

# New NIGERIAN

"The Greatest Weapon is Truth"

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Governor of Gombe State, Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya, third from right, received in audience, the management team of the Nigeria Satellite Limited (NigComSat) at the Gombe Governor's lodge in Abuja

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By: JACOB ONJEWU  
DICKSON &  
RAYMOND  
TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

The Minister of  
Aviation and  
Aerospace  
Development Barr. Festus  
Keyamo has ordered the  
relocation of the  
headquarters of the  
Federal Airports Authority  
of Nigeria (FAAN) back to  
Lagos from Abuja.  
This is coming on the heels  
of the Northern Elders  
Forum frowning over the  
alleged directives for some  
key departments in the  
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*\*Says economy not doing well*

*\*Insists purchasing power at lowest ebb*

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# Bodija Explosions Death Toll Now 5 - Oyo Govt

By: BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

A s uneasy calm still reigns at the scene of the Tuesday night Bodija explosions, Oyo State Government yesterday, declared that the number of death in the explosions has risen to five.

This was made known in Ibadan by the Special Adviser to Gov Seyi Makinde on Security Matters, CP Fatai Owoseni (rtd) while speaking on

update on the explosions. He stressed that two more bodies have been recovered from the scene of the explosions by experts working on the site clearing the debris.

"Rescue operation is still ongoing. As of yesterday, we had three casualties but this morning, just about 30 minutes ago, I got information from the security operatives supporting the medical team that two more dead bodies were recovered this

morning," he said.

CP Owoseni (rtd) emphasized that Oyo state government continues to monitor and respond to the situation as investigations into the cause of the explosion are underway and will leave no stone unturned at clearing the affected areas.

"A lot of conversations have been going on, a lot of interfacing with the people so that they will see transparency in what the

government is doing. The security agencies, especially the police, the DSS being supported by the Nigerian Army team EOD Unit as well are putting the bits and pieces of information together to ensure that discreet information is done towards prosecution to ensure that whoever, either directly, remotely connected with that incident are brought to justice."

## Implement New Minimum Wage Within First Quarter, SSANU Tasks FG

*\*Insists purchasing power at lowest ebb*

*\*Says economy not doing well*

By BILIQIS ONAOLAPO OLAJUMOKE, Ilorin

The Senior Staff Association of Nigerian Universities (SSANU) yesterday, tasked the Federal Government to honour commitment on implementation of the new minimum wage by the first quarter of the year.

National President of SSANU, Alhaji Mohammed Ibrahim made the call in Ilorin, while speaking with newsmen at the sidelines of the 72nd Zonal Executive Council (ZEC) Meeting held at the University of Ilorin.

Ibrahim while commending the Federal Government for the pronouncement, reminded the government that "the economy is not doing well".

He urged the administration of President Bola Tinubu to hit the ground running in ensuring that the country as a whole receives the needed attention in terms of security and economy.

"Beyond our members, every Nigerian today knows what he is going through, so our members are not coming from the moon, they are also Nigerians.

"The economy is not doing well. It is clear and glaring that the purchasing power is at its lowest ebb and the country is also becoming something else.

"However, we are optimistic that there is a new government and they have come with vigour and displayed that they have what it



takes to do this," he said.

Ibrahim observed that the ZEC meeting is to look at how members are faring in the university and those within the Western Zone of the country.

"We also look at whether or not the government is always looking up your expectations. When we see gaps, we escalate this matter in the level of the zone and the national level and also try to relate with the government by easing friction.

"But where it becomes necessary to hit at the government, we don't mince our words, but we are very peaceful union," he said.

Speaking also, the Vice Chancellor of the University of

Ilorin, Prof Wahab Egbewole advised on responsive and responsible unionism.

He observed that though there can be disagreement among issues, there is need for effective dialogue to reach resolution in spite of differences.

Egbewole commended the university unions, adding that the mandate of any unionism is to focus on members welfare.

He therefore, enjoined SSANU to deliberate on salient issues that will bring about partnership and development of the university system.

"The leadership must be responsible staffers in their various institutions. The way we

work will determine who we are," he said.

The vice chancellor also admonished the union to strategically engage government, not confront them.

In his address, the National Vice President (West) SSANU, Dr Abdulsobbur Salaam, lamented that Nigeria is in a season of confusion, adding that so many things are not right for the nation.

He pointed out that salaries of colleagues in Polytechnics and Colleges of Education are better and there is need to confront government on this issue.

Abdulsobbur also reminded that the government of the challenges posed as regard continuous payment through IPPIS.

## Insecurity: Gov Dauda Bans Traditional Rulers From Issuing Mining Consent Letters In Zamfara

By: AMOS TAUNA, Kaduna

Z amfara State Governor, Dauda Lawal, yesterday, signed an Executive Order prohibiting traditional rulers from issuing consent letters for mining across the state.

A statement issued by the governor's spokesperson, Sulaiman Bala Idris, disclosed that the executive order was signed at the Council Chambers, Government House, Gusau to stop one of the worst trends in the fight against banditry.

The statement explained that the order has banned all consent letters for mining, saying that it includes consent letters to individuals, companies, or organisations for mining activities.

Governor Lawal, while signing the order, reiterated that the decision was made due to the severe dangers posed by the rampant issuance of the consent letters.

According to him, "Today, in my administration's

resolve to tackle insecurity, I signed an executive order prohibiting traditional rulers from issuing consent letters for mining across the 14 local government areas of Zamfara."

He added that as the Attorney General rightly stated, the mining activities in Zamfara have been identified as a significant factor contributing to the worsening security situation of the state, especially the menace of banditry.

As a responsible government, the statement added that it is crucial that the government takes decisive action to resolve the issue of illegal mining operations that have been contributing to the crisis, stressing that the signing of the executive order is an effort of taking all necessary steps to rectify the problems bedeviling the issuance of consent letters, which have been recklessly abused.

He prayed Almighty Allah to guide them as they serve and safeguard the lives and properties of the people.

Earlier in his welcome address, the Chairman of SSANU, University of Ilorin branch, Mr Naheem Falowo, emphasized the role of the union as playing a vital role in the administration, maintenance and development of institutions in Nigeria.

According to him, it is crucial that the University unions come together as a collective force to address the challenges working against members and work towards addressing the challenges, and develop strategies to address them.

High point of the programme was the commissioning of the Secretariat Complex in the university for the benefit of members.

# Obaseki Hosts S/S Governors" Meeting In Benin City, Says Nigeria Facing Critical Challenges

*\*Resolve to foster regional economic cooperation, integration*

By; RAPHAEL OKHIRIA,  
Benin City

The Edo State Governor, Mr. Godwin Obaseki, yesterday, played host to the Governors of the South-South States for the BRACED (Bayelsa, Rivers, Akwa Ibom, Cross River, Edo and Delta) Commission meeting.

The meeting held at the Edo State Government House, in Benin City, and had in attendance Governors Douye Diri of Bayelsa; Sim Fubara of Rivers; Umo Bassey Eno of Akwa Ibom, and Sheriff Oborewori of Delta State, represented by his Deputy, Monday Onyeme.

The Commissioners of Budget and Planning from the six states were also in attendance.

The host, Governor Godwin Obaseki, was elected as chairman of the commission at the regional meeting which was held behind closed doors.

Addressing journalists after the meeting, Chairman of the Commission and Edo State Governor, said the meeting which was the first in the new dispensation, became necessary to address and proffer solutions to the critical challenges facing the region.

In a communiqué, Obaseki said the meeting was held at a critical time in the history of Nigeria as the country faces enormous challenges.

He said, "It's against this

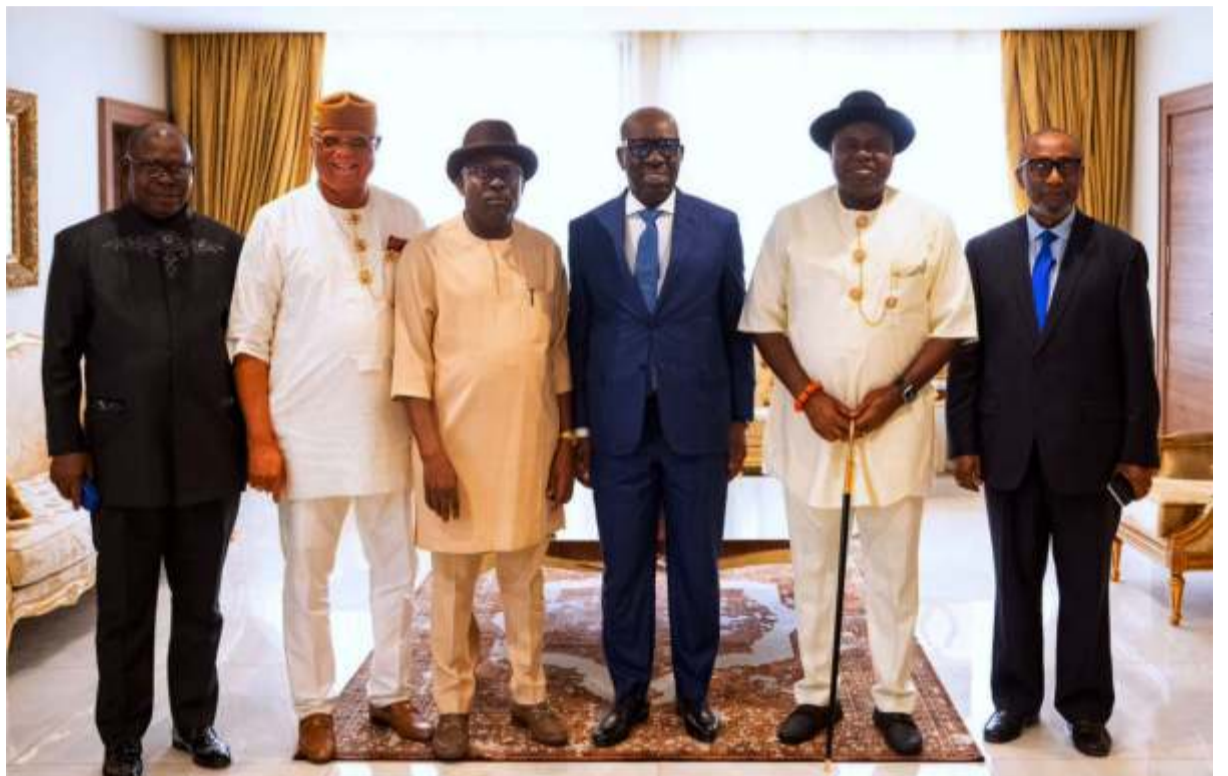
background that the South-South region must redefine its place and roles in the economic development of Nigeria and for the benefit of our people.

"The Director General of the Commission made a presentation briefing the members of the work done by the Commission since it came into inception, briefing the Commission of work done in the areas of agriculture, power, education, environment and sports.

"The Council members spoke of the compelling need to collectively accelerate the development of the states and affirmed their support for the imperatives of the South-South economic cooperation and integration as a practical step towards the creation of a zone of economic development.

Arising from this, the council expressed determination and commitment to drive the process for cooperation and integration in the zone and pledged to address the challenges faced by the BRACED Commission.

The communiqué further reads, "Accordingly, the council resolved as follows: To foster regional economic cooperation and integration with a view to achieving sustainable development through the development of a strong regional economy for the collective benefits of the people of the South-South and invigorate the



South South Governors after their meeting in Benin City yesterday

process of regional economic cooperation and integration.

