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Afenifere Fumes Over Insecurity, Insists On State Police

By: BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

Worried by the situation in some parts of the country, Pan-Yoruba socio-cultural and political organization, Afenifere yesterday, called on the federal government and security agencies in the country to rise up to combat the rising cases of insecurity, particularly kidnapping, in recent times.

Afenifere in a statement by its National Publicity Secretary, Comrade Jare Ajayi, emphasized that the federal government should urgently address the 'political, economic and ideological factors' identified by spokesman of the Department of State Security (DSS), Mr. Peter Afunaya, as being responsible for recurrent incidence of kidnapping and banditry.

The Pan Yoruba socio

cultural and political organization maintained that this latest call became imperative in view of rising kidnap cases in Lagos, Ogun, Kwara and some other parts of the country.

Afenifere cited the cases of the armed robbery attacks at two commercial banks in Ikere, Ekiti State last Wednesday, resulting in the death of three Amotekun security personnel as well as the killing of Mr. Taiwo Oyekanmi, a director of finance in Ogun State, on November 29, 2023 in Abeokuta by armed robbers as some of the recent examples.

"Reports have it that seven people were kidnapped, while one person was killed last Monday at Fidiwo on Lagos-Ibadan Expressway. This came in the wake of the kidnap of Miracle Adereti Kolawole, a 13-year-old student by an



From left: Zamfara State Gov Dauda Lawal, Gov Uba Sani, Chairman Northern Governor's Forum, Gov Inuwa Yahaya

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Katsina Governor Disburses Cash, Farm Implements Worth Over N1.7bn To 148,000 Vulnerable Families

By; SULAIMAN AHMED MISAU, Katsina

Governor Dikko Umaru Radda has disbursed cash grants, farm implements and inputs worth over N1.719 billion to 148,000 most vulnerable and poor families in the state.

A statement by the Chief Press Secretary to the Governor, Ibrahim Kaula Mohammed said the funds and farm implements were disbursed under the second tranche of the Katsina State COVID-19 Action Recovery and Economic Stimulus Programme.

Among the farm implements disbursed by the governor include, ruminant goats, power tiller, groundnut oil extraction machines, breeds of chickens and fish among others.

Governor Radda who launched the programme at the Local Government Service Commission in Katsina Metropolis said among the 148,000 men

and women who benefitted from the scheme, 6,100 were selected from 20 local government areas, with each getting 50,000 Naira.

According to Governor Radda, 43 village areas from across the 34 local government areas of the state would receive 12 million Naira each as grants for the execution of community development projects.

He said the projects would include water supply, renovation of schools and healthcare centers, depending on their needs.

Governor Radda added that 1,170 farmers were selected to receive farm inputs and implements worth 142 million naira. This he said was in addition to another set of 12,250 farmers also selected to receive goats, spices of fish and some implements worth over 763 million naira to boost their income.

Governor Dikko Radda said the government has

recently approved another 500 million naira to support the implementation of its programme in the state.

He explained that, another 145 million naira was also approved by his administration for the Community and Social Development Agency (CSDA) towards implementation of the livelihood and support to eight local governments not captured among some of the beneficiaries of the "KT CARES programme." Governor Dikko Umaru Radda urged the managers of the programme to ensure its successful implementation, emphasizing that, his determination to ensure government support reached the rural communities who constitute about 80 per cent of the electorates in the state.

Earlier in an address of welcome, the Chairman Steering Committee who is also the state Commissioner of Budget

and Economic Planning, Alhaji Bello Kagara appreciated the firm commitment of Governor Dikko Umaru Radda for driving the economy of the state.

According to him, the setback recorded by the programme in the past and the support of the Governor made it possible for achieving the success so far recorded.

On his part, the National Coordinator of the NG-Care programme who spoke through the State Coordinator, Alhaji Shuaibu Aliyu, lauded Governor Dikko Radda for his giant steps in kicking poverty out of the boundaries of the state through implementing the disbursement of NG CARE programmes.

Professor of Agricultural Geography, Professor Ibrahim Yusuf El Ladan spoke at length on guidelines on safe and sustainable utilization of the grants and assets under the NG-CARE.

Kwara Govt, NDLEA Launch Fresh Operation Against Drug-peddling, Abuse

*Support operation 'Gbalumo' for peace, security - Gov's aide

By BILIQIS ONAOLAPO OLAJUMOKE, Ilorin.

Kwara State Government has commenced a statewide operation in partnership with the Kwara State Command of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) to rid the state of drug and substance abuse, a statement said on Thursday.

Dubbed "Operation Gbalumo," the special operations commenced on Monday and will run for three weeks.

Operation Gbalumo will focus on several key areas, including raiding known drug hideouts and black spots, conducting targeted patrols in high-risk areas, monitoring illegal drug trafficking activities, and raising awareness about the dangers of drug abuse through community engagement programs.

It was said that the exercise would protect the state from influx of illicit drugs and drug-related activities, particularly in major towns and cities, before and after the festive period.

Speaking at a press conference held on Wednesday at the NDLEA Kwara Command headquarters in Ilorin, Special Assistant to Kwara Governor on Drug Abuse Prevention and Control, Hon. Aileru Olamilekan Mikail reiterated that the collaboration is part of the renewed effort of Governor AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq-led administration to maintain peace and security in the state.

"The festive season is a time for celebration and joy, but unfortunately, it is also a time when drug peddlers and users tend to

become more active," he said.

"We will not allow our state to be used as a haven for drug traffickers or a breeding ground for drug abuse. This is why we have provided every necessary supports through a partnership with the NDLEA to launch this special operation. We urge the public to support the government and the security agents for the success of the operation."

Aileru urged residents and visitors to the state to cooperate with law enforcement officials during the operation. He also said any suspicious activity or information about drug peddling or use should be reported immediately to the nearest NDLEA office or security agency.

On his part, NDLEA Commander Kwara Command, Mohammed Bashir, CN, commended the state government for its proactive approach and support to the agency. He pledged the command's unwavering commitment to the success of the operation.

"We have deployed a significant number of personnel across the state and we are prepared to work tirelessly to ensure a peaceful and drug-free festive season for everyone," the Commander declared.

While addressing journalists, Senior Special Assistant on Security Matters to Kwara Governor, Muyideen Aliyu, also highlighted the governor's commitment to providing a conducive environment for the security agencies to carry out their duties and maintain peace and security in the state.



Timi Frank Urges Police, DSS To Probe Wike, Others Over Alleged Killing Of DPO, Diversion Of \$300m, N9bn

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Former Deputy National Publicity Secretary of the All Progressives Congress (APC), Comrade Timi Frank, on Sunday, called on the Inspector General of Police, Kayode Egbetokun and the Director General of the Department of State Services (DSS), Yusuf Magaji Bichi, to urgently investigate the Minister of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Nyesom Wike, over alleged complicity in the murder of a Divisional Police Officer of Ahoada Division in Rivers State, Bako Angbashim.

Angbashim, a Superintendent of Police, had led his men to raid criminal hideouts in the Odemude community in Ahoada West Local Government Area of the state on September 8, when a dreaded cult group led by Okpara ambushed them, opened fire and eventually captured Angbashim, decapitated his body and filmed their action.

His killing attracted nationwide condemnation with the police high command, the Federal and the Rivers State Governments ordering an investigation and immediate arrest of the suspects.

Frank made the call in a statement in Abuja while reacting to a claim by a member of the House of Representatives, Boma Goodhead, representing Asari-Toru Federal Constituency of Rivers State, that Wike was complicit in the killing of the DPO.

Goodhead had at a protest rally in Rivers State in support of Governor Siminilaye Fubara, accused Wike and some federal lawmakers of masterminding the killing of the DPO.

She also claimed that the Governor of Rivers State had caused the diversion of

\$300million given by Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited meant for Ogoni cleanup and N9billion from the Internally Generated Revenue (IGR) of the state.

According to Frank, the investigation has become necessary to determine the veracity or otherwise of the claims by Goodhead against Wike and two federal lawmakers from the state.

He also called on President Bola Ahmed Tinubu to set up a judicial panel of inquiry to unravel the killing of the DPO in order to ensure justice for the dead.

According to him, "If the President fails to take action or do the right thing, by arresting Wike and setting up a judicial panel of inquiry, I demand that every murder suspect in Nigeria that is already in prison or that is being tried should be set free.

"This is because nobody is above the law and we are all Nigerians. So we expect equal justice for all Nigerians."

Frank also urged Wike to resign his position as minister and submit himself for probe over the alleged murder of the DPO and masterminding the diversion of \$300million given by the NNPC for Ogoni cleanup and another N9billion from the IGR of Rivers state.

He insisted that since Wike always claim to be a man of integrity, submitting himself to the security agencies like Goodhead had promised to do on the matter would further vindicate him.

He insisted that all federal lawmakers whose names were mentioned by Hon Goodhead in the killing must also be investigated.

He said: "The investigation must not be done in secret. It must be thorough and the findings made public because Hon



Timi Frank

Goodhead has offered to reveal further details when invited by any of the security agencies concerning the allegation.

"Justice must be given to the family of this police officer who was killed. This is not the time to protect or hide anybody.

"We are calling on the National Human Rights Commission and the International Criminal Court to take up this matter and

invite the Honourable Member who made this allegation to hear her out and thereafter take up the case to ensure that Wike is held accountable for the death."

He also called on the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) to investigate the alleged diversion of \$300million from Rivers State's IGR.

Afenifere Fumes Over Insecurity, Insists On State Police

unknown gang while returning home from school on Friday, December 1, 2023 in Ikotun area of Lagos as confirmed by Afonka Police Station in Egbeda, Alimosho, Lagos", it said.

Afenifere added, "Towards the end of October, sundry abductions took place in Ikotun, Okota, Ejigbo, Alimosho, Egbeda, Agege, Amuwo Odofin areas of Lagos according to published reports.

"Lagos State Police Public Relations Officer, Benjamin Hundeyin, according to BusinessDay, said that the police are aware of the situation and is taking decisive actions to round

up the criminals".

"It is therefore, a matter of serious concern that a few weeks into the yuletide period, commuters on the highway have to travel with trepidation for fear of being attacked."

Afenifere noted that kidnap incidents are not limited to the metropolis or major highways alone, going by abductions that took place in parts of Oke-ogun, Oyo State in recent times. Some of such places were Saki, Okaka, Otu, Komu and in Offa in Kwara State, among others. Similar reports have been reported in parts of Ogun, Ekiti, Ondo and Osun States in addition to the

ones in the central and northern parts of

The Pan Yoruba body then called on President Bola Tinubu to address the political, economic and ideological factors mentioned by Afunaya, saying, the political, economic and ideological factors mentioned by Afunaya can be addressed by "urgently allow states and local government areas to establish police services and be in total control of the services with enhanced welfare for the personnel as well as deployment of modern technology for security purposes."

"Second is to ensure quicker

dispensation of justice so that those arrested for banditry can be tried with dispatch. The third thing to do is to take urgent steps at easing the socio-economic hardships in the country so that the people can be more empowered and for them to have more faith in the country and its government".

Afenifere maintained further "The fourth thing to do is on the side of the government and the people. This involve de-radicalizing the bandits in a manner that they would realize that what they are doing are self-destructive. It also requires the enlightenment of the people to

stop covering up known criminals in their midst."

It stressed that "But for this to be effectively done, the people need to be sure that their own life would not be endangered for exposing perceived criminals. As is known presently, those who tip security agents off of suspected criminals are exposed to danger as the criminals sometimes go after them on being told of who exposed them".

Afenifere added, "in other words, our security agencies need to put their own houses in order for the security steps they are taking to be effective". Afenifere spokesman concluded.

Kaduna Govt Will Continue To Promote Private Investments - Uba Sani

By: FUNMIADERINTO, Kaduna

Kaduna State Government led by Senator Uba Sani will continue to promote private investments for economic growth, job creation, poverty reduction and better social services for its citizens.

This was disclosed by His Excellency, Senator Uba Sani, Governor of Kaduna

State, at the commissioning of a neighborhood center at Sabon Gari, Zaria. The governor, who was represented by his deputy, Her Excellency, Dr. Hadiza Sabuwa Balarabe, further stated that the desire to finance infrastructure and social services can better be supported by the private sector.

He further said that Public Private

Partnerships (PPPs) also offer the possibility of improved accountability of resources deployed for projects, improved quality of projects, improved service efficiency, and transfer investment risk away from government.

In his remarks at the occasion, the Emir of Zazzau, Dr. Nuhu Bamali appreciated the government of Kaduna State for the PPP

initiative and described it as very durable. He called on government not to relent in its measures to provide jobs and other amenities for its citizens.

