

Despite Border Closure, Katsina Customs Generates Over N1bn

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In Progress - Uba Sani

## Northern Elders, Professionals Warn EFCC Against Tarnishing Respected Arewa Politicians

- Ask EFCC leadership to denounce publication, give assurance
- Commend Tinubu on successful military operations in North West
- Task Northern political elite, religious, traditional leaders to create political understanding, unity

By: JACOB ONJEWU  
DICKSON

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) has been warned against being used as a political tool to tarnish hard earned reputation of

some respected politicians of Northern extraction.

The warning was contained in a communique issued by Northern Elders Progressive Forum and Northern Professionals Development Group, on

national issue and a recent Punch Newspaper's publication titled "EFCC revives 13 ex-govs N772bn fraud cases", held in Kaduna on Sunday, January 21, 2024.

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## NDLEA Intercepts Canada, South Africa Imported Illicit Drugs, Arms, Ammunition In Lagos

\*Suspect linked to imported container, nabbed

\*Over 5m pills of Tramadol seized in Kano

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Some of the Imported Illicit drugs



Middle: Dr. Usman Sani, (Chairman) and Comrade Yusuf Abubakar Dingiyadi (Secretary), at a press conference at the end of the two-day meeting of the groups

## ACF Says Planned Relocation Of CBN Units, FAAN Hqtrs To Lagos Plan To Underdevelop North

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## Chief Of Kagoro Pledges To Support Advocacy For Health Budget Cash Backing

By ; ALEX UANGBAOJE, Kaduna

His Royal Majesty, Ufuwai Bonet, Chief of Kagoro, Kaura LGA and Vice Chairman Kaduna State Traditional Council, has pledged to add his voice to advocate for cash backing of health sector budget in state.

The royal father who made the pledge on Thursday, when he received members of Kaduna Maternal Accountability Mechanism (KADMAM), in his palace, noted that there's need for government to earmark

budget that is realistic annually.

According to him, he will find an appropriate channel to convey KADMAM's message to the government.

He expressed dismay over the attitude of most people in communities where healthcare services are available, but refuse to access them.

The traditional leader who commended KADMAM for its efforts and sacrifices, urged the mechanism to continue in their advocacy until they get results for their efforts.

He called on the

mechanism to help in sensitizing communities to ensure that their wives and children go to facilities for healthcare services, urging husbands to at all times plan for their wives delivery to avoid unforeseen circumstances.

Earlier, leader of the delegation, Co-chair of the mechanism, Isa Gidado, told their host that the purpose of the visit was to seek his support to advocate for cash backing of funds meant for healthcare system in the State.

He said the mechanism is

concerned about the situation of Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health + Nutrition (RMNCAH+N), in Kaduna State and that there is need for traditional leaders to join force with civil society organizations in getting government to make funds budgeted for the sector available.

Gidado, also informed the royal father and his team of what KADMAM is doing in the state to support government in addressing issues of maternal and newborn mortality.



The inferno at Mandilas

## Popular Lagos Market Mandilas, Goes Up In Flames

By ; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

A Lagos market renowned for the sale of men shoes and other wears, called Mandilas is currently on fire.

The root cause of the inferno, which reportedly began at about noon yesterday, could not be ascertained as at the time of this report.

The fire as learnt, broke out on the first floor of one of the buildings in the market

located on Lagos Island, a 10 story building and had reached the fourth floor within hours.

The Director, Lagos State Fire and Rescue Service, Margaret Adeseye, who confirmed the incident said efforts are on to put our the fire.

The emergency responders were at the scene to curb further escalation and put the situation under control as at time of filing this report.



## 2023 Diaspora Remittances: 90% Did Not End Up In Nigeria - Oyedele

By; AMOS TAUNA, Kaduna

The Chairman, Presidential Committee on Fiscal Policy and Tax Reforms, Taiwo Oyedele, has said that findings have shown that about \$18 billion representing 90 per cent of the estimated \$20 billion Nigeria's diaspora remittances in 2023 did not end up in the country.

The World Bank had estimated that diaspora remittances to Nigeria in 2023 was \$20 billion. Speaking in a panel discussion at the 2024 Economic Outlook and Budget Analysis organised by the Lagos Chamber of

Commerce and Industry (LCCI), Oyedele alleged that more than 90 per cent of the remittances were externalized.

He explained that in their interactions with multinationals, rating agencies and other stakeholders, many of them stated that exchange rate difficulty is more than 50 per cent of all the challenges in Nigeria combined, as far as they are concerned, saying that it is a major issue that the country has to address.

According to him, "And we thought it is going to be an area where we can easily demonstrate

how the monetary and fiscal policies can work together. So, to that extent, we have done a sensible amount of work on the fiscal side. And we have been speaking to the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN). The ultimate objective being that, first and foremost, we think that the biggest problem we have is the fact that we have divergence in exchange rates."

He further explained that the World Bank said for 2023, the country's diaspora remittance was about \$20 billion, pointing out that they estimated that more than 90 per cent of that did not

get to Nigeria as they are being externalized.

He said that they have spoken to loads of Nigerians almost everywhere, in the US, UK, and they told them how they send remittance, saying that they used Apps, and they have tried some of those Apps, they used parallel market rates and as one take \$1,000 in New York, and tap on the phone that one is sending \$1,000 to someone, a Fintech, they pay the Naira equivalent in Nigeria without bringing the dollars, unless of course if the source of the money is illicit.

Mr Gabriel Idahosa, LCCI

President, earlier in his welcome address, explained that policy reforms by the government, especially the removal of fuel subsidies and floating of the exchange rate, are expected to boost fiscal revenue and contribute moderately to the improvement of the country's growth this year.

The Director General, Budget Office, Ben Akabueze, also stated that one of the challenges facing the nation is that of low public revenue against a growing population, adding that Nigeria has had over three decades of deficit budget.

# Northern Elders, Professionals Warn EFCC Against Tarnishing Respected Northern Politicians

\*Ask EFCC leadership to denounce publication, give assurance

\*Commend Tinubu on successful military operations in North West

\*Task Northern political elite, religious, traditional leaders to create political understanding, unity

"The commission should not allow itself to become a tool of political vendetta, blackmail or intimidation against any individual through personal grudges, persecution and campaign of calumny to tarnish the image of certain personalities or any perceived political enemies of the characters hiding behind their executive power to unleash allegations through media for public consumption and sympathy.

"There are groups of people who are allegedly sponsoring such sinister motives against some of the political leaders mentioned in the Punch hatched story on order to tarnish their reputation; those affected are senators Adamu Abdullahi, Danjuma Gone, Rabu'u Musa Kwankwasko, Aliyu Magatakarda Wamakko, Dr. Bello Mohammed Matawalle, Sule Lamido, among others," the communique said.

According to the communique jointly signed by Dr. Usman Sani, (Chairman) and Comrade Yusuf Abubakar Dingiyadi (Secretary), issued at a press conference at the end of the two-day meeting of the groups, EFCC Chairman, Ola Olukoyede should stick to standards.

"While we commend the efforts of the new leadership of the Economic and Financial Crimes



Commission (EFCC) under Mr. Ola Olukoyede in the fight against corruption we have no doubts that the new EFCC boss will stick to the standard of the operation of the commission.

"However, we are dismayed with the recent reports and publication by the Punch Newspaper title EFCC revives 13 ex-govs N772bn fraud cases in which it hurriedly published names of certain political leaders, and individuals with alleged accusations of amassing public wealth illegally without recourse to the due process and rule of law.

"The hurried publication has now become a big embarrassment to them, their families, political associates, and our dear nation in the quest for objectivity, a presumption of innocent, emotional, and moral psyches.

"We think that certain groups of political class because of vendetta or other reasons are cheaply using some media platforms to drag the anti-graft agency image into disrepute to achieve cheap and unpopular political scores," they said.

While however, appreciating EFCC's highly motivated operations and effective fight against crimes and corruption in the country so far, they pointed out that it is pertinent to note that, the new objectives assured by the leadership of EFCC in the fight against crimes and corruption under President Ahmed Bola Tinubu are about to be eroded by certain selfish group of political individuals with access to media and investigations in the commission.

"It is unfortunate that those who have done their best as governors to develop and make progress in their respective states are being ridiculed by some faceless groups through media trials.

"Most painful to see even the serving political leaders are not spared example of Dr. Bello Matawalle who has served Zamfara State meritoriously, honestly, diligently, and transparently, but his name was involved in this conspiracy by some hidden forces with the intention to destroy his good name and service rendered for the progress of his state and the country at large.

"Matawalle was successfully screened, and cleared by the Department of State Security and EFCC many weeks before appearing to the Senate for another screening and subsequently cleared as Honourable Minister of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

"It's pertinent to note that, those who are putting this campaign of calumny against his personality on media are just afraid of his growing popularity and acceptance, especially as Honourable Minister and political leader in the North West region and Nigeria as a whole," the communique stressed.

The group said, "We are surprised that the same EFCC that cleared and gave him a clean slate will return through the back door to allow such alleged documents to be circulated and

published by the Newspaper. It is like rubbishing the Presidency, Senate, and other security agencies that worked tirelessly to ensure due process before clearing him for ministerial responsibility."

They therefore, advised EFCC leadership to denounce the Punch publication and bring out a bond of assurance by ordering those petitioners, characters who allegedly accused those mentioned by the Punch Newspaper and many others to come out publicly and sign to pay compensation to those accused if after investigation and court process were found innocent from such allegations.

"We are aware of how some cases, despite their media trial before the advent of the present government, ended in rubbishing the EFCC and good intention of fighting against corruption in the country. There is no need of EFCC grieving more than the bereaved," they pointed out.

They commended the efforts of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu over the successful current military operations going on, especially military air strikes in major hide-out of terrorists in some part of the North West.

"The air strikes and ground operations in Sokoto, Zamfara and some parts of Kaduna and Niger states have yielded much success, which has tremendously forced the majority of them to leave their enclaves looking for shelter.

"While praying for continued peace and political cohesion in our region and the nation in general, we appeal to the Northern political elites, religious and traditional leaders to create an environment of political understanding, unity, and mutual respect for one another.

"They should not allow political differences to destroy our common interest, unity, and survival of the



## Supreme Court Ruling: Mrs Shekari Felicitates Governor Uba Sani, Woos Opposition For Support Towards Development

By; ISAAC ODEH, Kaduna

Following Friday's ruling by the Supreme Court affirming Governor Uba Sani as the duly elected Governor of Kaduna State, a Chieftain of the All Progressives Congress (APC) Mrs Charity Shekari has felicitated the governor and people of the state over the landmark judgment which according to her, will guarantee good governance and entrench socio-economic and political prosperity in Kaduna State.

In a congratulatory message made available to journalists in Kaduna, Mrs Charity Shekari described the Supreme Court ruling as a victory not only for

Governor Uba Sani and the APC, rather a resounding victory that will rekindle the hope of the common man in Kaduna State.

According to her, since assumption of office as governor in the last six months, Senator Uba Sani has demonstrated an unequal leadership traits of a bridge builder and promoter of unity of purpose and peaceful coexistence, while also giving the citizenry a breath of fresh air for societal development.

Mrs Charity Shekari who enjoined the general public, especially members of the opposition to support the Governor Uba Sani-led administration for a better Kaduna State, further



Gov Uba Sani

prayed for God to grant him the wisdom and good health to take the state to another enviable level of

## Ex Senate President Wants More skills acquisition Centers In Katsina State

By; SULAIMAN AHMED MISAU, Katsina

A one time Deputy Senate President during the Second Republic and former Speaker of the defunct Kaduna State House of Assembly, Alhaji Mamman Abubakar Danmusa has called for the establishment of more skills acquisition centers in Katsina State to put an end to rural and urban migration among the teeming youths across the state.

Alhaji Abubakar Danmusa stated this while speaking during the commissioning and handing over ceremony of a skills acquisition center to State Government which constructed in Danmusa town.

He said that, "I am handing over the skills center to the state Government to enable government equip the center with necessary equipments to help in training unemployment youth in the area".