"To establish and inaugurate the BRACED Business Council. This Council should endeavor to forge a closer partnership with the business council and utilize it to provide an improved business climate to attract businesses and investors into the region.

"To collectively engage the Federal Government on the development of key infrastructure in the region particularly roads, rail development and the decentralization and

rehabilitation of seaports in the region as well as management of security in the Country at large." He continued: "To engage the NDDC to ensure its activities benefit the BRACED States.

"To direct the Commissioners of Environment and Attorney-General of States to meet on climate issues affecting the States, particularly mangrove swamps.

"To forge a closer and cordial relationship with other regions for the creation of economic corridors that will be beneficial to the region.

"To pledge our commitment to work with the President of the Federal Government of Nigeria to improve the standard of living of the people of the South-South region. The Governors commit to work with and support each other for the purpose of improving the well-being and welfare of the people of the South-South."

Obaseki added, "Finally, we directed the DG to take steps to implement all the decisions that we took today and report back to the Council before our next meeting in March 2024 in Bayelsa State."

## US Bureau For Humanitarian Assistance Team To Visit Benue State

By; ARCHIBONG ESUENE,  
Makurdi

There are clear indications that Benue State Government will be playing host to United State Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance following the setting up of a nine- man committee whose membership comprises the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and Benue State Emergency Management

Agency (BSEMA), to coordinate the expected visit.

The Acting Executive Secretary of the State Emergency Agency, Mr James Iorpuu who disclosed this while addressing humanitarian stakeholders and other partners in Makurdi, said the Rwandan based US Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance body is expected to visit Benue State to see ways of possible intervention in the humanitarian

crisis that has bedeviled the State.

According to the BSEMA boss, the delegation which is expected to arrive the state on 29th January would meet with top government officials, humanitarian stakeholders as well as visit six Internally Displaced Person's, IDPs, camps across the state.

He explained that the biometrics verification data exercise earlier

conducted in the state by the IOM, have started yielding positive results both at the local and international level, expressed optimism that the visit of the BHA delegation to the state would also bring good tidings.

The State Emergency Agency boss who commended the commitment of Governor Alia administration to ensure that Internally Displaced Person's, IDPs, living in camps are moved

to their ancestral homes solicited for support from local and international partners.

Director General Bureau for International Cooperation and Development, Anderson Anchel in his brief address assured development partners that the present administration is ready to work, affirming that its has thrown its doors open for meaningful engagements in addressing plight of the IDPs in Benue State.

## Declare Prof Bello Of NNPP Winner Of Taraba Guber Election - Ambassador Ajadi

By; BAYO AKAMO,  
Ibadan

**A**chieftain of the New Nigeria People's Party (NNPP), Ambassador Olufemi Ajadi Oguntoyinbo on Wednesday, urged the Supreme Court to declare Professor Yahaya Muhammed Bello of the New Nigeria People's Party (NNPP) as the winner of the last Governorship Election in Taraba State.

Ambassador Ajadi in an open letter of appeal to the Supreme Court said this became necessary in the spirit of decency, decorum, discipline and sanity demonstrated in the judgement of Supreme Court on Kano guber tussle. He stressed that the Police, military clash at the INEC office in Taraba state on 20th March, 2023 led to the delay in results' collation of the governorship election, adding that during the collation period, the NNPP sent a written complaint on Wukari Result claiming over voting and results in variance with the results in iRev and accredited voters on BVAS and called for review.

The NNPP Chieftain stated that during the collation, the complaint was discussed based on the Electoral Act 2022 64(5) for possible review at collation level because the results were alleged to have been doctored and that after lengthy deliberation, the INEC Legal Officer explained that the review will only be done in Abuja after Application for Review.

Stating that the said review was jettisoned in Abuja as the INEC declared Kefas Agbu of PDP as winner without reviewing the result as been applied for by the NNPP, the NNPP Chieftain said based on what transpired at the election, the Supreme Court should declare the party's governorship candidate in Taraba state, Professor Yahaya Muhammed Bello as the winner of March 18, 2023 election.

According to Ambassador Ajadi, Professor Muhammad Ahmad AbdulAziz who was the Returning and Collation Officer in the Taraba Governorship Election in his report said "that election took place in all the Sixteen

Local Government Areas of the state on the 18th and 19th March, 2023 ; that the results were collated at various levels;

" That the Collation at the State Level started on Sunday 19th March 2023 and ended in the early hours of Tuesday, the 21st March, 2023; that there was shooting between the Police and Military attached to the INEC office on 20th March, 2023 which delayed the collation of results.

"That the collation resumed around 5:00 pm on the same day with a lot of tension; during the collation, we received written complaint from NNPP on Wukari Result claiming over voting and in variance with the results in iRev and accredited voters on BVAS; that during the collation, the complaint was discussed based on the Electoral Act 2022 64(5) for possible review at collation level. That the results were alleged to be doctored. The Electoral Act 2022 64(6) was difficult to be implemented under duress and tension".

"Election must be done in a decent, peaceful and transparent manner that must be acceptable by all, not through the Gun shooting, undue duress and tension as alleged by the Collation and Returning Officer of INEC in the Taraba State", he said.

Ambassador Ajadi added, " It is Worthy of note that electorate have the right to choose their leaders through a transparent electoral process without being under duress and tension as well as getting their results doctored in favour of another interest group or party"

" The Leadership of New Nigeria People's Party, (NNPP) is appealing to the Apex Court to restore the hope of Nigerians in the electoral system and electoral process by giving critical look into the complaints of the good people of Taraba state who lawfully and genuinely voted for Yahaya Muhammed Bello of the NNPP as Governor during the March 18, 2023 Governorship Election in the State. This will to a large extent normalize our Electoral System and process and sanitize it reasonably for future elections."

## Two Dead, 77 Injured In Bodija Explosion - Gov Makinde

\*Rescue operation ongoing, Oyo Govt to settle medical bills of victims

By; BAYO AKAMO,  
Ibadan

**G**overnor Seyi Makinde on Wednesday, hinted that two persons died, while about 77 persons were injured in the Tuesday night explosion at Bodija axis of Ibadan

The governor who dropped this hint in a message twitted on his X platform, said preliminary security Investigations have traced the explosion to illegal miners residing in one of the buildings at Bodija.

"In total, we have 77 injured victims so far, most of whom were

treated and discharged, and two fatalities. May their souls rest in peace and may God give their loved ones the fortitude to bear this irreparable loss," he said

The governor added, " Preliminary investigations by the security agencies revealed that illegal miners occupying one of the houses in Bodija had stored explosive devices there which caused the blast"

Vowing to bring to book those found culpable, Gov Makinde said the "medical bills of all victims will be covered by

the government"

The governor also promised to ensure that all "those whose houses were affected are supported to rebuild their lives" and that residents should be calm as rescue operations had already started at the scene of the incident.

" Earth - moving equipment, ambulances, emergency lights, and security were deployed to the scene of the incident. The wounded and injured are being treated and moved to public and private hospitals within Ibadan

"Medical personnel are on

standby at these hospitals to provide all needed assistance to the injured. We have visited UCH to see some of those injured during the incident.

"I urge all residents to please call 615 for any emergencies they may be experiencing at this time and to remain calm and stay away from the immediate scene of the incident to allow rescue operations to be carried out without interference," New Nigerian recalls that Gov Makinde, visited the scene of the explosion Tuesday night.



## Bloody Invasion: One Killed, Property Destroyed As Gunmen Attack Ebonyi Community

By; MKPUMA  
ENYINNA, Abakaliki

**F**ollowing the unexpected invasion and attack at the office of Ngbojeogu Central Security at Ngbo Court, one security personnel was killed, others sustained varying degree of injuries, while properties worth millions of Naira were destroyed during the attack.

Confirming the incident, the Chairman of Ohaukwu LGA, Hon. Ikechukwu Odonon stated that the attack, claimed the life of a female local security personnel.

He further stated that several security men have been battered, humiliated, abused and murdered gruesomely, which demoralizes the frantic efforts of their vigilantes from safeguarding their localities, adding that efforts are in top gear by security operatives to ensure the culprits of these heinous crime are apprehended and brought to justice.

"We are saddened by the cruel and bloody invasion of faceless gunmen on the Office of Ngbojeogu Central Security at Ngbo Court.

"The attack claimed the

life of a security personnel, left one injured, destruction of some property and looting of a motorcycle.

"Severally, our security men have been battered, humiliated, abused and murdered gruesomely, which demoralizes the frantic efforts of our vigilantes in safeguarding our localities.

"Sorrowfully, we mourn and console the families of the departed security personnel that lost her life on active duty, the one that is injured, operatives of Ngbojeogu Central Security, Ngbojeogu Clan and entire Ohaukwu.

"Efforts are on top gear by security operatives to ensure the culprits of these heinous crime are apprehended and brought to justice.

"Resolve to achieve peace in Ohaukwu Local Government can never be undermined by anybody, we urge our people to be vigilante in their environment and report any illegal movement to the nearest police station," he said.

All efforts made to get the reaction of Ebonyi State Police Command proved abortive as the Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO) did not respond.

# Minister Orders Relocation Of FAAN To Lagos

- North expresses displeasure over CBN's alleged relocation of key departments
- Northern Elders Forum says relocation would lead to a temporary disruption in CBN's operations.

(CBN) to be relocated to Lagos.

The directive of relocation of FAAN headquarters, was contained in a memo sighted by our correspondent titled, "Re: Relocation of FAAN Headquarters From Abuja To Lagos", dated 15th January 2024, signed by Mrs. Olubunmi Kuku Managing Director/ Chief Executive Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria minuted to Director Human Resources and Administration.

It reads, " The Honourable Minister of Aviation and Aerospace Development has directed that the Headquarters of Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN) should be relocated from Abuja to Lagos

" Consequent upon the above, you are requested to provide the implication of the relocation to the management".

In a telephone chat with our correspondent, the Director Corporate Communication FAAN, Mrs. Nwosu Igbo -Ijeoma neither confirmed nor denied the directive.

She however, said the agency is working on a statement to be issued soon on the matter.

However, an aviation journalist, and public affairs commentator, Mr. Chuks Iwelumo who spoke on the relocation of the agency back to Lagos described it as a welcome development.

He asserted that the movement of all the Federal agencies in the aviation sector to Abuja during the tenure of the immediate past Minister of Aviation Hadi Sarika was politically motivated.

Iwelumo, a former chairman of League of Airport and Aviation Correspondents (LAAC) noted that Lagos is the hub of Aviation, wondering why the headquarters of its agencies should be moved to Abuja.

He hinted that none of the agencies could get a befitting office and residential accommodation since their movement to Abuja.

His words, " The relocation order of the Headquarters back to Lagos is a well development. They were discussing in on the Aviation Stakeholders platform today.

" I wonder why anybody in his real senses will move the headquarters of the federal agencies in the Aviation Ministry to Abuja, knowing fully well that Lagos is the hub of Aviation.

" Since their movement to Abuja, they couldn't get a befitting residential and office accommodation. FAAN is occupying the former Aviation terminal, NEMA is on rented apartment, including NCAA. When the NAMA office was demolished in Lagos, they moved all the staff to Abuja. Till now, they still have accommodation and office problem".

