovery.

Governor Abba Kabir Yusuf commiserates With Kano NUJ Correspondents' Chairman Over Mother's Death

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Kano State Governor, Alhaji Abba Kabir Yusuf has extended heartfelt condolences to the State Chairman of Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ), Correspondents Chapel, Alh Aminu Garko who lost his mother, Hajiya Fatima Ahmad Tanimu Garko recently at Jos.

This was contained in a statement signed by his Chief Press Secretary, Sanusi Bature Dawakin Tofa, made available yesterday.

Governor Abba Kabir Yusuf described late

Hajiya Fatima as a caring and guiding mother, a submissive housewife and a woman of good virtues who trained and brought up responsible and committed children who are now contributing to the development of the nation in so many fields of human endeavours.

On behalf of the government and good people of Kano State, the Governor extended deepest commiseration to the entire family members of the deceased and prayed to Almighty Allah to grant her soul eternal rest, Jannatul Firdausi be her final abode.



Kano Governor

Borno Govt Commemorates 2023 International Day for Persons With Disabilities

***Emphasizes renewing hope for disability-inclusive society**

By; SADIQ ABUBAKAR, Maiduguri

In an effort to promote inclusivity and eliminate discrimination against persons with disabilities, Borno Governor, Prof. Babagana Umar Zulum declared the International Day for Persons with Disabilities open.

The event, organized by the Borno State Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs and Special Duties in collaboration with the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development, commemorated the 2023 International Day for Persons Living with Disabilities under the theme, "Renewing Hope Together for Disability-Inclusive Societies."

Representing Governor Zulum, Hon. Ibrahim Tukur delivered a speech expressing delight in addressing the attendees on this special day.

He emphasized the significance of the theme, which reflects the collective responsibility to ensure equal opportunities for every individual, regardless of

their abilities or disabilities, to thrive and contribute to society.

The day aimed at acknowledging the struggles and triumphs of individuals living with disabilities, celebrating their resilience, determination, and valuable contributions to communities. It also served as a reminder to break down barriers, embrace diversity, and create truly inclusive environments.

Governor Zulum's government is deeply committed to creating an environment that respects and upholds the rights of persons with disabilities.

They recognized the need for equal access to education, healthcare, employment, and all aspects of life. Notably, they have implemented policies and initiatives to promote inclusion and eliminate discrimination. Efforts include providing accessible infrastructure, inclusive education, vocational training, and employment opportunities. However, they acknowledge that more work needs to be done.

The occasion emphasized the importance of collaboration and collective action.

Stakeholders, civil society organizations, and the private sector were urged to join hands in the journey towards building truly inclusive societies.

The Honorable Commissioner for Women Affairs, Hajiya Zuwaira Gambo, reiterated the Borno State Government's commitment to the cause and welfare of women, children, and people living with disabilities.

She highlighted initiatives such as providing schools, vocational centers, job employment opportunities, monthly stipends for 1,900 individuals with disabilities, and inclusive palliative distribution during times of crisis.

Joining in the celebration, the Honorable Commissioner of Information on Internal Security, Prof. Tar acknowledged the significant challenges faced by individuals who resort to begging due to socio-economic factors. He assured the attendees that the Borno State

Government is working diligently to create viable alternatives for these individuals, ensuring that they have access to rehabilitation programs that will equip them with the necessary skills for sustainable livelihoods.

The Permanent Secretary, Alh. Bukar, expressed gratitude to Governor Zulum for his unwavering commitment to the needs of vulnerable individuals and people with disabilities.

He acknowledged the governor's sensitivity and provision of stipend allowances to 1,949 persons with disabilities, among other welfare packages.

Other notable figures who spoke at the program included the Representative of the Commissioner of Police and Ambassador Ahmed Shehu, Chairman of Civil Society Organizations.

The event featured a presentation on disability, which added to the celebration of the International Day for Persons with Disabilities and aimed to raise awareness and promote inclusivity.



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

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- Adverts may not be published if the visuals given are considered too poor as to affect the reproduction.
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TECHNICAL DATA			
6 COLUMNS			
Depth	38.1 (CM)	Depth -	15 (Inches)
Width	25.4 (CM)	Width -	10 (Inches)