The former Speaker who was represented by his eldest son Malam Nuradeen Mamman Danmusa noted that the decision to construct the skill acquisition center was to promote youth empowerment to enable them become productive members of the society. He therefore, appealed to well to do ones in the society to establish similar centers to motivate youth

who are considered the back born of the society, adding that the center when patronize would help reduce immorality among the youth.

Alhaji Mamman Danmusa charged youths in the area to patronize the center to become self-reliant.

In a remark, after receiving the keys of the center on behalf of the Director General of the State Enterprises Development Agency, Hajiya Aisha Aminu Malumfashi, the Zonal Director of the Agency Alhaji Kabir Abdullahi Kofar-Soro lauded the foresight of Mamman Danmusa for the establishment of the center. They described the center as a Sadaqatul Jariya, stressing that the center would create additional empowerment opportunities to youths in the area.

In a vote of thanks, the Magajin Malam of Katsina and District Head of Danmusa Alhaji Darda'u Mu'azu who was represented by the Wakilin Gurza Darda'u Gambo Danmusa appreciated the numerous contributions of Mamman Abubakar Danmusa for the development of the area.

In their separate remarks, Sarkin Kasuwa Bishir Yusifa Ahmadu Mai'Shanu and Nura Abdu both acknowledged the contributions being made by Senator Mamman Danmusa in taking the area to great height.

## Dutsinma, Kurfi LG Dry Season Farmers Receive Irrigation Materials From Katsina Govt

By; SULAIMAN AHMED MISAU, Katsina

Dutsinma and Kurfi Local Governments Dry season farmers have received irrigation materials provided by Katsina State Government.

In Dutsinma, the Caretaker Committee Chairman, Barrister Sulaiman Namadi said the gesture was to enhance irrigation farming and

food security.

He said clusters were divided into six with ten beneficiaries from each cluster.

The irrigation materials provided include solar water pump, insecticides, pumping machines, solar panels, agro chemicals, variety of seeds among others.

In Kurfi the Council Chairman Alhaji Mannir Shehu said, Governor Dikko Umaru Radda provided them to boost

irrigation farming in the State.

Also speaking, the Director of Agriculture of the area Malam Mansir Ibrahim Bara'u called for proper utilization of the items to achieve the desired objectives.

On behalf of the beneficiaries Malam Muntari sale Dantikiri and Alhaji Nasiru Birchi assured judicious use of the items.

In a remark, the Yandakan Katsina and District head

of Dutsinma Alhaji Sada Mohammed Sada thanked the State Government for the gesture.

Meanwhile the Dutsinma Local Government has also distributed two hundred bags of maize as palliatives across the eleven wards of the area.

The caretaker Chairman, Barrister Sulaiman Namadi charged the distribution committees to follow laid down rules, during the distribution.

## Fire Guts Super Eagle's Captain, Ahmed Musa's Multimillion Naira Event Centre In Kaduna

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

A fire incident has occurred at the prestigious Ahmed Musa Centre on Friday January 19, 2024.

Ahmed Musa is Nigeria's Super Eagles captain and is on national duty in Cote

d'Ivoire presentiy

Our correspondent reports that the fire started at about 2pm, razing a better part of the event centre located at Ahmed Musa Centre, located along Yakowa Way in Karji, Kaduna metropolis.

As at the time of filing this report, details were still sketchy, but sources informed that the fire was sparked up as a result of welding work at the premises, which lit up the roof of some relaxation huts made of grass, before spreading to the event

centre.

It was learnt that combined efforts of passersby and workers at the centre, yielded results as the inferno was contained.

# Despite Border Closure, Katsina Customs Generates Over N1bn

By; SULAIMAN AHMED MISAU, Katsina

**K**atsina Area Command of the Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) has generated over 1.132 billion Naira in 2023 fiscal year, despite the challenges of banditry and border closure with neighbouring Niger Republic. The Command's Controller, Comptroller Mohammed Umar, disclosed this in a statement by the Command Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Superintendent of Customs, Tahir Balarabe while decorating 30 newly promoted Officers of the Command on Friday, January 19, 2024 at the Command's Headquarters in Katsina Metropolis. Comptroller Umar said that, the

1,132,831,484.75 billion naira revenue generated within the period under review was a shortfall from the 2023 revenue target of 1,304,548,912.93 billion Naira given to the Command.

He said despite the border closure, "This figure represents about 87.8 per cent of the revenue target issued. It however indicates an improvement in revenue by N299,110,632.35 from N832,946,852.40 revenue generated in the preceding year 2022."

According to Comptroller Umar, the Command ensured compliance with the border closure directive by strictly adhering and enforcing the principles guiding the border closure.

He explained that, the Customs Command in Katsina State, "during the period under review, intercepted 369 contrabands, including used vehicles, tyres, second-hand clothing, vegetable oil, and foreign parboiled rice, among others, with Duty Paid Value (DPV) of N553,339,240.00 in its ongoing anti-smuggling operations."

He reiterated that, the Command under his watch has made significant progress in fostering synergy with other security agencies in the state for intelligence gathering and improved operations within and outside the border corridors. Comptroller Mohammed Umar noted that, the command has a cordial working relationship

with the Katsina State Government, traditional institutions, religious leaders, border communities, and other stakeholders in the trade supply chain and would continue to facilitate trade without compromising economic and national security.

"We could not have achieved this feat without the support of the Comptroller General of Customs Bashir Adeniyi MFR, his Management Team, Officers and Men of the Command, and other Units of the Service," he emphasized.

He disclosed the Thirty (30) Officers decorated in the recently released promotion includes:- One (1) Comptroller of Customs, Three (3) Chief Superintendents of Customs,

Three (3) Superintendents of Customs, Nine (9) Deputy Superintendents of Customs, Ten (10) Assistant Superintendents of Customs I, and Four (4) Assistant Superintendents of Customs II.

Comptroller Mohammed Umar charged the promoted Officers to rededicate themselves to work and deliver the Service's constitutional mandate of revenue generation, legitimate trade facilitation, and suppression of smuggling.

"You must ensure you behave as responsible officers wherever you find yourselves by giving your uniform the respect it deserves because so many wish to be where you are today", Comptroller Umar added.





Gov Mutfwang

## Plateau University Bokkos Earns Gratitude For Timely Support To Displaced Residents

By; **BUHARI B. BELLO, Jos**

In the wake of armed attacks that claimed the lives of over 290 individuals on Christmas Eve and beyond, Plateau State University Bokkos has received heartfelt appreciation from more than 19,000 people sheltering in Bokkos.

The university's swift response provided a crucial lifeline to those affected by the tragic events.

Bishop Ayuba Matawal, leader of the camps and Chairman of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), Bokkos branch, expressed gratitude during a visit by a team from Plateau State University on Sunday.

He highlighted the shortage of beddings and facilities, which compelled numerous internally displaced persons (IDPs) to seek refuge with relatives in surrounding towns and villages.

The university's intervention was described as timely and invaluable.

Acknowledging Plateau State University's significant role in academic and community development, Bishop Matawal pledged the unwavering support of the church for the university's ongoing efforts.

Mr. Michael Kyes, leader

of a local tribal association, emphasized that the attacks aimed at landgrab and ethnic displacements, calling for the intervention of both local and international authorities to address the situation.

Mrs. Christiana Bitrus Sagam, representing the displaced villagers, shared the devastating impact of the attacks that led to the loss of everything for many residents. She expressed deep appreciation for the university's timely rescue and support.

Presenting essential items to the camps, Prof. Bernard Matur, the Vice Chancellor of Plateau State University Bokkos, conveyed the university's deep concern over the widespread displacements caused by the attacks.

Prof. Matur reiterated that the university sees the well-being of surrounding communities as integral to its own, emphasizing the interconnectedness.

The items delivered to the camps included beddings, clothes, grains, and cooking utensils.

Prof. Matur assured camp officials that Plateau State University Bokkos remains committed to further interventions, pledging continuous support for the peace and advancement of the affected area.

## Chief Of Kagoro Pledges To Support Advocacy For Health Budget Cash Backing

By; **ALEX UANGBAOJE, Kaduna**

His Royal Majesty, Ufuwai Bonet, Chief of Kagoro, Kaura LGA and Vice Chairman Kaduna State Traditional Council, has pledged to add his voice to advocate for cash backing of health sector budget in state.

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budget that is realistic annually.

According to him, he will find an appropriate channel to convey KADMAM's message to the government.

He expressed dismay over the attitude of most people in communities where healthcare services are available, but refuse to access them.

The traditional leader who commended KADMAM for its efforts and sacrifices, urged the mechanism to continue in their advocacy until they get results for their efforts.

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mechanism to help in sensitizing communities to ensure that their wives and children go to facilities for healthcare services, urging husbands to at all times plan for their wives delivery to avoid unforeseen circumstances. Earlier, leader of the delegation, Co-chair of the mechanism, Isa Gidado, told their host that the purpose of the visit was to seek his support to advocate for cash backing of funds meant for healthcare system in the State.

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concerned about the situation of Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health + Nutrition (RMNCAH+N), in Kaduna State and that there is need for traditional leaders to join force with civil society organizations in getting government to make funds budgeted for the sector available.

Gidado, also informed the royal father and his team of what KADMAM is doing in the state to support government in addressing issues of maternal and newborn mortality.



## Benue Govt Releases Special Security Phone Contact Numbers

By; **ARCHIBONG ESUENE, Makurdi**

Following the upsurge in kidnapping and bandits activities, the Benue State Governments has released phone numbers for the public to give information to the office of the Special Adviser to the Governor on Security.

The phone numbers were released by the Special Adviser to the Governor on Security and Strategic Liaison, Col Alexander Igbaya Ashungu (rtd) in Makurdi.

According to the Special Adviser on Security to the governor, Benue State has zero tolerance for crime and called on the public to report any incident for prompt actions

"Any member of the public who suspect any false movement, gathering and none authorize persons bearing arms particularly in our rural forest should report through any of the following

numbers for investigation and further actions."

He added that the state government has been working round the clock to ensure the state is safe for inhabitants and businesses."we speak,a number of kidnapped victims have been rescued and we are going after those perpetrating such evil crime in the state".

The Security Adviser reiterated Governor Hyacinth Alia's determination to ensure security and safety in the state as no meaningful development can take place where insecurity is the order of the day.

On the efforts of the various security agencies in the state, the governor's Security Adviser commended all the agencies in Benue State for their total commitments towards the maintenance of peace in the state.

The numbers released by the adviser are 08115780499, 09021991445 and 08132111854. It would be recalled that recently, the caretaker

chairperson of Ukum Local Government Area (LGA) of the state, Gideon Haanongon, and three others were kidnapped.

Mr Haanongon was kidnapped with his orderly, driver and personal assistant, while travelling to a burial last weekend.

Speaking hours after the incident, the Benue State Governor father Alia called for the immediate release of the council chief and his aides, while decrying the killings and kidnappings in the area.

The governor who called on prominent sons and daughters of the area known as Sankara which comprises of three local governments namely Katsina Ala, Ukum and Logo to proffer lasting solutions to insecurity in their area, urges traditional leaders in the area to join in seeking solutions to the challenges, saying his administration was determined in ensuring that peace return to every part of the state.

# Customs FOU Zone C Records Over N5bn DPV In 2023

**\*Comptroller Kolade decorates promoted officers**

By; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

Total seizures worth N5.3 billion in Duty Paid Value (DPV) were recorded by the Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) Federal Operations Unit, Zone "C" Owerri in 2023 fiscal year, New Nigerian Newspapers has learnt.

This happened just as 46 promoted officers in the Zone were decorated with their new ranks.

The Zone "C" Comptroller, Kayode Kolade, while decorating the promoted officers, on Wednesday, described the seizures as a result of hard-work, resilience, dedication to duty and commitment of his men and officers.

Some of the items seized, he said, were pangolin scales, foreign parboiled rice, cannabis sativa (also known as Indian hemp), fake pharmaceutical products, tramadol, used vehicles, used tyres, used clothing and explosive raw materials among others.