\*Northern Elders Forum Frowns At moves to relocate key CBN Departments to Lagos

Meanwhile, the Northern Elders Forum (NEF) yesterday, frowned at the reported

plans by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), to relocate major departments from the Abuja headquarters to the former headquarters in Lagos.

The NEF, in a statement by its spokesperson, Abdul-Azeez Suleiman, recognized the importance of the departments in question, including Banking Supervision, DBS; Other Financial Institutions Supervision, OFISD; Consumer Protection Department, CPD; Payment System Management Department, PSMD; and Financial Policy Regulations Department, FPRD, as vital components of the CBN.

According to the statement, the affected departments are crucial to the functioning of the CBN.

"Therefore, relocating them entirely to Lagos will only serve to further strengthen the already dominant position of Lagos, while potentially weakening the significance and role of Abuja," the statement added.

While acknowledging the CBN's desire to improve efficiency and effectiveness, the NEF expressed worries over the potential negative impact of relocating these essential departments on both the institution itself and the nation as a whole.

"The movement would involve increased costs, loss of talent, disruption in operations, reduced coordination, regional economic disparities, impaired economic development in northern Nigeria, and decreased investor confidence in the nation's economy.

"Here are some of the potential consequences: It would require significant financial investment as the CBN would need to allocate funds for setting up new offices, purchasing or leasing properties, relocating employees, and other infrastructural requirements. This would strain the CBN's budget and divert resources away from other essential functions and initiatives.

"The CBN has a well-established workforce in Abuja, including professionals with significant knowledge and experience. Moving key departments to Lagos may lead to a loss of skilled employees who are unable or unwilling to relocate. This brain drain could negatively impact the CBN's performance and efficiency.

"Relocation would lead to a temporary disruption in the CBN's operations. Employees would need time to adjust to their new surroundings, potentially causing delays in decision-making and implementation. The transition period



Festus Keyamo

could result in reduced productivity, inefficient processes, and decreased service levels, further impacting the CBN's effectiveness.

"Moving key departments to a different geographical location would hinder effective coordination and communication with other government agencies in Abuja.

"The CBN, as the nation's monetary authority, relies on close cooperation with other bodies, such as the Ministry of Finance and relevant regulatory authorities. Physical separation may lead to increased bureaucracy and slower response times, negatively affecting policy formulation and execution.

"Shifting key departments to Lagos, which is located in the southwestern part of Nigeria, would exacerbate regional economic disparities. The concentration of such important positions and offices in one region may perpetuate the perception of Lagos as the economic center, potentially marginalizing other regions, especially Northern Nigeria. This could lead to increased feelings of neglect or economic imbalance, creating social and political tensions.

"Relocating key departments away from the nation's capital could send a negative signal to both local and international investors. It may raise concerns about political stability, policy consistency, and the government's commitment to regional inclusiveness. This could lead to reduced investor confidence in the Nigerian

economy, ultimately impacting foreign direct investment, capital inflows, and overall economic growth.

"Northern Nigeria already faces various economic challenges, such as poverty, unemployment, and insecurity. Moving key departments away from Abuja would exacerbate the imbalance in economic development between the northern and southern regions. It could hinder the flow of investments, infrastructure development, and job creation opportunities in the north, thereby stifling economic growth and exacerbating the existing socio-economic challenges.

"The NEF finds the broader negative implications of relocating these key departments ridiculous and unacceptable as moving economic decision-making power to Lagos could exacerbate regional disparities, fostering a sense of marginalization among other regions, particularly Northern Nigeria.

"Additionally, this move could hinder the Northern governments' efforts to promote economic diversification and reduce dependence on oil revenue.

"Unacceptably too, the North, which is home to a significant portion of Nigeria's population, would be disproportionately affected by the relocation with reduced access to economic opportunities and financial services further widening the economic gap between Northern Nigeria and other regions, potentially exacerbating social and political tensions." the statement said.

# Abdulrazaq Explains Plans To Harness Natural Minerals As Kwara Hosts National Council On Mining

\*Gov hails President Tinubu on steps to diversify economy

\*State Minister Uba sets agenda for miners, harps on partnership with local communities

By; BILIQIS ONAOLAPO  
OLAJUMOKE, Ilorin

Kwara State Government has recently registered five (5) Special Purpose Vehicles (SPVs) as part of its measures to acquire viable mining sites and make the state a major producer of solid minerals in Nigeria, Governor AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq said on Wednesday.

He said each of the 16 local government areas of the state is blessed with abundant viable mineral resources and in commercial quantities, inviting investors to tap into the natural endowments.

The governor was speaking in Ilorin at the 5th Annual Conference of the National Council on Mining and Mineral Resources Development (NCOMRD), which draws delegates from across the 36 states of the Federation.

The conference commenced on Monday and ended on Wednesday, with the theme: "Minerals and Metal: A Panacea for Economic Growth and Diversification".

"We plan to establish a standard mineral market in the state, where all minerals mined from our State will first be registered here before they are transported to other places," he said.

The Governor commended the choice of Kwara to host the council, hoping that resolutions reached at the end of the meeting will rev up development in the sector.

He thanked President Bola Ahmed Tinubu for the bold investments to diversify the economy.

"The need to diversify the economy and harness potentials in the solid mineral and other sectors cannot be overemphasized. The excessive reliance on oil has proven to be unhelpful for our country, and I'm glad we appear to have learnt our lessons," he added.

"I appeal to the Honourable Ministers present, the DG MCO, DG NGS to give us all necessary assistance to actualise our dream of becoming a major solid mineral producing state in the country."

The event attracted participants from all walks of life, including the Minister of State for Mines and Steels Development, Alhaji Uba Maigari; federal parliamentarians; members of the Kwara State Executive Council; and professionals in the mining sector.

Minister of State for Mines and Steels



L-R: Ambassador Yayaha Seriki; Dr. Kamaru Yusuf; Minister of State Steel Development Maigari Ahmadu; Kwara State Governor AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq (CON); Permanent Secretary Federal Ministry of Steel Development Dr. Mary Ogbe; Chairman House Representatives Committee on Solid Minerals Hon. Gaza Jonathan; Commissioner for Solid Minerals Development and Supervising Commissioner for Works and Transport Hon. Abdulquawiy Olododo; Hon. Kehinde Bamigbetan; Commissioner for Communications Hon. Bola Olukoju; and Permanent Secretary Ministry of Solid Minerals Development Mrs Funke Sokoya; during the 5th National Council on Mining and Mineral Resources Development (NCOMRD) meeting, in Ilorin,

Development Uba Maigari said steel is the backbone of modern infrastructure and the foundation upon which other sectors thrive, adding that the industry is key for job creation, community empowerment, and diversification of the economy.

Despite the fact that the sector is facing hurdles ranging from aging infrastructure to an uncertain global market, the challenges are an invitation to innovate, collaborate, and think beyond the ordinary, Maigari said.

"That is why I am here today to call on all of you -- miners, manufacturers, investors, policy makers, researchers, citizens and businessmen alike -- to join hands in a national mission to revitalize our steel industry," Maigari added.

"Let us use this gathering to not just share ideas but to commit to concrete actions

and measurable outcomes. Let us leave Ilorin with the roadmap for Nigeria's Steel industry that is the envy of Africa and a powerhouse for our nation's economic transformation."

He called on miners to always prioritise partnership with local communities and ensure that they benefit from resource extraction, saying the success of the sector intertwines with the well-being of the communities where mining takes place. He thanked the Governor and the government for the logistics support and for their warm reception throughout their stay in the capital city.

State Commissioner for Solid Mineral Development Abdulqowiyu Olododo, for his part, said the state government is collaborating with security agencies to

ensure the safety of investors within the Kwara borders.

"I use this opportunity to convey to our esteemed guests that we are wholeheartedly committed to the advancement of solid minerals, thereby harnessing the economic potentials of valuable minerals such as gold, tantalite, and lithium, which are abundant in our state," he said, adding that a framework is in place to facilitate works in the state without encroaching upon the existing Federal Mining Act.

Alhaji Teslim Jimoh, a representative of Dangote Group, in his goodwill message, said security is key in the mining sector and charged the Federal government to improve on the safety of miners, thirty percent of whom, he noted, are foreigners.

## 11 Bodija Multiple Explosions Victims Receiving Treatment With Us - UCH CMD

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

The Chief Medical Director of the University College Hospital (UCH), Ibadan, Prof Jesse Otegbayo on Wednesday, hinted that 11 victims of the Bodija multiple explosions are now receiving treatment at the hospital.

Prof Otegbayo who dropped this hint while featuring on a live radio programme in Ibadan on the Tuesday night explosions, also said it affected at least 16 buildings.

According to the UCH CMD, the 11 persons

were among those rushed to the hospital from the scene of the explosions, with the victims sustaining various degrees of injuries such as major fractures, chest injuries among others. The CMD emphasized that all the 11 persons on admission at the hospital are "all clinically stable", and receiving treatment as well.

Prof Otegbayo stressed that the hospital is of the view that all the victims will survive, adding our doctors and nurses and other medical officers are fully on ground to attend to victims of the explosion.

"We have been attending to victims of the explosion since yesterday night, we have to recall some of our medical officers on leave as well as those not on duty to come to duty and be attending to the victims", he said

On the impact of the explosion on the hospital, the Chief Medical Director disclosed that 16 buildings in the hospital were affected by the vibration from the explosions.

Prof Otegbayo identified the buildings affected as the School of Nursing, School of

Medical Laboratory, the hospital Museum building, Pathology building, Ogunlesi hall among others, school of Medical Laboratory among others.

Stressing that the doors, roof, ceilings and electric fittings at the affected buildings were brought down, destroyed and badly damaged, the CMD said the hospital emergency unit has been activated and put on alert to accommodate victims from the explosion.

## Revenue Crisis: Mkpat Enin Council Leadership Debunks Claim By Deceased Family



*Mkpat Enin Transition Committee Chairman, Mercy Bassey*

By; PATRICK TITUS, Uyo

The Leadership of Mkpat Enin Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State has debunked claims that one Samuel Monday Toby died in active service as a tax collector for the council.

Toby, report said that he was attacked in his home for assisting in the enforcement of revenue collection suspension in Ikot Akpaobong market, which led to his death. His wife, Mrs. Gift Samuel Monday had petitioned the Commissioner of Police over the death of her husband, alleging that her husband's death occurred as a result of his involvement in the suspension of revenue collection in the market.

"His assassination is not far-fetched from his 21st December, 2023, involvement in the enforcement of the Ikot Akpaobong Market revenue collection suspension directive of the Mkpat Enin Local Government Council having been appointed to assist in the implementation of the directive," she said.

Reacting to the death of the deceased, Secretary,

Transition Committee Mkpat Enin LGA, Pastor Amos Afia stated that December 2023 was declared a tax-free month for traders in Mkpat Enin, as such the revenue collection committee was dissolved.

In a release made available to journalists in Uyo on Wednesday, Afia explained that some youths in the Local Government led by Akanimo Bob Ikpe, a Personal Assistant to Governor Umo Eno, and Village Head of Ikot Akpaobong Village, Eteidung Aniefiok Cyril Udom flouted the order by selling unauthorized tickets to traders in Akpaudo and Ukam markets.