Also speaking, the General Manager of Kaduna Agricultural Development Agency, Mal. Muhammad Rili, said that the Neighborhood Center will generate about 200 direct and indirect jobs for



Sam Maris Varsity VC, Prof. Gbore Bags Award

By: ADEBOYE ADO, Akure

The Vice-Chancellor of the Sam Maris University, Supare-Akoko, Prof. Francis Ayodeji Gbore, has won the 'Impact Maker of the Year 2023 Award' organized by the Leadership Excellence and Dignity Awards (LEAD Awards).

The Don received the award on Sunday, December at the International Culture and Event Centre (Dome) in Akure, the Ondo State capital.

In the Impact Maker category, Prof. Gbore

defeated other five contestants to emerge as the winner of the keenly contested award.

While receiving the award, the Vice-Chancellor expressed gratitude to LEAD Awards for honoring him and other outstanding Nigerians. He noted that the award would serve as a catalyst for him to sustain and accelerate the pace at which he positively impacts on the society.

He added, "... thank you so much for the prestigious award! I am truly honored and grateful for this recognition. I want to express my deep

appreciation to the organizers for their hard work in making this event possible. Your efforts have made a significant impact on all of us. Once again, thank you."

Leadership Excellence and Dignity Awards is an established forum to serve as a means of rewarding mostly, deserving sons and daughters of Ondo State extraction from different sectors of the Nigerian economy that have brought about positive change to the socio-economic and human development of the Sunshine State.

Govt lacks political will to change economic fortunes - former ICAN President

By: PETER NOSAKHARE, Kaduna

Reasons for Nigeria's inability to develop and why it will remain economically stagnant have been attributed to lack of political will by its leaders.

For a long time the country has grappled in the unfavorable waters of instability, unemployment, lack of basic infrastructure and corruption.

Describing these factors as pull backs, Alhaji Tijjani Musa Isah immediate past President of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria, ICAN, stressed that leadership means trust

and it is also about justice and equity and this is lacking in Nigeria's leaders, as a result of leadership's lack of focus and ideas on how the country should be handled and managed.

He said this at ICAN's 2023 Week Technical Session with theme: Nigeria: Retooling the Economy for Prosperity held at Command Guest House, Kaduna

Alhaji Isah argued that unless the country begins to look inwards and elsewhere to generate external revenue and break the over dependence on crude oil nothing can be done to improve and

develop the country.

"Nigeria needs to diversify its economy for proper growth to take place and I urge the government to develop other sectors for the nation to move forward. People are really suffering right now and these are the people who voted them into office.

On his part Malam Umar Waziri FCA, and former Auditor-General of Kaduna State while agreeing with Alhaji Isah commended the organisers of the event adding that the theme was apt and timely and also condoled the families of those that died in the bomb error of the Army.

Delta Police Bans Fireworks, Warns Against Use Of Fireworks In Delta

By: UTEBOR PETER, Asaba

The Delta State Police Command has banned the sale and use of fireworks, knockouts, firecrackers, and other pyrotechnics in the state.

The State Commissioner of Police, CP Wale Abass, on Friday warns that the fireworks, crackers and knockouts poses a threat to State security and should be avoided.

This was discussed in a statement signed by the state Police Public

Relations Officer (PPRO), DSP Bright Edefe, on Friday afternoon to journalists in the state.

According to the statement, "In his remarks, CP Wale Abass admonished that the usage of fireworks (knockouts) is capable of causing nuisances, which further generates undue anxiety, fear, and an unnecessary disruption of public peace.

"Additionally, CP Abass warned against the hazardous consequences of its use, noting that it

could give room to diversions that might give criminals the chance to continue their crimes and endanger residents.

"The CP warned in strong terms that any dealer or resident who fails to abide by the ban, when caught, would be made to face the wrath of the law. On this note, parents and guardians are urged to monitor their wards and curtail their use of knockouts during Christmas and New Year celebrations.

"CP Abass urges the good people of Delta State to be vigilant and security conscious as he reaffirms the Command's commitment and willingness to protect the life and properties of residents during the Yuletide season and beyond".

The Commissioner of Police on behalf of officers and men of the Command, wishes the good people of Delta State a crime-free Christmas and New Year celebration in advance."



2023: FG Might Pay N600bn As Electricity Subsidy - NERC

By: AMOS TAUNA, Kaduna

The federal government in 2023 might have to pay N600bn as electricity subsidy, the Chairman/CEO of the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC), Engr. Sanusi Garba, has disclosed.

He made the disclosure at the ministerial retreat on the Integrated National Electricity Policy and Strategic Implementation Plan on Tuesday in Abuja. According to him, the increase is despite the government's annual subsidy being reduced from N528bn in 2019 to N144bn in 2022.

He added, "the Service-Based Tariff (SBT) was instrumental to the reduction of tariff subsidies but the financial burden of tariff subsidies from 2015-2022 stood at NGN2.8tn."

He explained that the sector's insufficient end-user tariffs, poor DisCo collections, and revenue shortfalls, have served as a threat to investments and the sector's viability.

The Minister of Power, Adebayo Adedun, while speaking, said there is the need to create another company from the Transmission Company of Nigeria (TCN) to strengthen its effectiveness in transmitting power from generating companies to electricity distribution companies.

The minister lamented that the use of ageing and dilapidated infrastructure by the TCN has made it unable to transmit enough power needed, while also decrying the dismal performance of TCN in the

electricity supply industry, as the way out of the inefficiency is to balkanise it into two.

He noted that in the Nigerian Electricity Supply Industry (NESI), the transmission sub-sector has been identified as a critical weak point in the value chain lately, a view widely shared, and to align with the Electricity Act, 2023 and the industry's demands, it's time to restructure the Transmission Company of Nigeria (TCN) into two entities: the Independent System Operator (ISO) and the Transmission Service Provider (TSP).

The restructuring, he believed must synchronise with the evolving landscape of State Electricity Markets, addressing calls for the decentralisation of the national grid into regional grids interconnected by a new higher voltage national or super-grid.

He explained that the nation now generates over 98 per cent of electricity through renewables as against the 70.5 per cent generated last year.

As of 2022, he stated that 70.5 per cent of the nation's grid electricity was generated by thermal plants, 27.3 per cent from hydro, whilst solar and other power plants made up 2.2 per cent, adding that the good news is that over 98 per cent of the feedstock powering electricity generation in the country are transition or clean fuels, as Nigeria ramps up capacity to generate more electricity through renewable means such as solar, hydro, wind, bioenergy and others.

Minister Pledges Support For Capacity In Health Sector

By: ARCHIBONG ESUENE, Makurdi

The Coordinating Minister of Health and Social Welfare, Professor Muhammad Ali Pate has said that the Federal Ministry of Health is ready to support training of human capacity to produce quality professionals in the country's health sector.

Professor Pate who gave the assurance at the maiden public lecture series of the Federal University of Health Sciences, Otuokpo, said human capital was key since it drives every other resources.

Represented by his special Adviser on Health Matters, Dr. Emmanuel Odu, the Minister maintained that if human capital

was not in place, every other resource will either be wasted or translate to nothing.

Professor Pate explained that the Federal University of Health Sciences Otuokpo was positioned to contribute to the agenda of the federal government by producing quality human resources and also engage in research, information and evidence that

will be used for better implementation of health care.

Guest speaker at the event and Vice Chancellor, Federal University of Health Sciences Otuokpo, Professor Innocent Ujah who gave a historical background

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Activists Fault Buhari's Use Of Military Force In Truncating EndSARS

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Nigerian human right activists Dabiraoluwa Adeyinka Honey and Ifeanyi Okoye have, in different interviews, blamed ex-president Muhammadu Buhari for truncating a peaceful protest across the 36 states with a military action that became historical.

Honey and Okoye spoke on the current state of the country as well as why the ex-president should be called to answer queries on the instruction of the military action as well as all he knows about the protest that went south.

"I would be very honest and this is a constructive explanation from my end. First and foremost, there was an administration in power at that time and ex-President Muhammadu Buhari was the head of that administration. I know for sure that no country's military act without the approval of the number one citizen, in person of the president, so the number one and only person that should be held responsible for the EndSARS incident which continues to resonate amongst Nigerian youths and has become a stigma, is no one else but ex-president Muhammadu Buhari," Honey began.

Supporting Honey's submission, Okoye, who is calling for ex-Army Chief, Tukur Buratai's trial, said, "Many people talk and say Governor Sanwo-Olu should not be exonerated but I, Comrade Ifeanyi Okoye, can tell categorically that the governor was never in charge of the security apparatus until we have a state police because we still run a federal police system and central military system with the C-in-C still the president and the



president to be answerable for whatever transpired is ex-President Muhammadu Buhari, hence, to an extent, I will exonerate Governor Sanwo-Olu, who was the governor then and current governor. We all saw the effort he made to ensure that the demands of the protesters were met by meeting the president several times, meeting him privately and taking our demands to him but like we all know, Nigeria is a place where citizenry need to be on our toes to get what we want but sadly, the military struck, obviously, on the orders of the C-in-C. Buhari should be queried and asked to give account because he was the President and C-in-C and the actions of the military were carried out on the instructions of the C-in-C and the Chief of Army Staff, who is Buratai. They should be questioned and called

to answer several plaguing questions as to why."

In the same vein, Honey, an entrepreneur and construction expert exonerated the Lagos State Governor, Babajide Sanwo-Olu but insists the whitepaper document recommendation by the panel he set up to look into the EndSARS activities should be implemented.

"Breaking it down now, I was in Lagos and it was tough, there was chaos, Lagos was like the leading state and we have Babajide Sanwo-Olu, whom I saw on two occasions visiting Buhari with our demands but what went wrong, I can not explain. In fairness to Mr Sanwo-Olu, I also saw him trying to engage us on a few occasions but my issue was when the order was given by the then administration, he could have interjected



because we are in a democratic state and not a military state. Governor Sanwo-Olu tried his best but he could have done more. The aftermath of EndSARS saw him visiting the victims, organised a panel and the panel concluded its submission with a whitepaper document but he's now referring us to the Federal Government. Sadly, the past administration won't do anything again and the current administration might not be able to do anything because they are just in the system. We are not saying we want to hold Sanwo-Olu responsible but what we are saying is that there should be an implementation of the whitepaper document. Even President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's administration can re-write the story of EndSARS to give hope to the Nigerian youth and that is because the Nigerian youths

matter."

Adding to Honey's submission, Okoye said, "Governor Sanwo-Olu set up a panel that came up with a whitepaper document and despite all that efforts, the recommendation of the panel in the document is yet to be implemented. The military men, the errant police officers, who necessitated the protest, and many more should be brought to book. Till date, neither the military officers nor the SARS operatives have been brought to book for their actions. In the same vein, the Chief of Army Staff or the ex-President have not been tried for their involvement in the military action that occurred in Lagos."

Okoye rounded off saying the EndSARS protest and the outcome has re-awakened the political consciousness of the Nigerian youth.

He further maintained that this was seen in the outcome of the last general election.

"EndSARS remains a sad one and it's something that awakens the political consciousness as regards the quest for good governance and demanding accountability from our leaders in terms of creating and implementing workable policies. I would gladly say that the outcome of EndSARS brought about the sub-consciousness of young people. The reality is that the outcome of EndSARS wasn't what we bargained for and this was evident in the last election. The movement created a sub-conscious political awareness in young people but as much as that, many young people are disappointed with the process. It's not yet Uhuru, it's a time to build on the gains of the last election and build the momentum."

Minister Pledges Support For Capacity In Health Sector

about the institution said the journey of the institution started like a journey to the unknown and cloud of uncertainty.

He said after getting approval during Dr. Goodluck Jonathan's presidency, the project was however stalemated upon coming on board of president Muhammadu Buhari who later gave a go ahead for the full take off of the Institution and appreciated the efforts of former president of the senate David Mark for ensuring that the university was approved. The lecture titled "Pioneering the first

federal university of Health Sciences in Nigeria: the excitement, the expectations and challenges", the pioneer vice chancellor told the gathering that the announcement of the establishment of the University was made on May 20th, 2015 at the 11th meeting of the federal executive council meeting under president Goodluck Jonathan's presidency.

The vision of the university, the vice chancellor explained, was to be a world-class institution for learning, scientific

research and innovation for developing the next generation of healthcare providers.

The mission of the Institution, the Vice Chancellor disclosed, was to build capacity of healthcare professionals through integrated medical education, professional skills and research providing access to high quality healthcare services. The Vice Chancellor lamented that the retirement, resignation and death of some lecturers in the institution have created a

vacuum where many courses are without lecturers and appealed to federal government to grant a waiver to allow the university to either recruit new staff or replace staff that who have left the institution.

In a good will message, the Ochi Idoma, His Royal Highness, Elaigwu Odugbo pledged the unalloyed support of the Idoma traditional council to the university for it to succeed.

Adeleke Of Osun State: A Governor With No Clue, Nor Direction - Fadoje

By; MIKE ODEH JAMES, Kaduna

An Osun State born Labour Party presidential aspirant, Faduri Oluwafre Joseph aka Fadoje has alleged that the report card for the first six months of Governor Ademola Adeleke's assumption of office in Osun State is below expectation.