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

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

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

Special Position			
SPACE	RATE	VAT	TOTAL
FULL W RAPA ROUND	6,750,000.00	506,250.00	7,256,250.00
HALF W RAPA ROUND	4,500,000.00	337,500.00	4,837,500.00
PA GE 2 O R 3	400,000.00	30,000.00	430,000.00
PA GE 4 O R 5	375,000.00	28,125.00	403,125.00
PA GE 6 O R 7	325,000.00	24,375.00	349,375.00
FRONT PA GE M AST HEA D EA R PIECE	16,875,000.00	1,687,500.00	18,562,500.00
FRONT PA GES OLUS	312,500.00	23,437.50	335,937.50
FRONT PA GES TRIP	375,000.00	28,125.00	403,125.00
BACK PA GE EA R PIECE	200,000.00	15,000.00	215,000.00
BACK PA GES TRIP	250,000.00	18,750.00	268,750.00
CENT RES PR EA D (C OLO UR)	837,500.00	62,812.50	900,312.50
DO UBLE S PR EA D (C OLO UR)	700,000.00	52,500.00	752,500.00
CENT RES PR EA D (BLA CK & W HIT E)	575,000.00	43,125.00	618,125.00
DO UBLE S PR EA D (BLA CK & W HIT E)	550,000.00	41,250.00	591,250.00
FRONT PA GE (10" X 6)	3,250,000.00	243,750.00	3,493,750.00
ROPS TRIP (C OLO UR)	125,000.00	9,375.00	134,375.00
ROPS TRIP (BLA CK & W HIT E)	85,000.00	6,375.00	91,375.00

PROPERTY AND IT, VACANCY, AGRIC, AND EVENTS/EDUCATION RATE						
COLOUR				BLACK AND WHITE		
SPACE	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

When Shall We Stop Going To Court After Elections? (1)

By: HASSAN GIMBA

Is there something with the presidential system of democracy we have twice adopted for ourselves that necessitates involving the courts where judges are made to be the ultimate arbiter between contestants?

In 1979, it was the judges who decided who emerged as the president between Alhaji Shehu Shagari and Chief Obafemi Awolowo when they told the nation what two-thirds of nineteen should be in a judgment that is more of a compromise between the spirit of the law and political practicality.

The requirement to be the president was a majority of votes and national spread, determined by the ability of a presidential candidate to score 25 per cent in at least two-thirds of the states of the federation. Nigeria then had nineteen states with Lagos as a state and federal capital, therefore avoiding the controversy associated with Abuja now.

In the presidential election held on the 11th of August, 1979, Alhaji Shehu Usman Aliyu Shagari of the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) got 5,688,857, defeating his closest rival, Chief Obafemi Jeremiah Awolowo of the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN), who garnered 4,916,551 in an election where the total registered voters were 48,633,782 with 16,846,533 voting. That represented 33.77% for Shagari who won in nine states, and 29.18% for Awolowo. The Federal Electoral Commission (FEDECO) headed by Michael Ani thus declared Shehu Shagari the winner of the 1979 presidential election.

By the declared results, Shehu Shagari got 25% of the votes cast in twelve states, namely: Bauchi, Bendel, Borno, Cross River, Gongola, Kaduna, Kwara, Niger, Plateau, Rivers and Sokoto. The 13th state was the issue. It was Kano State – where he scored 243,423 votes, equivalent to 19.4% of the 1,220,763 votes cast in total. A dispute thus ensued over whether Shehu Shagari had met the required threshold, with arguments centred on his 25% win in twelve states and 19.4% in Kano State. But Shagari argued that his 19.9% in Kano represented two-thirds of the 12 2/3 that was two-thirds of 19 states.

And so Chief Obafemi Awolowo went to the Special Election Petition Tribunal at Lagos, which started on the 4th of September, 1979. In just six days, the Election Tribunal dismissed the appellant's claims, affirming Shehu Shagari's victory.

Not satisfied, he went to the Supreme Court. The justices that heard his appeal were Atanda Fatai Williams, Mohammed Bello, Mohammed Uwais, Andrews Otutu Obaseki, Kayode Eso, Ayo Gabriel Irikefe and Chike Idigbe.

On 26th September 1979, Williams, who was the presiding judge, and others decided the case in favour of Shagari, with only Eso dissenting.

The Fourth Republic came in after the presidential elections held on 27th February 1999. The result was a victory for Olusegun Obasanjo of the People's Democratic Party, who defeated Olu Falae on a joint Alliance for Democracy/All People's Party ticket. Out of the total registered voters of 57,938,945, 30,280,052 voted with Obasanjo getting 18,738,154 (or 62.8%) and Falae got 11,110,287 (or 37.2%) of the votes.

Olu Falae contested the election at the tribunal where he, among other allegations, said Obasanjo was an ex-convict and a member of a secret cult, the Ogboni fraternity.

Falae went to the Court of Appeal on March 15 and on Friday, April 16, 1999, Justice Dahiru Musdapher entered judgment in favour of Obasanjo.

It is worth noting that the first election in 1979 was conducted with the presidential election coming first; however, the beneficiary reversed the order in 1983 and the NPN won with 48%. Chief Obafemi Awolowo this time did not go to the Supreme Court after losing at the tribunal, claiming that it would amount to a waste of time. He also hinted that it may take one year to gather evidence of the rigging by Shagari's party.