He revealed that the Council had officially informed Eteidung Udom on the tax-free excise in all the markets in the village, adding that members of the newly constituted Markets/Motor Parks Committee were introduced to the Commissioner of Police, as the authorized persons to collect revenue from January 1, 2024.

He explained that the local government council never engaged the services of Akanimo Bob Ikpe as a revenue officer, but that of

Samruf Technical Services Limited whose contract elapsed in December 2023, noting that any such claim by Akanimo Bob Ikpe was illegal.

"On December 11, 2023, after due consultation with members of the Transition Committee, the leadership of the Local Government Council through a press release signed by the Secretary of the Transition Committee, Pastor Afia Amos, declared December 2023 a tax-free month for traders in Mkpat Enin.

"We also announced the dissolution of all standing committees in the Local Government Council including the revenue collection committee.

"Despite the release, radio and social media announcement for the smooth implementation of the tax-free exercise, some Youths in the Local Government led by Akanimo Bob Ikpe, a Personal Assistant to the Governor, and Eteidung Aniefiok Cyril Udom, the village Head of Ikot Akpaobong Village flouted the order by forcefully selling unauthorized tickets to traders in Akpaudo and Ukam markets.

"On December 20, 2023, the village head of Ikot

Akpaobong, Eteidung Aniefiok Cyril Udom, was officially written to, introducing the enforcement team on the tax-free excise in all the markets in the village. In addition, on December 29, 2023, the Commissioner of Police, Akwa Ibom State Command, got a letter introducing members of the newly constituted Markets/Motor Parks Committee as the authorized persons for revenue collection from January 1, 2024.

"On December 22, 2023, an unfortunate report that an indigene of Mkpat Enin named Samuel Monday Toby was attacked at his home for assisting in the enforcement of revenue collection suspension in Ikot Akpaobong Market.

"From all the records available in the Local Government Council, there is no record that indicates that the Local Government Council at any point engaged the services of Akanimo Bob Ikpe as a revenue officer.

"Rather, the Council engaged a certain Samruf Technical Services Limited for the revenue business and details of the engagement shows that the contract elapsed in December 2023.

## Anchor University Will Uphold Standards, Quality In Law, Post-graduate Programmes - VC

By; AYO OJEDOKUN, Lagos

Anchor University, Ayobo, Lagos has assured that it would sustain the standards and quality the institution is known for as it commences its law and post-graduate programmes this session.

The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Samuel Oye Bandele, said at a briefing held on Tuesday, January 16 at the conference room of the Senate building, that the university authority is out to run law and postgraduate programmes that will stand out among other universities in the country and beyond.

He said that the commencement of the university's School of Postgraduate Studies has opened more opportunities for prospective students in Lagos and its environs to take advantage of.

According to him, the law and postgraduate students will be exposed to a serene and neat environment, innovative study plans for both law and postgraduate programmes, and National Universities Commission (NUC) standard Core Curriculum and Minimum Academic (CCMAS) at Anchor University.

"Today's press briefing is unequivocally designed as a follow-up, to announce the final round of our admissions at the undergraduate level and to showcase the commencement of our Law and Postgraduate programmes.

"It's strategically planned to echo the establishment and take off of the university's school of Postgraduate studies and the inauguration of the first batch of students admitted for the 2023/2024 on our postgraduate programmes.

"Also, it's to sensitize the immediate community and by extension to let the prospective students in the Lagos metropolis and its environs know that more opportunities are now being opened to them in Anchor University, Ayobo, Lagos," Professor Bandele said.

He also revealed that the University authority is working hard to improve its capacity with the building of more hostels and auditoriums which are going to be ready by September.

"Efforts are on to build more hostels and auditorium to improve our capacity before September," he revealed. Meanwhile, determined to keep to its faith-based standard, the Management staff of Anchor University has declared that there will be no hiding place for unserious students at the institution.

The Vice-Chancellor who sounded the warning noted that the university authority will not compromise decency and high standards for anything less no matter who is involved.

He insisted that the university authority will always follow due regulations, but standards will not be dropped as the institution is out to produce graduates, who will be useful to the development of the country and society at large.

To achieve this, he said the school authority has taken it upon itself to subject every one of its students to regular drug and pregnancy tests, and any student found to have failed any of the tests is dealt with accordingly.

"Anchor University is one of the fastest-growing young private faith-based universities in Nigeria and we shall ensure the tenet of faith of our founding father is upheld at all times.

"And at the meeting of the Parents Consultative Forum (PCF) recently, it was made clear that the university will continue its zero tolerance to hard drugs, immorality, and gangsters. Parents who felt threatened by these have been advised to seek a transfer for their children to other universities before they are expelled from our university. So, there is no hiding place for bad students at Anchor University," the Vice Chancellor warned.

# Gombe Governor Pledges Strong Partnership With NigComSat For Technological Advancement

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Governor of Gombe State, Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya, CON, received in audience, the management team of the Nigeria Satellite Limited (NigComSat) at the Gombe Governor's lodge in Abuja on Wednesday January 17, 2024.

A statement signed by the Director-General (Press Affairs) Government House Gombe, Ismaila Uba Misilli, made available yesterday, said that the delegation was led by the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer,

Mrs. Jane Nkechi Egerton-Idehen.

During the audience, Governor Inuwa expressed commitment to promoting a strong partnership with NigComSat towards harnessing the transformative power of technology to enhance brighter and digitally advanced future for Gombe State and its socio-economic prospects.

He emphasized the critical role of technology as the driving force behind economic development, stating that Gombe state is now better positioned than ever to harness the potential of reliable internet services provided by

NigComSat.

Believing that technology serves as the engine of every economy, Governor Inuwa hoped that a strategic alliance with NigComSat would stimulate innovation and various advancements within the technology industry.

He noted the importance of leveraging technological solutions for the benefit of sectors such as agriculture, education, health, and enterprises.

Earlier, Mrs. Jane Nkechi Egerton-Idehen, assured Governor Inuwa that her

agency is resolute in meeting the mandates set by the Federal Ministry of Communication and Digital Economy.

"The primary objective is to provide universal, ubiquitous, and cost-effective access to communication infrastructure throughout Nigeria. This initiative aims to revolutionize the utilization of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) across various spheres, including agriculture, education, health, and enterprises", she told the Governor.





# Lagos CP Fayode Reels Out Achievements, Cracks 37 Criminal Suspects, Recovers 16 Firearms, 72 Live Cartridges, 75 Ammunition, Others



By ; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

The Lagos State Commissioner of Police Fayode Adegoke PSC, mni, has disclosed that the command has nabbed no fewer than 37 suspected criminals within one month.

He also hinted that a total number of 16 firearms including a toy pistol, 72 live cartridges, 75 live ammunition, one expended cartridge, one pistol magazine, six axes, four daggers, five cutlasses, two vehicles, one POS machine, fake vehicle registration plates and various charms were recovered within the period in review.

Fayode, who made the disclosure Wednesday during his maiden press briefing at the Command Headquarters, Ikeja, stated that the suspects were apprehended for their alleged involvement in varying crimes, which include armed robbery, stealing, cultism and unlawful possession of firearms amongst others.

While reeling out the achievements, Fayode said "On January 11, 2024, at about 2130hrs, operatives of the Command arrested one Idowu Yunusa 'm' aged 25 who was seen attacking with intent to rob a passerby around Igando. A locally made shot gun was recovered from him.

" On January 11, 2024, at about 1530hrs, operatives of the Command arrested one Damilola Ontinride 'm' aged 36 who was seen loitering around Mile 12 area. One locally fabricated

baretta pistol with one live ammunition was recovered from him. He is suspected to be a member of an armed robbery gang.

"On January 11, 2024, at about 1500hrs, officers of the Command arrested one Rilwan Kareem 'm', Adejumo Noah 'm', Oluwadade Oluwasegun 'm' and Babatunde Raheed 'm' who were stopped and searched based on their suspicious movement within Aguda area. One locally fabricated double barrel gun was recovered from them.

" Operatives of the Lagos State Command arrested one Toheeb Oyekunle 'm', Victor Jimoh 'm', Samuel Okanlawon 'm', Segun Babatunde 'm', Okeowo Tosin 'm' and Mohammed Ibrahim 'm' in connection with the invasion that took place at at Iju-Ishaga area of the state where the suspects snatched an AK47 rifle from a police Officer. The suspects confessed to the crime and other criminal activities within Lagos and environs. One cut to size AK47 was recovered from them.

" On January 11, 2024, at about 0100hrs operatives of the Lagos State Command, upon credible intelligence concerning activities of some hoodlums terrorizing Ikorodu and its environs, swung into action, and arrested one Balogun Tola aka 50 'm' aged 35, Tunde Oladipupo 'm' aged 43, Rasa Ridwan 'm' aged 27 and Abimbola Aro 'm' aged 29 in connection with cult related activities.

" The following items were recovered from them: Three

English double barrel gun, One pump action rifle, one reining model 700 rifle, one locally made pistol, Seventy-Four rounds of live ammunition, Sixty-Eight rounds of cartridges, one baretta pistol magazine, Four axes, Three daggers and Five cutlasses.

"On January 16, 2024, at about 1730hrs, based on receipt of complaints, operatives of the Command arrested one Lukmon Ojo 'm' aged 25 around Ojota area. The suspect dispossessed the complainants of their properties including drivers licence, ATM cards and phones which he used to make bank transfers and obtain loans."

" On December 17, 2023, at about 2300hrs, based on credible intelligence that some group of boys suspected to be members of a confraternity were planning to retaliate their leader's death on other rival cult members in Ayobo area of Lagos State, Police operatives of the Command were dispatched to the area where one Quadri Mukail 'm', Adedoyin Azeez 'm', Olayinka Ayodele 'm', Orefuwa Olamide 'm' and Anuoluwapo Ojo 'm' were apprehended in possession of one berretta pistol with two cartridges and one axe.

" On January 13, 2024, at about 1030hrs, operatives of the Command arrested one Olamilekan Tajudeen aka Ebila 'm' aged 38, a wanted and notorious cultist leader who was involved in a series of cult related killings. One locally fabricated automatic baretta pistol was recovered from him.

Effort is ongoing to arrest other members.

" On December 28, 2023, detectives of the Command, based on a complaint, arrested one Lukman Alabi 'm', in connection with the diversion of 600 bags of rice. The suspects confessed to the crime, some number of bags of rice were recovered and released to the owner.

" On November 22, 2023, at about 2300hrs, operatives of the Command arrested one Adebayo Ojo Micheal 'm' aged 28 and his cohorts (still at large) who were in the process of dispossessing an uber driver of his vehicle around Eti-osa area of Lagos State. A locally made single barrel cut-to-size gun was recovered from him.

" On December 5, 2023, at about 2300hrs, operatives of the Command arrested one Lukmon Jimoh 'm' aged 35, who was stopped and searched based on his suspicious movement within Ibeju-lekki area. One locally made pistol, one toy pistol, one cartridge, one dagger and one axe were recovered from him. He is suspected to be a member of a one chance syndicate.

" On December 26, 2023, based on credible intelligence that some group of boys suspected to be members of a Confraternity are planning to retaliate their leader's death on a rival cult members in Golden Estate Abisoye area of Lagos State, Police operatives of the Command were dispatched to the area where one Rafiu Odeyemi 'm' aged 23 and Wesu

Babatunde 'm' aged 23 were apprehended in possession of one locally made pistol.

