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Massive Reception For Uba Sani As He Flags Off Construction Of Key Road In Southern Kaduna

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By: AMOS TAUNA, Kaduna, ADEBOYE ADO, Akure, SANI ALIYU, Zaria, BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan, ADAMA JOHN, Lokoja, ARCHIBONG ESUENE, Makurdi

The Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF) has expressed displeasure over the economic woes and rising insecurity bedeviling the country.

The forum which made this known in a statement yesterday, by its National Publicity Secretary, Prof. T. A. Muhammad-Baba, called for fervent prayers to halt the barefaced challenges.

The statement read, "The Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF) felicitates with Christians in all its national and state chapters,

as well as others in the nation and indeed the world over, on the season's Christmas celebrations. ACF also wishes everyone happy New Year in advance.

"No doubt, our communities variously face daunting existential economic challenges, social upheavals, poverty, inequalities, political disagreements. No less, or even more worrying has been the insecurity bedeviling our communities due to the criminal activities of bandits, extremists and other misguided elements or social misfits in the society. ACF yearns for an end to all these problems.

"ACF is conscious, worried and prays for escape from all the challenges. In the spirit of

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NDLEA Busts Drug Cartel As Sniffer Dogs Uncover Cocaine In India Bound Shipment

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From left: Guest Speaker, Dr. Boye Ola; Chairman Indigo Digital Photo Lab/chairman of occasion, Otunba Anthony Issac; awardee/chairman, NUJ Lagos Council, Adeleye Ajayi; Chairman, Photojournalists Association of Nigeria, Lagos Chapter, Princess Alaba Igaroolola; and Secretary, NUJ, Lagos Council, Tunde Olalere during PJAN End of Year Symposium in Lagos. Photo: AKINOLAARIYO

2023 Elections: Nigeria Diaspora Communities Review Procedures, Call For Improved Process

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

After a review of the conduct of 2023 general elections, Nigerian Diaspora Communities in Europe and America resolved to commend the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and take necessary action. According to him, part of actions intended to take is to push for sanctions and embark on worldwide campaign against Prof. Yakubu, who it believed rigged the elections in favour of ruling party All Progressives Congress (APC).

He however, said, the perception changed after some members' observations and stakeholders, who spoke during the meeting, clearing the air over misconception and erroneous impressions about the result announced in favour of the ruling party, All Progressives Congress (APC).

He said, it is natural for its members to disagree over the outcome because of the controversy surrounding the outcome of the Presidential elections, especially the failure to transmit results

electronically as promised by INEC earlier. But after the verdicts of the Election Tribunal and Supreme Court and reports of International Observers, it unanimously agreed to score the elections as fair, but with a reservation that INEC must be more transparent with result announcement procedures. Noting, "If results were transmitted electronically, the outcome would have been more transparent and acceptable".

He further said, "The fact that opposition parties won some key state like Lagos, Kano, Plateau, Kaduna and other states



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He further said, "The fact that opposition parties won some key state like Lagos, Kano, Plateau, Kaduna and other states

during the presidential elections, was enough to measure level of fairness.

He also said members later agreed with the outcome, when the Supreme Court affirmed the victory of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu of the APC as the valid winner of the general elections.

"The Supreme Court has already affirmed the Presidential election was credible and Tinubu deserved the victory," he said.

He therefore, advised INEC to ensure that its system works better during the next bye-elections and elections in the country.

Adelabu Warns Against Vandalising Of Power Transmission Tower

*TCN raises alarm over vandalization of towers at Borno, Yobe, others

By: BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

Minister of Power, Chief Adebayo Adelabu has warned against vandalization of Power Transmission Tower across the country.

The minister handed down the warning in a statement made available to journalists in Ibadan over the vandalization of Power Transmission Tower at Borno, Yobe and parts of the North.

According to the minister, it is time Nigerians stopped being their own worst enemy, saying the vandals should stop the act of deliberate sabotage that could hinder government's efforts in providing regular electricity supply to Nigerians.

"We should not continue to be our own worst enemy. Nigerians should also protect government assets in their areas", he said.

The minister added, "a comprehensive plan to protect the facilities would soon be unveiled. We are also working on an appropriate legislation to tackle the menace of vandalism".

Also, the General Manager, Public Affairs of TCN, Ndidi Mbah, has alerted that suspected

vandals have brought down one of the towers of the Transmission Company of Nigeria (TCN), tower T372 around Katsaita Village in Yobe State, bringing down the 330kV transmission tower which pulled down tower T373 along the same transmission line route on Thursday.

Mbah stressed that the incident, which took place at about 21:18, caused the failure of power supply to parts of the North East, namely, Yobe and Borno States

"While patrolling the line to ascertain the cause of the cut in power supply, TCN engineers discovered the fallen towers, and the villagers confirmed they heard a loud explosion before the tower came down", he said.

Mbah added, "On closer investigation, the engineers found evidence of explosive used by the vandals in bringing down the towers.

"TCN has mobilized one of its contractors to the site of the incident to commence the reconstruction of the transmission towers damaged by the vandals, according to the company".

Alia Set To Tackle Benue Housing Challenges In 2024

By: ARCHIBONG ESUENE, Makurdi

Benue State Government has reiterated her readiness to address infrastructure decay including housing challenges confronting the state in 2024 budget.

The State Commissioner for Works and Housing, Mr Isaac Imojime disclosed this during an interaction with journalists in Makurdi.

He informed journalists that from the beginning of next year, the state government would give serious attention to serious infrastructure development.

According to the Commissioner, Governor Alia led government is only interested in projects that

have direct bearing on the lives of the people which includes, roads and housing.

The Works and Housing Commissioner who called on media practitioners in the state to sustain their support for the government, described 2024 as a year of projects execution in Benue State.

Mr Imojime further stated that equally within six months in the life of the Alia administration, the people of the state have started counting achievements recorded by the government which includes road construction, provision of street lights in Makurdi, provision of buses to ease transportation problem and registration of WAEC and NECO examinations for Benue students among others.

Christmas: ACF Laments Nigeria's Economic Woes, Growing Insecurity

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the Yuletide Season, ACF calls on all to fervently pray for a deserved return to mutual understanding, tolerance, cooperation responsible neighborliness, peace and tranquility in all communities specifically and for humanity in general. "ACF also calls on all to pray for knowledge, courage, wisdom and empathy for our leaders, whether political, religious or traditional, as well as for our armed forces as they try to grapple with the challenges of the economy, insecurity, leadership and governance.

"May the Christmas celebrations be our merriest and 2024 the happiest yet for all," it said.

***Kaduna: CAN calls for peaceful celebrations**

The Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), Kaduna State Chapter, has wished Nigerians 2023 happy Christmas celebrations.

The chapter played that Nigerians would be committed to observing the provisions of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and seek to live peacefully with one another.

Rev. John Joseph Hayab, the state chairman of CAN in a statement on Sunday in Kaduna, said, "CAN Kaduna state chapter wishes every Nigerian happy Christmas celebrations and earnestly pray that Nigerians will be committed to observing the provisions of the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and seek to live peacefully with one another."

According to Hayab, "Christmas celebration calls for sober reflection on the meaning of the birth of Jesus Christ as it brings hope to humankind. Accordingly, Nigerians, and people the world over, ought to learn the depth of the love of God for giving humankind His son to save individuals by being one another's keepers."

While people celebrate, he said that CAN prays for peaceful celebrations as people move from one place to another and hope that Nigerians all live as a family to confront any adversity that may destabilise the corporate existence of society.

As part of the Christmas wishes and the need for peaceful existence of Nigeria, CAN also admonished judges to remain neutral in all their judgments as justice exalts a nation, saying that the Holy book confirmed it.

Accordingly, CAN Kaduna State chapter called on judges at all levels to be

objective in all the pending governorship election judgments yet to be delivered.

He noted that the judgments to be rendered by judges at the Supreme Court should be in the spirit of fairness to all, bearing in mind that the sustenance of peace and unity of the country was paramount.

The judiciary, he observed that as it is nowadays, deserves total public trust and confidence than ever before, stressing that such trust can only be achieved by repositioning the delivery of justice aimed at building Nigerian democracy by strict observance of the rule of law, the core tenets of social equality.

The state chairman said that since Nigerians hold the Supreme Court in high esteem, the judges at the apex court should be seen to be independent to give the common man/woman hope while the judges ensure that justice is served irrespective of who is involved.

"Once the populace loses confidence in the judiciary, which is the bedrock of any democracy, it spells doom for such a nation," the statement explained.

The statement noted that it is the standpoint of CAN that for Nigeria to move forward in all spheres of life, the judiciary as a sub-system of the social system must progress into an institution which ensures the constitutionality of every decision.

***Continue to strive for peace, unity in Nigeria - Senator Alli charges**

The Senator representing Oyo South Senatorial District, Senator Sarafadeen Alli yesterday, asked Nigerians to continue to strive for peace and unity in the country particularly during these challenging times.

Senator Alli gave the charge in his Christmas message, signed by his Special Adviser on Media, Mr. Akeem Abas made available to journalists in Ibadan

The Senator while extending his felicitations to Christians across the country said Christmas serves as a reminder that the people must continually strive for peace and unity in our nation, particularly during these challenging times.

According to Senator Alli, Christmas serves as an ideal opportunity for all Nigerians to come together, irrespective of religious affiliations, and foster a sense of togetherness, compassion, and mutual understanding.

"At this special time, we reflect on the significance of Christmas - a season of generosity, kindness, and harmony.

Christmas embodies the essence of peace, love, and unity amongst all people, regardless of religion or ethnicity", he said.

Senator Alli added, "As we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, let us remember the values He espoused - love, compassion, selflessness, and empathy".

Stressing that Christmas serves as a time to share love and spread joy amongst themselves, strengthening the bond that holds us as a nation, Senator Alli acknowledged the immense contributions of Christians to the development of our nation.

According to him, their faith, dedication, and commitment to humanitarian endeavours have positively impacted countless lives within the communities they reside, adding that Christians should use this celebration as a time for deep reflection, strengthened faith, and renewed hope for a prosperous future.

While calling on all Nigerians to embrace the ideals of love, peace, and unity as they work collectively towards building a more inclusive as well as progressive society, the Senator wished all Christians a joyous and blessed Christmas celebration, hoping that the love as well as goodwill experienced during the season would extend beyond the festive period and permeate all aspects of their lives.

***Imbibe spirit of nation-building, Ododo charges Nigerians**

The Kogi State Governor-elect, Ahmed Usman Ododo has felicitated Christians on the occasion of the birth of Christ as he urged Nigerians to imbibe the spirit of nation building and sacrifice for the greatness of the nation.

Ododo, in a statement by his media office, described the commemoration of the birth of Christ is a period "for deep reflection on the need to think and act in manners that bring glory to our nation.

"It is Christmas and its significance to the Christians is immense. I rejoice with Christians and Nigerians on this auspicious period when we celebrate the birth of Christ and his service to humanity", Ododo said.

He stressed on the need for Nigerians to constantly remind themselves of the need to support the weak and provide for the needy in the society as a sign of hallmark Nigerians need to promote "our nation with the right policies and patriotic zeal".

"It is heartwarming that our party and our leader, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR, has shown immense and an unimpeachable commitment to

humanitarian activities by putting in place, deliberate policies to stamp out poverty and give the people meaningful livelihood", he said.

Drawing from the "Renewed Hope Agenda of our President and leader, His Excellency Alh. Yahaya Bello also worked with policies that have drastically reduced poverty in Kogi State."