According to him, "In more than six months, all the governor has been doing is dancing around the state with no agenda. No developmental projects, no infrastructural development, no educational improvement in the State of Osun, the roads are still as bad as he met them, no spelt out tangible plans. Rather, it's been a flamboyant administration: spending more than the State makes, as if Osun State has oil wells. A governor that spends N2 billion monthly on food and welfare as revealed by the media. A governor that spends state resources without showing fear or sympathy for the people of the state."

The former Presidential Aspirant under Labour Party, stressed that he has neither personal issue with the governor nor does he want his job but as a citizen of Osun State, but that he wouldn't just fold his hands and watch the governor lavish money both home and abroad "and we all keep quiet as if it's normal. The governor just left for Thailand for one month of medical leave. It is only in Nigeria that politicians are so shameless that developing medical infrastructure in their state to world standard is never part of their project and agenda but always prefer taking our naira and changing it to high rate dollar to spend abroad for medical attention that could have been done in their state if they had focused on developing the health system. And the people that voted them would have also benefited from such medical facilities.



Fadoje

"The governor's trip no doubt, would have cost people of Osun State billions of Naira, which I hope the state budget unit should disclose and made public for people of Osun State to see how their Governor is lavishing their money. My question to these politicians is how many governors from Thailand and/or the UK or Germany that we run to come to our own nation for anything? The answer is zero. Why because they provided these infrastructures in their home country/home state so that they and their people can benefit and enjoy such amenities." Lamenting further, Fadoje who is also the leader of Rescue Movement For New Nigeria Mission, said that many hospitals in Osun State and across the nation are empty of staff and modern equipment, yet we see politicians traveling abroad every minute. Of a sad example is that of Ondo State Governor His Excellency Arakunrin Akeredolu, who has been sick for some while now, but yet won't even hand over the affairs of the state to his deputy. These states

continue to suffer good governance due to politicians' lack of empathy for the people, but their greed and selfishness overshadow their sense of direction and progress for their state.

"To many Nigerian governors, once they pay salary, to them, they have done too much. But the fact remains that paying salaries for workers in the state, paying gratuities, repairing roads or constructing new ones; are all basics of any government in the world. It is only in our nation that our politician make us feel as if they are doing the populace a favour when they do such.

"More than 70% of people of Osun State live in poverty, yet the governor lives a wasteful life every day. More than two months till now, the government of Gov Ademola Adeleke has not been able to properly palliate Osun People from the N5 billion palliative grants released by the federal government. Few farmers were used for political agrandisement, and we all kept quiet watching our state, our country going down the

drain by the day."

The US based Osun born politician said Nigerian Youths will soon rise up to begin to demand from our leaders and politicians how they are managing our resources, without clue, proper manifesto, long-term agenda, but only short-term goals to use the resources for media stunts. Yet no genuine infrastructural developmental projects across the local government across the state in more than 6 months of being in office.

"In closing on this, I want to appeal to Gov. Ademola Adeleke of Osun State to refocus and sit up to deliver dividend of democracy to Osun people. This statement is not to demean his office but to put him on his toes as citizens demanding to see him work as what he was employed for. The people of Osun employed you to make the state and their lives better, and that should be your primary focus as, I wish you the very best as you continue your term as governor.

"May God bless Osun State, and may God bless the Federal Republic of Nigeria."

Kaduna 2024 Budget: CALPED Frowns At 13% Allocation To Health

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The Coalition of Associations for Leadership, Peace, Empowerment and Development (CALPED), has decried the percentage allocated to the health sector by the Kaduna State Government in its 2024 draft budget.

This was expressed in a communique jointly signed by its Programme Officer, Governance & Advocacy, Seth Luke and Head of Leadership, Governance and Advocacy, Yusuf Ishaku Goje, made available to our correspondent at the weekend in Kaduna.

"The reality of deficits in the health systems prompted the African Heads of State and Governments to promise to allocate at least 15% of their annual budgets to the health sector in what is now known as the 'Abuja Declaration' in April 2001.

"The last administration adhered to this commitment, we therefore, call on this administration to sustain the Abuja Declaration by ensuring at least 15% of annual spending is allocated to the health sector. This is because according to the draft budget made public by the Planning and Budget Commission a day before, the sector got about 13%, even though the speech by the Honorable Commissioner mentioned 15%," CALPED said.

The group said that the Inflation rate in the fiscal assumptions is unrealistic and does not speak to the current realities, the inflation rate is projected at 23.6% for 2024 as against the 27.33% published on the NBS website, thus planning for development should be based on realistic data.

"The projected economic growth rate is overambitious looking at the economic instability occasioned by different factors such as insecurity. It is important to note that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) recently downgraded Nigeria's economic growth forecast for the year 2023 to 2.9%. This should be reconsidered and reviewed to ensure it is more realistic.

"The 2024 total draft budget is N35.3 billion (8.35%) higher than the MTEF recommended budget size. This means that the Government would have to borrow more to finance the deficit or shortfall. Debt servicing has continued to impact negatively on critical

infrastructure and service delivery as money allocated for debt servicing annually is gradually competing with capital expenditure. This trend should be checked by both the Executive and the Legislature," the communique said.

It noted that the 2024 draft budget increased by N81 billion (21.7%) from the 2023 budget.

"It is good for the government to spend more on its citizens. However, there is a need for clear and effective strategies to enhance revenue generation using the appropriate fiscal policy instrument that would enhance the revenue generation systems and processes. This should focus more on expanding the revenue sources not increasing tax rates.

"The State government should accelerate the review and approval of the Sector Implementation Plan (SIP) to ensure adherence to policy-budget linkage and result-based monitoring & evaluation. Ideally, the sector's budget should be drawn from their various SIPs.

"The approved MTEF (2024 - 2026) macroeconomic framework recommended exchange rate of N750 should be adhered to, as appears to be more realistic considering the risks factors identified," CALPED advised.

The communique explained that, "Key overhead cost (some of which we have identified amounting to N7.7 billion) should be reviewed and considered for reallocation to strategic priorities.

"The viability of the proposed loan from Afri. Exim Bank should be reconsidered to ensure guarantee for accessing the loan. If not it should be dropped and a supplementary budget initiated when the loan is 100% guaranteed.

"A percentage of the allocation for social investment programmes should be allocated to the take-off of the Social Security Administration to ensure better coordination mechanism and value-for-money.

"The Equity Funds Basic Health Care Provision Funds (BHCPF) Counterpart Funds should be released adequately and timely to ensure more vulnerable groups are enrolled," the coalition further advised.

LP Presidential Aspirant Fadojoe Bags PCRC Award Of Honour

By: MIKE ODEH JAMES, Kaduna

A former Presidential Aspirant under Labour Party, Comrade Faduri Oluwadare Joseph aka Fadojoe, has been honoured with an award as Icon of Peace and Security by the Police Community Relations Committee (PCRC), Enugu State Command in recognition of his good works and humanitarian services.

The award certificate that was jointly signed by DSP Daniel Ndukwe, the PPRO for Enugu State Command and Bright Alaribe, Enugu State Chairman PCRC;

was presented to him along side other notable Nigerians during the State Banquet held on Thursday 14th December, 2023 at Ibrahim K. Idris Event Center, Superior Police Officers Mess, Uwani, Enugu State. Receiving the prestigious award on the behalf of the USA based leader of Rescue Movement For New Nigeria aka Rescue The Vulnerable Initiative, Comrade Chidi Ozoemena, who is the state coordinator of Rescue Movement read his acceptance speech on his behalf as he (Fadojoe) commended the PCRC for their roles in encouraging peace

and harmony in Enugu State by bridging the gap between the masses and the Police Community.

Fadojoe, while promising to continue his selfless service to humanity and to always stand as Ambassador of Peace, he encouraged those who are into humanitarian services to continue selflessly as people and institutions they didn't know are noting such benevolence and you will be surprised when

they start honouring you publicly and even in high places; as he has been honoured with numerous

prestigious awards from highly regarded bodies across Nigeria, when initially he didn't know that such



DUFUHS Begins 4th International Public Health Conference In Ebonyi

By: MKPUMA ENYINNA, Abakaliki

In a bid to evaluate and improve public health teaching, research, and services, amongst others in post pandemic era, David Umahi Federal University of Health Services, Uburu, Ebonyi State has commenced the 4th International Public Health Conference.

The ongoing International conference at DUFUHS, which started on 12th Dec.2023, witnessed participants from all parts of the world who registered for the 3 days event.

Speaking on the theme: "Public Health Teaching, Research and Services in Africa in a Post-Pandemic Era", the Vice Chancellor of David Umahi Federal University of Health Sciences, Prof. Jesse Uneke while presenting his address, welcomed the participants to the 4th International Conference on Public Health, stating that the University has engaged with the global best practices to ensure public health teaching, research and services in the institution.

The vice chancellor who was represented by the Provost of the University, Prof. Esther Ajuruchukwu appreciated the participants for their commitment and

timely response to the 4th International conference, saying that the institution has made concrete and excellent efforts to provide all the human and material resources needed to ensure the success of the conference.

Also speaking, the Chief Medical Director of David Umahi Federal Teaching Hospital(DUFUTH), Prof. Agwu Uzoma in her address, said that the conference is timely as public health teaching, research, and service is so significant and relevant because of the role it plays in our contemporary society. She applauded the efforts of the vice chancellor in ensuring that the institution gives out the best in public health teaching, research, and services to the students and the general public.

One of the keynote speakers, Prof. Williams Brieger of the Department of International Health, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, USA while making his presentations on the topic, 'Pandemics: Lessons for Public Health Teaching, research, and Service in Africa' stated that based on assessment after the Ebola and subsequent --19 outbreaks in West Africa, that there were

low levels of preparedness of government and public health institutions to mitigate and control these diseases. He explained that these epidemics exposed major weaknesses in the capacity of most African countries to cope.

'In particular, there was not only poor logical capacity for testing and treatment but also low staff/training" William Brieger said.

He outlined major outbreaks between 2014--2023 in Nigeria including Ebola(2014), Meningitis, monkeypox, yellow fever(2017), Lassa fever, measles, monkeypox (2022), Polio Re-emergence(2016) lessa fever(2019), Cholera(2021), and Meningitis, Cholera, Diphtheria(2023).

Prof. Williams explained that our public health training, research, and service institutions are challenged while addressing the routine needs of the population because pandemics and outbreaks take these challenges to another level.

Speaking on HIV--AIDS as one of the earliest recognized pandemics, Prof. Williams said HIV had a zoonotic origin, but later took on a life of its own, saying

that scientific and public recognition of the problem was difficult in the easy days not just because of lack of technology, but also due to cultural taboos. In his words: 'While preventive measures were promoted, public acceptance was poor, and response to testing was deterred due to lack of effective instruments but being managed better now that key lessons about pandemic abound'.

He also spoke on Regional Ebola Response and Collaboration, BBC Analysis for COVID-19 Response in Oct. 2020, amongst other lectures.

Other notable speakers include Siobhan Fitzpatrick from the World Health Organization, and Ms. Oyeronke Oyebanji from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, United Kingdom.

Also expected are, Dr. Uba Nwose of the School of Health and Medical Science, University of SouthernQueen's Land, Toowoomba, Australia, Dr Daniel Umezurike from Federal University Teaching Hospital, Abakaliki amongst others.

Ganduje Receives Sardaunan Badarawa Back Into APC, Says Politician Big Shark To Party

By; AMOS EBUTE MATHEW, Kaduna

Former chieftain of People's Democratic Party (PDP), Hon. Usman Ibrahim popularly called Sardaunan Badarawa, who dumped the party was on Thursday officially received by National Chairman of All Progressives Congress (APC), Abdullahi Ganduje at the party's headquarters in Abuja.

This is just as Ganduje stressed the importance of having Sardaunan Badarawa back into APC, describing the politician as a giant shark with a heavy weight that would add political value to the ruling party in her quest for expansion and positioning to meet yearnings of Nigerians.

Hon. Usman Ibrahim was Senatorial contestant for Kaduna Central under the platform of PDP in 2023.

Ganduje, while imploring Sardaunan Badarawa to bring forth his wealth of experience to the advantage of the party, assured the grassroots politician of a fair and hospitable treatment in APC.

"You have always been a philanthropic politician with a large heart of accommodating people irrespective of their ethnic or religious background.

"Records have shown that you have touched many lives in several positive ways through your philanthropy and community development strides.

"I assure you that the party will treat you with respect and fairness so that you will be comfortable to continue with the good things you have been doing for growth and development of the society," he stated.

Sardaunan Badarawa in his remarks noted that he was motivated to rejoin APC due to high calibre of leaders in the party, whom he described as men of integrity and achievement.