We have also seen that an election was held in August and the petition hearing started in the first week of September at a special tribunal that gave judgement within a week. An appeal went to the Supreme Court which decided on it by the 26 of that month and the swearing-in of the president took place on October 1.

Again, the presidential election came first in 1999, but by the next round of elections in 2023, the sequence was reversed with that of the president first.

Judgement in the petition by Falae against the election was also delivered within a month.

From the elections of 1979 and 1999, we can deduce a reasonable, fairly tolerable process. But in each case, four years later, beneficiaries invariably put their interests first before that of the nation. And in this, there is always collaboration with the electoral body that is anything but independent, from the way its managers are appointed and how the body is funded. You ask why the electoral timetable is always reversed after the first election. In 1983, sensing dissatisfaction among the people with the way the country was being governed, the ruling NPN, afraid of defeat, capitalised on Shehu Shagari's

"Falae went to the Court of Appeal on March 15 and on Friday, April 16, 1999, Justice Dahiru Musdapher entered judgment in favour of Obasanjo."



Hassan Gimba

Monday Column

perceived likeability and reversed the timetable.

Afraid that the party would lose states and legislators, which could affect the electoral fortunes of the sitting president, the executive decided to start from the top. They relied on what they christened the "bandwagon effect" to commit electoral heists, calling it a "landslide" victory. Opponents and critics derisively called it a "moonslide".

In 2003, the same fear of losing, threat from General Muhammadu Buhari's foray into the presidential race, altercation with his deputy, Atiku Abubakar, and knowing how wary his party and governors were of his dictatorial tendencies, made Obasanjo, in cahoots with the electoral umpire, reverse the election timetable to start with his and that

of the National Assembly. Filled with paranoia, he assumed that he would be sacrificed once others won their elections, and so he engineered the reversal of the order of the elections.

The calculation was that the governors and the party structure would of necessity fight for him to win because his defeat would also signpost theirs. And they know him: if he lost the election, Obasanjo would make sure every one of them lost theirs. The National Assembly easily became accomplices because the arrangement also favoured their political survival. Plus, he introduced the politics of "Ghana-Must-Go."

We will consequently look to see if at any point there is always a convergence by the executive, legislature and judiciary against the ordinary voter for their interests other than that of the nation.

Afterwards, we will look at electoral litigations and why the political class deliberately jettisoned the process where election petitions were concluded before the inauguration, as we saw in 1979, 1983 and 1999.

Hassan Gimba is the Publisher and Editor-in-Chief of Neptune Prime.

Nine Persons Burnt On Ogbomosho - Oyo Expressway Accident

*As Trailer, Truck Collide

By; **BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan**

Nine passengers on Saturday, sustained varying degrees of burns in an auto crash that occurred along Ogbomosho - Oyo Expressway. It was gathered that the motor accident involved a trailer and a truck at Sekona area along Ogbomosho - Oyo Expressway leaving nine

of the 13 people involved in the accident burnt with four others escaped unhurt.

According to the Oyo State Sector Commander of Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC), Joshua Adekanye, the accident involved a trailer and a truck at Sekona area along Ogbomosho - Oyo Expressway.

"The accident happened around 3:30 a.m. on

Saturday, and that the truck vehicle caught fire while the trailer collided with it", he said

Mr Adekanye added, "The actual cause of the truck which went on fire could not be ascertain because it happened at night,"

The FRSC Sector Commander said the likely cause of the trailer colliding with the truck might be over speeding and wrongful overtaking.

He said the burnt victims are being referred to the University of Ilorin Teaching Hospital for treatment, adding that the RS11.31 Ogbomosho and RS11.312 Olo Command conducted rescued operations.

"Other agency that carried out the rescue operation are the Fire Service and Odo-Oba Lolic Division,"

Nasarawa Assembly Elects Jatau As Speaker

By; **ARCHIBONG ESUENE, Makurdi**

Nasarawa State House of Assembly has elected Hon. Danladi Jatau, member representing Kokona East in the State Assembly as new Speaker.

In the same vein, Hon Mohammed Oyanki,

member representing Doma North State constituency was equally elected as Deputy Speaker of the House.

Ibrahim Musa, the Clerk of the Nasarawa State House of Assembly, made the announcement shortly after presentation of the 2024 appropriation bill by Governor Abdullahi Sule

at the Assembly Complex in Lafia.