The Comptroller also said that as a result of the interventions of his officers in checkmating

the activities of fraudulent agents at the seaports, lots of revenues, hitherto lost, have been recovered to the tune of One Hundred and Fifty Two Million, Four Hundred and Ninety-Two Thousand, Two Hundred and Fourteen Naira (N152,492,214.00) only.

He charged the promoted officers to live above board and continue to justify the confidence reposed in them by the Service.

He also thanked the Comptroller-General, Wale Adeniyi MFR dsm fnipr psc (+), for his continued support and fatherly disposition which has resulted in the promotion of officers and eased up the activities of officers.

"Let me use this opportunity to appreciate the Comptroller-General of Customs, Wale Adeniyi MFR and his management team through the Board of the NCS for this privilege and promise our determination and zeal to perform even more as we wear our new ranks.

"New rank comes with new and more responsibility and we must



Comptroller, Kayode Kolade

deliver on our mandate.

"One thing that is constant in life is change. Due to the recent promotion, there will be changes in our roster and we must justify our relevance in duty assignments. We need to improve our performance this year to meet the target of N5.7 trillion set by the Service and I believe we can do it.", Comptroller Kolade stated.

The promoted officers

include three from the rank of Chief Superintendent of Customs (CSC) to the rank of Assistant Comptroller (AC); 5 from Superintendent of Customs (SC) to Chief Superintendent of Customs (CSC) and three (3) from the rank of Deputy Superintendent of Customs (DSC) to SC.

# Borno Speaker Felicitates Delta, Ebonyi Governors Over Supreme Court Verdict

By; SADIQ ABUBAKAR, Maiduguri

The Speaker Borno State House of Assembly (BOSHA), Rt. Hon. Abdulkarim Lawan has felicitated Governor of Delta State, Sheriff Francis Orohedor Oborewori and his counterpart of Ebonyi State, Rt. Hon. Francis Nwifuru for their affirmation by the Supreme Court of Nigeria, as legitimately elected governors of their respective states during the 2023 general elections. This was contained in a statement personally signed by the Speaker, a copy which was made available to our

correspondent in Maiduguri at the weekend. It would be recalled that the duo were former colleagues of the Borno Speaker at the 8th and 9th Assembly.

These victories according to Lawan, further rekindled the faith in democracy and the

confidence democrats have on the Judiciary being the last hope of the common man.

His words: "I want to use this medium and to join millions of Nigerians in Congratulating the Executive governor of Delta state, Sheriff Francis Orohedor Oborewori

and his counterpart of Ebonyi state, Rt. Hon. Francis Nwifuru for their affirmation by the Supreme Court of Nigeria, as legitimately elected

governor of their respective states during the 2023 general elections. "These victories further empowers the victorious governors to continue to deliver on the projects and programmes that are dear and impactful to the people of Delta and Ebonyi.

"I have no doubt, that with their pedigree, they will now have no distraction for whatsoever, as they all strive to put smile on the faces of their people who had massively gave them the mandate to serve them in good faith, peace and prosperity.

"While I pray for their tenure to be prosperous for the people of their dear states, I urge them to focus



Borno Speaker

# Bodija Explosions; Oyo NUJ Calls For Manhunt On Suspects' Hideouts

**\*Commiserates victims**

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

Oyo State Council of Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) on Thursday, called for manhunt of suspects behind the explosions that rocked Bodija area of Ibadan on Tuesday night. The union made the call in a statement jointly signed by the Chairman, Ademola Babalola, and Secretary, Olusola Oladapo.

In the statement, Oyo NUJ charged that in doing this, the state government and the security agencies should without hesitation fish out the suspects and as well bring the suspects to book.

Advocating thorough investigations into the cause of the explosion, Oyo NUJ stressed, "as the voice of the media in Oyo State, the NUJ emphasised the importance of thorough investigations into the cause of the explosion"

It tasked government to ensure that those responsible for this tragedy are held accountable and that measures are put in place to prevent similar incidents in the future".

Emphasizing that safety and well-being of the residents of Ibadan and Oyo State as a whole should be a top priority, Oyo NUJ noted that "no stone should be left unturned to ensure justice and prevent future occurrence of this unfortunate but avoidable incident".

Expressing deepest condolences and sympathies to the victims and families affected by the recent explosion at Bodija, Ibadan, the union

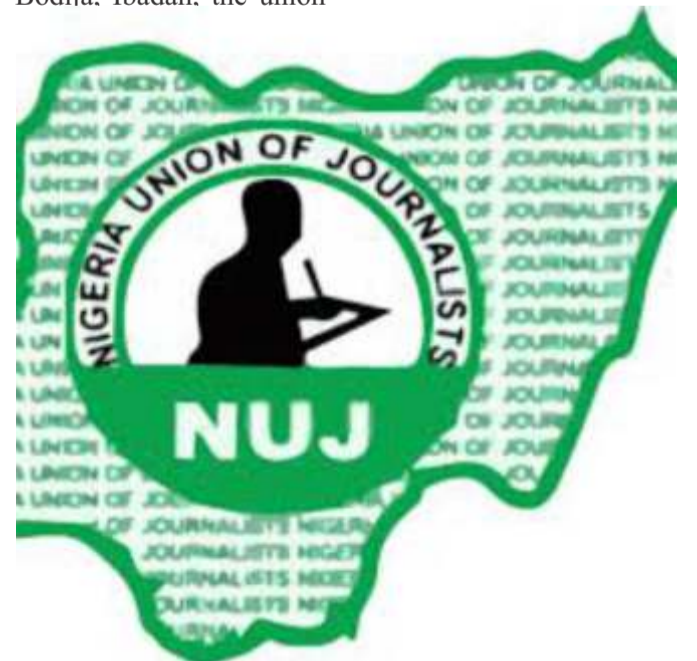
maintained that it solidarise with the affected individuals including three of NUJ members whose houses were affected, during this difficult time.

While acknowledging the devastating impact of the explosion and the profound loss of lives and properties, Oyo NUJ lauded Gov Seyi Makinde for providing immediate assistance and relief to the affected families through provision of shelter for them in some hotels in the city.

The union in extending support and solidarity to the victims' families, offering prayers and comfort as they navigate through this tragic event, adding that journalists whose houses were affected should be strong, the union urged media organisations to report on the incident responsibly, providing accurate and timely information to the public.

Calling for unity amongst journalists, the union urged them to support one another and collaborate in disseminating information that promotes safety, awareness, and community resilience.

"Together, as a community, we can overcome this tragedy, while working towards a safer and more secure environment for all. We have equally sent intelligence reports we garnered through our investigations to the Governor and relevant security agencies to launch manhunt on other suspected offices of the prime suspect and company linked to the unfortunate incident,"



# Group Seeks Support For Widows, Donates Items To 150 Beneficiaries

By; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

Governments at all levels, organizations and well meaning individuals have been urged to rise to the challenge of widows in the society.

The founder of Jediah Divine Home of Love (JEDLOF) a non governmental organization, Dr. Ebele Okoye made the appeal while distributing various items including foodstuff to over 150 widows in Enugu State.

In a statement made available to New Nigerian, Dr Okoye called for the

involvement of all levels of government to design programmes for widows by setting aside a grant that will enable them establish themselves.

According to her, governments at all levels should be able to employ graduate widows to enable them feed and train their families.

She also called for the setting up of small scale businesses for the non educated widows where they could learn handworks. "If they do that, you will see that many of them will not be as bad as they are by sitting and waiting for where the

next meal will come from or their children looking for how to go to school without school fees.

"Government should take care of their kids by establishing a kind of funds that will be for the caring of these children from primary to secondary schools.

"A serious government all over the world provides serious things that they do for widows, but in Nigeria, government should take it as a responsibility"

Dr. Okoye explained that both widows and their children are agonising and in pains as a result of poverty associated with

them.

On activities of JEDLOF, Dr. Okoye explained that over 150 widows were hosted in Enugu state as part of activities to mark the end of the 2023 programme.

She revealed that a lot of activities have been lined up for 2024, describing it as massive but will depend on the availability of funds adding, that JEDLOF planned the constitution of boreholes for communities, train brilliant of widows children in schools, identifying young widows with a view to empowering them business wise.



Dr. Okoye (right) presenting gift to a beneficiary.

## Ibadan Explosion: APC Calls For Probe, More Action From Oyo Govt



By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

Oyo State Chapter of the All Progressives Congress (APC) on Thursday, called for proper investigations into the multiple explosions at old Bodija area of Ibadan on Tuesday night.

The party in a statement by its state Publicity Secretary, Comrade Wale Sadare, maintained that the proper investigation is to unraveling the cause of the incident and the culprits behind it.

Oyo APC queried Gov Seyi Makinde on the efficacy of his efforts on security "when no intelligence report could be obtained on the activities of some custodians of weapons of mass weapons right behind the Office of the governor until they succeeded in destroying lives and properties of the innocent people".

The party stressed, "It was an emergency situation and the whole had been thrown into palpable fear since the social media has been littered with rumours and half truths".

"So, the governor should have admitted that he failed in the area of security because a proactive and efficient security architecture would not give room for such devastating explosions right behind the Governor's Office", it said.

Oyo APC added, Who are the illegal miners who live

and keep bombs in an high brow area such as Bodija without the knowledge of the powers-that-be?

"The unfortunate incident also exposed the state government as lacking the capacity to offer quick and efficient response to emergency situation because we all saw what happened as only the federal government funded agencies and some private organizations were able to act well to rescue many people who were trapped in the rubbles of collapsed structures".

It stressed, "We therefore urge Gov. Makinde prioritize training of officials on emergency and rescue operations, purchase of relevant equipment and fortification of the state Department of Fire Service for obvious reasons".

"As much as we are saddened by the development, we sympathize with all the victims of the disaster especially those who lost their loved ones and others whose valued properties and vehicles got destroyed".

APC maintained, "Lastly, we call on both the federal government and the PDP administration in the state to carry out independent investigations with a view to getting to the bottom of what led to the lethal explosions as well as those responsible for it and also ensure that all culprits are brought to justice."



# Bodija Explosions Preventable

## - Olubadan

*\*Commends Makinde's action, commiserates bereaved families*

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

The Olubadan of Ibadanland, Oba Lekan Balogun on Wednesday, said the Tuesday night explosions at Bodija area of Ibadan was preventable if people had been conscious and inquisitive about the activities of the people they live around with.

Oba Balogun stated this in a statement made available to journalists in Ibadan by his Personal Assistant (Media), Oladele Ogunisola on the Bodija explosions incident. The royal father who described the incident as unfortunate and devastating lauded Gov Seyi Makinde over his prompt response and action on the explosion declared that the way and manner he responded and with his prompt briefing of the people not only doused the tension created by the incident, but gave a sense of reassurance.

The Olubadan emphasized the need for the people to be vigilant in the town, saying, from the available preliminary investigation report, the explosion was preventable if people had been conscious and inquisitive about the activities of the people

they live around with.

"A stitch in time, saves nine as an adage says. If we put on I don't care cap about those we live around with, when the consequences of their lifestyle, if it is antisocial manifest, nobody is immune and that's the result we are now contending with", he said.

The Olubadan added, "As landlords or agents, who are those tenants we rent our houses to? How much of them do we know? What do they do for a living?"

"We should not be contented with just regular payment of rents or ability to pay humongous amount of money. Infact, any tenant that ordinarily offers to pay far beyond the common and prevailing rent in an area should be on the watch list if not denied the accommodation"

On Gov Makinde, Oba Balogun said, "I was following the governor's every step and I'm very impressed with his

approach, prompt action, meticulous steps and quick intervention on the medical needs of the injured. The governor really proved himself a truly people's governor". Oba Balogun also commended the security agents, led by the state Commissioner of Police for their professional handling of the situation, their commitment, dedication and sacrifice and prayed that they would not labour in vain just as he implored them not to rest on their oars, but to remain

steadfast and proactive to nip in bud any form of threat to the security and peaceful living of the people.