The governor-elect promised to build on the legacies of Governor Yahaya Bello when he assumes the mantle of leadership of the state in a matter of days.

His words: "For eight years, we have watched at close quarters, an administration that has redefined the place of Kogi State in the national polity and which has been fair to all religions and ethnic divides.

"When we step into the big shoes in January, we shall build on these legacies. I have been hired by the people of Kogi State to be their servant. My team and I will serve with every sense of responsibility and iron-cast commitment to the development of the state".

"We will defend the interest of all ethnic and religious persuasions and foster an unbreakable bond among the people as a platform for prosperity and development." he said.

***Omo-Aje preaches hope at Christmas**

The National Chairman of Action Alliance (AA) party, Dr. Adegunle Rufai OmoAje has urged Christians and Nigerians, in the spirit of the Christmas celebration, to uphold the principles of love, tolerance, and sacrifice to sustain harmony, progress, and advance the cause of humanity.

He stated this in a message made available to the media in Kaduna on December 24, 2023.

The AA National Chairman felicitated the Christian faithful and Nigerians in general, as they joined the rest of the world in celebrating Christmas.

The frontline grassroots politician added that the Christmas season represents joy, peace, hope, love, and goodwill. He added that these qualities are very much needed "in our country at this time when we are confronted with the diverse challenges of development".

"I celebrate with the Christian fold and enjoin all of us to remember the essence of Christmas.

"In the true spirit of the season, let's show love to our neighbors, kindness to the less-privileged and vulnerable, and tolerance to one another across the lines of faith,

Continued on Page 4

Kano Political Tension: Sheikh Dahiru Bauchi Writes CJN

*Demands justice, fairness for Kano Electorate

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Head of Supreme Court's verdict on Kano State governorship election, popular Islamic cleric and a leading Tijjaniyya doctrine, Sheikh Dahiru Usman Bauchi, has advised the Chief Justice of Nigeria (CJN), Kayode Ariwoola, to ensure that the Kano governorship election petition is treated by the apex court with caution, justice and fairness.

This is as Kano remains the most politically volatile state in Nigeria, tension has continued to grow over the controversy of the state's governorship election petition.

The cleric in a letter addressed to Mr Ariwoola, which was stamped "received" by CJN's office, was released to journalists on Friday.

The letter described Kano as "commercial and religious centre of the entire Northern Nigeria," warning that a judgement against the will of the people could snowball into violence and killing of innocent souls because of volatility of the state.

"Kano State has since been the commercial and religious centre of the entire Northern Nigeria. It's pertinent therefore, that

peace, unity and order that have woven Nigeria together ever since the dark days of Nigerian civil wars should be maintained at all cost, no other time than now as the world undergoes economic turbulence," Mr Bauchi said.

The cleric said northern clerics, elders and populace would unanimously conclude that Kano people's vote was stolen if the Supreme Court uphold Appeal Court's verdict sacking Mr Yusuf, warning that "Nigeria cannot, at this moment, afford another civil war; which is mostly ignited from unattended agitations of the people."

"I therefore, write to reiterate that the proceedings of the review of the Appeal Court should be administered with utmost fairness and justice without fear nor favour against the will of the people explicitly expressed through their civic rights, so they may not feel their votes have been stolen nor swept away," Mr Bauchi said.

"Your Lordship, this indeed is the unanimous opinion of the scholars and clerics as well as the concern of the northern elders; above all, the view of the northern populace and Nigerians at large."

On Thursday, the Supreme Court reserved judgment in the appeal

filed by the NNPP seeking affirmation of its candidate, Abba Yusuf, as governor of Kano who was sacked by tribunal and appeal courts in a controversial judgement that was different from what was read in the open court.

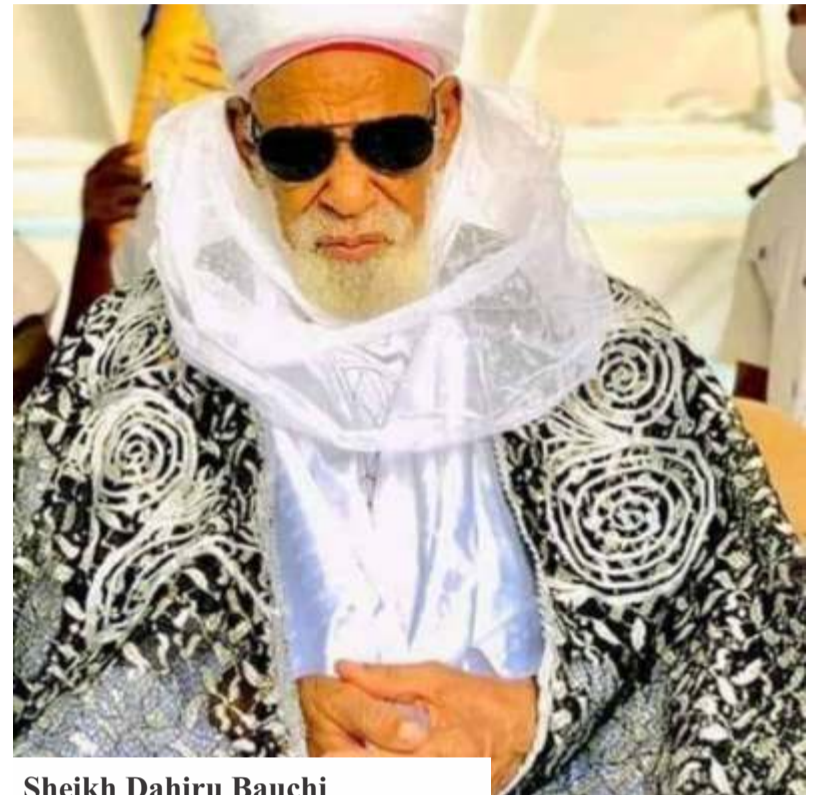
Sheikh Dahiru Bauchi's letter comes months after retired Justice Muhammad Dattijo, during his valedictory speech, made scathing remarks about the judiciary, explaining why Nigerians hate the judiciary.

Justice Dattijo, 70, echoed criticisms against the judiciary, lamenting that "public perceptions of the judiciary have over the years, become scornful and monstrously critical.

"It has been in the public space that court officials and judges are easily bribed by litigants to obviate delays and or obtain favourable judgments," he said.

It is a known fact that the integrity of judiciary is being put to test on Kano Election Petition as Nigerians believe that the ruling party APC is desperate to take the over the state from the New Nigeria Peoples Party.

Many notable personalities including former President, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, Chairman Northern Elders Forum, Prof. Ango Abdullahi, former NBA President, Akpata,



Sheikh Dahiru Bauchi

former presidential running mate, Mike Ahamba, SAN and a host of others have spoken on need to ensure justice prevails in the case of Kano to save the image of the judiciary.

Similarly, Yoruba Community in Kano and their counterparts, Hausa Community in the South West have cried out calling on the Yoruba traditional leaders to intervene by counselling President Bola Ahmed Tinubu not to interfere into the Kano

case, otherwise, the situation could be regrettable.

It would be recalled the spate of protests and counter protests in recent days, where members of the New Nigeria People's Party (NNPP) and that of All Progressives Congress (APC) had colluded after the controversy surrounding the certified true copy of the appeal court judgement.

Christmas: ACF Laments Nigeria's Economic Woes, Growing Insecurity

politics, and ethnicity; in the spirit of the unique sacrifice and the teachings of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

"I urge fellow Nigerians to appropriate the hope that comes with Christmas and reinvest trust in God's ability to restore the lost glory of Nigeria."

He equally admonished Nigerians to reflect on the lessons of the period and emulate Christ by fostering peace and unity in our Nation.

OmoAje also tasked Nigerians with religious tolerance "since it is one way we as citizens can live in peace, harmony, and love as taught by Jesus Christ, who is the reason for the season.

"More importantly, as we observe Christmas this year, let us all imbibe the essential message of Christ's ministry and truly begin to love our fellow Nigerians as we love ourselves," He added

*Anglican Bishop tells FG be sincere BAYOAKAMO Ibadan

The Bishop, Ibadan North Anglican Diocese, Rt Reverend Williams Aladekugbe on Sunday charged Government be sincere with Nigerians.

Rt Reverend Aladekugbe who gave the charge in his Christmas day message

entitled "Significance of Christmas" also advised Nigerians to keep their hopes and dreams alive and celebrate this year's Christmas season in moderation.

The Bishop declared that there is the need for the government at all levels to walk their talk in making life more beautiful for the citizens, saying, "We equally appeal to the Federal government to make good its electioneering campaign promises of making life more better for the people".

"The Government must be sincere with us. The government must be considerate in their politics, actions and decisions by walking the talks. Frivolous spending should be avoided," he said.

Rt Reverend Aladekugbe added, "Our appeal to Mr. President is that he should fulfil his campaign promises to us. He told us to put our mind to rest that everything will be fine".

He emphasized that the people need not punish themselves due to their inability to achieve certain dreams or desires between the last celebration and today's, adding that people need not to because of the current hardship dabble into crime and evil but show gratitude to God and love towards one another in the spirit of the season.

"My advice for Nigerians at this season is that we should do things moderately. If there is anything we cannot achieve before Christmas this year, there will always be another Christmas. We should not be involved in evil or dabbling into crimes. We should adopt cost cutting measures as a way of addressing the current economic challenges in the Country."

He stressed that Christians celebrate "Christmas each year to show their gratitude to God for what He did, to remember the birth of Jesus Christ by giving gifts, worshipping Him and thinking of the poor and less fortunate" and that "Christmas reminds us of the Saviour who gives us salvation (Matt. 1: 23). Christmas should be celebrated to reflect the reason(s) Jesus came into our world. To erase the curse of sin, to bring salvation to man and to restore us back to God. We should reflect on our relationship with God and our neighbours. On why the season is celebrated, he said "Christmas is an annual festival commemorating the birth of Jesus Christ, observed primarily on December 25 as a religious and cultural celebration among billions of people around the world.

"Christmas is celebrated to remember the

birth of Jesus Christ, who is the Son of God. The name 'Christmas' comes from the Mass of Christ (or Jesus). A Mass service (which is sometimes called Communion or Eucharist) is where Christians remember that Jesus died for us and then came back to life. Because Christmas is about the birth of God's Son – Jesus. It is about how He came to give us love, hope, and joy. That message doesn't change from year to year. When there is so much bad news and devastation in the world, this is good news worth celebrating.

He noted, "We celebrate Christmas because of the following: birth of Jesus Christ, spreading love and goodwill, cultural traditions, festive decorations and lights, family bonding, joy of giving, holiday feasts and treats, magical atmosphere, season of reflection and renewal as well as global celebration."

Rt Reverend Aladekugbe stressed "Christmas reminds us of the importance of giving and sharing with friends and family. Through Christmas, we know that the birth of the Lord Jesus is symbolic of new beginnings. It is an opportunity to think about nature and the reason for our existence".

Yuletide: Patients, Healthcare Volunteers Jubilate As Foundation Visits Kaduna Hospitals



Visits to hospitals in Kaduna photos

providing essential services to the community. As a gesture of gratitude, the foundation made a generous donation to support the volunteers' ongoing efforts. The positive impact of Caleb Danladi's visits resonated throughout the hospital communities. Patients and staff alike were moved by the CEO's genuine compassion and the foundation's commitment to making a difference. The holiday festivities brought smiles,

laughter, and a renewed sense of hope to those in the midst of challenging circumstances.