He said the responsive style of governance displayed by President Tinubu in handling socio-economic challenges confronting the nation was enough to win many hearts of true and sincere Nigerians.

He also commended Governor Uba Sani for hitting the ground running since assumption of office in May 2023 by



initiating and implementing several policies solely for growth and development of Kaduna State.

He urged Nigerians and people of Kaduna

State to support APC, insisting that the party would lead the country to greater heights.

Southern Kaduna Hosts Maiden Festival

By; AMOS TAUNA, Kaduna

The Southern Kaduna people have expressed their commitment and determination to explore the arts, culture, sports, entertainment and tourism industries that they are endowed with for the overall peace, unity and development of the area.

The people have agreed to host the first of its kind "the Southern Kaduna Festival, SKFEST 2023".

Briefing newsmen on activities lined up, the Chairman, Central Planning Committee, Rear Admiral Ferguson Bobai (Rtd), in Kaduna on Tuesday, said, "Sub committees have been set up and have concluded arrangement to stage the maiden

edition as part of the efforts to exploit the hitherto untapped Arts, Cultural, Economic, Sports and Tourism potentials for sustainable economic growth and development of our dear Southern Kaduna as we fondly refer to our place, and Kaduna State in general."

He added, "The forthcoming events will take place on the 28th to 30th December, 2023, will no doubt epitomize the resolute commitment and determination to explore the Arts, Culture, Sports, Entertainment and Tourism industries because of the value they have on generations."

He explained the near extinction of cultures of the people due to continuous hype on foreign

cultural ideologies and the misconceived perception of globalization among the youths. According to him, "This Festival therefore, is a veritable tool to mirror the cultural identities of the Southern Kaduna people, that is why the Central Planning Committee of SKFEST are saddled with the responsibility of planning the festivity as an avenue and potent vehicle for revitalizing our rich cultural heritage and values."

The committee of the maiden edition, he said is calling on all Southern Kaduna sons and daughters to come out in mass and enjoy the festival as aptly captured by the theme "Experience Unity, Celebrate Culture".

Focusing on the topic of this briefing, he added that the festival is an avenue for each Community Development Association (CDA) to participate effectively and display their peculiar cultural endowment.

"This is done to preserve and promote the abundance of each CDA's cultural industry and to

showcase not only investable opportunities in them, but also, to explore the wealth of job opportunities inherent in the cultural sector, especially for our teeming youths," he emphasized. He said that the major participants in SKFEST are the 57 CDAs of Southern Kaduna, Non – Governmental Organizations, youth groups and associations as well as other relevant stakeholders in the cultural sector, adding that the festival will feature competitive and non – competitive events.

He said the competitive events are beauty pageant, traditional cooking competition, traditional wrestling, indigenous fabric and fashion show.

Others, according to him are archery, marathon and football tournament.

The non-competitive events are command performance (to be held for all contingents on the 27th, such as carnival procession/parade, colloquium, arts and crafts cultural market that will be open to participations of private individuals, corporate organizations, youth groups and association, among others.

There will be free medical service, musical concert, arts and craft exhibition as well as closing ceremony and certificates/award presentations.

He explained that the contingents would be camped at the Federal Technical College,

Kafanchan where the opened market, musical concert and wrestling will be held, adding that the opening and closing ceremonies, football tournament and archery are scheduled to hold at the New Kafanchan Township Stadium.

The take-off of the 21 Kilometer Marathon race, according to him would be at Gidan Waya and end at the Patrick Yakowa roundabout, saying that other venues were events will take place are New Choice Hotel for Beauty Pageant and Traditional Cuisine competition while the Colloquium will take place at Throne Room.

He explained that each of the 10 competitive events would have a special guest, a chairperson, a coordinator, and a panel of professional judges drawn from their relevant specializations, to have credible winners in each of the events, pointing out that based on this thrust, it is important for all CDAs to participate in all the competitive events.

He said, "Prizes and certificates will be awarded both for winning and participation. It is instructive to let you know that worthy sons and daughters of Southern Kaduna will be honored both posthumous and living in four categories for their outstanding contribution and service to Southern Kaduna, Kaduna State and Nigeria at large."



Anti-corruption Academy of Nigeria, ICPC, in collaboration with Institute of Public Safety, Conservation and Correction organize a two days National Summit on Anti-corruption in Abuja. Photo : Bashir Bello Dollars





Edo 2024: Shaibu, Orbih, Ogbeide Join Forces Against Asue

By; DEBOYE ADO, Akure

In their determination to derail the Edo Agenda for a Governor of Esan extraction in 2024 being championed by Governor Godwin Obaseki, some aspirants of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in Edo State have decided to join forces together.

In a meeting held in the Abuja residence of the South South Zonal Chairman of the PDP on Thursday, the aspirants undertook to collapse their ambition and present a common front against the perceived favourite of the Governor, Barr. Asue

Ighodalo. Aspirants who attended the meeting included, Comrade Philip Shuaibu, Rt. Hon. Ogbeide Ihama and Hon. Felix Akhabue aka Joefel. In the meeting also were Chief Dan Orbih, Chief Benjamin Ceaser the State Treasurer, Destiny Oreye the State Youth leader, Barr Nosa Adams, Hon. Johnson Agbolagba, Mrs Lucy Omagbon, Rt. Hon. Frank Okiye, Hon. Jude Imague and Hon. Zuberious Edeoghon.

They all agreed that Barr Asue Ighodalo will win the primary if they all go into the field with him. The raising profile and

acceptance of Barr Asue Ighodalo's aspiration especially among the leaders of the party and youth populace in Edo State was a major source of worry to them all.

Chief Dan Orbih, Comrade Philip Shuaibu, Ogbeide Ihama and Johnson Agbolagba, voiced their opposition to the clamour for the governorship position to be zoned to Edo Central. It was therefore agreed that they should all collapse their ambition and support Comrade Philip Shuaibu for Governor while Rt. Hon. Ogbeide Ihama will be his

deputy. Hon. Felix Akhabue was nominated as the Secretary to the State Government designate. This was agreed to by all those present in the meeting.

They agreed that Chief Dan Orbih should convince other aspirants who were not in the meeting to key into the arrangement. How this will play out and be acceptable to aspirants like Senator Clifford Ordia, Barr Anslem Ojiezua, Rt. Hon. Marcus Onobun, Amb. Martins and Hon. John Yakubu is yet to be known.

Rule Of Law: Oyo Govt Sets Up Enforcement Authority

By; BAYOAKAMO, Ibadan

Oyo State Government has established a Rule of Law Enforcement Authority to ensure that citizens and residents of the state are guided to be law abiding.

The state Commissioner for Information and Civic Orientation, Prince Dotun Oyelade made this known on Wednesday in a statement made available to journalists in Ibadan.

Prince Oyelade stressed that the establishment of the authority approved at the 8th Executive

Council Meeting held last week and that the agency will ensure that those who flout environmental and social laws are apprehended and brought to book within a short period of time.

The Commissioner pointed out that the state government will henceforth be firm and decisive on those who engage in indiscriminate dumping of refuse on road medians, roadsides or waterways, obstruction of free flow of traffic, driving against traffic, disregard for traffic signs, indiscriminate occupation of public roads with trading activities, noise

pollution, among other related offenses as specified by the law.

He stated that in view of this development, Governor, Seyi Makinde, has mandated the Ministry of Information and Civic Orientation to erect billboards across the state, forewarning citizens and residents about the zero tolerance posture of government.

Prince Oyelade then urged members of the public to show maximum cooperation towards actualizing the purpose of establishing the Rule of Law Authority.

Iyaloja-General: Traders Frown At Folashade Abeo's Desperation To Compromise Oyo Assembly Leadership

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

Traders across major markets in Oyo State under the platform of Omituntun Economic Regeneration Traders Association on Friday, lamented the desperation of Princess Folashade Abeo's alleged unbending moves to compromise the leadership of Oyo State House of Assembly over the Iyaloja-General's position in the state.

A member of the Omituntun Economic Regeneration Traders Association, Alhaja Omolara Adetunji from Gbagi; Bola Ige International Market told newsmen in Ibadan that, "Alhaja Princess Folashade Abeo is hellbent on scuttling the efforts of other market leaders in the state who have jointly and severally told the state government that Alhaja Saratu Aduke Konibaje had been duly elected and appointed at several fora in the last 18 months.

"What we have noticed these days is that Abeo has been making several unsuccessful moves to curry the favour of the state governor, Engr. Seyi Makinde and known aides of His Excellency. This didn't work and she had also surreptitiously ensured there was a fresh election using some compromised civil servants, but it also botched, hence the recent intervention of the Speaker, Oyo State House of Assembly, Rt. Hon. Adebo Ogundoyin, his Deputy, Hon. Muhammed Fadeyi and a host of other state lawmakers.

"The Assembly leadership which stood for justice and fair play asked the Committee on Commerce and Cooperatives to wade

in, and bring about amicable settlement of the leadership crisis as the issue on who becomes the Iyaloja-General of Oyo State rages between Alhaja Saratu Aduke Konibaje and Alhaja Folashade Nurudeen Abeo.

"Regrettably and in her usual way of flaunting wealth and attending parties of notable citizens and government officials, all in efforts to reap where she did not sow, Nurudeen Folashade Abeo sent a public congratulatory message to the Chairman of the House Committee on Commerce and Cooperatives, Hon. Razak Adekunle Mabaje as the lawmaker marked his birthday.

"This development may be seen as normal by unsuspecting traders across the markets, but one of the members of Omituntun Economic Regeneration Traders Association who raised the alarm, warned about this unhealthy situation and stressed the need to raise our voices against it, hence this media briefing," Adetunji stressed.

Adetunji appealed to Hon. Adekunle Mabaje and the Assembly leadership to do their findings with utmost caution and be conscientious in their dealings with the issue of Iyaloja-General in the State by involving and inviting all the stakeholders in the Oyo State Market Association to ensure Justice is done in the matter.

Available statistics and several media reports had it that the position was long settled in favour of an elderly Septuagenarian, Alhaja Saratu Aduke Konibaje by all the stakeholders in the Oyo State Traders Association.



Alhaja Saratu Aduke Konibaje, the Iyaloja General of Oyo State.

Media Role Key To Societal Development - Shettima

By; ISAAC ODEH, Kaduna

The President General of the Arewa Youth Consultative Forum (AYCF), Alhaji Yerima Shettima has said that, for any society to develop, the role of the media is key.

This is also as he said, the media can make or mar any society, stressing that himself being a product of struggle for the survival of democracy in Nigeria, can attest to the fact that the media has played and still playing a major role in Nigeria's growth.

Alhaji Shettima stated this while responding to the leadership of the Correspondent Chapel of the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) Kaduna State council who paid him a courtesy visit at the headquarters office of the forum in Kaduna.

While commending the chapel for finding him worthy of the visit, he further averred that, Nigeria may not be where it ought to be today, but will get there some day with the support of the media, and called on all and sundry to give maximum support towards ensuring that the leaders are held accountable in the provision of good governance.

"I have seen all sides of the struggles, we stand for equity, justice for Nigeria and Nigerians, we must always demand for a country where no citizen is treated as a nobody, we are all equal as citizens of Nigeria and must be respected as such.

"All the Presidents since democracy came with

promises that they rarely fulfil. Much is expected from President Bola Ahmed Tinubu because Nigerians are passing through difficult times and Nigerians might take to the streets to demand a better condition of living and resist any unpopular policies that will undermine Nigerians.

"On my part, I will continue to partner and support the media in any way possible for them to discharge their duties efficiently and effectively, always feel free to reach out to me for any possible area of support within my powers," he said.

Earlier in his remarks, the Chairman of the chapel and Bureau Chief of Nation Newspapers, Abdulgafar Alabelewe said, they have identified the youth leader and how he has supported journalists in their activities and thought it necessary to among others come and say a big thank you to him and further solicit his continuous support.

"We are here to thank you for your support to our members and to further reiterate our resolve to continue to partner with you and your organization, we are indeed grateful for your unrelenting magnanimity towards our members and the chapel" he said.

Also available to receive the leadership of the correspondent chapel was a board member of AYCF and Chairman of the Arewa Stakeholders Consultative Forum (ASCF) Comrade Paul Danjuma.

UITH Experts Begin Intensive Research On Alzheimer's Disease



By; BILIQIS ONAOLAPO OLAJUMOKE, Ilorin

Experts in University of Ilorin Teaching Hospital (UITH) have commenced intensive research on Alzheimer's disease.

The New Nigerian Newspaper reports that the programme is under the African Dementia Consortium (AfDC).

The project is entitled: "Recruitment and Retention for Alzheimer's Disease Diversity Genetic Cohorts in the Alzheimer's Disease Sequencing Project Consortia (ADSP)".