Commiserating with the deceased families with a prayer that the Almighty God would comfort them and grant the departed peaceful repose of their souls, the Olubadan wished the injured quick recovery just as he urged the people to remain calm and obey safety precautions' directive as may be given by the security agents.



Olubadan Oba Lekan

# Afenifere Leader, Fasoranti, Expresses Shock Over Ibadan Explosion

*\*Calls on govts to prevent a re-occurrence*

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

Leader of the Pan-Yoruba socio-cultural and political organization, Chief Reuben Fasoranti has charged the federal and state governments to ensure that the Bodija explosions does not happen again.

The Afenifere leader gave the charge on Wednesday in a statement to condole the families of the victims

of the Bodija explosions. In the statement by the Afenifere National Publicity Secretary, Comrade Jare Ajayi, Pa Fasoranti expressed shock over the incident, saying what happened at Bodija in Ibadan on Tuesday evening was not for the victims' families or Ibadan residents alone as some of the victims were from different parts of Nigeria and perhaps from outside the country!.

"As the saying goes, an injury to one is an injury to all. What happened in Ibadan, just like various terrorist acts happening in different parts of the country, are quite worrisome to us in Afenifere and indeed to all of us in Yorubaland", he said.

The Afenifere leader added, "This is why we always called on those concerned to take decisive steps to put a stop to these

destructive acts as we all are the losers"

Lending his voice to that of President Bola Tinubu and Governor Seyi Makinde in calling for the unveiling those behind the explosion with a view to ensuring that such does not happen anywhere in Nigeria again, Pa Fasoranti expressing his deeply felt for the families of those who lost their lives in the explosion.

# Child Education, Youth Empowerment Icon, Caleb Danladi Unveiled

By; ACHADU GABRIEL, Kaduna

Caleb Danladi, a philanthropist and founder of the Caleb Danladi Foundation (CDF), has continued to emerge as a beacon of hope and inspiration in the realm of child education and youth empowerment. This is obvious, given his numerous unwavering commitment to transforming lives through education which positioned him as an iconic figure dedicated to creating positive impact on the future of our youth. Indeed, his journey as an advocate for child education and youth empowerment has been marked by significant milestones, reflecting a deep-seated belief in the transformative power of education. Through Caleb Danladi Foundation, he has consistently championed causes that uplift and empower children and young people, particularly those in underserved communities, so numerous to mention.

The foundation's initiatives span across various facets of education, including scholarship programs, infrastructural development for schools, and the provision of educational resources. Recognizing the importance of equipping young minds with the tools they need to succeed, Caleb Danladi has become a catalyst for change, ensuring that

educational opportunities are accessible to all.

One of the foundation's flagship programs involves providing scholarships to deserving students, enabling them to pursue higher education and fulfill their academic aspirations. By alleviating the financial burden associated with education, Caleb Danladi has not only created pathways for individual success but has also sown the seeds for community development. Beyond scholarships, the foundation actively engages in mentorship programs, vocational training initiatives, and community outreach projects. These efforts underscore Caleb Danladi's holistic approach to youth empowerment, recognizing that education is not solely confined to classrooms but extends to the development of life skills and character.

Caleb Danladi's impact on child education and youth empowerment has garnered widespread recognition, with testimonials pouring in from beneficiaries whose lives have been transformed through the foundation's initiatives. His visionary leadership and dedication to philanthropy have set a standard for social responsibility and community engagement. As an iconic figure for child education and youth empowerment, Caleb Danladi remains

committed to creating a legacy of positive change. His tireless efforts reflect a belief that every child, regardless of background, deserves the opportunity to access quality education and realize their full potential, and therefore unveiled.



Caleb Danladi, CEO of Caleb Danladi Foundation,



# COMMUNITY FOCUS

## Dungurawa Community Vows To Boost Education Through PTA

By: JABIRUA. HASSAN, Kano

**D**ungurawa Secondary School Parents Teachers Association (PTA) has joined hands towards the restoration of education at the school.

This was announced at the end of the meeting held recently at the school where Parents Teachers Association

was formed to tackle problems affecting the school.

Malam Abdulhamid Garba Kunnawa Majema who emerged as the chairman, told our correspondent that the decision to form the PTA at this moment, is to save the school from disintegration due to the decreasing number of students attending.

He said that he is ready to lead the association very well to restore the school's population.

He called on the parents and guardians to support their move in order to achieve what they have planned.

Abdulhamid Kunnawa added that, "We know how the school principal is working selflessly to ensure that the

school becomes more exemplary and with our helping hands, this would be achieved because all the PTA exco are ready to work as a team to salvage the learning edifice".

The school accommodates students from Dungurawa, Kunnawa, Waddau, Rawaki and Gudau-Jola towns, while the PTA leaders have swung into action to actualize their plans.



## NAERLS, VCDP Train 102 Women, Youth On Rice, Cassava e-Extension

By: SANIALIYU, Zaria

The National Agricultural Extension Research and Liason Services (NAERLS) in collaboration with FGN/IFAD/Value Chain Development Programme, have trained 102 Women and Youths on Rice and Casava on the use of ICT for virtual meeting and training (Zoom and Google meeting).

The training took place at (NAERLS) Conference Hall, the aim, to empower them with the knowledge and skills on how to become digital extension facilitators.

Declaring the training open, the Executive

Director of NAERLS, Professor Emmanuel Ikani advised the participants to make use of the knowledge they were provided on good agronomic practices as farming is now a business oriented.

Prof. Ikani stressed the importance of increasing productivity, livelihood, and food security through boosting farming activities in the country.

The objective of the training is to enhance the capacity of the women and youth and to deliver e-extension services to smallholder farmers in their respective states.

Giving an overview of the training, Mr. Musa Dalang

of (VCDP) has applauded the turn out of the participants and the initiative of the training.

Mr. Dalang emphasized the importance of the training as the women and youth are expected to share their knowledge with the farmers in their communities for them to benefit others.

He urged them to ensure that they involve grass-level farmers in their activities during the span of production and tasked them on the need for increased intentional gender mainstreaming of the training.

Various topics related to e-extension and digital extension were discussed

at the five days training of women and youth from nine states.

The participants gained new knowledge and skills on dry and raining season farming and improved their confidence and motivation to apply what they learnt in their farms and communities.

Some of the participants expressed appreciation for what they described as an apt and timely training programme.

The 102 participants made of 61 male and 41 female were drawn from nine states, Taraba, Kogi, Nasarawa, Ebonyi, Cross River, Benue, Anambra and Niger.



## LG Polls: Borno CSOs Network Gets Approval To Observe

By: SADIQ ABUBAKAR, Maiduguri

Head of Saturday January 20, 2024 Local Government Councils elections, Executive Director Network for CSOs Borno State (NECSOB), Ambassador Comrade Bulama Abiso on Wednesday, disclosed that arrangements have been concluded with the Borno State Independent Electoral Commission (BOSIEC) for the network

to mobilize its members across the state to monitor or observe the general conduct of the forthcoming LG election across the 27 LGAs.

Comrade Abiso who revealed this during a briefing/meeting with the members of the network, also highlighted specific key areas where the network will prioritize observation or monitoring exercise, which includes overall general conduct of the election, gender participation,

inclusiveness of the general election and security provision among others.

He added that the briefing was sequel to receipt of the formal approval from BOSIEC for the network to observe the LGCs election.

During the meeting, members were also instructed or taken through how to apply some electoral materials as working tools that will be used during the election.

The Executive Director further called on members of the NECSOB to endeavour to comply with the stipulated rules and regulations of the LG polls as well as adhere strictly to the guidelines spelt out for the general conduct of the elections across the 27 LGAs of the state as the network is expected to submit its findings on the election to the commission on the general conduct of the polls.

## ACF Says Planned Relocation Of CBN Units, FAAN Hqtrs To Lagos Plan To Underdevelop North

By: ADEBOYE ADO, Akure

A renowned Northern group, Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF) has criticized the alleged relocation of key departments of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) and the headquarters of Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN) from Abuja to Lagos.

The group expressed displeasure in a statement signed by Prof. T. A. Muhammad-Baba, the National Publicity Secretary of ACF.

The statement reads, "The management of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), recently announced plans to relocate some of its key departments from Abuja to Lagos, understandably sparking a wave of anxiety and outcry from many Nigerians, especially Northerners who, obviously would be most adversely affected by the spontaneous exercise.

"The CBN's decision is no means isolated or normal administrative action to fix some logistics problem. Rather, it fits into a disturbing pattern of antagonistic actions often taken by certain federal administrations against the interests of Northern and other parts of Nigeria. The CBN's announcements was followed by another from the Federal Ministry of Aviation's Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN) plans to also relocate to Lagos, due to shortage of office space and claim of the volume of air traffic handled by Lagos. The proposed actions of the two agencies, i.e. CBN and FAAN are precipitous and mala fide. Still on the Ministry of Aviation, only 8 of 40 directors recently appointed are from the North!

"As if deliberately designed to be made public in drip-drip fashion, a leaked letter to the Minister of Aviation from a contractor, AVSATEL, became public, wherein the company sought permission to relocate the project for refurbishing Airport Rescue and Fire Fighting Vehicles (ARFF) from Katsina to "the south" or Abuja, but sneakily mentioning Lagos, Ibadan or Enugu. AVSATEL sought to rationalise its suggestion on issues that should must have been in the scope of the works when the company bided for the job but which it clearly ignored then.

"It is easy to ignore such planned actions by the CBN and FAAN (and AVSATEL), but it is impossible to fail to see in them a clear pattern of thinly disguised marginalisation of the North. Nor is the grand strategy entirely new. President Obasanjo's first action in office in 1999, was to order the relocation of the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) and the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA), from Abuja, the federal capital, to Lagos. Today almost all agencies and institutions responsible for the marine economy and especially the sea ports, are concentrated at Lagos, which retains undisturbed monopoly over port operations and sea traffic in and out of Nigeria, even as Calabar, Uyo and Port Harcourt offer as much if not better facilities.

"When therefore the public condemns such obsession with relocation to Lagos, it is clearly reacting against a disturbing pattern of swindle perpetrated by some federal government officials against sections of the country. Northern Nigeria in particular has long lived under the shadow of these threats and has endured a series of calamities as a result. It was only the successful discovery and exploration of oil along the Kolmani River, in Gombe and Bauchi states, that discredited the propaganda that oil does not exist in the North. The vile propaganda was to discourage the investment of resources looking for oil up North. Sadly, such has also been the case with a number of other federal projects meant to be located anywhere in the North, such as dredging of rivers Niger and Benue (so that the North remains landlocked), Mambila Hydroelectric Dam (Kainji and Shiroro are dams too many to be up North!), grazing reserves for the development of the livestock sub-sector, to list but a few. For decades, certain powerful interests within the Federal Government, who seem scared of the North, have refused to allow the projects to be undertaken.

"Given all of the above and more, the Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF) remains unconvinced that the government agencies trying to relocate to Lagos will be doing so on any noble grounds. ACF calls on the Federal Government of Nigeria, and the National Assembly, to call on those agencies to retrace their steps and apply other honest means of addressing the alleged over-crowding in offices. Against the situation in Lagos, there is plenty of land in the Federal Capital Territory for expansion of office and other infrastructural facilities and such factors should not be used to obfuscate sinister motives. "Katsina remains the location of the ARFF, as in the original scope of works.

# Zulum Attends Third Day Funeral Prayer Of Late Isa Gusau In Abuja



By ; SADIQ ABUBAKAR, Maiduguri

Governor Babagana Umara Zulum of Borno State on Wednesday, attended the third day funeral prayer of his late spokesman, Isa Umar Gusau, which was organized by the family of the deceased at the residence of late Isa Gusau's elder brother, Alhaji Babangida Umar. Officials from the office of Vice President Kashim Shettima, who traveled on Sunday to Davos to represent President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, also attended the prayer session.