Caleb Danladi's exemplary actions have inspired admiration and emulation within the community. His dedication to making a positive impact has sparked a wave of generosity among locals, encouraging them to consider how they, too, can contribute to the well-being of their neighbors and community.

Beyond the festive season, the Caleb Danladi Foundation remains steadfast in its commitment to community welfare. The CEO expressed a dedication to ongoing initiatives that uplift and support the community, ensuring that the spirit of giving remains a constant force for positive change.

The community has responded with overwhelming gratitude and praise for Caleb Danladi and the Caleb Danladi Foundation. Social media platforms have been abuzz with messages of appreciation, showcasing the profound impact of their collective efforts on the lives of those touched by this Christmas initiative.

As the Christmas season unfolds in Kwoi, Jaba LGA, Caleb Danladi's visits to local hospitals and the generosity extended to healthcare volunteers stand as a testament to the transformative power of compassion.

The CEO's dedication to spreading joy and making a difference serves as an enduring reminder that, during the holiday season and beyond, individuals and organizations can come together to create a brighter, more compassionate world.

By: ACHADU GABRIEL, Kaduna

In a shining example of philanthropy and community spirit, Caleb Danladi, the esteemed CEO of the Caleb Danladi Foundation, embarked on a heartwarming Christmas mission to uplift the spirits of patients and honour healthcare volunteers in Kwoi, Jaba Local Government Area of Kaduna state. The foundation's journey touched the lives of those at Child Welfare Kwoi, General Hospital Kwoi, ECWA Clinic Kwoi, and Godiya Hospital Kwoi, leaving behind a trail of joy and gratitude.

Caleb Danladi, known for his commitment to community welfare, visited patients in five hospitals, imparting the magic of Christmas through personal interactions and thoughtful gestures.

His presence coupled with festive decorations and holiday treats, transformed hospital rooms into spaces filled with warmth and hope, providing solace to those facing health challenges during the holiday season.

Recognizing the dedication and selflessness of hospital community volunteers, the Caleb Danladi Foundation engaged in meaningful dialogues with these unsung heroes. The foundation expressed heartfelt appreciation for the invaluable contributions of these volunteers, acknowledging their pivotal role in



CEO Caleb Danladi Foundation visits patients, honour healthcare volunteers in Kaduna hospitals



Fadojoe

Christmas: There Will Be Dawn Of A New Day For Nigeria - Fadojoe

By; MIKE ODEH JAMES, Kaduna

Comrade Faduri Oluwadare Joseph aka Fadojoe, the leader of Rescue The Vulnerable Initiative aka Rescue Movement For New Nigeria and a former presidential aspirant under Labour Party, has said no matter the thickness of the night there will be the dawning of a new day for Nigeria and the country will take her place of pride again among the Comity of Nations.

This was contained in his Christmas message to Nigerians made available to pressmen.

While wishing Nigerians a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year in advance, the activist noted that as the year is ending, there is need for reminiscence on the political situation in the year 2023 in our dear country, Nigeria.

He stressed that, "the year, 2023 started with a ray of hope as in February Nigerians were enthusiastic in electing new leaders that they hope will bring positive change to the nation and lift Nigeria gradually out of

the gulf of political and social-economy downturn the nation has been plugged into over the years, but unfortunately as the new administration took over power, the country is nosediving deeper as economy is crashing more, Naira on free fall, cost of everything on the rise, yet our political leaders are still spending lavishly and borrowing to finance their extravagant cost of governance.

"However, no matter the situation we still have reasons to give thanks to God, if not for anything, at least for life: that you and I, are still in the land of the living. And certainly there is always light at the end of the tunnel and there is no thickness of the night that can prevent the dawning of a new day.

"So let us be hopeful that Nigeria will rise again and take her place among the comity of nations.

"Merry Christmas to you all and Happy New Year in advance from all of us at Rescue The Vulnerable Initiative aka Rescue Movement For New Nigeria", he concluded.

ETHICS MAGAZINE: Dare Osunkojo Emerges PEARL 2023, Man Of Year

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

The Chief executive officer, Kaniz Homes, Abuja, Dr Dare Ayodele Osunkojo has been named the recipient of this year's PEARL award.

This was made known in a brief ceremony organised by the management of The Ethics Magazine. PEARL (an acronym for Person of Ethics And Rare Leadership).

Speaking on behalf of management team of the Ethics, Tobi Adisa said the decision to name Dr Osunkojo as PEARL of the year is based on his extraversion personality and humane disposition. Mr Adisa stressed "now

that the Country is experiencing unremitting decline in moral values, the recognition award will goad the recipient to do more and make others to follow suit"

He maintained that Dr Osunkojo flaunts high ethical standing both in noble deeds and temperate mannerism and that "the recipient this year is a moral compass who always provides a shoulder for others to lean on."

The personality recognition award which comes annually from the stable of the Initiative for Ethics and values Orientation, publishers of the Ethics magazine is a way to appreciate high

Ethics ratings and compliance, thus promoting well ordered society.

Dr Dare Osunkojo hails from Ibadan, Oyo state and has been a developer of Kaniz Homes. His watchword is to offer quality homes at a very modest cost so that housing for all will not be a pipe dream.

Doctor Ayodele osunkojo has a cognate experience in real estate management and construction. He established the firm of Adeniyi Osunkojo associates, an arm of his father's business in Abuja, where he is, currently a partner.

For the sake of emphasis, Kaniz construction has

built over five thousand houses in abuja and it's environs and is currently expanding to lagos and oyo state while plans are underway to build a minimum of 55,000 houses in 5years within Nigeria.

Dr. Dare Osunkojo is a member and fellow of several professional bodies. He is happily married and blessed with kids.

Other past PEARL awardees in the last fifteen years of the magazine as Adisa highlighted, include, Engineer Amuche Gabriel, Sir Peter Aliu, Mohammed Bogueie Attah, Madam ifueko Omoigui Okauru, Barrister Mike Ozekhome (SAN) among others.

Professor Gwarzo Is Generous - Registrar, Council Of Nursing, Midwifery Of Nigeria

By ; I M R A N A ABDULLAHI, Kaduna

In the interest of Nursing and midwifery education, Professor Adamu Abubakar Gwarzo, the President of the Group of MAAUN Universities has earned praise for his generosity and esteemed reputation.

Dr. Faruq Umar Abubakar, the Secretary-General/Registrar of the Council of Nursing and Midwifery of Nigeria, commended Professor Gwarzo's benevolent nature during an interaction with journalists at the 11th induction/oath-taking ceremony for foreign-trained graduates. The induction was held at the Twin Lecture Theatre of the Maryam Abacha American University in Kano on December 14, 2023.

The 340 inductees came from seventeen (17) countries where Maryam Abacha American University, Maradi in the Republic of Niger, accounts for 212.

Dr Faruq said; "Prof Gwarzo respected us and we saw that in his action, he honoured us. The arrangement and plans we see for the induction were not far from that of Abuja".



He said from now, henceforth, the induction of the foreign-trained graduates will be taken to the various parts of the country.

He appreciated Maryam Abacha American University for organizing this year's induction.

Dr Faruq emphasized the need for the inductees to use their knowledge to bring positive societal change and encouraged them to serve humanity

with dedication.

He called on the inductees to uphold a high standard of care and professionalism in the nursing profession, addressing any negative perceptions and ensuring that society recognizes the profession as dedicated to helping humanity.

"Use your knowledge wisely to bring positive change to the society. Your patient doesn't differentiate a nurse and

non-nurse. Society laid complaints against nurses, change the negative perceptions. Treat the patients well", he emphasized.

Professor Gwarzo announced the awarding of free scholarships at the Master's level to the best inductees, showcasing his commitment to education and the development of skilled professionals in the field.

Gombe Governor Signs N208.064bn 2024 'Budget Of Continuity, Consolidation'

*State Lawmakers applaud Governor Inuwa Yahaya over 2023 budget performance

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Gombe State Governor, Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya CON, has signed the Gombe State 2024 Appropriation Bill into law amounting to Two Hundred and Eight Billion, Sixty-Four Million Naira (N208,064,000,000.00) as passed by the Gombe State House of Assembly.

According to a statement signed by the Director-General (Press Affairs) Government House Gombe, Ismaila Uba Misilli, the signing of the budget was performed by the Governor on Friday at a brief ceremony held at the Council Chamber of the Government House, Gombe.

The House of Assembly has increased the budget size by Three Hundred Million Naira (N300,000,000.00) from the

initial proposal submitted by Governor Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya, which was Two Hundred and Seven Billion, Seven Hundred and Fifty Million, Two Hundred Thousand Naira (N207,750,200,000.00).

The break down of the budget indicates an allocation of 58% for capital expenditure and 42%, for recurrent, indicating a rise in the capital expenditure for the first time in the budget of the state.

Performing the ceremony, Governor Inuwa Yahaya commended the lawmakers for the expeditious passage of the appropriation bill, appreciating the longstanding collaboration between the executive and legislative arms, particularly in maintaining the January to December budget cycle.

“Let me commend the leadership and members of the House of

Assembly, especially the House Committee on Appropriations for the enormous work done to ensure the expeditious passage of the appropriation bill. The speedy passage of the bill reaffirmed the harmonious relationship between the executive and the legislative arms”, the Governor said.

“Since our assumption of office during our first tenure in 2019, the House of Assembly has always been cooperative. The lawmakers have never failed to act on our requests for passage of annual or supplementary budgets, and on all other requests that needed the approval of the House. We are grateful for the support of the House to our leadership”, the Governor added.

Governor Inuwa further emphasized his commitment to continued synergy with the

lawmakers towards providing effective leadership for the betterment of the citizen and fostering economic development and prosperity in the state.

He said the 2024 budget, tagged 'Budget of Continuity and Consolidation' will leverage on the gains of the previous budgets, maintaining that the Appropriation Act has resources allocated for increased infrastructure, enhanced healthcare services, improved education, human capital development, and job creation, among other priorities.

Speaking at the event, the Speaker of the Gombe State House of Assembly, Rt.Hon. Mohammed Abubakar Luggerewo, commended Governor Inuwa Yahaya on the 2023 budget performance, assuring continued legislative support to ensure that the 2024 budget surpasses that of the 2023

in terms of performance.

“As we present the approved 2023 appropriation bill for the Governor's assent, I want to express the gratitude of all Honorable Members of the State House of Assembly to His Excellency for the budget items. The budget reflects the Governor's commitment to the well-being of Gombe people. It is based on this that we recognize crucial areas needing attention and augmented the budget by 300 million Naira”, the Speaker remarked.

The Deputy Governor, Dr. Manassah Daniel Jatau, lawmakers, the Secretary to the State Government, Prof. Ibrahim Abubakar Njodi, Head of Service, Alh. Ahmed Kasimu Abdullahi, Commissioners and other top government functionaries were also at the Council Chamber to witness the signing of the budget.



Nasarawa NYCN Appoints Acting Chair, Writes Govt, Security Agencies

By; SAMSON YAKI, Laia

The Nasarawa State chapter of the National Youth Council of Nigeria (NYCN) has appointed Comrade Alhassan Mohammed Nasir as its acting chairman with immediate effect.

This follows the suspension of the substantive Chairman, Comrade Ja'afar Muhammad Loko over allegations of misappropriation and lack of accountability in the management of council's funds, running into millions.

These were the decisions taken on Wednesday December 20 at the end-of-the-year congress of the association, held at the Abacha Youth Centre, Lafia.