The Clerk who presided over the swearing in of the new Speaker Danladi Jatau his Deputy Muhammad Adamu Oyanki tasked them to working in-line with relevant laws guiding the House

In their separate

acceptance speeches, the new Speaker of the Nasarawa State House of Assembly, Danladi Jatau and his Deputy, Muhammad Adamu Oyanki appreciated members of the House for their unanimous decision to nominate them to pilot the affairs of the House.

FG Will Be Strategic To Harness Energy In Each Region - Minister

By; **AMOS TAUNA, Kaduna**

Minister of Power, Adebayo Adelabu has said that the federal government will be strategic to harness energy peculiar to each region in the country's intervention in the power sector.

Speaking at annual Power Correspondents Association of Nigeria (PCAN) seminar, the minister stated that the

government would focus on solar energy in the North, mini hydro power plants in the Middle Belt and the Southwest, hybridised with solar while the coastal states will be identified for wind energy utilisation.

Adelabu stated that the PCAN is one of the key stakeholders and partners in the sector, while calling for the media to advocate against power theft, vandalism and educate

consumers against sabotage.

He explained that customers paying for electricity consumed would determine the financial liquidity of the Nigerian Electricity Supply Industry (NESI).

According to him, "Taking all the above into consideration, especially with the liberalisation of the sector, Nigerians will soon start to experience the objective that led to the

Act which is to improve power supply across the country."

He said that it is on record that the 2023 Electricity Act is a significant part of the country's energy roadmap as it clearly signifies the present administration's commitment to the transformation of the power sector as clearly stated in the agenda of Mr President as contained in the Renewed Hope Agenda.

Akwa Ibom/Federal Governments Seal Pact On FCE, Ididep

By; **PATRICK TITUS, Uyo**

The Akwa Ibom State Government has officially handed over the Certificate Of Occupancy of the newly established Federal College of Education, Ididep, to the Federal Government.

The certificate was presented to the Minister of Education, Prof. Tahir Mamman, SAN on Friday by the Akwa Ibom State Governor, Pastor Umo Eno.

Receiving the document, the Education Minister, Mamman highlighted the shortage of teachers in Nigeria and commended the President for graciously approving the establishment of the college.

He expressed optimism about the College's potential for growth and development, emphasizing the importance of the favorable topography and the numerous opportunities available in the area.

Also speaking, Governor Umo Eno emphasized the significance of quality manpower in the education sector.

Represented by the deputy governor, Senator Akon Eyakenyi, Gov Eno stated that the establishment of the College of Education was a reflection of the state government's plans for the future.

He acknowledged the efforts of Senator Ita Enang in bringing meaningful development to the Akwa Ibom community.

Governor Eno further noted that the symbolic handing over of the Certificate of Occupancy, signified that the 94.927-hectare land, which was acquired with about N95 million from the community, now belongs to the Federal College of Education.

He stressed the importance of education in combating anti-social activities, saying the college holds a

special place in the hearts of the people.

In his welcome address, the Provost of the College, Dr. Edem Ntuk, expressed gratitude to the President for establishing the College and appointing him as one of the principal officers.

He appreciated the support in terms of waiver for employment, seeking government's intervention on compensation payments, and infrastructure provision.

Meanwhile, the Paramount Ruler of Ibiono Ibom local area, Akuku Ime Udousoro Inyang, expressed his appreciation to the Federal Government and President Tinubu for their generosity in granting the College.

The Monarch also thanked Senator Ita Enang for his commitment to the development of the region, even as he envisioned that the College would metamorphosed into a Federal University of Education in the near future.

The facilitator of the project, Senator Ita Enang attributed the success of the college's establishment to the collaboration between the APC-led Federal Government and the Akwa Ibom State PDP-led government.

Highlighting the approval of former President Muhammadu Buhari and President Tinubu's endorsement for the commencement of the college, Senator Enang shared his gratitude for witnessing the growth of the institution, which he had attended when it was a Teachers' Training College.

Dignitaries present at the event were the Minister of State for Education, Dr Yusuf Sununu; the Akwa Ibom State Commissioner for Education, Hon (Mrs) Idongesit Etiebet; the Commissioner for Lands, Captain Iniobong Ekong(Rtd); the Surveyor-General of the State, Mrs Emem Isang among others.

Where Dedication To Humanity Is Like Religion

By Owei Lakemfa

THE ISRAELI bombs that rained down on Gaza has killed over 200 health workers with 215 injured. In Havana, Cuba, 10,953 kilometres away, Palestinian youths being trained as medical doctors, gathered to mourn the human carnage in their country and vowed to take the next available flight back once they complete their studies to replace the murdered doctors.