Other personalities that also attended the third day prayer from Borno State include, Commissioner of Finance, Alhaji Ahmed Ali

and Zulum's private secretary, Barrister Mustapha Ali Busuguma, Zulum's SSA on Media, Baba Sheikh Haruna, and SSA on New Media, Abdurrahman Ahmed Bundi, among others.

The governor in his briefly offered prayer to condole the family of late Isa Gusau, lauded the exemplary contributions made by the deceased during his life time.

He also spoke on late Isa Gusau's selfless dedication to the welfare of others, his humility, and his kindness.

It would be recalled that Mallam Isa Gusau died last Thursday evening at a hospital in India and was buried on Sunday in Abuja.

The third funeral prayer was led by Khalifa Muhammad Abdullahi Suru, the Chief Imam of Dantata Jumaa, Abuja.



# Kaduna State, German Govt Deepen Economic Partnership

By; FUNMI ADERINTO, Kaduna

Kaduna State and the German Government are set to deepen their economic partnership as they work together to foster sustainable growth and development in the state. "Under the leadership of Governor Uba Sani, the administration is actively seeking support and partnerships to drive the state's progress. It would be recalled that, in December 2023, Governor Uba Sani visited the German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ) to explore

potential collaborations. The visit was successful, with GIZ expressing their readiness to support the state in achieving its development goals. Recently, on January 16, representatives from GIZ, led by Country Director Dr. Markus Wagner, visited Kaduna State Government for a two-day visit. The purpose of the visit was to discuss and solidify economic partnerships between the two parties. The GIZ team was warmly welcomed by Governor Uba Sani and other senior government officials, and a business dinner was later held to

further strengthen the relationship. During the discussions, which continued the following day, the Deputy Governor Dr. Hadiza Sabuwa Balarabe led senior government officials in talks on specific areas where the state requires support from the German government. These areas include energy, digital transformation, investment promotion, and agriculture. Dr. Wagner expressed gratitude for the warm hospitality and reaffirmed GIZ's commitment to supporting Kaduna State in achieving sustainable development and creating job

opportunities. The Deputy Governor, on behalf of the state government, thanked GIZ for their partnership and assured them of the state's dedication to making the most out of the collaboration. She also expressed her confidence that the discussions will result in impactful initiatives that will benefit the people of Kaduna State. Furthermore, the Deputy Governor highlighted the progress made in the discussions, particularly in areas such as digital transformation, investment promotion, energy,

and agriculture. She said that GIZ's support in these sectors will have a positive impact on the state's development and the lives of its people. Overall, the visit by the GIZ team has strengthened the partnership between Germany and Kaduna State, and both parties are optimistic about the potential outcomes of their discussions. "This collaboration has the potential to drive economic growth and improve the lives of the people of Kaduna State," she said.



# NDLEA Intercepts Canada, South Africa Imported Illicit Drugs, Arms, Ammunition In Lagos

*\*Suspect linked to imported container, nabbed*

*\*Over 5m pills of Tramadol seized in Kano*

By ; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

Eye- eye operatives of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), have intercepted large consignments of different illicit drugs in Lagos, New Nigerian Newspapers has learnt.

The substances identified as Cocaine and Colorado, a strong strain of cannabis, concealed in containerized household items and vehicles imported from Durban, South Africa and Canada at the Tincan Seaport in Lagos, were said to have been intercepted by operatives attached to special units of the agency.

This was contained in a statement by the Agency spokesman Femi Babafemi, made available yesterday.

According to him, following coordinated intelligence and months of tracking of the containers by three special units of NDLEA, the illicit drugs along with arms, ammunition and sundry military effects were seized during joint examination of the three containers by the agency's officers and their counterparts from Customs Service and other security agencies between Thursday 18th and Friday 19th January 2024.

Some of the agency's sniffer dogs were also deployed to help identify locations and bags used in concealing the illicit items.

Babafemi disclosed that some of the items recovered from the containers include: 1, 274 parcels of Cocaine and Colorado with a total weight of 884.09 kilogrammes; four pistols; 197 rounds of 9mm ammunition, 49 rounds of 7.62mm ammunition, 275 rounds of 5.56mm ammunition, 14 rounds of 9mm ammunition and sundry military personnel effects as well as some chemicals in kegs. With the exception of 32.5kg shipment of Colorado that came in used vehicles from Canada, the rest of the items were found in two of three containers that arrived the Tincan port from Durban, South Africa onboard a vessel marked MSC RESILIENT III and discharged on New Year eve,



*Some of the Imported Illicit drugs*

31st December 2023.

A suspect linked to one of the containers, UACU 5348336, bearing the 32.5kg Colorado, 41-year-old Akara Chibugo has already been tracked and arrested by NDLEA operatives.

Two vigilant freight agents and a traveler escaped being roped into two drug trafficking operations by desperate traffickers at the Murtala Muhammed International Airport, MMIA Ikeja Lagos. The two agents were contacted to send a consignment of 1kg cannabis concealed in tins of Milo beverage to Turkey but chose to submit the shipment to NDLEA checks before processing the cargo. The psychoactive substance was later discovered to be hidden inside the shipment.

In the same vein, NDLEA operatives on Friday 19th January arrested one Okosun Paul Punitt, the consignee of a consignment of tramadol concealed in a bottle of dietary supplements, which a staff of Pathfinder International Ltd, Ajuzieogu Mac-Elvis Ugochukwu attempted sending through an intending passenger on Ibom Air to Accra, Ghana at the Lagos airport on Tuesday 16th January. A video of the face-

off between the passenger and Ajuzieogu later went viral after the vigilant passenger suspected the consignment contained illicit substances.

Both Ajuzieogu and the exhibit were later transferred to NDLEA on Thursday 18th January by the Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria, FAAN for investigation. Preliminary findings by NDLEA on Thursday 18th January by the Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria, FAAN for investigation. Preliminary findings by NDLEA showed the parcel contained 50 pills of tramadol 225mg concealed in a bottle of dietary supplements.

A follow up operation by the agency led to the arrest of Okosun upon his return from Ghana on Friday. He has in his statement, confirmed ownership of the drug.

In Kano, no fewer than five million six hundred and fifty three thousand (5,653,000) pills of tramadol 250mg and exol-5 were seized from three suspects. While Nura Abdullahi, 38, and Tahir Muhammad Mukhtar, 42, were arrested at Bacharawa area of Kano with 5,404,000 pills of tramadol 250mg on Sunday 14th January, Yusuf Umar, 50, was nabbed at Gadar Tamburawa

area of the state the previous day Saturday 13th January with 249,000 tablets of exol-5 by NDLEA operatives.

In Lagos, two suspects: Ali Abubakar and Murtala Sani were arrested at Ojodu Berger area on Tuesday 16th January with 110kg of cannabis sativa while 69kg of same substance was recovered from the hideout of a fleeing suspect in Akerele, Surulere same day. Not less than 2,800 bottles of codeine-based cough syrup were recovered by NDLEA officers on Saturday 20th January during a raid operation at Aleyita FCT, Abuja. The suspected owner of the consignment, Jidefor Sochima is still at large.

While a total of 100,510 pills of opioids were seized from a suspect, Ike Emmanuel, 35, on Thursday 18th January at Dan-Anacha village, Taraba State, NDLEA operatives in Abia state arrested 60-year-old Joseph Isiguzoro, as well as Emmanuel Eugene and Malachi Ndu in parts of Abia state with 34,200 pills of opioids. Isiguzoro was equally found with monetary exhibit totalling Two Million Eight Hundred and Eighty Five Thousand and Forty Five Naira (N2,885,045) only.

The war Against Drug Abuse, WADA, advocacy campaign of the Agency continued in equal measure in schools, markets, worship places and others across the country in the past week. Some of them include: WADA sensitization lecture at Federal University of Technology, Ikot Abasi, Akwa Ibom; Federal Government College, Ijanikin, Lagos; Edusoko University, Bida, Niger state and WADA advocacy lecture at Community Secondary School, Bichi, Kano state, among others.

While commending the officers and men of Tincan, MMIA, Abia, Taraba, Lagos, Kano and FCT Commands as well as the special units of the Agency for the arrests and seizures of the past week, Chairman/Chief Executive Officer of NDLEA, Brig. Gen. Mohamed Buba Marwa (Retd) urged them and their compatriots across all formations of the Agency to remain focused and resolute in pursuit of the corporate goal of winning the war against substance abuse and illicit drug trafficking in Nigeria. He further charged them to maintain the flame of collaboration with other law enforcement agencies and stakeholders in their areas of



## Network Tasks Stakeholders To Join Hands In Improving IGR In Kaduna State

By; **ALEX UANGBAOJE, Kaduna**

**C**oordinator Tax Justice and Governance Platform (TJ&GP), Kaduna State, Simeon Olatunde, has appealed to all accountability mechanisms, Civil Society Coalitions, Community Based Organizations and other tax stakeholders to join hands with in making sure the state achieves the voluntary tax compliance drive.

Ola, noted that no government can achieve genuine development without deliberate tax compliance, emphasizing that an improved IGR will engender development in the state.

The coordinator, made the call at the weekend, during a Town Hall meet to have a unified civic position towards engaging tax

administrators and relevant state actors, ahead of the review of state tax law, supported by ChristianAid.

He expressed hope that the partnership with other stakeholders should be able to help in driving the informal sector to become compliant to tax payment which is expected to impact IGR.

According to him, a critical look at the IGR to budget increases yearly shows that IGR in the State is suffering, adding that there's need for people to begin to volunteer willingly in tax payment so government can raise more money for development.

Olatunde added that the "meeting with other stakeholders is to identify and harvest taxpayers concerns on revenue generation (tax

assessment, collections and accountability) processes in the state.

"Improve taxpayers' knowledge on their tax rights, obligations and the existing grievance redress mechanism GRM channels and to harmonize civil society inputs and strengthen collaborations towards optimizing tax revenue mobilization."

In his address, Corporate Communication Officer of Kaduna Internal Revenue Service, Jamilu Zakari, who appreciated the network for her efforts, said the move would go a long way in helping the agency in achieving its 120 billion Naira target for 2024 and beyond.

On his part, CS Co-chair Open Government Partnership (OGP), Kaduna State chapter, Mubarak Abdulganiyi, stated that in the spirit of

collaboration, CS need to seize the opportunity to exchange ideas, share experiences, and collectively formulate strategies that resonate with the principles of openness and justice in tax administration.

"The diversity of our backgrounds and expertise is our strength, and together, we can propel the discourse on tax justice to new heights.

"I extend my deepest appreciation to each one of you for your commitment, passion, and invaluable contributions to the cause of tax justice. May our deliberations be fruitful, our collaborations enduring, and our impact resounding. Welcome to this transformative journey, and let us collectively shape a future where tax justice prevails for the betterment of all."

## 2023 YPP Governorship, Others In Akwa Ibom Defects To APC

By; **PATRICK TITUS, Uyo**

**T**he 2023 Young Progressives Party (YPP) governorship's candidate in Akwa Ibom, Senator Bassey Albert Akpan has decamped to the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC).

Akpan, who alongside his entire campaign structure which include his running mate, Mr Asuquo Amba, State Chapter Chairman, Apostle Nyeneime Andy made the declaration at APC stakeholders meeting in Ukana, the country home of the Senate President, Senator Godswill Akpabio in Essien Udim local government area of the state on Friday.

The decision to dump thier eswhile party for APC according to Apostle Andy was to enable the party to align with the central government and link Akwa Ibom state in order to attract meaningful

development into the state. The former YPP state chapter chairman also explained that the decision was taken after due consultations with the state leadership of the party, in order to prepare those concern for the task ahead of the 2027 elections in the state.

Receiving the decampees into the APC family, the State Chairman, Mr. Stephen Ntokekpo described the development as a timely intervention to rescue Akwa Ibom state from its present minority status and link it with the centre, where every developmental stride abounds.

He described Akwa Ibom as being blessed with the present administration under President Ahmed Bola Tinubu and the Senate President, Sen Godswill Akpabio, who he described as the pride of the Niger Delta region in particular and the country in particular.