In a communique on Thursday, the council also said a 9-man committee has been constituted to investigate all the allegations levied against the suspended chairman.

Alhassan was mandated to preside over the affairs of the council pending when

the investigation would be concluded.

Similarly, the council in a letter briefed the state government and security agencies on the new development and advised Comrade Loko to desist forthwith from parading himself as chairman pending the outcome of investigation.

The letter was jointly signed by Muhammad Akaro Liman, Santos Dandos, Lamino Ishaq and Barrister Samuel John Attah, the Vice Chairman (Nasarawa South), Vice Chairman (Nasarawa North), Chairman of Local Chapters and the Legal Adviser of the Council respectively.

They commended the present administration for giving the youth a sense of belonging and assured of their continued support and unflinching loyalty in order to enjoy more dividends of democracy.

Meanwhile, a member of the council, Comrade Musa Salihu has dismissed the suspension as illegal, stating that due process was not followed.

First Lady, Remi Tinubu, Gifts 100,000 Each To 250 Elderly Persons In Nasarawa

By; SAMSON YAKI, Lafia

The first Lady of Nigeria, Mrs Oluremi Tinubu has given the sum of one hundred thousand Naira each to about 250 elderly persons in Nasarawa State as part of the activities of the Renewed Hope Initiative Elderly Support Scheme.

The First Lady, who disclosed this, Thursday, in Lafia, said the gesture was borne out of a steadfast commitment to well-being of the elderly.

Represented by the wife of the Deputy Governor of Nasarawa State, Mrs Shela Tosan-Akabe, Mrs Tinubu said that the scheme was designed to support elderly citizens aged 65 and above in all the 36 states of the federation and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja.

"The beneficiaries were carefully selected from the 774 Local Government Areas (LGAs) across the country and each beneficiaries will get ₦100,000.

The first lady expressed

optimism that the support would go a long way to cushion the effect of the economic situation and alleviate the burdens of the elderly during this festive period.

She further explained that ₦250 million was approved by the Governing Board of the Renewed

Hope Initiative and every state and the FCT would get their own for onward disbursement to beneficiaries.

Also speaking, Silifat Sule, wife of Nasarawa governor, lauded the nation's first lady for the gesture.

Mrs Sule said the gesture was unique as it targeted the elderly in the society that were often forgotten.

She said that the



Senator Oluremi Tinubu

beneficiaries were carefully selected from the 13 local government areas across the state.

The governor's wife also called on the beneficiaries to use the money judiciously for their benefit and that of their loved ones.

In her remarks, Aisha Rufai, Nasarawa State Commissioner for Women Affairs and Social Development, commended the First Lady

for the support at this time.

The commissioner said that modalities had been put in place to ensure that the beneficiaries got their monies directly and not through a third party.

Responding on behalf of the beneficiaries, Mariam Rabi'u, expressed gratitude to the first lady for the gesture.

She prayed God to bless her and for the success of the her husband's administration.

DSS Akwa Ibom Command Honours 21 Personnel

By; PATRICK TITUS, Uyo

The Department of State Security Services (DSS), Akwa Ibom State Command has gifted Awards of Excellence to 21 officers of the command for distinguishing themselves in service delivery to the state.

Presenting the awards during the 2023 End of Year Party, organised by the Command on Wednesday at its headquarters in Uyo, the State Director of DSS, Mohammad Kaumi said the personnel so honoured were selected across the various departments of the command having distinguished themselves in various roles in the year ended 2023.

Kaumi, who appreciated God for His benevolence upon the Command, said that, the activities throughout the year have been lauded. He stressed that throughout the general elections period, the Service did not have any casualty that could lead to loss of personnel.

The State Director, who commended the Akwa Ibom State for providing enabling environment for the command to operate, also described the synergy between the sister security agencies in the state as cordial, hence the success recorded within the year under review.

Commenting on the service awards, the State Governor, Pastor Umo Eno attributed it to the cordial working relationship existing

between the State Director of the Command and the Staff.

Governor Eno, who was represented on the event by his Commissioner for Internal Security and Waterways, Brig. General Koko Essien also attributed the national security rating of Akwa Ibom as one of the safest states in the country to the synergy between the intelligence community and operational community in the state.

"When we talk about Akwa Ibom being one of safest States in Nigeria, I like to also say that it comes out of the fact that there's a very strong synergy between intelligence community and operational community. This, I mean among the State

Commanders and Service Chiefs in Akwa Ibom State who always work tirelessly to provide best intelligence that enhances each other's duties in the State." Governor Eno said.

The Governor pledged that the state government would continue support to the security agencies in the state to provide the needed services of ensuring a crime free society for all.

Goodwill messages were delivered other invited guests. Among whom were the State Director of Center for Human Rights and Accountability Network (CHRAN), Otuekong Franklin Isong and Paramount of Uyo, HRM, Sylvanus Okon as well as from the other Security Service Chiefs in the State.



Comrade Alhassan Mohammed Nasir
New Acting Chairman

Zone 2 Police Arrests 3 Suspected Human Hearts Harvesters

By: RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

At least, three suspected human hearts harvesters have been apprehended by police operatives attached to Zone 2 Command.

The suspects, identified as Moshood Najimdeen, Adebajo Wasiu and Segun Asunni were reportedly in possession of two human hearts at the time of their arrest.

It was learnt that Najimdeen was arrested in his house at Oke-Ola area of Ago-Iwoye, with two suspected human hearts discovered during a search at his residence.

The Zonal Police Public Relations Officer (ZPPRO), SP

Ayuba Tunni Umma, in a statement on Thursday, said during interrogation, the suspect implicated one Wasiu whom he claimed to have paid fifty thousand Naira to assist him in obtaining the two human hearts.

According to the statement, Wasiu in turn pointed at one Asunni as the source of the hearts.

It added that investigation had however, commenced into the alleged offence, while the two suspected human hearts have been sent to Lagos State University Teaching Hospital (LASUTH) for thorough examination and confirmation, while further findings would be made public.

Meanwhile, the Assistant Inspector General of Police, AIG Ari Muhammed Ali has implored residents to remain vigilant and promptly report any form of unwholesome activities in their respective areas to the nearest Police formation within their locality.

In a similar vein, the Zone 2, command has charged Lagos and Ogun states, Commanders of all Tactical Units as well as officers and men serving in the command to beef up security around worship centers, shopping malls, tourist centers, market places, commercial centers, social gatherings, residential areas.

Others include; high-ways, motor parks and garages, train stations and bus terminals, also

critical national assets as well as government and privately-owned property within their areas of jurisdictions and to also ensure free-flow of traffic before, during and after the Christmas and New Year celebrations.

The AIG also urges residents on the importance of reporting any suspicious activities that could compromise security as he assures maximum security throughout the Yuletide period.



Olubadan To Community Baales: Stop Indiscriminate Sales Of Land

By: BAYOAKAMO, Ibadan

The Olubadan of Ibadanland, Oba Lekan Balogun has warned Ibadan community Baales against indiscriminate sales of land in their domains.

Oba Balogun handed down the warning on Thursday, during the presentation visit of the newly inaugurated executive committee of the Baales under the aegis of Association of Traditional Baales, Ibadan in his Alarere residence.

He emphasized that this became necessary to avoid selling away the long held heritage of the ancient metropolis to people without roots and who are not out for genuine growth and development of Ibadanland.

The Olubadan stressed that the Baales must be conscious of the responsibility their respective positions confer on them and use such to protect the interest of the current and unborn generations of Ibadanland.

"We can all see what goes around our metropolis how virtually all the elitist areas are being converted to business hubs, we must guide against such in our villages. If at all it becomes imperative to sell any land in our domains, we must be sure of the purpose for which the land is being bought and the true identity of the buyer", he said.

Oba Balogun added, "Our land is our heritage which must be jealously guarded. We inherited land from our forebears, if they had sold the land off, what could we have inherited?"

"As noted earlier, whatever land we want to sell now must be for developmental purpose and from which our children can derive long lasting benefits".

Speaking further, Oba Balogun described the Baales as his undisputable ambassadors in their respective domains said he's in full support of whatever step they might take in ensuring that peace reigns in their localities, stressing that it is when they engage in those things that are less dignifying and bereft of nobility that he would frown at them.

The Chairman of the Association and the Baale of Olohunde Ige in Oluyole Local Government, Baale Bamitale Ige said the newly inaugurated executive committee under his leadership had taken note of some of the challenges confronting the people in their



localities and ready to confront them with all their might.

Baale Ige specifically mentioned the issue of insecurity, primarily induced by the activities of herdsmen, who engage in kidnapping and violent clashes with the farmers, a development he said had threatened means of

livelihood of the people and engender food scarcity in the metropolis, saying, "we are not sleeping over this serious matter and we are going to ensure the problem is tackled".

He sought for the cooperation and support of Olubadan in addressing and resolving land

disputes in their localities as the eyes and ears of His Imperial Majesty, adding, "we want to seek for Your Majesty's authority to handle land disputes in our respective domains as your able representatives and we want to assure Your Majesty of quality representation in that regard".



COMMUNITY FOCUS

Over 6,000 Adamawa Constituents Benefit From Boya's Palliative Distribution Of Food, Other Items

*Over two thousand bags of rice, noodles, oil, seasonings distributed

By: TOM GARBA, Yola

The House of Representatives Lawmaker, Hon (Barr) Aliyu Wakili Boya have distributed food and non food items to over six thousand Adamawa constituents.

Boya on Saturday, gave over two thousand bags of rice, noodles, oil, seasonings as non food items. Beddings to include blankets, mat, mattresses and beds. Others are wrappers, Yards for men are some of the clothing the Lawmaker shared on Saturday at his Yola residence.

Boya who is the Chairman House Committee on police Institutions, also distributed building materials, including cement, roofing sheets and nails.

Boya who is representing the Federal constituency of Fofure and Song, brought together hundreds of people in various needs and assure them of better, enhanced and people-oriented representation.

The event was witnessed by many All Progressives Congress (APC) (stakeholders) across the 21 local government areas, including the state working committee (SWC).

Some of the beneficiaries passed vote of confidence on Boya's style of representation.

Bara'u Usman who is a single mother, praised Boya for representing the Federal constituency well.

Usman who got a mattress and a blanket, prayed that Boya to excel much more than he is.

Mallam Daputo Song, a critical stakeholder in Adamawa, said Boya has touched the heart of many people in diverse of recent.

He recalled how he fought for the establishment of higher institutions in the two local government areas (Fofure and Song) he is representing, in his few months in office as an elected lawmaker.

"What else do you need from a leader? He is intelligent, hard working, a lobbyist and experienced grassroots politician. We can do all we need to do, to lifting up his political dreams," Daputo said.



Gov Yahaya Bello Presents Ambulances, Fire Fighting Vans To All LGAs, Gives Judges, Legislators SUVs

By: ADEBOYE ADO, Akure
Governor Yahaya Bello of Kogi State has presented 25 ambulances to all the local government areas of the state and some tertiary institutions as well as fire fighting vans to the state's Fire Service in Lokoja.

These is part of efforts to further aid the smooth functioning of the state's health sector adjudged as one of the best in the country currently, in line with the State government's prioritisation of the sector and to enable quicker handling of emergencies.

The governor also presented 40 SUV cars and four Hilux vans to the state's lawmakers and judges at a brief ceremony on Friday, in Lokoja, the state capital.