" On December 30, 2023, at about 0220hrs, operatives of the Command arrested one Yahaya Abubakar 'm' aged 36 who was seen loitering around Igbo-Elerin. One locally made double barrel pistol with one live and one expended cartridge was recovered from him.

" On January 13, 2024, at about 1500 hrs, based on credible intelligence that some boys were seen making occultic practices around Agufoye area of Ikorodu, operatives of the Command swiftly arrested one Ifeanyi Nwodo 'm' aged 39 and Dainel Johnson 'm' aged 32. Investigations revealed that they were trying to set up their occultic shrine named 'Indian Occultic Temple' with intent to defraud victims by making them believe that the oracle has powers of making them rich and successful.

" Several occult items including moulded human head, crafted human effigies were found in their shrine.

"On 12th January 2024 at about 1500hrs, Headquarters 9 Brigade of Nigerian Army arrested and handed over six suspected armed robbers/cultists named Fatai Ajayi 'm' aged 25, Samuel Issac 'm' aged 26, Solomon Kamaldeen 'm' aged 28, Kenneth Danladi 'm' aged 29, Etuk Ayanime 'm' aged 28 and Damilola Oyerinde 'm' aged 36 along with one locally fabricated beretta pistol with one live 9mm ammunition.



# COMMUNITY FOCUS

## Giwa Community Storms Zazzau Emir's Palace, Protests Over Killings, Kidnapping

By: SANIALIYU, Zaria

Hundreds of people from Tunburku Village of Kidadan in Giwa Local Government Area of Kaduna State stormed Emir Of Zazzau Palace in protest over the killings and kidnapping on daily basis by the bandits. Addressing the protesters, the Emir of Zazzau, Malam Ahmed Nuhu Bamalli advised them to always follow the proper

channels of taking their problems to the authorities.

Emir Bamalli said, the issue of insecurity in Giwa Local Government Area is top on agenda of Kaduna State Government as serious attention is given to bring the situation under control.

He added that, the state security council has directed its attention to that area, because of the daily reports it receives

from the district head to the emirate for quick attention.

Bamalli noted with concern that the security challenges in Zazzau emirate is worrisome and proactive measures are being taken.

The emir sympathised with the entire communities in the affected area and urged them to remain law abiding and

assured them that government will come to their aid in having a secured environment.

He prayed to Allah to grant the deceased Aljannah Firdausi and a very quick recovery for the injured ones.

On the already kidnapped people, he assured them that by God's will, they will be rescued unhurt and reunited with them.



## 11 Bodija Multiple Explosions Victims Receiving Treatment With Us - UCH CMD

*\*Says one person brought dead*

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

The Chief Medical Director of the University College Hospital (UCH), Ibadan, Prof Jesse Otegbayo on Wednesday, hinted that 11 victims of the Bodija multiple explosions are now receiving treatment at the hospital.

Prof Otegbayo who dropped this hint while featuring on a live radio programme in Ibadan on the Tuesday night explosions, also said it affected at least 16 buildings.

According to the UCH CMD, the 11 persons were among those rushed to the hospital from the scene of the explosions, with the victims sustaining various degrees of injuries such as major fractures, chest injuries among others.

The CMD emphasized that all the 11 persons on admission at the hospital are "all clinically stable" and receiving treatment as well.

Prof Otegbayo stressed that the hospital is of the view that all the victims will survive, adding our doctors and nurses and

other medical officers are fully on ground to attend to victims of the explosion.

"We have been attending to victims of the explosion since yesterday night, we have to recall some of our medical officers on leave as well as those not on duty to come to duty and be attending to the victims", he said

On the impact of the explosion on the hospital, the Chief Medical Director disclosed that 16 buildings in the hospital were affected by the vibration from the explosions.

Prof Otegbayo identified the buildings affected as the School of Nursing, School of Medical Laboratory, the hospital Museum building, Pathology building, Ogunlesi hall among others, school of Medical Laboratory among others. Stressing that the doors, roof, ceilings and electric fittings at the affected buildings were brought down, destroyed and badly damaged, the CMD said the hospital emergency unit has been activated and put on alert to accommodate victims from the explosion.

## Lagos Police Arrests 16 Notorious Cultists, Recovers Assorted Firearms, Ammunition, Army Camouflage

By; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

At least, 16 notorious cultists are now cooling in police custody in Lagos, including a wanted kingpin alleged to be involved in series of killing.

Identified as Olamilekan Tajudeen (aka Ebila), 38, he was said to have been arrested with one locally fabricated automatic Baretta pistol on January 13, 2024, at about 10.30am by police operatives.

Six others, said to be members of a confraternity, were also arrested while planning to retaliate their leader's death on other rival cult members in Ayobo area of the state.

They were identified as one Quadri Mukail, Adedoyin Azeez, Olayinka Ayodele, Orefuwa Olamide, and Anuoluwapo Ojo.

Our correspondent gathered that they were in possession of one berretta pistol with two cartridges and one axe at the time of the arrest.

Five assorted firearms of high calibre were also recovered from two gangs of suspected notorious cultists cum armed robbers by the operatives.

As gathered, four of the suspects identified as Balogun Tola (aka 50), 35, Tunde Oladipupo, 43, Rasa Ridwan, 27 and Abimbola Aro, 29, were apprehended in Ikorodu area of the State on 11th

January, 2024 at about 1.00am.

Three English double barrel gun, One pump action rifle, one reining model 700 rifle, one locally made pistol, seventy-four rounds of live ammunition, sixty-eight rounds of cartridges, one baretta pistol magazine, four axes, three daggers and five cutlasses were recovered from them.

According to report, six others named Fatai Ajayi, 25, Samuel Issac, 26, Solomon Kamaldeen, 28, Kenneth Danladi, 29, Etuk Ayanime, 28, and Damilola Oyerinde, 36, were nabbed by officers of the Headquarters 9 Brigade of Nigerian Army on 12th January 2024 at

about 3.00pm and handed over to the Police.

One locally fabricated beretta pistol with one live 9mm ammunition were said to have been recovered from the suspects.

The Commissioner of Police, Lagos State Command CP Fayoadé Adegoke while parading the suspects along others Wednesday at the Command headquarters, GRA, Ikeja stated that the suspects are some of the hoodlums terrorizing Ikorodu and its environs.

He said added that all the suspects will be charged to court at the conclusion of investigation.

Fayoadé assured residents that the Command under his watch would continue



The recovered assorted firearms and ammunition

## Family Begs Makinde, Tinubu To Rescue Abducted Air Force Officer, Wife, 16yr Old Student

*\*Says it can only raise N30m of N100m demanded by abductors*

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

The family of a Nigerian Air Force officer, Squadron Leader Nurudeen Popoola, his wife, Dr. Ganiyat Olawale-Popoola, and a 16-year old 100 level student on Wednesday, pleaded with President Bola Tinubu and Gov Seyi Makinde for the rescue of their kinsmen kidnapped by gunmen

A cousin of the Air Force officer, Alhaji Olatunde Rafiu while speaking with journalists,

disclosed that the abductors called the brother of the Air Force officer on Monday to hand down an ultimatum of Thursday to come up with N100million for the rescue of the abducted trio.

He declared that as at present, the family has been able to raise only N30 million from the N100 million demanded the abductors, adding that the family has made frantic efforts to reach out to Gov Makinde through mail, as they could not meet with him physically.

Alhaji Rafiu stressed that the e-mail sent to Gov Makinde for appeal was dated January 8, 2024 and that there has not been any response till date, saying, Gov Makinde should reach out to the Kaduna State Governor, Senator Uba Sani to immediately look for a way out so that the lives of the victims will not be lost.

"Since our brother and his wife with our young brother have been kidnapped in the middle of the night of December 27, 2023,

we have made all efforts to gather the money requested by the kidnappers, which is a hundred million naira but all we could get till this moment is just N30 million", he said.

Alhaji Rafiu added, "for two weeks, the abductors did not call us till they did on Monday, telling us that they gave us till Thursday to come up with the money. We have made public appeal and called on people of means in the society to please help secure the lives of our loved

ones in captivity, friends, extended family members have reached out, but we are still far to the figure demanded, which is hundred million naira and we have only today left".

"We are renewing our appeal to President Bola Ahmed Tinubu and our Governor, Engr. Seyi Makinde to please help us do something within the little time left of the ultimatum given, God Almighty will protect

# Bomb Blast: How Terrorists Kill 2 Injure 8 In Borno

By ; SADIQ ABUBAKAR, Maiduguri

Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) have killed two members of Mafa LGA Civilian JTF, while eight others sustained various degrees of injuries on Tuesday.

The incident occurred while they were on their routine operations along Mafa/Konduga LGAs axis and stepped on suspected landmine suspected to have been planted by Boko Haram Terrorists.

Two of the bereaved CJTF members instantly died on the spot of the bomb blast, while the remaining eight members sustained various degree of injuries and were rushed to the Maiduguri Teaching Hospital.

They were buried in Mafa town Tuesday evening, according to Islamic rites. Prayers were offered Allah to forgive the deceased

their shortcomings and give their families the fortitude to bear the irreparable loss.

The Executive Chairman, Mafa Local Government Council, Hon. Goni Gonibe, alongside Borno State House of Assembly (BOSHA) Member representing Mafa, LGC State Constituency, Hon Baba Ali Modu, Mafa LGC Secretary, Alhaji Sale Bukar, and Mafa Brigade Commander, among other community members attended the burial

The Chairman, Goni Gonibe, Member BOSHA, Baba Ali Modu, Council Secretary, Alhaji Sale Bukar and other sympathizers also visited the hospital to see situations of those injured and assured the families of the victims that proper medical care should be given to all, and prays for their quick recovery.



# Bomb Blast: How Terrorists Kill 2 Injure 8 In Borno



## Chief Bisi Akande An Ageless Icon With Vast Repository Of Wisdom - Senator Omisore

*\*Congratulates him on 85th Birthday*

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

A former Deputy Governor in Osun State, Senator Iyiola Omisore on Tuesday, described the former Interim National Chairman of the All Progressives Congress (APC), Chief Bisi Akande as an ageless icon with vast repository of wisdom. Senator Omisore said this in a message from his Media Office to congratulate Chief Bisi Akande on his 85th birthday anniversary. The former Deputy Governor to Chief Bisi Akande from 1999 to 2003 stated that the Asiawaju of Ila Orangun "as an ageless icon with vast repository of wisdom who have traversed all the Republics Nigeria, as a Nation, have

passed through in the cause of her Nationhood not only as a mere citizen but as an active roles player even in the football sense, a mercurial midfielder".

"Pa Bisi Akande was a trusted disciple of the Late Sage Chief Obafemi Awolowo since Pre-Nigeria independence, in the First Republic, was the Oyo State Secretary to the State Government and Deputy Governor in the Second Republic, a prominent progressive figure in the aborted Third Republic, and the first Osun State Governor when I was his Deputy in this Fourth Republic. He was \*the pioneer National Chairman of our Party, (APC) while till date his aeonian contribution to National discourses and the building of the Nation



Omisore

towards an enduring development is enormous", he said. The former Deputy Governor added, " what else can one describe the presence of the person who has being part of Nigeria Nationhood before independence till

now other than Titanic. Senator Omisore then prayed for Almighty Allah to grant Chief Akande vivacious strength, Solomonic wisdom, catholic joy and heterogeneous blessings for his years ahead to be most fulfilling".