## Bodija Explosions, Devastating - CJN Ariwoola

**\*Visits scene of explosions in Ibadan**

By; **BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan**

**T**he Chief Justice of Nigeria (CJN), Justice Kayode Ariwoola on Friday described the Tuesday night explosions at the Dejo Oyelese area of Bodija Ibadan as devastating. CJN Ariwoola stated this in Ibadan, the Oyo State capital when he visited the areas affected by the explosions.

He lamented what he saw at the scene and prayed that God would take care of everything and help the government to assist the families affected.

"What I have seen is

devastating. I don't know who can explain this, but God says He knows it all. God knew it before it happened, and only God will take care of everything", he said.

The CJN added, "We cannot say government should come and do it but God will assist the government to assist all the families affected."

Justice Ariwoola during the visit visited a former deputy governor of the state, Chief Iyiola Oladokun, and a legal luminary, Chief Niya Akintola, (SAN) whose buildings were part of the houses affected in the Bodija explosion.



# Kaduna: Constructing Homes For Over 500,000 Less Privileged, Individuals In Progress - Uba Sani

By; FUNMI ADERINTO, Kaduna

Governor Uba Sani of Kaduna State yesterday, inspected the progress of the Qatar Sanabil Mass Housing Project in Chikun LGA.

The governor inspected the ongoing construction, aimed at constructing homes for over 500,000 less privileged individuals in the state.

The first phase aims to build 100 homes, with additional houses in the second phase.

Additionally, a farmland, including a poultry farm, will be established to provide livelihood for the less privileged residents.







## Supreme Court Governorship Judgements

By Safiya I. Dantiye

**T**HE MUCH-awaited end to 2023 election court cases had finally ended for many states in the governorship election last Friday, January 12, 2024. It was a tortuous journey from Election Tribunal to Appeal Court up to the Supreme Court, taking almost a year from the day the governors had been sworn into office on May, 29, 2023.

Winners and losers alike have all suffered, and governance has been affected even though some of the governors tried to work as hard as possible; after all, just because your victory is challenged in court, you still have work to do. Though the opposition mocked some with bitter words calling them administrators, meaning they would soon be removed from office.

To save our democracy, the politicians themselves have a role to play to sustain it, not just by words, which are in many cases empty, but in action too. They have to abide by the rules and when they are defeated in election which they know to be so; they should accept it and prepare for the next election.

However, the attention of the judgment was drawn to the Court of Appeal when the Supreme Court justices used strong words in reversing their earlier judgements, making people to be vindicated by being skeptical of some judgements delivered by the Court of Appeal.

This is more so where there were earlier judgments by the Supreme Court such as in pre-election matters and even in its own court, yet they went ahead and ruled on it, giving contrary judgement.

In any event, there should be reforms in our electoral laws and matters that were ruled by the Supreme Court should not be ruled again by the lower courts. Those that go against that should be dealt with. We cannot have officers of the law; especially those that sit in judgement, disobey the law as well either because of inducement or whatever.

To save our democracy, the politicians themselves have a role to play to sustain it, not just by words, which are in many cases empty, but in action too. They have to abide by the rules and when they are

defeated in election which they know to be so; they should accept it and prepare for the next election.

They should not go to court to challenge the party membership of an opposition candidate or that he did not obey a High Court order, and on these bases, the court should remove him as governor and declare him winner.

The irony is that they are not disputing that the governor won the election, but they want to pick holes by looking through some sections of the electoral act to take what is not theirs. That is a stolen mandate as far as I am concern.

Though, it is apparent that violence usually happens when the peoples' mandate is taken from the owner and given to another person, the problem is that this culture of impunity involves even those that fought for democracy in Nigeria, but the democracy they practice now leaves much to be desired.

Yet, if it were given to them on these bases, the Muslim ones would quote some verses from the Holy Qur'an or translate it and say, "it is God that gives power to whom He wishes..." But in their heart, they know they have stolen the power and can't deceive people except the gullible. Besides, as Muslims know, God works with what is in the heart, not a show of piety, sympathy and so on.

That is why some people in power with stolen mandates are afraid to go around freely among the people they claimed have loved and voted for them.

So, they should stop wasting time and resources, causing tension and fear of what would happen after court judgements.

Though, it is apparent that violence usually happens when the peoples' mandate is taken from the owner and given to another person, the problem is that this culture of impunity involves even those that fought for democracy in Nigeria, but the democracy they practice now leaves much to be desired.

In this regard, politicians should not truncate the democracy they are so proud of by manipulations and other underhand tactics. And the courts should not be used and allowed to support them.

## Adamawa Reps Member Provides Free Medical Services To Over 6,000 Fufore/Song Eye Patients

By; TOM GARBA, Yola

**A**t an ongoing treatment for people suffering from glaucoma, and other eyes-related sicknesses, the member representing Fufore/Song Federal Constituency of the House of Representatives (HoR) at the National Assembly Complex, Hon Barr Aliyu Wakili Boya has vowed to take free healthcare delivery services to his people.

The free healthcare services which are currently getting attention with over six thousand

people expected to be treated across the two local government areas of Fufore and Song of Adamawa State Central senatorial district, are thronging in their numbers. The free healthcare medical services carried out by the Wakili Boya Foundation through the lawmaker, is calling on people suffering from diverse eye defects to visit Fufore General Hospital to see a team of opticians from Abuja and Lagos who are in Adamawa for the purpose.

The programme started on

January 13 and those in Song Local Government Area are expected to visit the general hospital for their eye examination and treatment.

The federal lawmaker however, warned that anyone going about collecting money for the same purpose will face the wrath of the law, because the exercise is free for all eye patients.

He reiterated that under his watch and representation, his constituency must feel the breeze of good leadership and enjoy the dividends of democracy.



## NOA Hails NCC On Youth Digital Skills, Empowerment

By; JABIRU A. HASSAN, Kano

**T**he Director General National Orientation Agency (NOA), Mal. Lanre Issa Onilu has commended the Federal Government, under the leadership of president Bola Ahmad Tunubu, for its efforts towards empowering youth with skills on digital space, to encourage self reliance and self employed.

The Director-General stated that, at the two days workshop on Digital Skills for Youth Empowerment,

organized by Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) in collaboration with National Orientation Agency (NOA), at Ni'ima Guest Palace, Kano.

Represented by the State Director Kano, Alh. Salusu Waziri Kutama, they Directpr-General further, highlighted that the skills acquisition workshop is inline with the president's campaign promises of pulling out 1,000,000 Nigerians out of poverty. He charged the beneficiaries to make very good use of the skills

acquired in order to improve their business capabilities, digitally.

The Director General appealed to the Nigerian Communications Commission for commitment and endurance, in achieving this national assignment and assured of the agency's maximum support and cooperation.

The NOA Public relations officer, Malam Nuhu Musa disclosed that the participants were cut across North West states of Kano, Kaduna and Katsina.

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

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- Adverts may not be published if the visuals given are considered too poor as to affect the reproduction.
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### TECHNICAL DATA

<b>6 COLUMNS</b>			
Depth	38.1 (CM)	Depth -	15 (Inches)
Width	25.4 (CM)	Width -	10 (Inches)

### POLITICAL RATE

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

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1	Handling for the first 40 copies	120,000.00	9,000.00	129,000.00
2	Per 1000 Copies (1 Page)	28,000.00	2,100.00	30,100.00
3	Per 1000 Copies (Magazine)	50,000.00	3,750.00	53,750.00
4	Per 1000 Copies (Magazine)	80,000.00	6,000.00	86,000.00

### CLASSIFIEDS

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

### Special Position

SPACE	RATE	VAT	TOTAL
FULL W RAPA ROUND	6,750,000.00	506,250.00	7,256,250.00
HALF W RAPA ROUND	4,500,000.00	337,500.00	4,837,500.00
PA GE 2 O R 3	400,000.00	30,000.00	430,000.00
PA GE 4 O R 5	375,000.00	28,125.00	403,125.00
PA GE 6 O R 7	325,000.00	24,375.00	349,375.00
FR ONT PA GE M A S T H E A D E A R P I E C E	215,000.00	16,875.00	231,875.00
FR ONT PA GE S O L U S	312,500.00	23,437.50	335,937.50
FR ONT PA GE S T R I P	375,000.00	28,125.00	403,125.00
B A C K PA GE E A R P I E C E	200,000.00	15,000.00	215,000.00
B A C K PA GE S T R I P	250,000.00	18,750.00	268,750.00
C E N T R E S P R E A D (C O L O U R )	837,500.00	62,812.50	900,312.50
D O U B L E S P R E A D (C O L O U R )	700,000.00	52,500.00	752,500.00
C E N T R E S P R E A D (B L A C K & W H I T E)	575,000.00	43,125.00	618,125.00
D O U B L E S P R E A D (B L A C K & W H I T E)	590,000.00	44,250.00	634,250.00
FR ONT PA GE (10" X 6)	3,250,000.00	243,750.00	3,493,750.00
R O P S T R I P (C O L O U R )	125,000.00	9,375.00	134,375.00
R O P S T R I P (B L A C K & W H I T E)	85,000.00	6,375.00	91,375.00

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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

## Illegal Mining: Kogi Govt Bans Issuance Of Consent Letters To Miners

By; ADAMA JOHN, Lokoja

Lack of commitment by illegal miners resulting in incessant crisis, Kogi State Governor, Alhaji Yahaya Bello, has prohibited all traditional rulers in the state from issuing consent letters to miners without approval by the government even as the existing consent letters will be reviewed.

The prohibition became necessary as the Federal Government's order revoking some fraudulent miners' licences and those described as "portfolio investors", as such Kogi State has no option than to key into the Federal Government policies and pronouncement to sanitise the sector.

The prohibition order in Lokoja during the stakeholders sensitization and meeting with traditional rulers on issues of mining consent letters and community development agreements over the weekend.

While appreciating the traditional rulers' cooperation and understanding throughout his tenure, Governor Bello charged them to be in complete control over

their domains, stressing that they must know all the residents including visitors to their land.

The governor said there are several activities including illegal mining of gold, coal, lithium which if properly channeled through due process would boost state government financially.

He said due to illegal mining, after the exploitation, the sites became desolate and haven for criminals, where some unwholesome activities are being carried out to the detriment of the society.

According to him, criminals hide under the guise of miners, ending up training and initiating young persons into several criminal activities.

"Land is one of the greatest factors of production, therefore, safeguarding it is necessary. If caution is thrown to the winds, you will become an alien in your land. Some communities are already completely displaced", the Governor warned.

Bello lamented that despite the gains from the crude exploitation of the land, the so called 'investors' were not

contributing to the development of the communities in all aspects of developments.

While he urged the Royal Fathers to have comprehensive list of activities taking place in their lands and waterways, they should also collaborate with relevant government officials in the discharge of any land related activities.

He equally urged the incoming government to sign a new law that will be stringent including tax on miners, before exploiting any mineral from Kogi.

Earlier in his address, Kogi state Commissioner for Solid Minerals and Natural Resources, Engineer Abubakar Bashir Gegu, said the Royal Fathers hold the key to the success or failure of the economy and security administration of the state. Engr Gegu reminded the Monarchs of their closeness to the grassroots which has enabled them to interact closely with the people, as such they remain the frontline stakeholders in the management of the economic build up, security, peaceful and mutual coexistence in the society and every

community.

He also re-echoed the Governor's directive that Traditional Rulers are banned from issuance of consent letters to mining investors without clearance from the Ministry of Solid Minerals and Natural Resources.

The Commissioner said the decision will address the effect of environmental degradation associated with mining activities coupled with security checks, and Community Development Agreement CDA.

The law stipulates that before any company commences mining, it has to submit statutory environmental documents on Environmental Impact Assessment, Environmental processing, Rehabilitation programme, Community Development Agreement.

In his goodwill, Chief Solomon Owoniyi, Obaro of Kabba, said the partnership with the Monarchs is timely as there are illegal miners all over the places, and they have been causing a lot of security challenges.