Governor Bello stressed that the

autonomy granted to the legislature and Local Government was geared towards service delivery, noting that the Judiciary, Legislature and Local Governments had enjoyed their autonomy under his administration.

He said, "Today we can boast of a reference specialist hospital in Okene, that has been adjudged the best in Sub Saharan Africa. The Ambulances would help attend to emergencies within the shortest possible time towards an efficient health care delivery.

"We have made the health need of our people top priority under our administration, reason the 2024 budget is basically aimed at employment generation for health care providers and consolidation of the available

infrastructure that has made us reference in north central Nigeria.

"It is also our avowed determination to ensure that our judicial officers are provided with the needed means to make them deliver justice without fear or favour," he said.

"Over the years, we have witnessed some fire incidences that could have been averted but for want of the necessary equipment. It is our determination that henceforth, we will, with the provision of the fire service vehicles, fight fire incidences promptly and efficiently," the Governor added.

Governor Bello assured the people of the State that his administration would continue to offer the necessary intervention

that would improve the well-being of the people, assuring that his efforts would be witnessed till the last minutes of his administration.

In his remarks, the Speaker, Kogi State House of Assembly, Rt Hon. Umar Aliyu, commended the unwavering commitment of Governor Yahaya Bello to delivering quality services to the people of the State.

"You have proven to be an advocate of the well-being and welfare of the legislators. The Assembly members have witnessed unprecedented support under your leadership in improving on our productivity," he noted.

In his goodwill message, the Commissioner For Health in Kogi State, Dr. Usman Zakari,

said, following a baseline and needs assessment carried out in 2018, the present administration of Governor Bello employed over 3000 health workers and improved on the infrastructure in all health institutions.

He described Governor Bello as a game changer in the state's health Sector.

"You have procured ambulances for all the Local Government areas. This gesture has provided the opportunity to prevent maternal death and to be able to transport patients, for emergency, for linkages and referrals," he stated.

The Chief Judge (CJ) of the state, Justice Josiah Mejabi, thanked the governor for considering the welfare of judges as paramount towards enhanced judicial service to the people of the state.



Commander General of NHFSS, Amb. Dr. Joshua W. Osatimehin presents award of experience to Minister of Defence Mohammed Badaru Abubakar during the CG's led the Senior Officers paid a working visit to the later at his office in Abuja. Photo: BASHIR BELLO, DOLLARS



Alia Set To Tackle Benue Housing Challenges In 2024

By; ARCHIBONG ESUENE, Makurdi

Benue State Government has reiterated her readiness to address infrastructure decay including housing challenges confronting the state in 2024 budget.

The State Commissioner for Works and Housing, Mr Isaac Imojime disclosed this during an interaction with journalists in Makurdi.

He informed journalists that from the beginning of

next year, the state government would give serious attention to serious infrastructure development.

According to the Commissioner, Governor Alia led government is only interested in projects that have direct bearing on the lives of the people which includes, roads and housing.

The Works and Housing Commissioner who called on media practitioners in the state to sustain their support for the

government, described 2024 as a year of projects execution in Benue State.

Mr Imojime further stated that equally within six months in the life of the Alia administration, the people of the state have started counting achievements recorded by the government which includes road construction, provision of street lights in Makurdi, provision of buses to ease transportation problem and registration of WAEC and NECO examinations

for Benue students among others.

He said the people of the state did not make any mistake by voting the man of God, Fr. Alia to power, adding that governor Alia was interested in ensuring that all that went wrong were corrected for the general in of all irrespective of political, religious or ethnic divide.

"If the state government could achieve all these in few months, you can imagine what the government will do in one year",

Yuletide: Delta Police Deploys Massively, Assures Residents Of Adequate Security



By; UTEBOR PETER, Asaba

The police in Delta State has deployed massively ahead of Yuletide, assuring residents of the state adequate security.

The Commissioner of Police of Delta State, CP Wale Abass ordered massive deployment of Police personnel across the length and breadth of the state to provide sufficient security before, during, and after the Yuletide celebration.

This was disclosed in a statement signed and forwarded to journalists in the state by the Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), DSP Bright Edefe on Saturday.

According to the statement, "the Commissioner of Police, Delta State, CP Abas has directed that all Area Commanders, Divisional Police Officers, and Tactical Commanders, should deploy their men to guarantee the safety of all state citizens and the success of all the celebration-related events planned.

He said during his address, the CP stated that, "the police would be undertaking operations throughout the state, focusing on visible policing at all celebration locations, particularly shopping centers and other resort areas. Similarly, the police will focus on special crime awareness and prevention operations, as well as targeting crimes common over the festive season.

"Conclusively, CP Wale urges members of the public to remain alert and aware of their surroundings at all times to avoid being easy prey for crooks who may want to take advantage of this period, which is typically marked by social gatherings and festivities. "He further advised the public to be law-abiding, and also nurture an active participation in community policing, so that they can be instrumental to the police in the fight against crime during the Festive Season and beyond," the statement said.



The recovered assault rifles

Police Raids Katsina Criminal Den, Recovers Assault Rifles

By; SULAIMAN AHMED MISAU, Katsina

Katsina State Police Command has successfully raided criminal hideout at Yar'Gamji Village in Kankara Local Government Area of the state and recovered assault rifles.

Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO) of the Command, Assistant Superintendent of Police

(ASP), Abubakar Sadiq Aliyu said, "On Thursday, December 21, 2023, in a major raid operation carried out at Yargoje Town, Kankara LGA, by operatives attached to Kankara Divisional Police Headquarters, a criminal hideout in Yar Gamji village was raided, resulting in the neutralisation of notorious criminal gang activities within the area."

Assistant Superintendent

of Police, Sadiq Aliyu explained that, the raid operation, carried out with utmost precision and determination, led to a fierce shootout between the command's operatives and the hoodlums.

Consequently, ASP Aliyu said the Katsina state Police Command succeeded in recovering "two (2) AK-47 rifles, two (2) locally made guns, and five AK-47 magazines." Furthermore, he said two

(2) of the magazines were found to be fully loaded with fifty-nine (59) rounds of 7.62mm calibre live ammunition.

According to ASP, Abubakar Sadiq Aliyu the success of the operation has effectively rendered the criminal activities in the area incapacitated, as relentless efforts are underway to track down and apprehend the fleeing suspects as the investigation proceeds.

How Zero Dose Impacted Unimmunized Eligible

By: MUSTAPHASAYE

It is a undeniable facts that about 2.2 million eligible children have never received a single dose of antigens of routine immunization and many pregnant mothers have not visited health facilities for antenatal and this has posed serious danger to their lives. Farar Kasa and neighboring settlements in Kwassallo Ward of Soba LGA of Kaduna State are among the places that encountered such issues and it was for this reason, UNICEF as one of the strongest development partners took it upon itself

through zero dose activity to resolve this menace and ensure no single child is left out unvaccinated. The zero dose out reach in Farar Kasa in Kwassallo Ward of Soba Local Government was a colourful occasion as many pregnant mothers and unimmunized children took the advantage of the event to be immunized as the programme covered nutrition, routine immunization, people suffered tuberculosis disease and all other ailments benefited. Malam Habibu Suleman, the village head of Kwassallo

applauded UNICEF for the kind gesture of choosing Farar Kasa, noting that Farar Kasa is one of the hard to reach and many caregivers and pregnant mothers lack access to visiting health facilities, especially during raining season and this has caused loss of lives, particularly women. With this development, it is a step forward as he will continue to encourage his subjects to visit health facilities against all odds. "I want to categorically thank UNICEF for breaking this barrier for initiating such a laudable programme and we will

not relent towards following up," he said. Also speaking during the event, Chairman of Soba Local Government Area, Abdulmumini Bawa who was represented by the council secretary, Barrister Hamisu Hamza, appreciated UNICEF for choosing Soba as one of the local government areas that benefited from zero dose, saying that it will go a long way in reducing the menace of unimmunized children and lack of attending antenatal care by expectant mothers. "We have noted the significant

contribution of UNICEF in areas of health education, water and sanitation and we have to complement," he said. It was observed that no fewer than 150 eligible children and high number of pregnant mothers were vaccinated during the outreach, apart from other medical services rendered. The dignitaries that attended the zero dose in Farar Kasa include, UNICEF Deputy Representative Programme, Chief Operation and Chief of Field Officers. Other are, Dr. Gerida Brukilla who is heading UNICEF C Field.



Benue Police Command Deploys Adequate Personnel For Christmas

By; ARCHIBONG ESUENE, Makurdi

The Commissioner of Police, Benue State Command, CP. George Chuku has ordered the deployment of police officers across the state in readiness for Christmas and New Year celebrations.

The Police boss gave the directive while meeting with all Area Commanders, Divisional Police Officers and Tactical Commanders at

the State Police Command, Makurdi.

He warned all officers to ensure security of lives and property within their area of responsibility, by ensuring that they secure all entry and exit routes through patrol and monitoring.

The Benue Police boss advised them to constantly carry out intensive motorised patrols of government facilities, religious centres, parks and densely populated

areas where people go for celebrate.

Speaking further, the Police Commissioner who warned seriously against the sale and use of 'Knockouts,' called on traditional rulers, religious leaders, guidance to warn their children/ wards to refrain from such practices.

Displaying masquerades during the festivities are, the Benue Police Command advised to be

very careful so that they won't infringe on other people's rights.

In a statement made available to New Nigerian in Makurdi and signed by SP Anene Sewuese Catherine, Police Public Relations Officer of the Command, assured residents of Command commitment to secure the state while providing emergency Police numbers for ease of communication.



Emir Of Kano Sympathizes With Kaduna Govt Over Drone Attack In Tudun Biri

By; FUNMI ADERINTO, Kaduna

The Private Secretary to Kaduna State Governor, Professor Bello Ayuba and the Special Adviser, Research and Documentation, Mr Fabian Okoye on behalf of the Governor, on Wednesday, received a

delegation from the Kano Emirate Council.

The delegation, from the Emir of Kano, Alh. Aminu Ado Bayero were at the Sir Kashim Ibrahim House to commiserate with the Kaduna State Government and the people of the state over the sad incident that affected members of the Tudun Biri Community.

The four-man delegation included, Dokajin Kano, Muhammadu Aliyu, Bunun Kano and Alh. Lamido Abubakar Bayero and two others.

The delegation delivered the condolence of the Emir of Kano where he sympathised with Senator Uba Sani, the Kaduna State Government, the

immediate families of victims, and the entire people of the state over the accidental drone strike that led to the death of civilians at Tudun Biri village in Igabi Local Government Area of Kaduna State.

He prayed for the souls of those who lost their lives and wished the injured ones, a speedy recovery.

Olayoku's Emergence As IPAC Dep National Chairman, Well Deserved - Ajadi

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

Achieftain of the New Nigeria People's Party, (NNPP), Ambassador Olufermi Ajadi Oguntoyinbo on Thursday, congratulated the National Secretary of the party, Mr Oladipo Olayoku over his election as the Deputy National Chairman of the Inter Party Advisory Council (IPAC).

Ambassador Ajadi expressed this in a message to congratulate Mr Olayoku who was elected on Wednesday, unopposed during the IPAC Election in Abuja.

The NNPP chieftain declared that the election of Mr Olayoku's as IPAC Deputy National Chairman "is well deserved".

According to the NNPP governorship candidate in Ogun State in the March 2023 election, the election of Olayoku shows that the hard work and resilience he puts into the administration of the

NNPP is appreciated both within and outside the party.