One of the experts, a prominent researcher in UITH, Prof. Kolawole Wahab, of the Department of Medicine, has researched on various diseases, including stroke, and delivered a paper in his inaugural lecture titled: "In the Quest for a Masterstroke for Stroke".

Speaking on the project at a meeting organized for Community Advisory Board members and Research Team in Ilorin, Wahab explained that the

project is an international study on Alzheimer's Disease".

According to him, Nigeria is one of the country of research where extensive research would be carried out in various cities including, Ibadan, Lagos, Zaria, Ilorin and Abeokuta among others.

Wahab described Alzheimer's disease as a brain disorder that gets worse over time.

According to him, the disease is characterized by changes in the brain that lead to deposits of certain proteins.

He said: "Alzheimer's disease causes the brain to shrink and brain cells to eventually die. It is the most common cause of dementia, which causes a gradual decline in memory, thinking, behavior and social skills". The expert lamented that these changes affect a person's ability to function.

Wahab pointed out that the disease is a huge burden in Africa especially in Nigeria, couple with the fact that there are no data to show the exact number

of sufferers.

"It's a common degenerative disorder, one can lose cells in the brain and we see them in the community.

"We are however, not seeing cases because of the different interpretation giving to the disease and fear of stigmatisation," he said.

He explained that it is a disease common with the aged population, as their brain is degenerating and unable to handle information.

The expert who teaches in the Faculty of Clinical Sciences, College of Health Sciences of the University of Ilorin underscored the need for building capacity to get more data on the disease in Africa, most especially in Nigeria.

Similarly, the expert disclosed that a corresponding research is also taking place in the United State, to study Alzheimer's disease on Latino and African-American population.

"This information will then be compared with

those collated in Africa and see difference in manifestation. There is need to look and find if there is genetic disposition.

"The data that is realised will help to find cure for the disease and see ways of personalising medication early in life," he said.

Also speaking, Prof Uthman Mubashir, the Community Engagement Coordinator of the programme explained that the role of community advisory board is to assist the team in building community trust for participation in the research.

According to him, they are also expected to create community awareness, facilitate community outreaches and also assist in public relation purposes among others.

Mudashir who is a public health expert in the UITH emphasized on the importance of the programme, adding that data collated from various subjects committed to the research will be beneficial to humanity.



Shettima

Support Veterans, Families Of Fallen Heroes - Uba Sani



By; FUNMIADERINTO, Kaduna

Governor of Kaduna State, Senator Uba Sani on Wednesday, admonished corporate entities and individuals to support the veterans and the families of the fallen heroes. Senator Uba Sani who launched the year 2024 Armed Forces Remembrance Day Emblem and Appeal Fund, also donated the sum of five million Naira to the state Chapter of the Nigerian Legion at an event held at Arewa House in Kaduna. Uba Sani who felt highly honoured and privileged to be at the occasion, said he is privileged to govern the state at this period. He said, it has been a tradition to honour personnel serving or retired since 1924, with the establishment of Nigerian Army Depot Zaria.

The governor noted that since the colonial period, armed forces have been involved in defending Nigeria and other nations. He added that, "many of our galant men and women have paid the ultimate price in the cause of keeping peace at home or elsewhere in the world. "Therefore, they will forever be remembered and appreciated by Nigeria and Nigerians. "Today, gallant members of the armed forces are spread in different forms, battling bandits, terrorism, insurgency, kidnapers and other criminal elements. They have been recording success despite huge challenges," he said. Uba Sani however, said that many of them have been away from their families for months and for years. "Our departed heroes left behind wives,

children and relations that must be catered for. "Therefore, there are thousands of different, some of whom have special health needs and challenges. "As beneficiaries of the sacrifices of members of the armed forces, we must as government, corporate entities and individuals, support the veterans and the families of the fallen heroes," he urged. Senator Uba Sani said, "the emblems I launched, is one of the ways to support and appreciate the sacrifice of our heroes. "As we do so, we must strive harder to peacefully resolve the issue that results in use of arms and loss of lives. "Therefore, as we launch this emblem, let us spare a thought for our dear citizens who lost their lives in the unfortunate Tudun Biri military drone attack.

"Let us pray for the repose of the souls of those who lost their lives in the unfortunate Tudun Biri incident. May God give their loved ones the fortitude to bear the irreparable loss. "Let us recommit ourselves to the national grace to serve Nigeria with all our strength, defend her unity and uphold the honour and glory. It is doing this that the sacrifices of our heroes past will not be vain," he further urged. He called on public spirited organisations and individual to donate generously to the appeal fund. Speaking in a welcome address, Chairman Nigerian Legion, Major Danjuma Baren (rtd), represented by Major Bala Adamu, appealed to the state government and people to support the legions and widows.



Anti Corruption Day: CEDI Seeks Stronger Law, Transparency In Award Of Contracts In Delta

By: UTEBOR PETER, Asaba

A nongovernmental organisation, Community Empowerment and Development Initiative (CEDI), a member of the ANEEJ Anti-Corruption cluster, with support from Palladium USAID Scale Project has commemorated this year's International Anti-Corruption Day (IACD) with a passionate call for a stronger Anti-Corruption law and transparency in award of contracts in Delta State.

CEDI made the call during a press briefing in Warri, an activity to mark this year's IACD.

The Executive Director of CEDI, Mrs. Martha Onose, while presenting a press statement to journalists at the briefing noted that, "Despite progress, corruption remains a significant obstacle to development at global and local levels." She said, "With one in five people still facing bribery across public services worldwide and 124 countries showing no improvement in their corruption levels, this widespread corruption highlights the urgency of collective actions to stem its spread."

The International Anti-Corruption Day (IACC

2023) serves as an opportunity for us to reflect on and reinforce our commitment towards collective action to prevent and address corruption at all levels," stressing that the media has an important role to play in making it happen.

Onose stated that the theme of the IACD, "UNCAC at 20: Uniting the World Against Corruption," underscores the coincidence of this year's IACD with the 20th anniversary of the United Nations Convention against corruption (UNCAC), adding that, "Since 2003, the UNCAC has served to galvanize Anti-Corruption efforts and measures at global, regional, national and sub-national levels."

This advancement has been crucial in fostering peace, security and development as highlighted by this year's theme."

Onose further stated, "As we commemorate this day, it is important to highlight recent national gains on anti-corruption, including but not limited to important progress on some Anti-Corruption legislation and strides in asset recovery such as recent plans by the French government to repatriate \$150 million dollars looted funds linked to

former military president Sani Abacha."

Raising the demand for an effective Anti-Corruption policy in Delta State, CEDI urge Delta State government to develop and implement strong state Anti-Corruption strategies especially in the State Oil Producing Area Development Commission (DESOPADEC).

According to the statement, "We, the undersigned civil society organisations and concerned citizens, are urgently appealing to the government of Delta State to strengthen its anti-corruption laws and ensure greater transparency in the award of contracts in the Delta State Oil Producing Areas Development Commission (DESOPADEC).

"Recent events have highlighted the need for greater accountability and transparency in the way contracts are awarded in DESOPADEC. It is crucial that the government takes swift action to address these concerns and demonstrate its commitment to fighting corruption."

"We urge the governor of Delta State, Rt. Hon Governor Sheriff Oborevori to consider the following measures to improve transparency and

accountability in DESOPADEC.

"Swt up an independent body to monitor the activities of DESOPADEC, including the process of contract award. This body should be composed of respected individuals with proven track records of integrity and probity.

"Implement a Public Notice System so that DESOPADEC could publish details of all contract awards in an easily accessible format, allowing citizens to monitor the process and ensure that contracts are awarded fairly and without favouritism.

"Establish an Automated Tracking Systems to monitor expenditure and ensure compliance with approved budgets. This will enable timely identification of any irregularities or mismanagement of funds. "Enact a whistle-blower Protection Policy to encourage employees and stakeholders to report any observed malpractice or wrongdoing without fear of reprisal."

The statement noted, "By implementing these measures, the government of Delta State can send a strong signal that it is committed to rooting out corruption and ensuring transparency in all aspects

Financial Inclusion Insurance A Policy Tool For Addressing Poverty In Nigeria - Prof Yusuf

By: MATTHEW UKACHUNWA, Lagos

A Nigerian scholar has advocated financial inclusion in Nigeria's insurance sector, describing it as a major policy tool for addressing poverty in the country.

Professor Tajudeen Olalekan Yusuf, a Professor of Risk Management and Insurance Awareness, expressed the view while speaking on the topic, "Marketing Insurance for Financial Inclusion in Nigeria: Gaps and Opportunities," at an all-inclusive mass media workshop on insurance awareness.

The event which took place in Lagos was organized by Insurance Publication Limited in collaboration with Centre for Financial Journalism.

According to Yusuf, the need for financial inclusion in Nigeria is an urgent one that is underscored by available evidences.

While emphasizing that governments and insurance regulators have to worry about insurance penetration and contribution to Gross Domestic Product (GDP), Yusuf said that the real challenge is the insurance practitioners who have to develop products that will effectively address those massive protection gap.

The professor said, "Financial Inclusion is a broad terminology that refers to decisions and actions taken to democratize finance by ensuring that every individual and corporate entity has access to financial products and services irrespective of their net-worth, size, gender and/or location."

Yusuf pointed out that central to financial inclusion is the removal of barriers to access that reduces exclusion and, in

the corollary, enhances inclusion.

He stressed that financial inclusion has become more important in a world of increasing inequality and inequity in both income and wealth distribution. "It has therefore become a major policy tool for addressing poverty and intervening at the bottom of the pyramid," he declared.

Yusuf said that according to Micro Insurance Network (MIN) finding, inclusive insurance is targeted at about 6.5 billion people worldwide who are vulnerable to sickness, job loss, business premises destruction or damage by flood or fire.

He highlighted that the real concern is about the 1.8 billion people in the world who are very poor that do not have enough food to eat.

"Add to this another 4.7 billion people that are not extremely poor but are highly vulnerable and that make up the figure of 6.5 billion people that are generally referred as low income, emerging insurance customers and bottom-of-the-pyramid," the Risk Management professor elaborated.

"There is a huge gap between losses to life and property that are insured and those that are not. This is known as the protection gap," the facilitator stated. He explained that Micro Insurance is a subset of insurance, adding: "It aims to protect low-income people against specific risks, and its target market is the low-income demographics."

He noted that the term Micro Insurance is relatively new, and highlighted that one of its objectives is to help increase the penetration in the Nigerian population, especially the low-income class who shy away from insurance.



Family Planning: FHANI Hails Uba Sani, Demands Cash Backing

**Says family planning not only moral imperative, sound economic decision*

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

While appreciating the Kaduna State Government for its commitment towards supporting family planning, a group, the Family Health Advocates in Nigeria Initiative (FHANI) has advocated for cash backing of allocated funds.

This was expressed by FHANI at a press briefing in Kaduna yesterday.

Speaking, Secretary of FHANI, Benjamin Yunana Maigari said that the Uba Sani-led Kaduna State Government has recognized the critical importance of family planning.

"I wish to appreciate the Executive Governor of Kaduna State Senator Uba Sani and his government for recognizing the critical importance of family planning in promoting the well-being and empowerment of individuals and families. It is a fundamental right for every person to have access to comprehensive family planning services and information, enabling them to make informed decisions about their reproductive health.

"In light of this, I am pleased to announce that the Kaduna State Government in its proposed budget has taken a decisive step towards strengthening its commitment to family planning, by its decision to significantly increase the budget allocation dedicated to family planning initiatives from 6,800,000 for 2023 programming to 70,000,000 in 2024 and has decided to make it an MOU with UNFPA through the State Primary Health Care Board to dedicate a counterpart funding with the economic number 23010222 and the amount of 608,396,619.51 in the proposed 2024 budget," he said.

He explained this increased budget allocation will enable the state expand the reach and availability of family planning services.

"It will also support the provisions of such commodities and Consumables to PHCs and general hospitals that provide essential reproductive health services across the state.

"Furthermore, the increased funding will also contribute to the monitoring, training and capacity building of healthcare



professionals, ensuring that they are equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to deliver high-quality family planning services," FHANI said.

According to him, "We believe that investing in family planning is not only a moral imperative, but also a sound economic decision. By empowering individuals and families to plan and space their pregnancies, we can reduce maternal and infant mortality rates, improve child health, and promote economic stability and sustainable development.

"The government's commitment to increasing the budget

allocation for Family Planning shows the government is development focused and people oriented. Family Health Advocates in Nigeria Initiative FHANI wishes to appreciate the Kaduna State Government and to also call on the Kaduna State government to cash back the 250,000,000 earlier approved by the previous administration and also cash back

"its commitment in the 2024 budget. FHANI will keep supporting the state government for improve health care services and will not relent in its advocacy for the release and cash

backing of funds allocated for Reproductive Health services in the state".

FHANI further appreciated the state government for maintaining and surpassing the Abuja declaration of 15% budgetary provisions to health. FP2030, which Nigeria is a signatory also mandated member states to allocate 1% of its health budget to Family Planning.