In a show of the famous Cuban sense of humanism, President Miguel Diaz-Canel on November 17, 2023 met with the Palestinian students to express the solidarity of the Cuban people. Then on November 23, draped in the black-and-white Palestinian keffiyeh, he led the Palestinian students and a huge mass of Cubans in a solidarity march across Havana passing in front of the United States (US) Embassy, demanding a ceasefire in the Israeli-Palestinian War. Also participating in the march were the Cuban Prime Minister Manuel Marrero, Foreign Minister, Bruno Rodriguez and the President's wife, Lis Cuesta.

The Cuba-US fight is like that between the Biblical David and Goliath. The US has a total area of 3,119,885 kilometres compared to Cuba's 109,884 kilometres. In other words, the US is over 28 times the size of Cuba. In terms of population, while the US is 331.9 million, Cuba is 11.26 million. So, the US population is over 29 times that of Cuba. Yet in over six decades of skirmishes, sabotage and sanctions, the US has been unable to subdue Cuba.

The solidarity the Cubans are engaged in on the Palestinian issue is no fluke. They showed Africans a thousand times more solidarity when we were in our most vulnerable state. That was in the 1980s when Apartheid South Africa, supported by the US, Britain, Israel and their allies, held us in the jugular. Apartheid held down Namibia and enslaved the Blacks in South Africa with liberation icons like Walter Sisulu, Govan Mbeki and Nelson Mandela held in prison as terrorists. Additionally, the Apartheid regime with a mighty military equipped by its Western allies, invaded African countries like Zambia, Swaziland, Lesotho, Botswana, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Angola at will.

Africa seemed helpless. Most countries merely made declarations. So, with the support of the Apartheid regime by some world leaders like President Ronald Reagan and Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, the situation appeared hopeless. However, Cuba took action. It

sent a total 55,000 troops over 9,000 kilometres from Havana to Africa to fight Apartheid and liberate the African continent.

Thousands of heroic Cuban youths lost their lives fighting for Africa. In the historic Battle of Cuito Cuanavale, Angola, the Cubans roundly defeated the Apartheid forces, chasing them into colonised Namibia where the enemies of humanity begged for a ceasefire. Cuba's basic demands on the Apartheid regime were independence for Namibia leading to independence for South Africa. Two years later, Namibia became independent on March 21, 1990 and South Africa, on April 16, 1994.

Cuba, which has been under US sanctions for six decades, went before the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on November 2, 2023 asking it to vote against the US economic and trade embargo against it. A total of 187 countries voted against the US embargo with only the US and Israel voting for the embargo and Ukraine abstaining. It was the 31st time the UNGA was voting against America on the issue, but the Americans have never shown any respect for the UN resolutions.

Cuba, a small island nation, had, as at 2021, lost over \$1,098,008,000,000 to the unilateral American restrictions which includes embargo on spare parts, medicine, transportation and food.

It has also survived attacks by some 300 terrorist groups which bombed private and commercial places. Cuban aircraft have also been hijacked, taken to the US and destroyed. The most serious of these terrorist attacks was the October 1976 hijack of a Cuban Airline with 76 persons on board. It was flown over the sea and blown up.

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The man who symbolised Cuba's



resistance and unparalleled sense of dedication to humanity is Fidel Alejandro Castro Ruz. Fidel, as he was affectionately called, flew away on November 25, 2016. Exactly on the seventh year of his passing, I joined guests at the Cuban Embassy in Abuja to plant a royal palm tree commemorating his passing.

Cuban Ambassador Miriam Morales Palmero, who personally worked with Fidel, explained the choice of tree: "The royal palm was chosen as the national tree in Cuba for being the most numerous of its trees, for being the most notable species in its landscapes, resistant and durable, for its beauty, for its usefulness and for being represented in the national coat of arms."

She recalled that Fidel told Cubans that they have the 'duty of compensation' to "Africa by virtue of the crucial role played by Africans and their descendants in the independence and revolutionary wars (In South America and the Caribbean) in their contribution to the construction of the Cuban nation and in the creation of wealth that successive generations of all races have enjoyed."

Aremu said that although Fidel was produced by Cuba, he was a gift to humanity. Therefore: "When we solidarize with Cuba, we solidarize with ourselves." He wondered why Cuba cannot open a bank account in Nigeria, indicating that Nigeria might, vicariously, be carrying out part of the American sanctions against Cuba.

The Ambassador said, Fidel's speech in Havana on March 21, 1962 on war, remains relevant today as it was 61 years ago. In it, he had said: "In no other minute of human history is peace so

necessary, because in no other minute of human history does war mean so much destruction and so much death. At no other minute in human history is the idea of war as terrible as at this moment."

Dr. Onuche Audu, an Obstetrician and Gynaecologist who studied in Cuba, graduated 48 hours before Fidel passed. He told the audience that Fidel had not died, but had merely "multiplied". Audu, seeing himself as a representative of Cuba said: "A Cuban doctor prides himself in saving a life even when no money is paid."