Ambassador Ajadi emphasized that "Olayoku is a round peg in a round hole" and that "IPAC will benefit immensely from his experience and hard work".

"I congratulate you on your election as the Deputy National Chairman of IPAC, an umbrella body of all registered political parties in the country. We in the NNPP are not surprised in your being elected unopposed to the exalted position of IPAC Deputy National Chairman", he said.

Ambassador Ajadi added, "We know you are steadfast, thorough and hardworking. These qualities which you were known for will transform the IPAC into a recognized body both within the country and outside. Keep our party's flag flying. Wishing you the best in your new office."

Our Special Prayers On National Progress Would Be A Continuous Programme - Kwa

By; JABIRU A. HASSAN, Kano

Special prayers for national unity, peaceful coexistence and economic progress would be a continuous programme to be organised by Dawakin Tofa Local Government Council of Kano State.

The chairman of the council, Honourable Ado Tambai Kwa made this known shortly after the special prayer session held on Thursday at Asibitin Tafasa prayer ground Dawanau, where he reassured that prayers remain the best solution for any issue to humans.

He added that his administration resolved to adopt special prayers in order to seek God's intervention to any form of issues that need remedy, and commended the Islamic scholars that always trooped en mass to

participate in the prayer sessions often organised by his council. "I am of the opinion that conducting special prayers with people is one of the best approaches to addressing issues that retard national unity, peace and progress. We always pray for the success of our great party All Progressives Congress (APC) and Gawuna at the Supreme Court after winning election petition tribunal and the court of appeal recently," he emphasised.

Kwa called on the people of Kano State to continue to be law abiding citizens for the development of the state, while thanking all those who offered helping hands towards the promotion of peace and unity in Dawakin Tofa Local Government Area, Kano State and Nigeria at large.

Yuletide: Kaduna APC Women Leader Distributes Wrappers, Food Items, Cattle To Over 300 Less Privileged Women

By; AMOS EBUTE MATHEW, Kaduna

Women Leader of the All Progressives Congress (APC) Kaduna State, Hajiya Maryam Suleiman has slaughtered three cattle for 300 less privileged women in the state.

Maryam, fondly called Mairusau by her admirers, said slaughtering the cattle and sharing the whole meat to the poor who could not afford to buy meat for the Christmas celebration, is a way of putting smiles on faces of the needy.

Other items distributed were wrappers for women, cash and various food items which she noted, would go a long way in giving the poor a sense of belonging during the Christmas celebration marked by Christian faithful with sacrificing animals, preparing good dishes and dressing in new clothes.

Hajiya Suleiman while assuring less privileged women and widows of her continuous support, paid glowing tributes to Malam Uba Sani, describing the Kaduna State Governor as a leader with the interest of people at heart.

"I am inspired to extend the hand of generosity to the poor by Governor Uba Sani who always preaches the act of remembering the less privileged in the society so they too would be happy.

"We all know how times are hard and prices of essentials have kept skyrocketing which would make it difficult for most people to happily celebrate this year's Christmas with pageantry.

"It is in this spirit of trying to put smiles on faces of the needy I have decided once more to remember the less privileged people around me, particularly widows who have lost their breadwinners so they too would be happy in this festive season.

"I will use this opportunity to call on the rich and financially privileged members of the society to be generous to the poor people around them so the World would be a happy place to live in," she preached.



Under The Shadow Of Tudun Biri, Uba Sani Unites Kaduna

By: JAMES SWAM

The trajectory of Governor Uba Sani's administration's future becomes evident through current events surrounding it. The governor's leadership resonates positively, painting a clear picture of the direction the administration is taking. Since 3rd December, this historically significant state, shaped in 1900 by Lord Lugard, a mix of positive and negative occurrences has unfolded. The once cacophony of voices is diminishing.

Events unfold in a sequence, with the people of Kaduna seemingly finding common grounds today. Notably, certain events that impact the administration, especially as December gains momentum, come to mind.

The commencing event in this series, was the unfortunate incident at Tudun Biri, which metaphorically illuminated the Kaduna landscape, leaving a lasting impact. Despite the devastation, the incident fostered unity among citizens. The outpouring of compassion, empathy, and support demonstrated by the people through daily visits to the Government House was remarkable. It reflected the awaited opportunity for the citizens to come together and bridge the gap that had divided the people of the state. For weeks, Kaduna Government House transformed into a centre of convergence as the governor welcomed diverse guests from varied demography within the state. Visitors included the Kaduna Elders Forum, newly elected Southern Kaduna People's Union (SOKAPU) leadership, Christian and Muslim leaders, Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) representatives, and other notable figures from various political backgrounds and traditional institutions. Significantly, these guests consistently remarked on the governor's personality, which played a pivotal role in fostering a massive show of unity.



Significantly, the governor underscored his commitment to unity at the 2023 Christmas Carol hosted by the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) at the ECWA English Service, Sabo GRA, in the southern axis of the city on 17 December. His presence illuminated the atmosphere, and in his brief speech, Uba Sani emphasised the importance of inclusive governance, stating, "One of the most crucial aspects of our government is ensuring that we carry our people along," a promise he made during his inauguration on 29 May.

Sharing a personal anecdote, the governor recounted his father's encouragement to attend Christmas carols, expressing joy in witnessing the celebration and happiness among Kaduna citizens. Uba Sani concluded with a pledge to extend development throughout the state, unveiling the 2024 budget theme: "Budget of Rural Transformation and Inclusive Development."

The following day, 18 December, Governor Uba Sani presented the proposed N458 billion 2024 budget to the Kaduna State House of

Assembly, emphasising its focus on rural transformation and development. Notably, capital expenditure constitutes 69.57%, with recurrent expenditure at 30.43%. A significant allocation of N57.131 billion is earmarked for Public Works and Infrastructure, aiming to enhance rural roads critical for addressing food transportation and rural-urban migration concerns.

Governor Uba Sani's governance style has sparked widespread commentary across various platforms, with many applauding it as a return

to a commendable status quo. His approach has garnered significant support, potentially aiding in the resolution of future issues. Demonstrating a willingness to listen and adopt strategies, he focuses on strengthening his relationship with the electorate, seemingly indifferent to whether a constituency voted for him and his party. His enthusiasm lies in making pledges and delivering on them. Uba Sani understands the perspective of the citizens.

This is just the rule of the game. The people of Kaduna are united once again by their governor, Senator Uba Sani, under the shadow of Tudun Biri, Christmas carol, and budget for rural transformation and inclusive development.

Swam was Secretary of the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR), Kaduna State Chapter.

"The outpouring of compassion, empathy, and support demonstrated by the people through daily visits to the Government House was remarkable."

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HALF PAGE	248,970.00	18,672.75	267,642.75	203,175.00	15,238.13	218,413.13
QUARTER PAGE	164,670.00	12,350.25	177,020.25	94,724.44	7,104.33	101,828.77
10" x 6 Col	364,320.00	27,324.00	391,644.00	245,005.20	18,375.39	263,380.59
10" x 5 Col	333,960.00	25,047.00	359,007.00	224,588.11	16,844.11	241,432.22
10" x 4 Col	242,880.00	18,216.00	261,096.00	163,336.80	12,250.26	175,587.06
10" x 3 Col	182,160.00	13,662.00	195,822.00	122,502.60	9,187.70	131,690.30
9" x 6 Col	327,888.00	24,591.60	352,479.60	220,504.68	16,537.85	237,042.53
9" x 5 Col	273,240.00	20,493.00	293,733.00	183,753.90	13,781.54	197,535.44
9" x 4 Col	218,592.00	16,394.40	234,986.40	147,003.12	11,025.23	158,028.35
9" x 3 Col	163,944.00	12,295.80	176,239.80	110,252.34	8,268.93	118,521.27
8" x 6 Col	291,456.00	21,859.20	313,315.20	196,004.16	14,700.31	210,704.47
8" x 5 Col	242,880.00	18,216.00	261,096.00	163,336.80	12,250.26	175,587.06
8" x 4 Col	194,304.00	14,572.80	208,876.80	130,669.44	9,800.21	140,469.65
8" x 3 Col	145,728.00	10,929.60	156,657.60	98,002.08	7,350.16	105,352.24
7" x 6 Col	255,024.00	19,126.80	274,150.80	171,503.64	12,862.77	184,366.41
7" x 5 Col	212,520.00	15,939.00	228,459.00	142,919.70	10,718.98	153,638.68
7" x 4 Col	170,016.00	12,751.20	182,767.20	114,335.76	8,575.18	122,910.94
6" x 6 Col	218,592.00	16,394.40	234,986.40	147,003.12	11,025.23	158,028.35
6" x 5 Col	182,160.00	13,662.00	195,822.00	122,502.60	9,187.70	131,690.30
6" x 4 Col	145,728.00	10,929.60	156,657.60	98,002.08	7,350.16	105,352.24
6" x 3 Col	109,296.00	8,197.20	117,493.20	73,501.56	5,512.62	79,014.18
6" x 2 Col	72,864.00	5,464.80	78,328.80	49,001.04	3,675.08	52,676.12
5" x 5 Col	151,800.00	11,385.00	163,185.00	102,085.50	7,656.41	109,741.91
5" x 4 Col	121,440.00	9,108.00	130,548.00	81,668.40	6,125.13	87,793.53
5" x 3 Col	91,080.00	6,831.00	97,911.00	61,251.30	4,593.85	65,845.15
5" x 2 Col	60,720.00	4,554.00	65,274.00	40,834.20	3,062.57	43,896.77
4" x 6 Col	145,728.00	10,929.60	156,657.60	98,002.08	7,350.16	105,352.24
4" x 5 Col	121,440.00	9,108.00	130,548.00	81,668.40	6,125.13	87,793.53
4" x 4 Col	97,152.00	7,286.40	104,438.40	65,334.72	4,900.10	70,234.82
4" x 3 Col	72,864.00	5,464.80	78,328.80	49,001.04	3,675.08	52,676.12
4" x 2 Col	48,576.00	3,643.20	52,219.20	32,667.36	2,450.05	35,117.41
3" x 3 Col	54,648.00	4,098.60	58,746.60	36,750.78	2,756.31	39,507.09
3" x 2 Col	36,432.00	2,732.40	39,164.40	24,500.52	1,837.54	26,338.06
2" x 2 Col	24,288.00	1,821.60	26,109.60	16,333.68	1,225.03	17,558.71
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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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3	Per 1000 Copies (Magazine)	50,000.00	3,750.00	53,750.00
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3	Change of Name	Per Box	2,000.00	-	2,000.00

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SPACE	RATE	VAT	TOTAL
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FR ONT PA GE M A S T H E A D E A R P I E C E	215,000.00	16,875.00	231,875.00
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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
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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
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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

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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

Rivers Must Not Overflow, Mr President

By: HASSAN GIMBA

Rivers, a state so rich because God blessed it with an abundance of crude oil and gas, is named after the many rivers that border its territory. Forty per cent of Nigeria's output of crude oil is produced in the state. It also has deposits of silica sand, glass sand and clay.

According to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), ₦1.93 trillion was raked in, in 2022 as Internally Generated Revenue (IGR) across the 36 states in Nigeria, including the Federal Capital Territory. Out of this, Rivers State generated ₦172.89 billion, second only to Lagos, with ₦651.15 billion.

And despite a 12 per cent decline in the overall allocation in the second quarter of this year, Rivers State was third with ₦69.73 billion. For December 2022, shared in January this year, for instance, the state received ₦13,700,878,221.58 (₦13.7billion).