"We are calling on the Kaduna State House of Assembly as it's approved the budget to look into the FP2030 commitment," he appealed.

IPAC Chairmanship Candidate Facing Criminal Charges

By JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

A key contender for the post of the national chairman of the Inter Party Advisory Council (IPAC), Alhaji Yusuf Mamman Dantalle is currently facing criminal charges at the Federal High Court, Lokoja over alleged possession of arms.

Findings revealed that the State Security Services (SSS) had in October, 2021 dragged Dantalle before the Federal High Court, Lokoja.

Dantalle who is the national chairman of Allied People's Movement (APM) was alleged to have been caught with a pistol and other dangerous weapons at Ayingba in Kogi State sometime in 2021 and the case is still pending before the Federal High Court, Lokoja

Despite the criminal charges hanging on him, Dantalle is contesting the IPAC national chairmanship position against

the national chairman of Action Democratic Party (ADP) Engr Yabagi Yusuf Sani.

Although it is not clear as at press time whether or not the IPAC's electoral committee will clear Dantalle, but the chairman of the committee, Barr Dan



Alhaji Yusuf Mamman Dantalle

Nwanyanwu told our correspondent on phone that he has no position on the candidature of Dantalle.

Nwanyanwu said it's not in his purview to take a decision on the eligibility of any of the contestants vying for any of the

positions, stressing that his duty is to serve as an umpire for the election.

He said, "as an umpire in the election, it is not my duty to determine who is qualified to contest and who is not qualified to contest. I am an umpire in the forthcoming

election of IPAC and my duty is to conduct election and not to take position on who to contest and who not to contest."

However, findings by our correspondent revealed that the State Security Service had in October 2021 instituted a case against Dantalle and the case is yet to be adjudicated by the court.

The statement of offence prepared and signed by Mr Olanrewaju Yahaya, the Principal Legal Officer in charge of Discipline and Legal Services, State Security Service in Kogi State indicates that Dantalle committed the offences with an accomplice who is currently at large.

The statement marked LKJ/FHC/61/21 reads "that you Yusuf Mamman Dantalle, Male, (49 years old), on 4th October, 2021, at Anyigba, Dekinn Local Government Area of Kogi State, within the jurisdiction of this court was arrested with Barreta

Pistol with serial number 215RR95042, without license, thereby committed an offence.

"That you Yusuf Maman Dantalle in October, 2021, at Anyigba was arrested, with nine live rounds of ammunition, without license, thereby committing an offence.

"That you Yusuf Maman Dantalle in October, 2021, at Anyigba was arrested, with nine live rounds of ammunition, without license, thereby committing an offence," it added.

He was alleged to have carried out the offences with one Abdul Oye who is currently at large.

When contacted, Dantalle confirmed that the matter is still before the court, saying that he is presumed innocent until the contrary is proved.

He refused to make further comments on the matter, claiming that it is still before the court and he has not been found guilty.

Governor Umar Bago Gives Out Bride In Marriage, Prays For Blissful Union

By; AMOS EBUTE MATHEW, Kaduna

Niger State Governor, Mohammed Umaru Bago was among well wishers that graced the Wedding Nikkah between Firdausi Adamu Bako and Kazeem Abidemi Odusanya. The Wedding Fatiha was conducted by Malam Gwani Hashim Idris at the bride's

family residence in Minna. Governor Umaru Bago who stood in as the father of the bride, gave out her hand in marriage after the payment of N100,000 as bride price. The bride, Nana Firdaus is a relation of the Director General, Niger Road Maintenance Agency (NIGROMA). Prayers were offered for the couple to

have a blissful home. The couple were also advised to live their marriage lives in accordance with the teachings of the Quran and Hadith. In another development, Governor Umaru Bago attended the naming ceremony of Fatima Gambo Suleiman, the newly-born daughter of his long-time ally Gambo

Suleiman. Governor Umaru Bago while praying to Allah for His blessings and guidance on the child, acknowledged the contributions of Suleiman to the growth and development of All Progressives Congress (APC).



Northern Governors Forum Commends FG Over Renewed Fight Against Insecurity

By: FUNMIADERINTO, Kaduna

The Northern States Governors' Forum under the leadership of the His Excellency, Muhammad Inuwa Yahaya of Gombe State, has commended the Federal Government for the renewed vigour in the fight against insecurity, menace of kidnaping, banditry, communal clashes and terrorism, bedeviling the region.

The Northern States Governors' Forum disclosed this in a communique after the meeting held on Friday at the Council Chamber, Sir Kashim Ibrahim House in Kaduna.

The chairman said the forum commiserates with the government and people of Kaduna State over the unfortunate bombing incident at Tudun Biri Community of Igabi Local Government Area of the state, during which some members of the community lost their lives and property, while others who sustained various degrees of injuries

are currently receiving treatment in various hospitals.

"The forum prayed for the repose of the souls of those who lost their lives and speedy recovery of the injured. The Forum prayed for God to grant the families of the deceased the fortitude to bear the loss and appreciated the Kaduna State and Federal Governments for the way and manner they handled the unfortunate incidence so far.

"The forum resolved to work collectively to ensure that the tragic incidence is thoroughly investigated with a view to compensating victims and taking corrective measures to prevent future occurrence.

"The forum resolved to vigorously pursue the collective interest of the North in areas of enhanced security, peaceful coexistence, economic development, youth employment, drug abuse and revitalisation of education at all levels.

"The forum commended the Federal Government for the renewed vigour in the

fight against insecurity, menace of kidnaping, banditry, communal clashes and terrorism, bedeviling the region.

"The forum resolved to stand united in its commitment to addressing those challenges through enhanced collaboration with security agencies, strengthening local law enforcement, community engagement, adoption of modern technology and administrative reforms, as well as addressing the root causes of insecurity such as poverty, unemployment and deepening social inequality," the communique said.

The forum further resolved to address the environmental challenges affecting Northern Nigeria which is threatening rural livelihood, pushing farmers into conflict with herders and adding to the general level of poverty and insecurity.

"The forum further resolved to collectively fast track regional integration through investment in infrastructure,

human capital development, trade, commerce, agriculture, environment, digital economy and cultural exchanges.

"The forum received briefing on the activities of the New Nigerian Development Company (NNDC) by the Group Managing Director and accordingly constituted a committee to review the Report of the earlier committee on NNDC operations with a view to repositioning the Company for greater productivity and profitability.

"The forum collectively resolved to support the Kaduna State Government and victims of the unfortunate incidence of bombing at Tudun Biri Community, Igabi Local Government Area by donating the sum of One Hundred and Eighty Million Naira (N180,000,000.00) only to the victims," the communique added.

The next meeting of the Forum would be held on March 2, 2024.



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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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Width	25.4 (CM)	Width -	10 (Inches)

POLITICAL RATE

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

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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

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S/NO	POSITION	SIZE	RATE	VAT	TOTAL
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2	Loss of Documents	2" x 2 Cols	4,400.00	330.00	4,730.00
3	Change of Name	Per Box	2,000.00	-	2,000.00

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SPACE	RATE	VAT	TOTAL
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HALF W RAPA ROUND	4,500,000.00	337,500.00	4,837,500.00
PA GE 2 O R 3	400,000.00	30,000.00	430,000.00
PA GE 4 O R 5	375,000.00	28,125.00	403,125.00
PA GE 6 O R 7	325,000.00	24,375.00	349,375.00
FR ONT PA GE M A S T H E A D E A R P I E C E	212,500.00	16,875.00	229,375.00
FR ONT PA GE S O L U S	312,500.00	23,437.50	335,937.50
FR ONT PA GE S T R I P	375,000.00	28,125.00	403,125.00
B A C K PA GE E A R P I E C E	200,000.00	15,000.00	215,000.00
B A C K PA GE S T R I P	250,000.00	18,750.00	268,750.00
C E N T R E S P R E A D (C O L O U R)	837,500.00	62,812.50	900,312.50
D O U B L E S P R E A D (C O L O U R)	700,000.00	52,500.00	752,500.00
C E N T R E S P R E A D (B L A C K & W H I T E)	575,000.00	43,125.00	618,125.00
D O U B L E S P R E A D (B L A C K & W H I T E)	590,000.00	44,250.00	634,250.00
FR ONT PA GE (10" X 6)	3,250,000.00	243,750.00	3,493,750.00
R O P S T R I P (C O L O U R)	125,000.00	9,375.00	134,375.00
R O P S T R I P (B L A C K & W H I T E)	85,000.00	6,375.00	91,375.00

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

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

Why We Should Stop Going To Court After Elections (2)

By: HASSAN GIMBA

In the first part of this write-up, we saw how in 1983, the National Party of Nigeria (NPN), afraid of defeat, capitalised on Shehu Shagari's perceived likeability and reversed the election timetable and started with a vote for the president.

They relied on what they christened the "bandwagon effect" to commit monumental electoral fraud to win, calling it a "landslide" victory, which opponents and critics derisively described as a "moonslide".

We also saw how in 2003, the same fear of losing, the threat from General Muhammadu Buhari's foray into the presidential race, an altercation with his deputy, Atiku Abubakar, and knowing how weary his party and governors were of his dictatorial tendencies, made Obasanjo reverse the election timetable to start with his. 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.

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

We also saw and were impressed with the way they dispensed with election petitions within a month. We read how 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. The appeal to the Supreme Court was decided on the 26 of the same month and the swearing-in of the president took place on October 1. Judgement in the petition by Chief Olu Falae against the election of General Olusegun Obasanjo in 1999 was also delivered within a month.

Starting the elections with that of the president was reversed in 2003 by Obasanjo. But another aberration that got accepted was the prolonged election petitions that, in some instances, went beyond a year.

Apart from further dividing the voters for and against the litigants, election petitions invariably freeze government activities and put voters in limbo while they await the verdict. Struggling for legitimacy at the courts makes the respondents lame-duck.

Apart from the voters and process of governance that are affected, election petitions ought to be done with before inauguration, otherwise, the process will be unfair to three sets of people: the petitioner fighting an incumbent who has

a lot of resources at his disposal; the judge who will adjudicate in a matter concerning he who appoints him and the incumbent who, based on human instinct for self-preservation, will use the powers inherent in the office to trample over the system and win.

But perhaps the urge to go to court may be whittled down if the electoral commission is truly independent, not just in name. Therefore, the way its management team is appointed and how it can be unbundled should thoroughly be considered.

Having said all this, there are still those who hold the opinion that the presidential system may not be the best for us. The parliamentary system, to them, is cheaper with little room for contentions. Also, it demands greater accountability from those in office.

There is also a school of thought that believes the high financial return in politics - by fair or foul means - is what makes some politicians consider winning elections a do-or-die affair. To this school of thought, our politics and governance need to be demonetised and the winner-takes-all syndrome jettisoned.

Beginning with the last, they opine that the money spent on maintaining political officeholders is too much and pulling the nation into penury. They, however, contend that that may not be the case if we look inwards and get to be level-headed.

A ready example is how each senator - Nigeria has 109 of them - will be bought a vehicle worth ₦160 million. Worse is that the vehicles are foreign-made, causing capital flight. Buying foreign cars instead of locally assembled ones should no longer be acceptable for those holding public office. If we prefer foreign brands, why don't they come here and set up assembly plants?

Legislative work could be made a part-time job attracting sitting allowances, and all political office holders must have



Hassan Gimba

Monday Column

To this school of thought, our politics and governance need to be demonetised and the winner-takes-all syndrome jettisoned.

Nigeria's interest uppermost in their minds.

For instance, those who have their children in private schools should not determine the affairs of public schools. How can one be in charge of education but send his wards to private schools or abroad?

Anybody who will administer education must have faith in what the government is doing to improve the sector which he superintends. They should not permit anybody who cannot sacrifice for the state to gain from the state. However, no harm if they want to eat their cakes and have it, but as public officers, they should be made to contribute a certain amount to an endowment fund at the level of their office (a local government officer to the local government, state officer to the state and a federal officer to the federal government).

Such a policy should apply to the health sector as well. None of the leaders, together with their family members, should travel abroad for medical reasons, or patronise private hospitals, except in cases of exigency as determined by a competent medical team.

Perhaps with these in place and free money no longer an attraction to public office, coupled with patriotism from political officeholders, electoral officers and judges, maybe, just maybe, court cases relating to elections may cease.

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

Rivers State And The Politics Of Absurdity

By Jibrin Ibrahim

YESTERDAY, the Rivers State governor, Siminalayi Fubara, signed the 2024 Appropriation Bill of N800 billion into law. It appeared to be a banal act as had been done by so many other governors.