Comrade Abiodun Aremu, the Secretary of the Nigeria Movement for Solidarity with Cuba recalled that there were over 600 assassination attempts on Fidel, especially by the US, but that they all failed because he was what Yorubas call 'Akanda', a specially created human being.

He also noted that Cuba has survived over 60 years of blockade by its powerful neighbour, US, but that the country remains standing and viable.

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The ruling All Progressives Congress (APC), in a solidarity message delivered by Mr. Ini Akpan Morgan, the Head of its International Department, praised Fidel for the redistribution of the national wealth to the Cuban populace.

Cuba remains a country where dedication to humanity is like religion.

JT Moore Foundation Advances Mental Health Awareness Campaign In Secondary Schools

By; BASHIR BELLO DOLLARS, Abuja

The Jeffrey Tyrone Moore Foundation, a non-governmental organization dedicated to mental health advocacy, has extended its outreach to secondary schools under the theme "Let Your Whisper Be Heard."

The foundation, based in Abuja, organized its latest edition of the Mental Health Awareness Campaign on November 29, 2023, targeting students from Government Junior Secondary School Garki (GJSS), Area 10 Garki, Abuja, and their teachers. Mary Moore, the Executive Director of the foundation, conveyed a crucial message to the students during the campaign. "We are here to let the students know that mental health is a universal human right, and they should speak out and not keep their challenges to themselves," she emphasized. Moore underscored the significance of self-belief and the transformative power of positive affirmations.

Dr. Imaobong Edemaise, the resource person at the event, highlighted the World Health Organization's definition of mental health as "a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of diseases or infirmity." She educated the students on various mental health conditions such as depression, anxiety, substance disorder, developmental disorder, and eating disorder.

Dr. Edemaise also outlined factors affecting mental health, including biological elements, hormonal imbalances,

environmental influences, inadequate healthcare, social factors, and financial stress. She urged students to be vigilant about early warning signs, such as anxiety, unhappiness, sleep difficulties, appetite changes, and feelings of isolation. Importantly, she encouraged students to seek help when needed.

The event featured Mental Health Ambassadorial nominations, with Miss Miracle Isaac of JSS2A and Master Dickson Kromlep of JSS3A emerging as "Young Mental Health Ambassadors." These students demonstrated intelligence and knowledge about mental health during the event, earning them the title and the responsibility to serve as role models and advocates within the school.

Maxwel Omar Gabari, a board director, adorned the newly appointed ambassadors with their official attire. These ambassadors will play a crucial role in raising awareness and fostering a supportive environment for mental health within Government Junior Secondary School Garki.

The event also included the distribution of sanitary towels to girls, T-shirts to boys, writing materials, and a fun day with refreshments. Most importantly, counseling sessions were provided as part of the holistic approach to addressing mental health concerns among students.

The Jeffrey Tyrone Moore Foundation continues to make strides in promoting mental health awareness, emphasizing the universal right to mental well-being and encouraging proactive measures for a healthier future.

FG Will Be Strategic To Harness Energy In Each Region - Minister

By; AMOS TAUNA, Kaduna

Minister of Power, Adebayo Adelabu has said that the federal government will be strategic to harness energy peculiar to each region in the country's intervention in the power sector.

Speaking at annual Power Correspondents Association of Nigeria (PCAN) seminar, the minister stated that the

government would focus on solar energy in the North, mini hydro power plants in the Middle Belt and the Southwest, hybridised with solar while the coastal states will be identified for wind energy utilisation.

Adelabu stated that the PCAN is one of the key stakeholders and partners in the sector, while calling for the media to advocate against power theft, vandalism and educate consumers against

sabotage.

He explained that customers paying for electricity consumed would determine the financial liquidity of the Nigerian Electricity Supply Industry (NESI).

According to him, "Taking all the above into consideration, especially with the liberalisation of the sector, Nigerians will soon start to experience the objective that led to the Act which is to improve power supply across the

country."

He said that it is on record that the 2023 Electricity Act is a significant part of the country's energy roadmap as it clearly signifies the present administration's commitment to the transformation of the power sector as clearly stated in the agenda of Mr President as contained in the Renewed Hope Agenda.



South East Should Support Tinubu, We Can Never Be Part Of Biafra - Umahi

***We saw Tinubu's victory in the spirit**

By; MKPUMA ENYINNA, Abakaliki

Former Governor of Ebonyi State and the current Minister of Works, Engr. David Umahi has called on the people of South East to support President Ahmed Bola Tinubu to succeed, stating that the region can never be part of Biafra.

He also added that Tinubu's victory was seen in the spirit before its

manifestation.