Despite its vast resources and strategic positioning as the nation's goose that lays the golden eggs, Rivers State, created in 1967 with the splitting of the South Eastern State, had always been a calm state with level-headed people as its governors.

Apart from military administrators and governors, seven democratically elected governors have led the state since 1979. Among them is its first civilian governor, Melford Okilo, who governed for four years and 91 days, from 1 October 1979 to 31 December 1983.

Rufus Ada George was next and was in office for one year and 320 days, i.e. from January 1992 to 17 November, 1993. Peter Odili was governor between 29 May 1999 and 29 May 2007, or eight years, and was the state's first civilian governor in the current Republic.

The state started its journey to its current 'ignominious' status with the ascendancy to governance by Celestine Omehia, who was there for just 150 days, between 29 May 2007 and 26 October of that year.

Omehia, on the platform of the Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP), won the governorship election but Rotimi Amaechi, also of the same party, went to court claiming to be the candidate of the party and so his name ought to have been on the ballot paper.

Amaechi, the speaker of the state House of Assembly, was duly elected at the party's primaries as its gubernatorial flag bearer. The PDP leadership substituted him "in error" in the state on the orders of the former president, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo. The substitution was done without the due process of informing the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC).

And so the Supreme Court removed Omehia from office in October 2007 after he had been in office for five months. It ruled that he had usurped Amaechi's ticket

for the election, and accordingly handed Amaechi the top job. In any case, the principle is that the party owned the votes and not the candidate, and so even though Amaechi was not on the ballot, he inherited the votes cast for the party as its valid candidate.

From that event when the court gave the Rivers people their governor, a seamless transition vacated the state.

Nyesom Ezenwo Wike, who also served for eight years from 29 May 2015 to 29 May 2023, grabbed the ticket from Amaechi's hand with the help of the sitting president, Goodluck Ebere Jonathan, and his wife.

But that is not the case with Siminalayi Fubara as he was handpicked and bankrolled to the office of the governor by Wike.

Of course, Wike did not do that out of altruism, but for him to have a firm hold on the government of the rich state.

Now, barely 200-odd days into office, his anointed Fubara wants to be allowed to breathe. Sources have it that almost all appointees of the governor came from his godfather. All major contracts are being approved and dispensed by Wike and any transaction above ₦50 million must have his seal of approval. According to Dele Momodu, a chieftain of the PDP, Wike usually screamed at Fubara in front of subordinates.

Fubara's determination to escape Wike's influence has led to a fierce battle between supporters on both sides, who are fighting to keep their leaders relevant in the political landscape.

This has drawn up issues, many of which are testing the elasticity and resilience of our constitution, even threatening the spirit of that constitution.

Some 27 members of the State Assembly loyal to Wike left the party, on whose platform they were elected, for the All Progressives Congress (APC), the party ruling at the centre. This made Fubara, his loyalists and the PDP, struggling to regain its foothold in the state, declare their seats vacant.

Unfortunately for both gladiators, their party, the PDP, made toothless by no other than Wike with expressed support from his erstwhile minions like Fubara and others, could not help.

Perhaps concerned with the happenings in Rivers, and worried that what seemed like political pugilism for dominance may overflow and spill over to God knows where, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu called a meeting of the key actors and sought a détente.

Coming out of that gathering, a truce was reached, and an agreement signed, with the 27 members of the state House of Assembly back and calling the shots as bona fide legislators.

But this is where the problem is. Some stakeholders have already started calling on the president to approach the matter



Hassan Gimba

*Monday
Column*

differently.

For instance, Robert Clarke, an elder and Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN), has said the president had no constitutional right to intervene in the Rivers State crisis. He suggested that if the situation in Rivers State escalated, the president should not intervene but consider declaring a constitutional crisis, pointing out that the only historical instance where the federal government intervened in a state's affairs was during the 1st Republic when a state of emergency was declared in the West.

On his part, Ben Murray-Bruce, the commonsense senator, has commended the president and the national security adviser (NSA), Malam Nuhu Ribadu "for bringing peace in Rivers State."

According to him, their intervention was timely, prudent and statesmanly, adding that it behoves on the disputing parties to abide by the resolution.

Others, however, see it differently.

Six elders from the state have dragged President Bola Tinubu to the Federal High Court in Abuja, for allegedly "compelling Governor Siminilaya Fubara into an unconstitutional agreement."

Led by a member of the Rivers State House of Assembly representing Bonny State Constituency, the other five are

Victor Jumbo, Senator Bennett Birabi, Senator Andrew Uchendu, Rear Admiral O. P. Fingsi, Ann Kio Briggs and Emmanuel Deinma.

To them, the agreement, which was signed on December 18, was not only "illegal but amounted to an usurpation, a nullification, and undermining of the extant/binding relevant provisions of the 1999 Constitution, as amended."

They prayed the court to determine whether President Tinubu, Governor Fubara, and the Rivers State Assembly had the right to enter into any agreement that had the effect of nullifying or undermining the constitutional/legal potency of Section 109(I)(g) and (2) of the 1999 Constitution, as amended.

Wherever one finds himself on this divide, this Rivers crisis is one that all sensible Nigerians who love our democracy will want to see resolved according to the letters and spirit of the Nigerian Constitution that the president, Fubara and Wike (who at some points) have all sworn to uphold and protect without fear, favour or ill will.

Nigerians, and possibly others, are waiting and watching.

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

Salihu Lukman And The Thankless Job Of Reforming The APC

By Jibrin Ibrahim

ONE thing everyone was agreed upon is that Salihu Lukman, the famous trade-unionist-turned-politician, is a very stubborn man.

For almost a decade, he has been very steadfast, focused and committed to transforming his party, the All Progressives Congress (APC), into a democratic, rule-based, open, people-focused and people-led party that would set the highest standards in internal party democracy.

Six books and hundreds of memos, letters and pamphlets later, the party has not changed and Lukman has not deviated from his laser-focused advocacy to change it. On Tuesday, he invited the party, comrades and friends to the public presentation of his latest book – APC and Transition Politics.

To the surprise of many, the APC National Chairman, Dr Umar Abdullahi Ganduje, was there for the occasion. Surprise because Lukman had campaigned vigorously against the imposition of Ganduje as Party Chairman setting aside established rules and procedures of the party and the tone of his campaign was quite hard on Dr. Ganduje.

His ambition is to see the ruling APC return to its foundational vision of a progressive party that advances the interests of the ordinary Nigerian rather than remain at the level of the primitive accumulation of wealth for the self-aggrandizement of the leadership. This is a noble position to take. The real question however is whether this party, the APC, is not too far gone along the path of “money politics”, and that it is too late for it to reform to save itself. If this is indeed the path taken, then Lukman's consistent message remains valid – that they are enroute to self-destruction. I encourage Lukman to remain steadfast in his advocacy.

I found a lot of the discussions at the launch rather trivialised the importance of Lukman's contribution to internal (and external) party debate by focusing on Lukman's allegedly excessively critical language while addressing party leaders which many find irritating and annoying. My analysis is that Lukman's language is truthful rather than sycophantic and we must all see talking truth to power as the only path to democratic development.

I agree with the argument made by former Ekiti governor, Kayode Fayemi, that Lukman's advocacy is vital for party-building and ensuring that the party becomes a political instrument for the common people who should own it. He added that the party should see Lukman as its conscience rather than an adversary that tells them what they don't want to hear.

Dr Fayemi recalled that at some point, his APC governor colleagues in the Progressive Governors Forum ganged up and sacked Lukman from his position as Director General. It is pleasing that some Nigerians in exalted positions will risk their positions on matters of principle. Lukman's next position in the party was as National Vice Chairman, North West and he resigned voluntarily last July to give himself more opportunities to continue telling truth to party leadership.

It was in this context that discussions at the book presentation focused on Lukman as remaining faithful to his personal history of being more of a political activist than a politician. His desire is not for getting positions but for articulating the correct position. He has therefore not changed from when I worked with him to defend the Abiola Mandate following the June 12, 1993 elections when I was chair and he was secretary of the Kaduna Alliance for Democracy. His entire career as a trade unionist was also focused on defending the rights of workers and linking their struggles to the wider ambition of advancing democratic development.

Lukman's core concern is that political parties must behave in ways that are respectful to democratic norms as well as their constitutions and policies so that they would attract membership whose aspirations and interests must always be their priorities. Failure to do so would lead to the gradual death of the parties as they lose touch with their base.

His ambition is to see the ruling APC return to its foundational vision of a progressive party that advances the interests of the ordinary Nigerian rather than remain at the level of the primitive accumulation of wealth for the self-aggrandizement of the leadership. This is a noble position to take. The real question however is whether this party, the APC, is not too far gone along the path of “money politics”, and that it is too late for it to reform to save itself. If this is indeed the path taken, then Lukman's consistent message remains valid – that they are enroute to self-destruction. I encourage Lukman to remain steadfast in his advocacy.

The sideshow at the event was the attempt by Adams Oshiomhole to ridicule and demolish Lukman's advocacy because when he was National Chairman, this same Lukman fought him to a standstill on his reckless attempt to evacuate democratic engagement within the party as he sought to establish party supremacy defined as Oshiomhole supremacy.

“Adams Oshiomhole conducted one of the worst primaries in the history of Nigeria's contemporary politics and ended up shopping for his own enemies,



Jibrin Ibrahim

leading to his eventual removal as Chairman of our party. Nigerians should not be in a hurry to forget the allegations that preceded the conduct of those primaries and his eventual invitation by the Department of State Service, DSS, to clarify certain grave allegations. If anyone was in doubt that Senator Oshiomhole posed the biggest and most destructive threat to the existence of the APC at that time, and the party's best bet was to dispose of a canon fodder that he was and unfortunately still is, his utterances and grandstanding yesterday at an occasion to find solutions to our democratic and party challenges, would have cleared such mindset.”

Adams openly accused Lukman of playing a script put together by Nasir el-Rufai and Kayode Fayemi, two ex-players in the Progressive Governors Forum, to checkmate his ambition. The attack was uncouth because Lukman's foray into trade unionism was with Adams in the Textile Union and in the decades that followed, he had learnt that Lukman would always stand by his principles; so, belittling him by claiming he was playing a game orchestrated by others was unfair.

The fact that historic party leaders such as Chief Bisi Akande were in attendance to stand by Lukman is an indication that his message of commitment to issue-based politics is respected by some of the leaders. In his closing speech, Akande made the point that Lukman has documented his own vision in books that

were already on the table and those with an alternative vision should go and write their own.

Even more important, the democratic mission in contemporary Nigeria is to provide content for parties so that they work for the interests of the people so that the entire system does not collapse because of the practice of practicing democracy without democratic dividends for the people.

I would conclude with the response of Senator Ibikunle Amosun to Adams Oshiomhole's diatribe at the book launch:

“Adams Oshiomhole conducted one of the worst primaries in the history of Nigeria's contemporary politics and ended up shopping for his own enemies, leading to his eventual removal as Chairman of our party. Nigerians should not be in a hurry to forget the allegations that preceded the conduct of those primaries and his eventual invitation by the Department of State Service, DSS, to clarify certain grave allegations. If anyone was in doubt that Senator Oshiomhole posed the biggest and most destructive threat to the existence of the APC at that time, and the party's best bet was to dispose of a canon fodder that he was and unfortunately still is, his utterances and grandstanding yesterday at an occasion to find solutions to our democratic and party challenges, would have cleared such mindset.”