## FG Workers Suffering In Silence - FWF

*\*Wants all outstanding wage award arrears paid within next 14 days*

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

Worried by their plight, the Federal Workers Forum (FWF) on Tuesday, alerted that the Federal Government workers in the country are now suffering in silence. Raising the alarm in a communique signed by the forum's National Coordinator, Comrade Andrew Emelieze issued at the end of an online meeting to evaluate the existential conditions of the federal workers in Nigeria, FWF noted that it "has been a tale of harrowing experiences from the federal government workers in Nigeria". According to the forum, " It has been a tale of harrowing experiences from the federal government workers in Nigeria", adding, "The workers have been suffering in silence. Federal government workers are frustrated and sorrowful". " Live has been made meaningless and hellish since the removal of subsidy on petrol. The

daily rising cost of living has made everything worthless resulting in monumental hardship being visited on the workers", it said. FWF added, " After intense and critical discussions concerning the living conditions of the federal workforce. The general submission is that the federal workers have been shortchanged, cut off from acceptable social life and our family structure has been badly affected, since the removal of fuel subsidy.

" The government had promised a palliative package through a wage award meant to mitigate against the sufferings caused by the subsidy removal. Unfortunately, the wage ward is not paid promptly".

FWF stressed further " The purpose of putting up the wage award has been defeated, as most workers only got paid just once in September, and are being owed three months arrears of payment , gradually getting to the fourth month now", adding, " The federal government has derailed in the payment of

wage award to her workers".

The Forum maintained, " It is getting to the fourth month that most of the federal government workers have not received any wage award", saying, " The payment of the wage award has been staggering, while a very few just got the second month, out of the six months promised from September 2023, majority of the federal government workers are yet to collect the October, November and December arrears.

" It is so bad that protest letters against the non implementation of the wage award has emanated from the military and paramilitary.

Workers are fed up, the sufferings is unlimited. It is as if government want to deliberately torture the federal employees.

"Workers have gone borrowing in order to continue surviving. What is more surprising is the response by the Tinubu led Federal government pretending that all is well while the federal workers are starving".

FWF in the communique

stated that it resolves that \* All the outstanding wage award arrears be paid within the next fourteen days, \* That the government should investigate the delay in the payment of wage award, which we see as an act of corruption.

\* That all outstanding promotion arrears and many other pending arrears owed workers be paid.

" That all pending arrears owed the federal universities workers be paid.

That salaries be paid latest 28th of every month. That the federal government look into and implement our earlier demands concerning free education to the dependants of all federal government workers in all federal government owned schools across all levels.

"That the federal minimum wage should not be less than three hundred thousand naira (300k)

That all federal government workers be ready to react at the expiration of the two weeks ultimatum giving to the federal government if our demands are not met."

## Our Hands Remain On Deck To Ensure Success Of Abba Kabir's Administration - Dr Saleh Wailare

By; JABIRU A. HASSAN, Kano

Dr. Saleh Musa Wailare, one of the top ranking New Nigeria People's Party (NNPP) chieftains, has said that his hands would continue to be on deck to ensure that the success of Engineer Abba Kabir Yusuf administration with optimum results.

Speaking with newsmen at the arrival of Governor Abba Kabir from Abuja after the Supreme Court affirmed his election, he added that it is time all NNPP family came and contribute in one way or the other, towards the success of the Abba Gida-Gida government.

"We are all aware that His Excellency, Governor Abba Kabir Yusuf has a good mission and vision for the development of our state. Therefore, I am optimistic that Kano would become an exemplary domain in the very near

future, because we have a dynamic person whose objectives are to bring real change to Kano State without bias," he emphasized.

Furthermore, Dr. Saleh Musa Wailare who is also the founder of the Tamallan Foundation commended the leader of Kwankwaso Movement, Engineer Dr. Rabiu Musa Kwankwaso for being steadfast in the promotion of democracy with all his ability, adding that "Kwankwaso is a true nationalist and elder statesman".

Wailare congratulated the governor on his victory at the Supreme Court and reiterated his commitment towards good governance, where he assured Kano citizens that Engineer Abba Kabir would transform the state at both rural and urban settlements, to reap the good harvest of genuine democratic governance.



Wailare

## Lalong Congratulates Mutfwang Over Supreme Court Victory

*\*Advocates unity for greater Plateau*

By; BUHARI B. BELLO, Jos

Former Governor of Plateau State and Senator representing Plateau South Senatorial District, Simon Bako Lalong has congratulated Governor Caleb Mutfwang over his victory at the Supreme Court, saying the final decision of the apex court provides the opportunity for him and all politicians to work for a united, prosperous and inclusive Plateau.

Lalong said the long legal hurdles leading to the decision of the Supreme Court is part of the democratic process that should be cherished irrespective of the outcome as it has afforded all players the opportunity

to ventilate and seek redress through courts as provided under the law.

He said the verdict of the Supreme Court means an end to litigation and time for governance which the governor should now utilise to concentrate and deliver to the people of Plateau State.

The judiciary according to him, has done its duty according to the constitution and democratic practice which is binding on all parties that submitted themselves to it.

The former Minister of Labour and Employment, urged Governor Mutfwang to embrace all sections of the State in delivering good governance and dividends of democracy to the

people.

Similarly, Senator Lalong commended the candidate of the APC Dr Nentawe Yilwatda for his doggedness, maturity and resilience in the political journey that saw him going all the way to the highest court in the land.

He said the performance of the APC Candidate and the exemplary conduct of members of the party who fought doggedly within the confines of democratic tenets shows their capacity to continue to put the interest of the people above personal ambitions. Lalong urged the APC family not to be deterred but remain focused on building the party for continues service to the people.

The former Governor used

the opportunity to appeal to all citizens to close ranks and shun all divisive rhetoric because the interest of Plateau remains paramount.

Meanwhile, Senator Lalong has appreciated President Bola Tinubu and Vice President Kashim Shettima for their support to the APC family in Plateau State and the nation at large as well as commitment to the growth of democracy in the Nigeria.

He said as leaders with lofty democratic credentials, they continue to give leadership to not only their political party elected officials, but also guarantee a level playing field for all political actors and their supporters to work towards building a greater Nigeria.



## Police Confirms Kidnapping Of Mother, 17-year Old Son In Zaria

By; SANIALIYU, Zaria

The Kaduna State Police Command has confirmed the abduction of Halima Bello and her 17-year-old son, Yusuf Bello at Dogarawa Area of Sabon Gari Local Government Area, Zaria.

ASP Mansur Hassan, the command's Public Relations Officer made the confirmation to newsmen in Zaria on Monday.

He said the police has swung into action in an effort to rescue the victims

unhurt as well as commenced investigation into the matter.

Hassan also advised the public to be vigilant and report any suspicious move by the unknown faces to the nearest authorities.

Malam Mahmud Abubakar, resident of the area told newsmen that the bandits who were in large numbers, armed with sophisticated weapons, stormed the Dogarawa, New Layout at about

2.00am at the early hours of Monday.

"They entered the house of Alhaji Bello and abducted the victims, attacked Adamu Bello with matches on his hand; Adamu Bello is currently receiving treatment at Ahmadu Bello University Teaching Hospital (ABUTH) Shika, Zaria.

"The bandits who did not abduct the two tenants residing in the house, tied them and locked them in their rooms," he said.



## Persons With Disability To Sit For JAMB Free - Registrar

By; AMOS TAUNA, Kaduna

Persons Living With Disability who wish to sit for the 2024/2025 Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination can register at no cost, the Joint Admission and Matriculations Board (JAMB), has said.

Ishaq Oloyede, the JAMB Registrar, disclosed this, while rolling out the registration process for the 2024 matriculation examination for interested candidates across the country.

Oloyede explained, "JAMB will issue free application documents to all categories of Persons Living With Disability as a form of support."

To support the PLWD, he said that JAMB would issue free application documents to all categories of Persons Living with Disabilities in the advertisement for the 2024 UTME/DE.

According to Oloyede,

measures have been put in place to ensure a smooth exercise for all candidates, said audio books will now be provided for all blind candidates.

He explained that the development was a digital adaptation of the traditional reading book, noting that it will come in popular audio formats such as MP3, WMV, and WMA that would be compatible with all devices that can stream audio records.

The registrar noted that the suggestion for the provision of audiobooks was made at the first National Conference on Equal Opportunity of Access to Higher Education in Nigeria.

He explained that apart from the blind candidates, other groups to benefit from the free registration according to the examination body are people with Down syndrome, Autism, Dyslexia disorder and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.



## Labour Party Chieftain Lauds Judiciary For Affirming Nwifuru's Election

By; MKPUMA ENYINNA, Abakaliki

Chief of the Labour Party (LP) in Ebonyi State, Chief Chikaodiri Ojimba, has lauded judiciary for affirming the election of Governor Francis Ogbonna Nwifuru, saying that it has restored the confidence of a common man.

Chief Ojimba, expressed this on Sunday, while calling on Ebonyians to give maximum support to the governor towards the actualization of the people's charter of needs agenda.

His words, "On behalf of my family, I congratulate His Excellency, Rt. Hon

Francis Ogbonna Nwifuru and his deputy, Her Excellency, Princess Patricia Obila on the reaffirmation of their victories by the nation's apex court.

"Your Excellencies, this judgement has proven the masses choice during the March 25 Governorship, 2023 governorship election in their polling units and has further restored the confidence Nigerians repose in the judiciary as the last hope of the man.

"I, also appreciate the Supreme Court for its courage in upholding justice and sustaining our nascent democracy.

"Your Excellencies,



Chief Chikaodiri Ojimba,

always accept the assurances of my support towards the actualization of your people's charter of needs agenda".

## Stop Compelling Communities To Provide Transformers, Cables, Poles, Minister Tells Electricity Distribution Companies

\*Says it's their responsibility to provide such within areas of coverage

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

Minister of Power, Chief Adebayo Adedunjo on Monday, warned the Ibadan Electricity Distribution Company (IBEDC) and electricity distribution companies to stop compelling communities to purchase transformers, cables and poles.

Handling down the warning in Ibadan while addressing IBEDC Management during his working visit to Ibadan, the Minister said it is the responsibility of the electricity distribution companies to provide transformers, poles and cables to communities within their areas of coverage.

Chief Adedunjo declared that President Bola Tinubu frowns at the situation where communities would be forced to purchase transformers poles and cables by electricity distribution companies.

The Minister maintained that the President Tinubu led administration will not tolerate a situation where communities will be



Chief Adedunjo at a meeting with IBEDC Management in Ibadan

forced to purchase such items by themselves.

"We don't want to hear news of communities buying transformers, cables and poles for themselves again. The federal government frowns at it. You see what we have done in Kaduna. Service to our people is paramount. It is the responsibility that Mr. President has placed on us. You are not number one, two or three, you are struggling to be number four on the rating", he said Chief Adedunjo added "it is the responsibility of the

distribution companies to provide transformers, cables and poles to communities so that power supply can improve".

"A situation where communities buy transformers, cables and poles must stop. I know that you have these centers but how effective are they to ensure that customer complaints are attended to. As a minister, I don't want to hear news of communities being asked to purchase electric transformers, cables and poles", Chief Adedunjo

stressed, "If the consumers are paying for the electricity, then it is the responsibility of the distribution companies to provide these items.