Governor Umahi who disclosed this at the commissioning of three projects executed by TETFUND in Ebonyi State University, urged people not to be more religious than the people that brought it, saying that there is nothing wrong with the composition of Tinubu's administration.

The works minister commended the management of Ebonyi

State University for making the institution one of the best state owned universities in Nigeria and therefore, charged the university to embark on courses that will make students self employed after graduation.

He further said that the Federal Government of Nigeria is ready to support higher institutions in order to produce quality graduates that will add value to the society.

On his part, Governor Francis Nwifuru appreciated the management of the institution for repositioning the school, saying that his administration will always support them.

He however, called on Federal Government to assist in terms research facilities and building of library in order to give students the best they can offer.

Accolades As Abuja Sports Journalists Honour SWAN President

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The dosage of honour beaming around the current National leadership of Sports Writers Association of Nigeria (SWAN) reared up again as sports journalists within the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) rolled out the drums to celebrate their President, Mr. Isaiah Benjamin.

A statement signed by the Secretary-General, SWAN, Ikenna Okonkwo, said that this is as they bestowed a deserving Meritorious Award on SWAN President at



a high octane event to mark the grand finale of 2023 FCT SWAN Week in Abuja. The Special Merit Award presented to the SWAN President by former Director-General of National Sports Commission, Mallam Alhassan Yakmut, supported by the FCT Director of Sports Mr. Lukas Istifanus in the presence of Nigeria Football Federation (NFF), Alhaji Ibrahim Gusau, was in recognition of his dedication and professionalism in the discharge of his duties in Nigeria.

While reeling out the outstanding leadership qualities of Mr. Benjamin, Chairman of SWAN FCT, Mr. Ndubueze Chidoka, said since his emergence as SWAN President few months ago, the face of sports writing has taken a new trajectory.

"For us in FCT, we are glad that SWAN is gradually enjoying a new lease of life under Mr. Isaiah Benjamin. He has always been a unique leader even before he became our President.

"His antecedents speak volumes and we know that with his accelerated development approach in administering SWAN affairs, better times are ahead," he said.

Receiving the Award on his behalf, SWAN Secretary-General, Amb. Ikenna Okonkwo, thanked SWAN FCT for remaining focused over the years with array of Sports Writing Veterans.

He then assured Sports Media Professionals and other Special Guests at the occasion that his administration was committed to ensuring utmost welfare of



Mr. Isaiah Benjamin

SWAN members nationwide as efforts are on to resolve existing issues in all chapters of the Association with a view to ensuring that everyone is on the same page.

He said, "I sincerely appreciate my respected colleagues in FCT for this rare honour. This will spur me to do more. As a leadership, we will remain committed to serve you the most in the coming months and years."

The FCT SWAN also honoured other distinguished personalities including serving and former leaders of the Association as well as NFF President Alhaji Gusau alongside other notable sports administrator.

Incumbent and former SWAN Secretary-

Generals - Amb. Okonkwo, Mr. Jude Opara, Mr. Andrew Abah, former SWAN FCT Chairmen - Mr. Kayode Adeniyi, Mr. Tony Ezimako, Mr. Victor Iroele, Veteran Sports Writers - Mr. Lekan Olaseinde, Elder Asueliemen Osasuyi, Mr. Ezeocha Nzeh, Mr. Ben Ogbemudia, Mr. Ben Nwachukwu among others were also honoured at the event which also featured a five-aside football competition final between the Nigeria Television Authority (NTA) and Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN).

At the end of hostilities decided inside Area 3 playground, NTA edged FRCN 1-0 to win the tournament a record sixth time.

IGP Egbetokun Inaugurates Ist NPF Open National Mixed Martial Arts Championship

By: RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE Lagos.

The Inspector General of Police, IGP Kayode Adeolu Egbetokun, Ph.D., NPM, has officially launched the groundbreaking of the 1st NPF Open National Mixed Martial Arts Championship scheduled held on the 2nd and 3rd of December 2023 in Abuja at the Moshood Abiola National Stadium, Abuja.

In his address during the inauguration on Saturday, December 2, 2023, the IGP underscored the significance of the championship, saying it is in not only to enhance policing services

but also contributing to the broader development of sports in Nigeria. Tagged "Abuja 2023", the event, according to a release by the Force Public Officer ACP Olumuyiwa Adejobi, is poised to foster collaboration and mutual respect among participating agencies, showcasing the commitment of law enforcement to community policing.

"As part of the preparation for this championship, the Force conducted a comprehensive 2-day seminar titled "Sensitization on the Rules and Regulations of Mixed Martial Arts."

The seminar brought together

athletes and officials from the Police, Para-military, and other law enforcement agencies, along with representatives from the Ministry of Youth, Sports, and Development.