Massive Reception For Uba Sani As He Flags Off Construction Of Key Road In Southern Kaduna

By; FUNMI ADERINTO, Kaduna

The Kaduna State Governor, Senator Uba Sani on Saturday, performed the groundbreaking for the construction of a feeder road from Takjey - Mayayet, Zangon Kataf LGA.

Governor Uba Sani initiative is just one among several projects statewide, reflecting his dedicated focus on rural

transformation.

Zangon Kataf is a local government area in Southern Kaduna State, its headquarters is in the town of Zonkwa.

Sons and daughters came out enmass to welcome the governor as he performs the ground breaking for the construction of feeder road.

It would be recalled that senator Uba Sani assured the state of commitment to the

progress and development of our dear state when he signed the 2024 Budget into law which provides for a total expenditure of N458,271,299,477.66.

The governor's initiative of bringing development closer to the people of Kaduna State into 2024 Budget of "Rural Transformation for Inclusive Development" will bridge the gap between the rural and urban areas, revitalize rural

economies, promote social inclusion, address the gaps in infrastructure and human capital, boost agriculture and food security, and make Kaduna State safe and secure for citizens and investments.

According to him, the reinvigorated Kaduna State Internal Revenue Service (KADIRS) has an important role to play in the effective implementation of the 2024 Budget. KADIRS must

sustain the current momentum of our revenue generation drive.

Uba Sani, however, called on citizens to give the state their full support and cooperation as he commences the implementation of the 2024 Budget.

He noted that, "we are determined to lead our people to a brighter future, we shall succeed because the people of Kaduna State are resourceful and resilient".



Kano Gov Yusuf Joined By VP Shettima, Zamfara Gov Lawal In Gracing Abacha's Wedding



By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The Executive Governor of Kano State was at the centre of attraction on Saturday as he bowed down in respect to the matriarch of the family of late General Sani Abacha, the former Military Head of State and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Hajia Maryam Abacha, during the wedding of her son, Mustapha Abacha, Safa Geidam. The wedding on Saturday of Alhaji Mustapha Sani Abacha, son of the former Head of State, and Safa Tijjani Saleh Geidam, presented another sight of assured One North beyond the usual

saying in South, where people want to say demystify politicians on claim "no permanent enemy but permanent interest in politics".

On the other side of the divide, beyond politics, what is permanent to every Northerner is Northernism that unity of the North side-by-side Islam and, for this, Northerners are a strong force very hard to be split by political gerrymandering, and that was brought to fore at the Abacha and Geidam joint family wedding event on Saturday.

Although he has suffered betrayal by the All Progressives Congress (APC), Governor of Kano State, Alhaji Abba

Kabir Yusuf, took to his X account to express his joy to be with its chieftain and Vice President, Senator Kashim Shettima, at the wedding, where, officially, he looked more to be the chief host.

He was also glad that his brother and Zamfara counterpart, Alhaji Dauda Lawal, from another party, Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) member, was also at the all-important event to do the ever revered Abacha family its due honour.

"My pleasure to join the Vice President, H.E @KashimSM and my brother, H.E Dauda Lawal, the Governor of Zamfara

State, alongside other esteemed individuals in witnessing the wedding ceremony of Alhaji Mustapha Sani Abacha, son of former Head of State, Gen. Sani Abacha and Safa Tijjani Saleh Geidam.

"The wedding solemnization took place at the Mohammed Ali Mosque, Old GRA, Maiduguri," Governor Yusuf said. He then congratulated the former First Lady.

"I congratulate Her Excellency, Hajiya Maryam Abacha and the family on this important day, Governkr Abba Kabir Yusuf popularly called AKY, said.



NBB Of C Seminar Kicks Off In Lagos

*Aboderin commends De Lads promotions, Osundairo for support

By; AYO OJEDOKUN, Lagos

The three-day working boxing seminar for coaches put together by the Nigerian Boxing Board of Control (NBB of C) in collaboration with De Lads Boxing Promotions and United States of America based Nigerian boxer, Abimbola Osundairo took off on a good note on Saturday, December 22 at the Media Centre of the National Stadium, Surulere, Lagos. The first day of the seminar, saw international

Referee/Judge, Belgian Daniel Van De Wiele taking the participants on judges roles in boxing such as scoring, judging and boxing rules (Dos and Don'ts) in the ring.

His lecture which was both audio and visual gave the coaches a practical example of how to score points and what is expected of them to do when a fight is going on. The well travelled boxing instructor who have been a referee since 1980 and a WBC referee/ judge since 1993 also took them on some

travel tips such as importance of Yellow Fever Vaccination/ Yellow card, validity of international passports, visa application and hotel bookings and locating addresses outside their countries and many more.

At the end of the lecture, there was question and answer session which gave the coaches opportunity to ask some vital questions and answered proffered by the resource person.

The seminar continues tomorrow. There will also be a corner care and

professional and handwraps wash workshop to be handled by international technical officer, Coach Yinka Adeoti.

Meanwhile Secretary General of NBB of C, Remi Aboderin has commended Chief Executive Officer of De Lads Boxing Promotions, Alhaji Waheed Wasiu Alade and Nigeria born United States of America based boxer Abimbola Osundairo for their financial support towards the hosting of the seminar.

"Kudos must go to Alhaji Waheed Wasiu Alade for paying the flight ticket of the instructor and to Abimbola

Osundairo for taking care of his lodging at Sheraton Hotel for five days.

"All these involves a huge amount of money and without these two great Nigerians, we wouldn't have had this seminar.

" We need more of such support to enable us organise regular seminars because coaches need to be upgrading themselves from time to time and no knowledge acquired is a waste", concluded Aboderin who also doubles as the President of West African Boxing Union (WABU).



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NDLEA Busts Drug Cartel As Sniffer Dogs Uncover Cocaine In India Bound Shipment

*Intercepts large consignment of Tramadol Pills

By: RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

Desperate attempts by transnational criminal organisations to flood Nigerian communities with large quantities of assorted illicit drugs during the Yuletide has been thwarted by operatives of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), which intercepted millions of Tramadol 225mg pills, thousands of codeine syrup bottles and bags of Canadian Loud in consignments arriving the country ahead of the Christmas celebration.

At the Murtala Muhammed International Airport, MMIA, Ikeja Lagos, all tricks employed by the drug syndicates to smuggle into the country seven million five hundred thousand (7,500,000) pills of tramadol 225mg through the NAHCO import shed of the airport were frustrated by NDLEA officers with the cooperation of men of the Nigeria Customs and other stakeholders.

The consignment which was taken into custody on Friday December 22, came onboard Turkish airline with no country of manufacture or origin.

Apart from being the first time such shipment would be seized on the airlines flight, it was equally the first of such coming from Hamburg, Germany.

The 7.5million Tramadol 225mg pills were also specially designed and packaged as tamol-x concealed in 100 big cartons weighing 7,150kg, which arrived the country on 11th December and placed

under surveillance until last Friday. Preliminary test of the tablets proved positive to tramadol hydrochloride.

The Director, Media & Advocacy of NDLEA Femi Babafemi made the disclosure in a statement yesterday. He added that operatives of the Lagos Command of the Agency on Wednesday December 20, conducted a search operation on two shops marked Chex Mat Global Link Limited at Trade Fair complex in Ojo area of Lagos, where 258 cartons of codeine-based cough syrup and eight cartons of codeine tablets were recovered.

"The cartons contain: 49, 200 bottles of codeine syrup and 46, 200 tablets of same opioid.

" A consignment of spare parts that originated from Asaba, Delta state and going to Malviya Nagar, New Delhi, India was intercepted at the cargo terminal of the Lagos airport on Wednesday 20th December. NDLEA sniffer dogs were deployed to examine the spare parts.

" The dogs were able to identify the particular shipment containing illicit drug concealment, which a physical examination later confirmed to be cocaine measuring 200grams.

" Not less than 70 parcels of Canadian Loud, a strong strain of cannabis, with a gross weight of 35kg were seized by operatives of the Tincan Command of NDLEA from a container, marked BEAU 4993525 coming from Toronto via



The recovered Indian bound consignment

Montreal, Canada.

" The container contained four used vehicles, including a Honda CRV 2006 model, where bags of the psychoactive substance were concealed.

" In the FCT Abuja, NDLEA operatives on Monday 18th December intercepted a waybill consignment of 25,000 pills of tramadol, while their counterparts in Anambra arrested two suspects at Onitsha head bridge. Ejoro Emmanuel was driving a bus marked EFR 31 XB conveying 61,100 tramadol capsules; 1, 025 bottles of codeine; 1,350 tablets of rohypnol and 46grams of designer drug, while Daniel Ogbiyoyo was caught in a bus marked

SAP 540 YK conveying 55,950 tramadol capsules; 3,117 bottles of codeine; 1,530 tablets of swinol and 1,350 tablets of rohypnol.

" Operatives in Delta state on Monday 18th December in a joint operation with the military raided the home of a drug kingpin, Chukwuma Steven Eneriku at Okanaro street, Abbi town, where bags of cannabis weighing 353kg were recovered. " Same day, NDLEA operatives in Enugu recovered bags of cannabis sativa weighing 435.1kg in a warehouse located at Trans Ekulu, Enugu East LGA", the NDLEA spokesperson hinted.

Kwara Gov Swears-in, Sets Agenda For New Commissioner, Buge, Others

*Posterity won't forget Gov's support for youth - Buge

By: BILIQIS ONAOLAPO OLAJUMOKE, Ilorin

Kwara State Governor, AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq on Friday, inaugurated Nafisat Musa Buge as Commissioner for Youth Development, charging her and other cabinet members to be good ambassadors of their constituencies and communities in and outside of government.

The governor said her pick was on the strength of her "antecedents as a progressive political activist, her modest contributions to the growth of the party in her community and her passion and consistent support for the administration".

"You are joining an administration with a rich profile in youth empowerment, gender

inclusion, community development, prudence, accountability, empathy for the poor and vulnerable, service and responsiveness to the plight of the people," the Governor said.

"I expect you and all other officers of the government to fully key into these and be good ambassadors of your constituencies and communities in and outside of government."

AbdulRazaq congratulated the new cabinet member and her family, and wished her the best in her service to the state.

At the event were the Secretary to the Kwara State Government Prof Mamman Saba Jibril; Chief of Staff to the Governor Prince AbdulKadir Mahe; Commissioner for Communications Bola Olukoju;

Commissioner for Planning and Economic Development Aliyu Kora Sabi; Senior Adviser and Counsellor Alhaji Sa'adu Salau; Permanent Member, Kwara State Civil Service Commission Jamila Adamu Bake; among other government officials, bureaucrats, and relatives of the new commissioner.

Prof Jubril, in his introductory remarks, said her coming on board should be seen as a call to service and develop the state.

"You have been tested by the state government by sending your name to the State House of Assembly for screening, and you are fortunately considered fit for the job," he said.

Buge, in a brief comment acknowledging the gesture, commended the youth inclusion

policy of Governor AbdulRazaq which she said continues to inspire young people within and outside of the state.

"On behalf of the Youth constituency in Kwara State, I want to thank Your Excellency for making us real leaders of tomorrow, as we used to sing when we were in secondary schools. I thank you for giving us hope, for helping to fulfil our aspirations, and for being our supporter," she said.

Buge pledged to offer her best in the service to the state and humanity.

"Your choice of mentees will, in the next few years, by God's grace, increase the number of committed young leaders in Nigeria. And history and prosperity will be kind to you."