## Kano State Polytechnic Rector, Principal Officers Visit NBTE

By; JABIRU A. HASSAN, Kano

In his giant strides to create synergy between Kano State Polytechnic (KSP) and all stakeholders towards the transformation of the institution, the Rector, Dr. Abubakar Umar Farouk, FCA together with the principal officers, have paid a courtesy visit to the Executive Secretary (ES), National Board for Technical Education (NBTE), Prof. Muhammad Idris Bugaje at the board's headquarters, Kaduna.

The visit, which took place on Thursday January 18, 2024, was part of the management's familiarisation outreach which aims at strengthening the existing relationship between the new principal officers in KSP and the regulatory body.

In his speech, the Rector Dr. Abubakar Faruk, FCA applauded the efforts of the ES for bringing various innovations to the polytechnic sector that place emphasis on skills rather than certification.

He also appreciated the results of the recent resource inspection, accreditation, and reaccreditation of over 74 programs of the KSP by the Board, assuring that all the observations and recommendations will be implemented.

The Rector further emphasized that Kano State Polytechnic has over one hundred PhD holders and an equivalent number of Chief Lecturers in different disciplines, he therefore, requested the involvement of the KSP staff in any key mandate areas or programmes of the

board.

He solicited the support and cooperation of the board towards the improvement of the institution's programmes.

Responding, the Executive Secretary, Prof. Muhammad Idris Bugaje appreciated the visit and congratulated the Rector on his appointment by the Executive Governor of Kano State, Engr. Alhaji Abba Kabir Yusuf.

He also called on KSP to participate in a round table discussion on the AKK programme (Gas Pipelining and installation) which will soon commence and is aimed at boosting the downstream industries, and by extension, providing employment opportunities to the youth. Prof. Bugaje suggested that KSP should further introduce more skills acquisition programs such as Gas Engineering, Rail Engineering, and similar skills programmes.

He also urged KSP management to consider engaging the informal sectors, like the Kofar Ruwa Market, Gandun Albasa Furniture Market, Farm Center GSM Market, and the likes, into certification programmes, which would boost indigenous capacity to meet the needs of the industries, as done by Kaduna Polytechnic to Panteka Market.

The executive secretary thanked them for the visit and assured them of the board's unflinching support when the need arises as contained in a statement issued to newsmen by the KSP head of protocol and media, Auwal Ismail Bagwai.

## NAFDAC investigating Fried Plantain Chips Using Oil Adulterated With Polythene - Spokesman

By; AMOS TAUNA, Kaduna

The National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) is investigating a viral social media post alleging a woman fried plantain chips using oil adulterated with polythene, Sayo Akintola, NAFDAC's Resident Media Consultant, said in a statement.

The statement issued on Saturday explained that the agency was taking a science-based approach to verifying the claim before taking any action and assured citizens of its commitment to

safeguarding public health amid the disturbing allegation.

According to the viral post, "A woman allegedly melted about five pieces of olonka rubber (polythene) into oil before grating plantain to make chips."

The statement stated that the attention of the Management of the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control has been drawn to viral posts making the rounds on social media where an individual was reporting the alleged frying of plantain chips by a woman, saying that before she grated the plantain into the hot oil she melted

about five of the white polythene what the agency calls 'olonka rubber' into the oil.

According to NAFDAC, the post began circulating before the date the practice was supposedly observed, without indicating the geographical location, assuring that the agency was taking a science-based approach in her response to the alleged claim and will conduct necessary laboratory investigation into the claim.

It advised the public who consume NAFDAC regulated food products remains the same and centres around being vigilant as consumers and also advised Nigerians

buying NAFDAC-regulated food products to be vigilant and cautious.

It also advised citizens to only purchase from reputable sources, while checking for NAFDAC registration numbers on product labels, while advising against products with suspicious packaging, objectionable smell/color, or unrealistically low prices.

The agency assured the public of its proactive in safeguarding health thorough investigation of the disturbing claim will be done, while promising to get to the roots of the allegation and take action based on scientific findings.

# The North Under Siege: A Rehash

By: HASSAN GIMBA

As reporters and analysts, we must inform, based on trends, and where possible, raise the alarm, hoping that those in authority will heed. In 2018, six years ago, that was what I did. And so, this is just a rehash of my article "Insecurity, the North under siege" written on this page on 24 December 2018.

Perhaps those concerned did not read it or they were unmindful because they were safe or just that they did not care. Well, now Abuja is a town gasping for breath from the stranglehold of criminals. Read on:

The Boko Haram insurgents, once touted as 'technically defeated' by no other than President Muhammadu Buhari, are now technically re-surfing and giving a bloody nose to our soldiers, killing them and civilians in droves, sacking military bases and villages in the North East and packing away weapons and prisoners of war consisting of soldiers and civilians, especially women to assuage their lust.

The war against the Boko Haramites in the North East seems to be losing steam and one is concerned as to question why. Is it because of exhaustion, war weariness or lack of ideas on how to confront them? Is it the lack of morale among our fighting force? Or lack of weapons coupled with inadequate training? Or is it a bit of all this?

When looked at properly, the Boko Haramites do not have the formal military training our army has, even though some abducted soldiers may be teaching them some military tactics under duress – which may account for their confidence in confronting the Nigerian Army. Because when you look at the videos they release, you do not see them with weapons that are more sophisticated than those of our soldiers.

In the North West, armed bandits, perhaps Boko Haram with a different face, are threatening to take over Zamfara State. The state is almost under their control. They move freely, heavily armed, collect tax from villagers for protection, ransack communities at will, kill, maim and take as many as they can with them for ransom. The bandits can come to a marriage gathering and just demand for the bride and she would be handed over to them. They also abduct women and girls, converting them into sex slaves.

The North Central has become a traveller's nightmare from Rijau to Birnin Gwari and Gwanin Gora to Rijana through Kaduna and down to the suburbs of the Plateau. One travels at one's own risk as even four-star generals are being killed at will. Herdsmen kill every moving object and sack villages, burning everything down to ashes. Kidnappers are also having a field day. Are some of them, especially the herdsmen and kidnappers, another face of Boko Haram getting the much-needed cash.

Hardly can one confidently travel from

one town or village to the next once it is 7 pm. Travelling by road even in broad daylight is embarked upon with trepidation. Journeying by plane is no longer for luxury as for safety.

Our security apparatus possibly needs a total overhaul and assistance from elsewhere. There has to be a synergy between the different actors, modern policing methods and the revival of community policing.

On November 1, 2021, writing under the title, "Of Wachakal Airport, Wastage and the Bandits in Government," I said: "Now one can see how both those who, through corruption, have brought insecurity upon us and the innocent, who find travelling between Abuja and Kaduna safer through the trains, are now jittery because the products of wastage have turned their evil towards the rails."

In October last year, they failed to stop a train after they laid explosives on its tracks. Witnesses say that time, the train hobbled on to its destination afterwards. But five months later, they hit the bull's eye. On the same route, on Monday, March 28, this year, they stopped one heading for Kaduna from Abuja by bombing its tracks and shooting sporadically into it, forcing it to come to a halt. They killed many passengers and abducted dozens. Less than a week earlier, they had stormed the Kaduna airport, killing an official on the runway. Monday's train attack was the second in six months last October.

Since its launch in 2016, the train has presented an alternative means of movement between Abuja, the nation's capital, and Kaduna as the "bandits" had taken over the roads along the route. It was not surprising to see military and police rednecks, top government officials and political holders being driven to the railway stations in convoys of well-armed security men for the 200-kilometre journey by train or being picked up after arrival.

These bandits-cum-Boko Haram number in the tens of thousands but go around in dozens, sometimes more. Unchallenged, they invade towns and villages mostly on motorcycles – and sometimes on horses, and always well-armed.

Just last week, contributing to a debate on establishing a national task force to combat insecurity, the deputy speaker of the House of Representatives, Idris Wase,

**"We have always seized the opportunity to point out that apart from other parts of the country, "Abuja, the nation's capital, is itself not exempt. Bandits operating in Niger State to the West, Kogi to the South, Kaduna to the North and Nasarawa to the East have sandwiched Abuja and there is a need for a clinical onslaught against them."**



**Hassan Gimba**

## *Monday Column*

cried out over how kidnapers and bandits have taken over his constituency, Wase Federal Constituency of Plateau State.

"Virtually every day in my constituency, I have one kidnap report or the other — every day," he lamented.

We have always seized the opportunity to point out that apart from other parts of the country, "Abuja, the nation's capital, is itself not exempt. Bandits operating in Niger State to the West, Kogi to the South, Kaduna to the North and Nasarawa to the East have sandwiched Abuja and there is a need for a clinical onslaught against them. The Fulani settlements in these areas have to be forensically combed. Quite a few of

the rugas around Kuje, Lugbe, and close to the Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport are alleged to be used by bandits to store weapons."

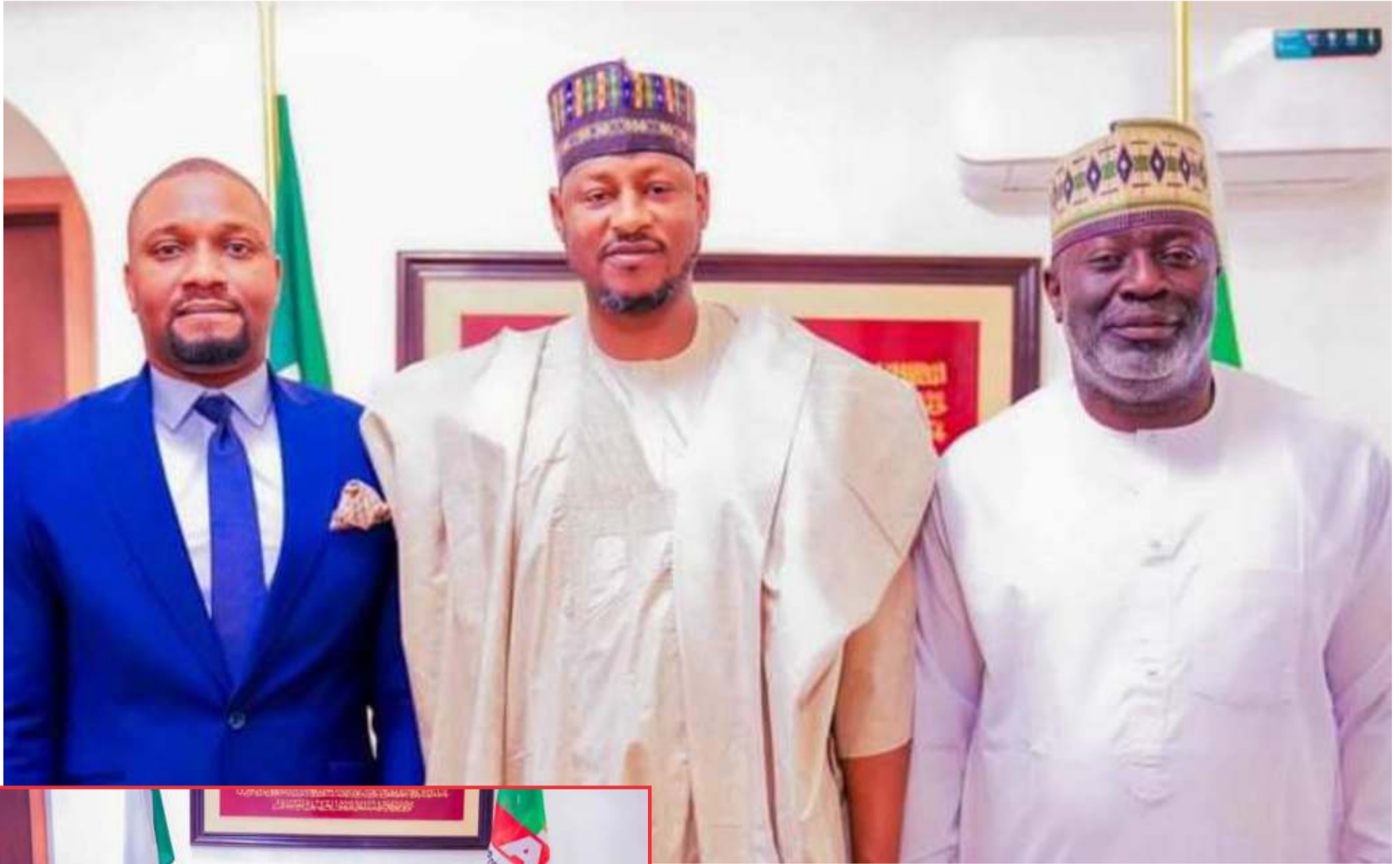
Within the town itself, you move at your own risk because hoodlums have taken over major spots. Robbery attacks are recurring decimals in dark places, especially on bridges, wooded spots and pedestrian crossings.