There must be improvement in power supply".

He noted further, "That is what the government planned to do. People should not pay for darkness. When people have a 24-hour power supply, they can pay double for electricity because you have saved them the money to power generators".

## Kaduna Govt Seeks Partnership With Commission To Rebuild More Settlements, Rehabilitate IDPs

By; FUNMI ADERINTO, Kaduna

Governor of Kaduna State, Senator Uba Sani on Tuesday, sought urgent support of the National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons (NCFRMI) to build more settlements and rehabilitate homes for Internally displaced persons (IDPs) and other vulnerable persons in the state.

The governor made this known when he received a delegation led by the Federal Commissioner NCFRMI, Mr Tijani Ahmed on condolence visit to Sir Kashim Ibrahim House over the military drone attack at Tudun Biri which occurs in December 3, 2023.

Governor Uba explained that his particular concern is the provision of educational opportunities for the children in IDP camps.

He said, "Our administration will not rest until peace is restored to all troubled communities, while looking forward to the return of all the IDPs to their communities.

"In most of our communities, we have thousands of internally displaced persons livelihood destroyed, IDP camps are scattered around the state, while the recent Tudun Biri Military drone attack has presented another major challenge.

"As you are aware, the state has been grappling with security challenges, terrorist and bandits have laid siege on our communities, hence security agencies have been doing a commendable job to tackle the situation," the governor said.

Governor Uba Sani explained that, the attacks have created a major

humanitarian crisis in most communities across the state.

He said the state government has been unrelenting in providing relief to the injured and their families, adding that it has also created shelter for the displaced persons. According to him, "we are working round the clock to provide social amenities to the displaced Tudun Biri Community, hence building and maintaining IDPs camps in the state is overwhelming".

He expressed appreciation to the commission for giving the state a lot of priority, while looking forward to more partnership.

Earlier in his remarks, Tijani Ahmed, Federal commissioner NCFRMI said the visit was to commiserate the government on the unfortunate incident that occurred in Tudun Biri in Igabi LGA, where loss of lives and property were recorded.

He said also on the ongoing security crisis in the state which has tragically resulted in the displacement of over 100,000 people (108,370 according to the latest Displacement Tracking Matrix count by IOM in Jan. 2024)

He said, "Across the state, particularly in Birnin Gwari, Igabi, Chikun, Kauru and Kajuru, Southern Kaduna has also faced incessant insecurity crisis over the past two decades."

He further reiterated the NCFRMI's commitment towards assisting the most vulnerable in the state.

According to him, they will also visit Tudun Biri to flag off the distribution of relief items to IDPs in Kaduna State in partnership with Kaduna SEMA.



# Your Decision To Join APC Apt, Reps Speaker Abbas Tells Sardaunan Badarawa



By; IBRAHIM ADAMU, Kaduna

Speaker House of Representatives, Hon. Tajudeen Abbas has hailed the decision of Hon. Usman Ibrahim popularly called Sardaunan Badarawa to rejoin the All Progressives Congress (APC), describing the action as apt and smart.

The Speaker made the statement, while hosting Sardaunan Badarawa at his National Assembly Office in Abuja on Wednesday.

Hon. Usman Ibrahim was People's Democratic Party (PDP) Kaduna Central Senatorial Candidate in the 2023 General Election.

He recently severed ties and defected from PDP to APC.

Hon. Abbas assured Sardaunan Badarawa of equal and fair treatment in APC, adding that with high caliber of leaders with proven integrity and foresight in the ruling party, the former chieftain of PDP would have a conducive ground to contribute his quota to growth and development of Nigeria.

While urging the grassroots politician to utilize his wealth of experience to the advantage of APC, especially in the Renewed Hope agenda of the present administration, expressed optimism in a better and brighter

future for citizens.

"I am very pleased and elated over your decision to dump your former party because you have seen the sincerity of the present leadership of APC at virtually every level of governance to take Nigeria forward.

"I'm not unaware of your invaluable contributions in uplifting socioeconomic status of people at the grassroots all the years you have been in partisan politics.

"I will urge you to continue with similar tempo and even more as you rejoin the APC in your quest to ensure a good life for the people.

"I will implore you to synergize with the leadership at the state level to see how best you can serve our people of Kaduna State so that our common goals of a better nation can be achieved," he advised.

Responding, Sardaunan Badarawa commended the speaker for his exemplary leadership qualities since assuming head of the Lower Chamber.

He expressed delight over the warm and hospitable reception he received from his host.

Hon Usman Ibrahim, promised to contribute his quote to the development of the party both at the state and national level.



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## ADVERT RATE

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

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### 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 |

### LOOSE INSERTS

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

### CLASSIFIEDS

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

### Special Position

| SPACE   | RATE         | VAT        | TOTAL        |
|---|--------------|------------|--------------|
| FULL W RAPA ROUND                               | 6,750,000.00 | 506,250.00 | 7,256,250.00 |
| HALF W RAPA ROUND                               | 4,500,000.00 | 337,500.00 | 4,837,500.00 |
| PA GE 2 O R 3                                   | 400,000.00   | 30,000.00  | 430,000.00   |
| PA GE 4 O R 5                                   | 375,000.00   | 28,125.00  | 403,125.00   |
| PA GE 6 O R 7                                   | 325,000.00   | 24,375.00  | 349,375.00   |
| 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    |

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

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

# Poverty Alleviation In Nigeria, A Dashed Hope

By: MUSAILALLAH

The World Bank's Nigeria development update, titled, 'Turning the Corner: From Reforms & Renewed Hope, to Results,' in December last year stated in unambiguous terms that poverty rate in Nigeria had increased to 46 per cent in 2023, representing 104 million poor Nigerians.

However, highlights of the 2022 Multidimensional Poverty Index survey had revealed that: 63% of persons living within Nigeria, representing 133 million people are multidimensionally poor.

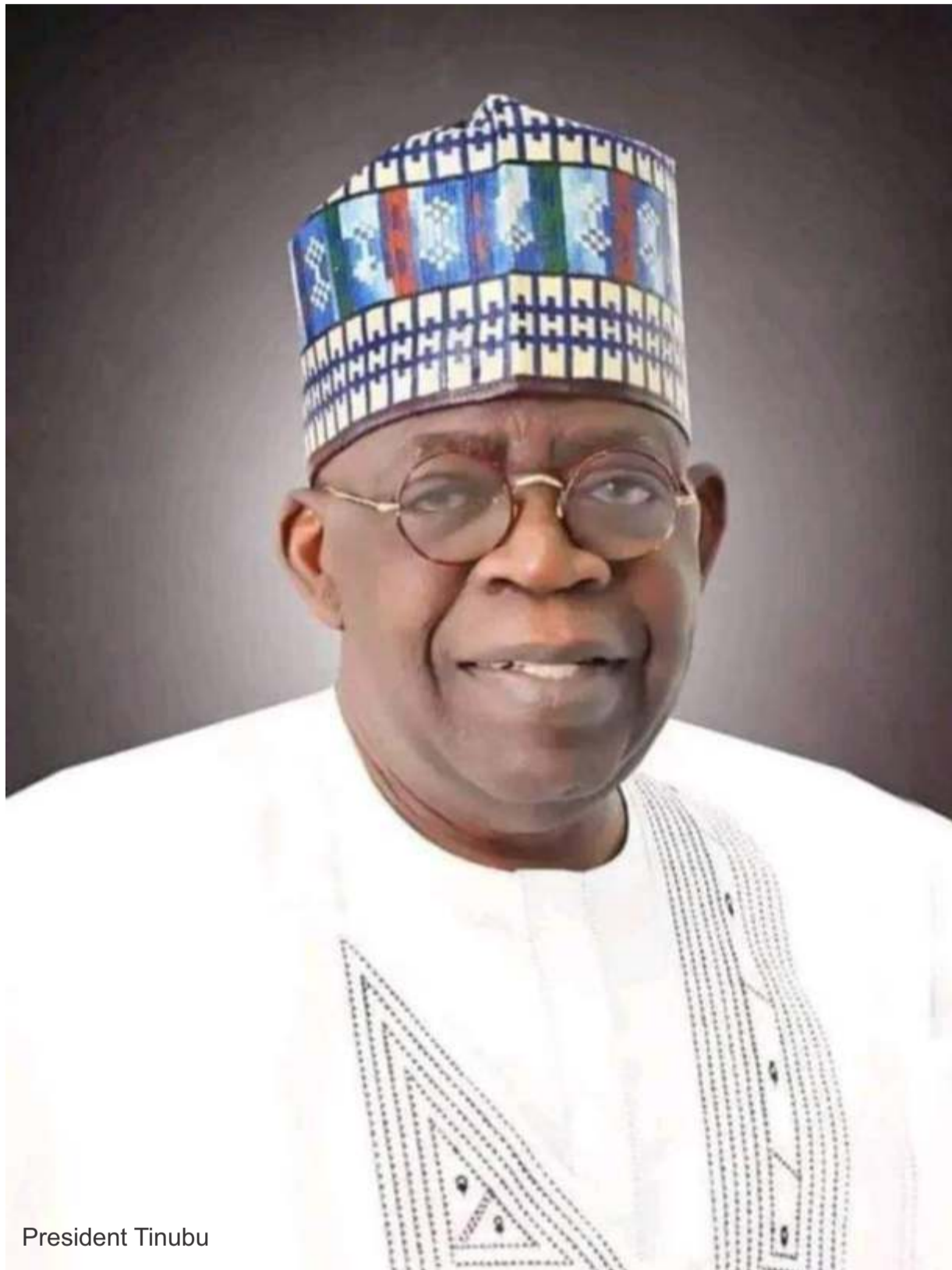
In general, the incidence of monetary poverty is lower than the incidence of multidimensional poverty across most states If the country.

In Nigeria, the poverty alleviation measures implemented so far have focused more on growth, basic needs and rural development approaches.

The country's previous military and civilian governments in the country approached eradication of poverty through key programmes through Operation Feed the Nation, Green Revolution, Better Life for Rural Women and Family Economic Advancement.

Indeed poverty eradication will be achieved by expanding employment opportunities, and also by making life more affordable for low income households thus reducing vulnerability by increasing the asset base and strengthening social security and the social wage.

The Social Protection Policy for Nigeria commonly called NSIP which President Buhari administration started in 2016 and gave priority attention to, is an umbrella policy framework that incorporates related social agenda paradigms intended to reduce poverty and provide a life of dignity for all citizens.



President Tinubu

The NSIP was intended to check poverty, improve capacity and put money in the hands of the poorest and the most vulnerable in the country. Under President Muhammadu Buhari, the NSIP has successfully implemented and executed four programmes aimed at addressing the negative effects of poverty and promote economic development.

The NSIP programmes are Home Grown School Feeding Programmes, GSFP;

Government Enterprise and Empowerment Programme, GEEP; N-Power, National Social Safety Net Programme, NASSCO; and the National Cash Transfer Programme, N-CTP otherwise called 'Trader Moni'.

In a regrettable twist on the impact of the lives of poverty stricken and vulnerable Nigerians after almost 7 years of a success, President Tinubu recently suspended the work of NSIP. Though the reasons are not far fetched, this action

will go a long way in easing poverty level among Nigerians.