"The IGP calls on all participating athletes and agencies to showcase their best performances while adhering to the rules and maintaining the spirit of sportsmanship.

The competition will feature various categories, including the Beginners Mixed Martial Arts events, highlighting a combination of grappling, striking, and ground fighting", Adejobi added.



IGP Egbetokun displaying the official jersey for the event.

Kaduna Residents Groan Over Cashless ATMs

By; IBRAHIM ADAMU,
Kaduna

Unsettled by seeming concession amongst banks not to load their Automated Teller Machines, simply known as ATM with cash for easy withdrawals by debit card users, Kaduna residents have expressed worries and disappointment over the new trend.

Our correspondent who took a tour of money dispensing points owned and operated by old and new generation banks in commercial nerves of Kaduna metropolis, observed virtually empty ATM arenas with few individuals utilizing the machines for transfers or online payments of one bill or the other. A cross section of highly disappointed customers who visited the ATMs for cash withdrawals but met empty machines wondered if the present administration had tactically returned the country to days of the infamous cashless policy that characterized the 2023 general election.

A trader in edible food items, who simply identified self as Malam Musa Shehu said he needed urgent cash to pay

farmers who supplied maize and millet and would not take transfer because, according to him, none of them had a bank account.

"Getting to my bank to use the ATM for a quick withdrawal, I couldn't do so due to empty machines that have again reared their ugly faces.

"And the queues inside for people who came for withdrawals is too long for a serious trader whom time is of essence to join.

"And above all, the security men at the gate will tell you there is no cash across the counter as well," he explained.

A civil servant who preferred to speak on anonymity decried the ongoing development in the nation's banking sector, describing it as unnecessarily stress-induced reform, liable of putting more pressures on already hapless Nigerians.

He called on the present administration and Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) to rescind the gradually executed cashless policy at a wrong time.

A Kaduna based public affairs analyst, Salisu Garba while commenting on the issue said the development was not

unconnected with the December extension period granted by the court during the immediate past regime of Buhari.

"The uncertainty is palpable in the banking sector if Tinubu will be seeking more extension for old naira notes to remain legal tender or not.

"Though, we have read headlines in the papers that lawyers of the FG

have already gone to court filing papers for another round of extension, but that remains an attempt yet without a distinct direction of where we are headed as far as cashless policy saga is concerned," he added.

The story was the same in the Southern part of the state capital, where virtually major banks have their branches equipped with ATMs as our reporter who visited the outlets, observed empty cash dispensing machines with few users who were there to

make transfers or pay bills.

Yohanna Samuel, a middle aged man told our reporter that he has been making attempts to withdraw cash from ATM for days without success.

He called on the governments to take a decisive action of forcing banks to make cash available for ease of daily activities by countrymen.

New Nigerian Newspapers contacted an operations manager with a new generation bank who spoke on anonymity, admitting that banks are just being careful to stock their vaults with old cash

that may become problematic at the long run.

"We are in a state of dilemma and uncertainty of what will happen next in regard to the use of old note for transaction.

"I would want you to also remember that this is almost an end of the year with banks closing annual transaction and taking stock of businesses for the year.

"Let's however keep our fingers crossed and see how events unfold in the coming days," he suggested.



Gombe Governor Commemorates International Day Of People With Disabilities

*Pledges continued support, inclusive policies

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

In commemoration of the International Day of People with Disabilities, yesterday, December 3, the Governor of Gombe State, Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya, CON has felicitated with the resilient individuals facing challenges due to disabilities across the state.

According to a statement signed by the Director-General (Press Affairs) Government House Gombe, Ismaila Uba Misilli, in a goodwill message, the governor emphasized his

administration's resolve to encourage inclusive policies, promote diversity, equity, and empowerment for every segment of society.

While reflecting on this year's theme, 'United in action to rescue and achieve the sustainable development goals for, with and by persons with disabilities,' the Governor reiterated his commitment to ensuring the dreams and aspirations of People with Disabilities (PWDs) are not only acknowledged but fully supported by his government.

"We remain resolute in our commitment to providing necessary support for the empowerment and dreams of our PWDs".

"Efforts are underway to establish an Agency to cater for the unique needs and welfare of our PWD community," the Governor stated.

He assured that a bill which will seek to create this Agency has received the full attention and support of his administration. He pledged that upon its submission and passage by the State House of Assembly, he will expedite its

enactment into law, to ensure that the voices and concerns of PWDs are comprehensively addressed.

Governor Inuwa acknowledged the strength and resilience demonstrated by the disability community in Gombe State, urging continued support and loyalty to his administration's inclusive initiatives.

"We renew our resolve to champion inclusivity, celebrate diversity, and continue our collective journey towards a more supportive society", the Governor assured.