Rivers', however, is a special drama. He had transmitted the bill to the State Assembly only the previous day. Calling the 4 legislators he submitted the bill to as the State Assembly is a bit of a stretch as the body is composed of 32 members. The court-appointed speaker he works with had dismissed the 27 other members of the Assembly for carpet-crossing the previous day. It would have been silly old type unrealistic comic Nollywood drama has the issue not been such a serious one.

Dokubo, in a viral video clip that went public this week declared that his Ijaw people are angry with the present government because of the on-going crisis in Rivers State. Governor Fubara is Ijaw and Dokubo made it clear that if Wike is allowed to remove him, they would hold the government responsible. Ijaw organisations have come out clearly in support of the governor since the crisis broke out with the implication of a return of militancy if Wike is allowed to succeed in his political ambition of removing his former godson Fubara and installing another governor.

The story started at the end of November when dynamite was used to blow up a part of the State Assembly. It turned out that the recourse to explosives was to stop an attempt by some lawmakers to impeach Governor Fubara. The arson took place the night before the said impeachment would have occurred.

It is not surprising that there have been no concerns expressed by furious citizens or law enforcement agencies about such criminal activity to stop a state organ from carrying out its functions. Following the explosion, the governor indicated that his godfather, Wike, Minister of the Federal Capital Territory, was the brain behind the attempt to remove him from office. Wike told journalists that he was indeed fighting back because the governor he installed was trying to dismantle his political structure in the state and that impeachment is a constitutional route to addressing political problems.

Again, I did not hear screams on how dare a former governor proclaim publicly that he would personally remove a governor who had presumably just been elected into office by a majority of citizens of Rivers State. Where is the anger about disregard for democratic norms? What should we consider to be the legitimacy of the 27 presumably elected members of the State

Assembly who would be instructed by a former governor to change their party affiliation, an act prohibited by the Constitution and they would obey with immediate alacrity?

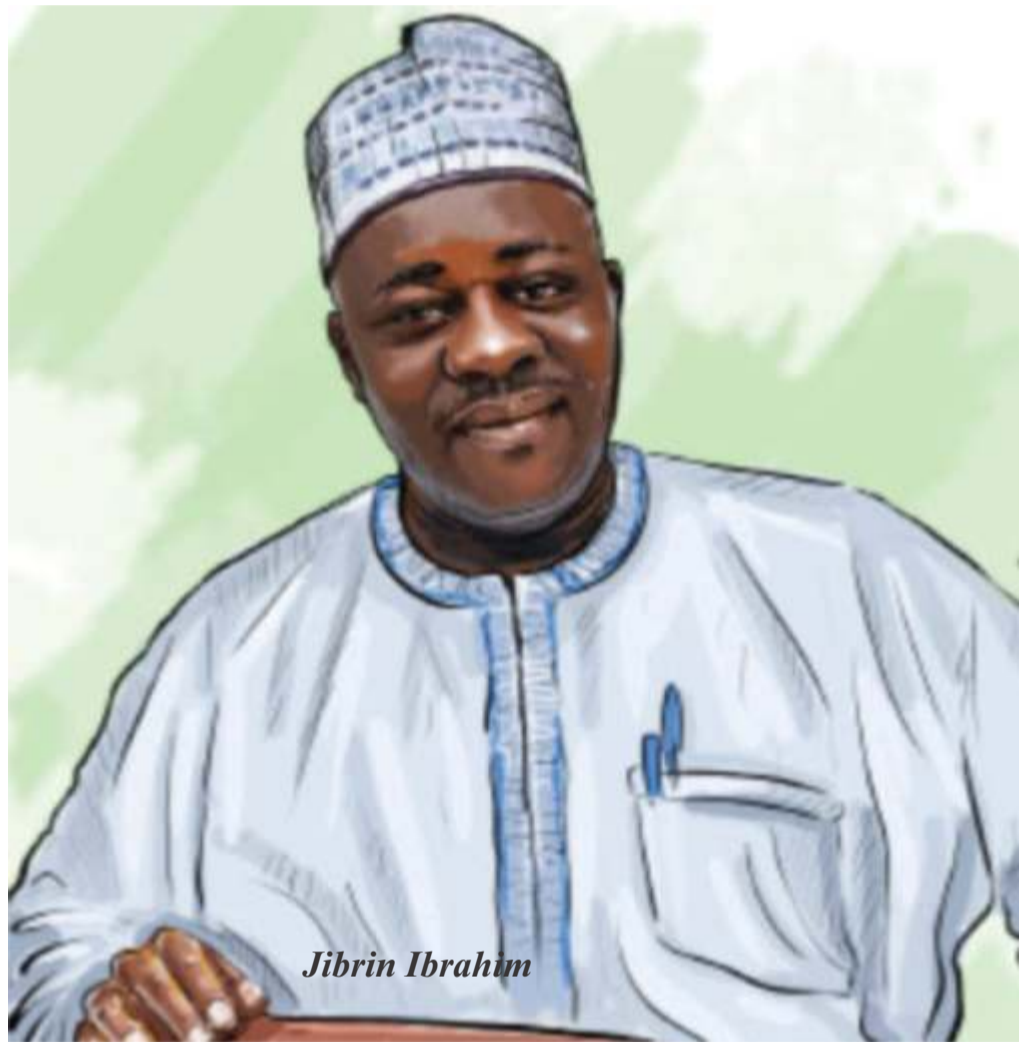
The core of the crisis is the lack of respect for democratic and constitutional norms. Wike has been a PDP member and since he lost his bid for the presidential nomination of the party, had set up a faction of governors that openly and systematically subverted the interest of his own party. He became the very symbol of the definition of anti-party activities. It was to reward the damage that Wike did to his own party thereby boosting the chances of the ruling APC in the elections that Wike was rewarded with a juicy ministerial appointment. President Tinubu has therefore been a beneficiary of Wike's politics at the state and national level.

Governor Fubara, having procured judicial recognition of his faction of the legislature from the State High Court proceeded to completely demolish the State House of Assembly Complex and gave his faction a room in Government House to operate from, making a complete mockery of our constitutional order. He claimed the demolition was necessary because engineers had discovered structural defects in the building. The other faction also rented a meeting room in town and the two "assemblies" held parallel meetings yesterday.

Meanwhile, tempers are running very high in the state. The former Niger Delta militant leader, Asari Dokubo, is dragging the federal government into the matter. He called the President Bola Tinubu-led federal government as the worst ever the country has seen. He had previously been one of the most vocal supporters of Tinubu in the country.

Dokubo, in a viral video clip that went public this week declared that his Ijaw people are angry with the present government because of the on-going crisis in Rivers State. Governor Fubara is Ijaw and Dokubo made it clear that if Wike is allowed to remove him, they would hold the government responsible. Ijaw organisations have come out clearly in support of the governor since the crisis broke out with the implication of a return of militancy if Wike is allowed to succeed in his political ambition of removing his former godson Fubara and installing another governor.

In a swift response, the Minister of Information and National Orientation, Idris Malagi, yesterday dismissed allegations that the federal government orchestrated the political crisis in Rivers State. The minister emphasised the



Jibrin Ibrahim

absence of concrete evidence linking the federal government to the crisis, saying: "I've not found evidence to suggest that the federal government is engineering the crisis."

Money, armed thugs, illicit use of the police and the army and manipulation of the judiciary are the elements that define politics in Rivers State. It's a sad story of the negation and subversion of democratic norms. Meanwhile, we watch as the godfathers and their sponsors continue to draw on these resources to intensify the absurd struggle against democracy and constitutionalism.

The problem of course for the federal government is the very cosy ties between Minister Wike and the Tinubu administration suggesting that he is drawing upon "federal might" to remove Governor Fubara.

The core of the crisis is the lack of respect for democratic and constitutional norms. Wike has been a PDP member and since he lost his bid for the presidential nomination of the party, had set up a faction of governors that openly and systematically subverted the interest of his own party. He became the very symbol of the definition of anti-party activities. It was to reward the damage that Wike did to his own party thereby boosting the chances of the ruling APC in the elections that Wike was rewarded with a juicy

ministerial appointment. President Tinubu has therefore been a beneficiary of Wike's politics at the state and national level.

The real issue however is that Rivers politics has throughout the Fourth Republic been about reckless disregard for democratic norms. Both in party primaries and in elections, political godfathers had always had the capacity to produce results they want, with or without the accord of voters. This means there is never a lawful or morally upright side in the political factions that fight out gladiatorial battles in the state.

Money, armed thugs, illicit use of the police and the army and manipulation of the judiciary are the elements that define politics in Rivers State. It's a sad story of the negation and subversion of democratic norms. Meanwhile, we watch as the godfathers and their sponsors continue to draw on these resources to intensify the absurd struggle against democracy and constitutionalism.

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

Convicted Drug Baron Forfeits Multi-million Naira Lagos Mansion As NDLEA Arrests 75-yr Grandma Over Illicit Drugs

By; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

A convicted drug baron, Okenwa Chris Nzewi, has forfeited a multi-million Naira mansion located at K-5A/2 Road 14, Victoria Garden City (VGC) Estate, Lekki area of Lagos used as clandestine laboratory for the production of methamphetamine to the Federal Government, following his successful prosecution and conviction in court by the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA). Okenwa, as confirmed by NDLEA spokesman, Femi Babafemi, was arrested along with his associate, Sunny Okeh Ukah on July 30, 2022 and subsequently arraigned on four counts in charge number FHC/L/527C/2022 at the Federal High Court, Lagos.

They both pleaded guilty on 17th July, 2023, while they were convicted and sentenced to four and three years imprisonment each with an option of fine of four million (₦4,000,000) naira and three million (₦3,000,000) naira respectively in addition to community service for four and three weeks each.

His vehicle marked EKY 496 DJ was equally forfeited to the Federal Government.

To further deny him of enjoying the proceeds of his criminal activity, the NDLEA, according to Babafemi filed a civil forfeiture charge against the building used as clandestine laboratory at the Federal High Court Lagos which initially granted an interim forfeiture order that elapsed on 6th December before the final forfeiture on 7th December 2023.

Meanwhile, NDLEA operatives in Lagos on Friday December 25,

arrested a 75-year-old grandma, Mrs. Sekinat Soremekun for dealing in illicit drugs.

At the time of her arrest in Oshodi area of Lagos, Babafemi confirmed, quantities of cannabis and litres of codeine syrup were recovered from her.

The grandma was said to have claimed her son, Segun who is now at large supplied her the illicit substances which she retailed.

In Imo, operatives on patrol along Owerri-Onitsha expressway on Thursday 14th December intercepted a way-billed consignment containing cocaine weighing 2.287kg.

The shipment coming from Lagos was concealed in cellophane condoms, and heading to Port Harcourt, Rivers State. A suspect, Isaac Okoh, 45, has already been arrested. No fewer than 10 jumbo bags of cannabis weighing 100kg were recovered from the ceiling of a dealer, Ibrahim Yahaya, 35, when his house was raided in the Tudun Kofa area of Lafia, Nasarawa State on Friday 15th December while he was also arrested.

At the SAHCO export shed of the Murtala Muhammed International Airport, MMIA Ikeja Lagos, over 1.5 million pills of tramadol 225mg and rohypnol were intercepted in a cargo going to South Africa by NDLEA operatives in collaboration with personnel of the Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN).

Two suspects: Bada Olanrewaju Akorede, and Amusan Olufela Sharafadeen have so far been taken into custody in connection with the consignment, which consists: 1,050,000 pills of tramadol 225mg and 510,000 tablets of rohypnol.

At the Federal Capital Territory, FCT Abuja, operatives on Friday 15th December intercepted a consignment of 1,496 bottles of codeine syrup at A.Y.A area of the city while a suspect, Ozioma Enoja, 31, was arrested in a follow up operation. Another consignment of 400 bottles of the same opioid coming from Port Harcourt, Rivers state was also seized along Abaji-Abuja highway on Saturday 16th December after which a suspect, Bala Ishaq was arrested during a follow up operation at Zuba motor park.

While 17 bags of cannabis sativa weighing 195.8kg stored in a bush at Gbanke village, Orhionmwon LGA, Edo state were recovered by NDLEA operatives on Wednesday 13th December, anti-narcotic officers in Ogun state intercepted two suspects: Edun Olowokou and Tunde Elijah at Alamutu roundabout area of Abeokuta with bags of same psychoactive substance weighing 279kg.

In Borno state, NDLEA officers on Tuesday 12th December arrested Bukar Ali, 29, and Abacha Alhaji Fantami, 20, with 171kg of cannabis at Ngamdu, Kaga LGA, while three suspects: Jamilu Haruna, 22; Mohammed Hassan, 23; and Aminu Umar, 50, were nabbed with 57kg cannabis on Wednesday 13th December at Tsafe checkpoint, Zamfara state, when they were on their way to Zurumi, a village known as bandits' enclave.

At least four suspects: Ezekiel Monday Thompson, 56; Hezekiah Ime, 20; Nsikak Okon Jonah, 39; and Chidi Kalu, 44, were arrested with a total of 121kg cannabis and



The convicts and property forfeited

5.1grams of methamphetamine in parts of Cross River state on Monday 10th December.