The ever-busy Apo-Maitama expressway and pedestrian bridges and roundabouts at Area One and Wuse Market area to Zone 7 down to Berger and up to the Abuja-Kubwa-Kaduna expressway are some of the major areas frequented by criminal elements, and from City Gate to Gwagwalada is one dangerous habitat of these criminal elements.

However, while the criminals keep upgrading in silence, our security agencies believe in public shows. You see their heads gathering the press and boasting of "formulating" new tactics and acquiring "devastating" weapons to "deal" with criminals and the next day, the criminals continue their business as if to prove they own the narrative.

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

**Executive Governor of Katsina State, Dikko Umaru Radda PhD, hosted the Director General/ CEO of the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria, SMEDAN, Charles Odi at Katsina Governors Lodge. In Abuja. Photo: BASHIR BELLO DOLLARS**



# Nigeria Qualify For 2024 FIFA U-20 Women's World Cup

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Nigeria's U-20 girls, Falconets, have earned a place at this year's FIFA U-20 Women's World Cup finals after a goal by Opeyemi Ajakaye eventually brought down hard-fighting Burundi in a final round, second leg encounter at the MKO Abiola National Stadium on Saturday evening. This tallied to a 2-0 aggregate victory for Nigeria in the final round of the qualifying race in Africa. The Falconets had won the first leg 1-0 in

Dar es Salaam six days ago.

As was the case in the first leg in Dar es Salaam, the Nigerian girls created opportunity after opportunity, but failed to put them away to make their vast superiority count.

As early as the 2nd minute, Opeyemi Ajakaye, who was top scorer for the FIFA U-17 World Cup bronze-winning Flamings two years ago, volleyed wide when it appeared easier to score.

In the quarter-hour, Chiamaka Okwuchukwu swung the ball into the

visitors' box from the wing, but the team's leading scorer Janet Akekoromowei failed to convert the opportunity. It was Okwuchukwu's turn to miss in the 34th minute, when she could not convert a pull-out by Ajakaye.

Eight minutes after the restart, Ajakaye went on a solo run into the visitors' eighteen-yard box, only to end with a weak shot that was easily collected by goalkeeper Amissa Inarukundo.

The deadlock was broken in the 78th minute by Ajakaye, who made hay with an

assist by Akekoromowei.

Ajakaye scored again in the 90th minute but the goal did not stand. The result put the Falconets through to the final tournament in Colombia later this year.

Nigeria has been an ever-present at the FIFA U-20 Women's World Cup, since it was launched as an U19 tournament in Canada 22 years ago, finishing as runners-up in 2010 and 2014, and reaching the semi-finals in Japan in 2012.



# There's No Sports Philanthropist Like Nimrod, LG Boss Says As Hong U-20 Soccer Tourney Ends

## \*Hong Ward crowned champions



By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The Chairman of Hong Local Government Area of Adanawa State, Honourable Usman Inuwa Wa'aganda has praised the President of Nigeria Volleyball Federation (NVBF), Engineer Musa Nimrod for his contributions to all round sports development in the state and Nigeria. Honourable Inuwa expressed this, when organisers of the fifth edition of Engineer Musa Nimrod U-20 Hong LGA Soccer Tournament paid him a courtesy visit in his office on Saturday, ahead of the final of the competition. "There is no one like you in Hong LGA. The youth are always proud of you. May God continue bless you with happiness and success in your life," he prayed.

The LG Boss expressed excitement that the annual soccer tournament sponsored by Engineer Nimrod, which is organised by the Youth Sports Federation of Nigeria (YSFON) is being sustained. The organisers of the tournament as part of activities during the visit, presented a souvenir to the Chairman of Hong Local Government Area, Honourable at his office. Meanwhile, Hong Ward emerged champions of the fifth edition. They defeated Uba Ward by a lone goal to lift the giant trophy. Earlier in the third place match, Thibang Ward proved to be the better side as they beat hard fighting opponents, Daksiri 1-0. High point of the closing ceremony was the presentation of trophies and medals to players.



**There's No Sports Philanthropist Like Nimrod, LG Boss Says As Hong U-20 Soccer Tourney Ends**  
\*Hong Ward crowned champions

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## Bodija Explosions: Security Agencies Still Investigating Incident - Gov Makinde

*\*Says 90% victims discharged from hospitals*

By: BAYOAKAMO, Ibadan

Oyo State Governor, Engr Seyi Makinde yesterday, said security agencies are still investigating the last week Tuesday night explosions at Bodija area of Ibadan.

The governor who made this known in an update on the incident declared that an update on the investigation will be publicised.

Governor Makinde stressed that his "administration remains committed to supporting all victims of this unfortunate incident and ensuring that everyone responsible is brought to book."

He maintained that as at present,

90 per cent of victims of the explosions at Dejo Oyelese area have been discharged from various hospitals and that the death toll so far still stood at five.

"Security agencies are still investigating the incident and an update on their investigation will be publicised", he said.

Gov Makinde added, "Yesterday, the medical team at the Emergency Operations Centre in company of the Honourable Commissioner for Health, visited two of the hospitals where victims from the incident were taken and over 90 per cent of the victims have been discharged".

"The death toll from the incident

currently stands at five persons. The clinical psychologist has commenced counselling for victims of the incident at the Emergency Operations Centre in Ibadan."

Governor Makinde commended the security agencies in Oyo State for maintaining law and order in around Bodija as well as residents who have been complying with directives from these officers.

He stressed further that a clinical psychologist has begun counselling for victims of the incident at the Emergency Operations Centre at the Oyo State Housing Corporation, Bodija, Ibadan and that search

and rescue operations have ended at the Dejo Oyelese Close site of the explosion and that recovery efforts have begun.

Appreciating the Nigerian Society of Engineers, who have begun carrying out structural integrity tests on about 230 properties around the site of the blast, he expressed gratitude Gov Babajide Sanwo-Olu, for releasing the Lagos State Emergency Management Agency (LASEMA) to support Oyo State.

"The operations at Ground Zero have moved from search and rescue to recovery. Let me use this opportunity to thank the Nigerian Society of Engineers

who have been carrying out structural integrity tests on about 230 properties around the site of the explosion; 13 houses within 50 metres radius of the blast site, 40 houses at 100 metres radius; 122 houses at 200 metres radius and 53 houses within a 250 metres radius.

"We are also grateful to my brother, Governor Jide Sanwo-Olu for releasing the Lagos State Emergency Management Agency (LASEMA) to support us, and for the assistance offered by the team led by Engineer Olatunde Akinsanya, the Director of Operations.

## APC sweeps Borno LG's Saturday elections

*\*Elected chairmen, councillors pay thank you visit to Dalori*

By: SADIQABUBAKAR, Maiduguri

The ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) in Borno, has won all the 27 chairmanship and 312 councillor positions in Saturday's council polls in the state.

This is even as the newly elected chairmen and Councillors of Konduga, Jere and other local government areas of Borno State hl lauded the open-door, grassroots politics of the APC Deputy National Chairman North (DNC) Hon. (Dr) Ali Dalori which has become his political legacy in Borno State.

The DNC was the immediate past Chairman of the APC in Borno and Forum Chairman of APC Chairmen in all the 36 states of the federation including Abuja FCT.

The Executive Chairman of the Borno State Independent Electoral Commission (BOSIEC), Alhaji Lawan Maina, made this known while declaring the overall results of the election on Sunday in Maiduguri.

"Following the conduct of the election on Saturday, today we have received results from the 27 LGAs and as empowered by the law under Section 10.

"In my position as the Chief Returning Officer of the state, I read out the results as follows :- "The ruling party, APC won all the 27 Local Government Chairmen in the state.

"Equally, the ruling party has won all the 312 council members (councillors) in all the wards of the state.

"With this, we have come to the end of this exercise and the certificate presentation to the winners will be made at a later date to be

announced soon," Maina said.

Meanwhile, the newly elected chairmen and Councillors of Konduga, Jere and other local government areas of Borno State have lauded the open-door, grassroots politics of the APC Deputy National Chairman-north, Hon. (Dr) Ali Dalori which has become his political legacy in Borno State.

The newly elected chairman, councillors and stakeholders of the local governments said this on Sunday when they paid a "Thank-You" visit to the APC National leader at his Damboa road residence in Maiduguri.

The chairmen, councillors and Party leaders came with their supporters to thank Dalori for his support and intense mobilisation for the Party.

In a statement issued in Maiduguri, the Borno State Capital by Dalori's Special Adviser on Media and Strategy, Hon. Yemi Akinbode said, " We the newly elected chairmen, councillors and Party supporters have come to express our profound gratitude to our leader and mentor, Hon. Ali Dalori for his exemplary leadership and excellent service to our great Party, the All Progressives Congress(APC).

"You have demonstrated to politicians in Borno State that power belongs to the people. This you have shown over the decades in your belief in open-door, grassroots and people-focused politics which has now become your legacy in Borno State politics.

"We have followed with keen interest your political trajectory which espouse a deep connection and affinity to the people. Rather than distancing your self from the common

man, you have made the people the fulcrum of your political practice. Right from your days in the Social Democratic Party, UNCP, and through your political journey, you have remained resolute and consistent in making the grassroots the priority of your politics.

"Today, it is evident that with your support and commitment to open-door political principle, you have been able to help build a formidable APC in Borno State.

"As we steps into the new horizon we shall continue to safeguard and promote same principle for the full integration and sustenance of the principles of democracy and good governance in the state.

In his speech at the occasion on behalf of the elected chairmen and councillors, the newly elected chairman of Konduga Local Government, Hon. Abba Abari, extolled the leadership qualities of Hon. Dalori.

According to him, Dalori has shown clearly that as politicians what you need is the people. The people is our market, so therefore, if you want to be successful in politics, focus on how to build your politics on the interest of the common man.

"Dalori is our leader and mentor in the game of politics. He has taught us what we need to do to become good politicians. His teachings and mentoring is what we have all adopted, we would continue to foster and promote your legacy of open-door politics. Since we joined his school of politics, we have learnt that power belongs to the people and as such, we will always strive to put the interest of the people first at all time.

"He has taught us to know that the people is our market, such that for us to be relevant, we must continue to make products that will excite our customers and satisfy their needs" he said.

In her own speech to observe gender sensitivity, the newly elected chairperson of Jere local government area, Hajia Inna Galadima, the only elected executive Chairperson said, " I have come to thank our leader Hon. Dalori for his support towards our elections as chairperson, As a matter of fact, the DNC procure nomination forms for some of the councillors in Borno State.

"I know the huge role you played in my nomination and eventual emergence as the chairperson of Jere local government. I wish to pledge my loyalty and support for your leadership at all time" she concluded.

Hajia Galadima was a two-time Commissioner in Borno State.

In his remark at the meeting, Dalori thanked the group for the honour done to him by the new chairmen and councillors.

He charged them to be more dedicated to the interest and needs of the people.

He said " Any politician that want to sustain his or herself in power must take the welfare of the common man as a priority. We often forgets that power belongs to Allah, if we serve the people with utmost dedication, Allah will not forsake us. So when we serve the interest of the people, we are serving Allah. I want to plead with you all to continue to reflect on the teaching of Allah, that we must endeavour to help the poor and the needy.