The War Against Drug Abuse, WADA, advocacy campaign of the Agency continued in equal measure in schools, markets, worship places and others across the country in the past week.

Some of them include: WADA advocacy lecture for students of St. Margaret High School, Ilesa, Osun; students of Federal Government Girls College, Shagamu, Ogun; students of Wesley Model Primary and Secondary School, Badagry, Lagos; students and staff of Government Junior Secondary School and Government Girls Senior Secondary School, Yaryasa,

Tudun Wada LGA, Kano state.

While commending the officers and men of the MMIA, Lagos, FCT, Imo, Edo, Borno, Ogun, Zamfara, and Cross River Commands for the arrests and seizures of the past week, as well as those of the Directorate of Prosecution and Legal Services for their diligent prosecution of cases in court, Chairman/Chief Executive Officer of NDLEA, Brig. Gen. Mohamed Buba Marwa (Retd) urged them and their compatriots across all formations of the agency to intensify the offensive action tempo against drug cartels as the yuletide season approaches while maintaining an equal balance with their drug demand reduction efforts.

Retired Senior Officer Warns Of Imminent Shortage Of Nigeria Police Personnel

By; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos.

The Nigeria Police Force may suffer shortage of personnel soon if policemen are not accorded due respect and regard by the society.

A retired Chief Superintendent of Police and former Divisional Police Officer (DPO) of Ikotun Division, CSP Johnson Adagba, who sounded the note of warning pointed out that policemen are most times treated as outcast by the society they sacrifice their lives to protect.

He therefore, called for an attitudinal change and urged the society to embrace the police at least for their sacrifice at ensuring a peaceful and crime free society.

CSP Johnson Adagba gave the admonition in an exclusive interview with New Nigerian Newspapers at the weekend in Lagos.

Adagba, who retired on November 1, 2023, after 35 years meritorious service, beamoned the inhumane attitude of most Nigerians towards policemen.

Pointing out that they are most times treated as an outcast, the former Divisional Police Officer (DPO) of Ikotun

Police Station, warned that the Nigeria Police Force may suffer shortage of personnel if policemen are not accorded their deserved respect by the society.

Emphasising that Nigerian policemen do perform excellently well outside the country, winning laurels and treated with honour, the Badagry born ex- super cop wondered why same treatment is not



CSP Adagba (rtd)

enjoyed back home.

He noted that the hatred for policemen was not fashionable in the olden days, which elicited his interest in the job, adding that many young men wouldn't have lived to joined the Force then because there were lots of job opportunities.

His words, " There's need for attitudinal change from Nigerians towards the Police. Most people see policemen as valueless beings and of no use to the society. They see Policemen as what the Igbos called "Ozu".

" It is a thing of joy wearing the colour of the country's security agency, it's a pride to serve ones fatherland. We never had a feeling that it will later turn against us. If it was like this in the past, we wouldn't have love to joined because there were lots of job opportunities then to choose from.

" Today, when you wear the police uniform, the next person sees you as an enemy and that's why they kill policemen anyhow. But if a policeman mistakenly kills someone in the course of discharging his lawful duty, the whole world will call for his head, then the

issue of human rights comes in. But when a policeman is killed, nobody talks about human rights as if policemen do not also have human rights too".

Speaking further, the retired but not tired police chieftain posited that he had no regret serving in the Police Force, saying the job offered him a lot of exposure, experience and respect from the society.

" I feel happy serving my fatherland because the job exposed me to a lot of things and I gained a lot of experiences. The society respects me. When I also pulled out of service, my people received me back home with joy, honoured me and I became an illustrious son. They were proud that I represented them well. The police work offered me the opportunity to travel to many countries. I thank God that " I saw, conquered and returned home alive", retired CSP Adagba enthused.

Asked when is the appropriate time to start preparing for retirement life, CSP Adagba popularly called JayJay, advised all policemen irrespective of rank to start preparing for retirement as soon as they start work.

His words, "Get yourself prepared against your retirement and the preparation starts now. Save for the rainy days".

Open Letter To Tinubu: Be A Statesman

By; GARBA KAITA KATSINA

Open Letter to PBAT
Your Excellency,
Be a Leader,
Be a statesman, And act as a
statesman

Leadership is hard. It means making hard decisions and doing hard things. And leading a country like Nigeria is even harder and you can mess things up. You can pain some people and you can pain yourself. Listen to people and there are benefits in doing so.

Do not regard criticisms as evil or as personal attacks on you. In USA and western world we copy they value, recognize and appreciate public opinions as a big asset that help them to serve the people and their country. This brings me to the many allegations and revelations about how the Buhari's government and key players of that government looted and bankrupted Nigeria. You too have spoken and your NSA has spoken confirming that these allegations are true, valid and credible.

There are public concerns, grievances and fury on the economic vandalisation carried out during the period and people are calling for you to institute a full blown probe of the 8years rule of that administration. These calls are not new and are justified.

The Commission of Inquiry should include dereliction of duties, the Shia killings, the over 100000 deaths of innocent people and many human right violations.

Mr. President, the evidences of corruption and massive stealing are mounting, it is not fair and right to ignore them. They are too sensitive to be ignored and doing nothing is not an option.

In 1979 Alh. Shehu Shagari, immediately after he resumed work, was faced with similar complaint and challenge – A missing 2.4 Billion Naira from the NNPC. Shagari responded to public concerns and set-up a commission of inquiry.

Shagari had to speak to the Nation. You too should do the same by setting-up a probe commission to look into



President Tinubu

all the allegations. Nobody is above the country and its people.

Nigerians deserve respect and need answers from those officials who led Nigeria in the situation it finds itself now. Nigerians have endured a lot of pains and disrespect from officials hired to work for them.

Mismanagement of public funds or converting public funds as personal and using public funds for personal benefits is totally unacceptable and must not be allowed to become the standard practice by elected

representatives.

I doubt very much if the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria allows the president to do whatever he likes.

Mr. President just last week the British Government set up Inquiry on mishandling COVID 19 by the former prime minister and this has been broadcast live and interestingly the inquiry was set up by the party of the former prime minister. Boris Johnson has to fight or his political survival.

Many former presidents like Trump, the French president and even the present Israel prime minister so why cant Buhari face the same thing? He put the lives of over 200 million people in peril.

I hope this letter meets you well and you would act on it. This is a call to national duty, fight against corruption and promotion of good governance in Nigeria.

Yours Faithfully, Garba Kaita Katsina, a lover of Nigeria and Nigerians

Nigeria's Sports Minister Wins Africa Sustainable Leadership Man Of Year Award



By: **JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON**

Honourable Minister of Sports Development, Federal Republic of Nigeria, Senator John Owan Enoh was chosen from a stellar cast of notable leaders of African origin, as the Africa Sustainable Leadership Man of the Year at the 17th edition of the Sustainability, Enterprise and Responsibility Awards, the SERAS,

which held on December 15, 2023 at the Oriental Hotel, Lagos, Nigeria.

Under his leadership, the sports ministry is experiencing an uncommon turnaround for good, clear policy directions and extraordinary commitment to salvage all areas within the sports ecosystem of Nigeria for the general good of Nigeria. Sports development and sustainable livelihoods, the SDGs impacted

positively by sports amongst others, make up the Sports Minister's six-point agenda WAIFAR.

His philanthropic activities spanning decades through the JOE Foundation, continuously liberates the people of Africa from death sentence of poverty, perpetual dependence and under development.

Senator Enoh's leadership and capacity stands in monumental proportions.

For the likes of him, we have hope in the future of Nigeria and Africa.

Past winners of this award include, Tony Elumelu (Tony Elumelu Foundation), Aliko Dangote (Aliko Dangote Foundation), Lieutenant General Sir Seretse Khama (Former President of the Republic of Botswana).

Congratulations to the Honourable Minister of Sports Development.



Nigeria's Sports Minister
Wins Africa Sustainable
Leadership Man Of
Year Award

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Stop Consuming Ponmo, National Steering Committee Tells Nigerians

By: SANIALIYU, Zaria

The National Steering Committee on the implementation of the National Leather and Leather Products Policy has called for a halt to the consumption of animal hides and skins, popularly known as ponmo.

The call was made by the committee chairman, Prof. M.K Yakubu, Director-General/CEO Nigerian Institute of Leather and Science Technology (NILEST) Zaria.

According to him, the call for a halt in the consumption of hides and skins (ponmo) became necessary if the moribund tanneries in the country must be

revived for economic growth, wealth generation and employment creation. Prof. Yakubu added that about 7,000 cattle are slaughtered on a daily basis in the Nigerian abattoirs, and the raw hides and skins that ought to serve as raw materials for tanneries are ending up in people pots as delicacy.

"it is only in Nigeria that such a practice is found," he lamented. He is, therefore, of the opinion that



Ponmo dish

discouraging the consumption of raw hides and skins will make raw materials available for production of needs such as footwears, bags, wallet, belts upholsteries and many other leather materials".

He however, opined that the consumption of hides and skin as ponmo can be achieved if incentives are provided to producers, processors, and marketers as well as incorporation of other

groups to be affected into other forms of livelihood.

The DG also used the occasion to advocate the creation of the Leather Industry Pension Fund.

In his contribution, Mr. Emmanuel Kwaya, Director of Raw Materials Research and Development, added that the leather sector is contributing to quality export, national GDP, and creating employment to teeming unemployed Nigerian youth.

He, therefore, encouraged patronage of made in Nigerian leather products so that it can contribute positively to the nation's economy.

IPAC Election Crucial To Peaceful Electoral Environment In Nigeria - TMG

*Says desire to plant loyalists in every institution damaging quality of democracy

*Says planting, alleged buying judiciary has eroded citizens' trust

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

As the Inter-Party Advisory Council (IPAC) prepares for its election on Monday December 18, 2023, the Transition Monitoring Group (TMG) has noted the importance of the election to the democratic process and development in Nigeria.

This was expressed in a statement signed by Chairman, Transition Morning Group (TMG)/Executive Director Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC), Auwal Ibrahim Musa (Rafsanjani), which called for a free, credible IPAC polls.

"As the umbrella body of all the registered Political Parties in Nigeria (IPAC) is a critical platform for the promotion and sustenance of free, fair, credible, transparent, acceptable, inclusive and peaceful electoral environment in Nigeria. Yet, Nigerians are not unaware that this critical aim of the conference of political parties have remained a mirage.

"Be that as it may, this important council must not be allowed to become another appendage of some political merchants and corrupt ruling class just as other independent bodies including election management bodies and the judiciary have appeared to become in Nigeria. It is in this light that TMG wishes to draw the attention of the public to the IPAC election, and to state categorically that it is not oblivious of attempts by some desperate political elite especially from the ruling party to plant candidates into the

leadership of the council of political parties in the country," the statement said. It said that, "this unending desire to plant loyalists and people with lack of integrity in every institution of democratic development in Nigeria is damaging to the quality of democracy in the country. While the regime has succeeded in planting loyalists in the National Assembly, which is capable of eroding the democratic principle of checks and balances as Nigerians have widely described the current Assembly as a rubber-stamp.

"Where the regime has succeeded in planting and allegedly buying over loyalists in the judiciary, it has also succeeded in eroding citizens' trust in the judiciary. In the same vein, where the regime has succeeded in planting loyalists as Resident Electoral Commissioners against citizens petition, it continues to deplete citizens trust in the electoral process. Every single selfish action has its wide-reaching consequences on democracy in Nigeria".

TMG warned that attempt to hijack the IPAC election only points to a regime which is bent on eliminating every form of opposition as the inter-party council is expected to present the most critical form of objectivity in the conducts of political parties in Nigeria since the opposition parties have failed woefully in that role.

"It is important to note that the foundation of democracy is anchored on strong

political parties that promote internal democracy through inclusive membership participation.

"The practice of monetizing every elective position in Nigeria is undemocratic and injurious to the growth of the process.

"Even as the attempts to plant loyalists in the leadership of IPAC is noted, TMG wishes to also bring to the public the fact that certain frontline candidates in the election have pending criminal cases in the court of law and wishes to state that it remains baffled that such characters are even allowed to run in this critical election," TMG stressed.

The group said that it is important to note that having an IPAC of people with integrity deficit will leave a damaging effect on the image of the council, hence, they are calling on the members of IPAC in exercising their votes to ensure that such characters are not allowed into power.

"Also, TMG calls for a transparent electoral process which would give Nigerians the confidence that the Inter-Party Advisory Council has what it takes to entrench internal democracy in the



Auwal Ibrahim Musa (Rafsanjani)

registered political parties in the country. The December 18th election is one of interest to Nigerians as citizens yearn for political party reform in the country. A credible IPAC election will boost confidence among citizens about the possibility of those reforms," it concluded.