Nigeria's President recently suspended the country's Minister of Humanitarian Affairs and Poverty Alleviation and Mrs Halima over the use of private bank accounts for ministry's financial transactions in the government's social welfare programme.

Betta Edu and Halima's actions have resulted in the President ordering a

"thorough investigation" of all ministry's financial transactions," including the entire framework of Nigeria's social investment programmes.

President Bola Tinubu was elected last year after promising to rid Africa's most populous country of chronic corruption and extreme poverty. His government said the suspension follows his commitment "to uphold the highest standards of integrity, transparency and accountability" in how Nigeria's resources are managed.

Meanwhile, sequel to President Bola Tinubu's six-week suspension of the four (4) programmes under the National Social Investment Programmes Agency, NSIPA President Tinubu has approved the establishment of a Special Presidential Panel, to immediately undertake a comprehensive review and audit of existing financial frameworks and policy guidelines of the social investment programmes with a view to implementing a total re-engineering of the financial architecture of the programmes with detailed modification to procedures guiding the programmes' implementation moving forward.

The Special Presidential Panel, which is comprised of ministers representing strategic sectors and will ensure a multi-disciplinary approach to the reform effort, is made up of the following members:

However and regrettably too, the hope of Nigerians being saved from the threats of poverty will continue to elude them and something must be done urgently to save the country from the consequences of increased poverty in the land.

*Musa Ilallah writes from Emeka Anyaoku Street, Abuja he can be reached via; musahk123@yahoo.com*

## By-election: APC inaugurates Campaign Team For Chikun Constituency In Kaduna

By; AMOS TAUNA, Kaduna

The All Progressives Congress (APC), Kaduna State Chapter, has constituted a campaign team for the by-election into the State House of Assembly for Chikun Constituency.

The by-election is as a result of the death of the member-elect for Chikun State constituency in the Kaduna State House of Assembly, Madami Garba Madami, who received his Certificate of Return from the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) after the general election in 2023, but was unable to attend the inauguration of the State Assembly on June 13, 2023 due to the illness that eventually claimed his life.

The Special Adviser on Political Matters to Governor Uba Sani, Dr Manzo Maigari, who inaugurated the campaign

team on Monday in Kaduna, expressed confidence that the candidate, Jesse David Tankon, has the support of the electorate in the coming election slated for February, 2024, assuring of the victory of the candidate in the coming election.

He explained that Chikun Constituency is so strategic in the politics of Kaduna, adding that the constituency is a metropolitan in nature that makes up all the ethnic groups in the state and enjoined the electorate to vote the APC candidate, who is a youth to power.

He said, "The candidate is a youth and has the determination to bring the necessary change needed in the local government. If voted into power, I strongly believed that he has all it takes to bring the dividends of democracy to bear in Chikun Constituency and ensure

the youths are carried along in the affairs of the Governor Uba Sani-led administration that is all inclusive."

He noted that with the council chairman as an APC member, all councillors and other stakeholders in the team, the candidate has a bright future in the coming by-election in the constituency of coming out victorious.

As a youth, he expressed the belief that the candidate if voted, would connect easily with the younger generation, believing that the unity shown by all members of the party and other stakeholders in the local government during the primary election to the candidature of Jesse David Tanko is a clear manifestation that he would come out victorious in the coming by-election.

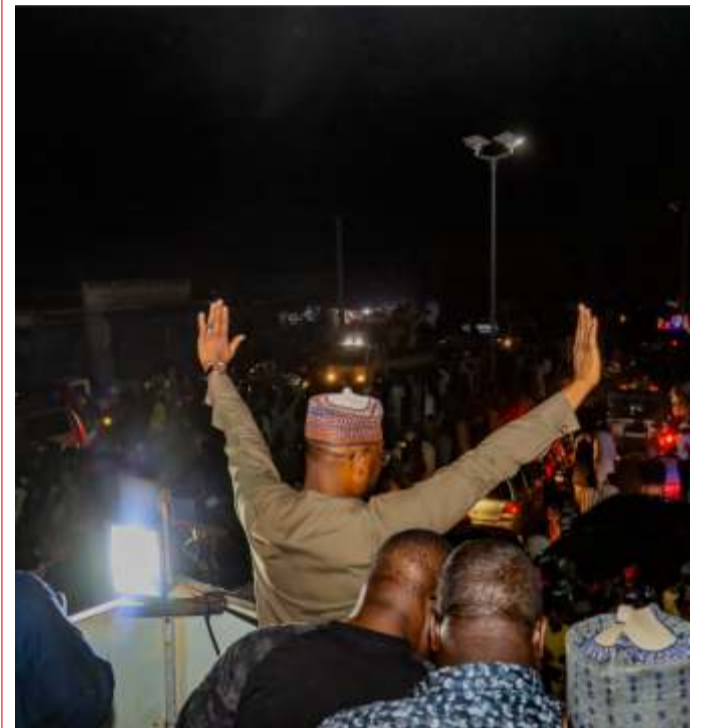
The APC candidate, Jesse David Tanko, called on

other aspirants that contested the primary with him to come together for the victory of the party in the coming by-election, saying that with the support he has received so far is an indication of the victory of the party in the coming election.

He said that he has the aspiration to ensure quality representation by carrying the people along on government activities, assuring that he will be a chief servant to his people if elected.

He hopes to ensure "hope renewed" and also ensure "Chikun trust fund" by helping the youth in the educational sector by ensuring that they excel in their educational pursuits. On social welfare, he promised to empower the youths and women in order to ensure the youths are engaged in doing things for a living.

## Supreme Court Verdict: Zamfara Stands Still As Large Crowd Welcomes Governor Lawal



By; IMRANA ABDULLAHI, Kaduna

Thousands of supporters and well-wishers welcomed Governor Dauda Lawal in Gusau, the capital city of Zamfara state, on Monday, creating an atmosphere of excitement and jubilation. The Supreme Court reaffirmed Governor Lawal as the winner of the Zamfara Governorship Election, setting aside the Court of Appeal's decision that declared the election inconclusive.

A statement issued by the spokesperson of the governor, Sulaiman Bala Idris, said a massive crowd brought the state capital to a standstill as they celebrated the Supreme Court's decision.

According to him, it was a momentous occasion for the people of Zamfara, who were determined to show their support for their leader. "The streets are lined with a mammoth crowd, cheering and waving as the governor's convoy makes its way through the city."

The governor rode in an open van called the Bazamfara, waving to the cheering supporters as he moved through Tsafe LGA, Kwatarkwashi, and Damba to the 'Freedom Square' in Gusau, the capital city.

"The rally lasted over 10

hours. Thousands of people took to the streets, dancing and singing political songs while raising placards to express their joy over Governor Lawal's reaffirmation by the apex court."

During his speech at Freedom Square, Governor Lawal praised the judiciary for standing with the truth regardless of the challenges. "This decision by the Supreme Court has reignited hopes for an independent judiciary.

"I thank the judiciary and the Federal Government for not interfering with the judicial processes, especially the election petitions. This has brought hope for the entire country.

"I assure you that security is our top priority, as promised. We are progressing toward addressing our challenges and will continue to do so. Additionally, we have made great strides in education, health, agriculture, the economy, and other essential sectors.

"We were denied a venue for our campaigns by the previous administration, even though we followed all the procedures required by law. As a result, we could only gather in this square for our campaigns. Therefore, we have decided to rename this square as 'Freedom Square'."

## Cooperate With Security Agencies In Oyo State, Makinde Tells Residents

*\*Says if you see something, say something*

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

Oyo State Governor, Engr Seyi Makinde on Monday, charged the people of the state to always cooperate with the security agencies in the state.

Speaking at the grand finale of the 2024 Armed Forces Remembrance Day, in Ibadan, the governor tasked residents in the state to keep security agencies informed of any suspicious act.

He said his administration is ready to continue to support the widows, orphans and other dependents of the fallen heroes.

"Please cooperate with our service commanders. If you see something, say

something. I want to use this opportunity to thank our service commanders, the officers and men of the Armed Forces in Oyo State, for their dedication and for keeping us safe. We are eternally grateful to them", he said.

The governor added, "For the people our fallen heroes left behind, we will continue to give them support and make life bearable for them."

He then assured the people of Oyo state that the security agencies will continue to keep Oyo State safe.

Chairman, Nigerian Legion, Oyo State Command, Deputy Commandant General Julius Ogunkojo while speaking commended Gov Makinde for his generous

donation and support in the celebration of the 2024 Armed Forces Remembrance Day celebration.

He urged the Oyo state government, individuals and well-meaning Nigerians to come to the aid of Legion members, saying their monthly allowances are not encouraging due to the economic situation of the country.

Gov Makinde during the celebration performed the traditional wreath-laying. The ceremony witnessed the laying of wreaths at the remembrance cenotaph by Governor Makinde, the Speaker of Oyo State House of Assembly, Rt. Honourable Adebogundoyin; the Chief

Judge of Oyo State, Justice Iyabo Yerima; and the representative of the Olubadan of Ibadanland, Oba Mohood 'Lekan Balogun, the Garrison Commander, 2 Division of the Nigerian Army, Brigadier-General Muazu; the Commander, Nigeria Air Force Station, Ibadan, Air Commodore A.G. Akinyimika; the Commissioner of Police, Oyo State Police Command, Adebola Hamzat and a representative of the widows of the fallen heroes.

It also witnessed the 21-gun salute in honour of the fallen heroes and the release of ceremonial pigeons by the governor, which signifies peace.

## All Set For IDGS 60th Anniversary, Old Students To Launch N100m Appeal Fund

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

The old students of Iseyin District Grammar School, (IDGS) Iseyin are set to celebrate the 60 years anniversary of the school.

IDGS made this known on Tuesday in a statement by the Chairman of the anniversary Publicity Committee, Mr Tunji Lalude, made available to journalists in Ibadan. According to Mr Lalude, the anniversary will kick off with rally and endurance trek from the Government Technical School, Oluwole to IDGS through the Aseyin Palace, with a walk-through of the school premises on Wednesday January 24, 2024.

Mr Lalude stressed that the programme will continue on Thursday January 25 with Panel discussion on 'Career Development and Building a Prosperous Future' and a public lecture on "Building A Prosperous Future, Your Background Notwithstanding" from Dr. T.Y Raheem, Past President of the Association of Medical Laboratory Scientists of Nigeria and activities of the day will be concluded with a Novelty Match between IDGS Staff and Old Students of the school.

"On Friday, the programme continues with the second Anniversary lecture entitled "IDGS at 60: Keeping Tab on Public Schools and Infrastructural Challenges in Nigeria" by Chief Adeniyi Falade, former National

President of the All Nigerian Congress of Principals of Public Schools (ANCOPPS)", he said

Mr Lalude added, "There will be General Assembly and election of new executive members for both National and Zonal Chapters of the Association; the launching of an updated school directory and newsletter, Jum at Service at the Olona Central Mosque, award presentation and special dinner."

"The School's Cultural group is billed to thrill the attendees, which will culminate into a 100 million naira (₦100 m) fund-raising event, foundation laying of the school gate and 0.5 km school road projects and reception programme on Saturday 27th January, 2024.

"The ceremony will close on Sunday with a Church service at the Anglican Church, Okutapemo, Iseyin to appreciate God for a successful outing. We therefore use this medium to call on all Old Students of IDGS at home and in Diaspora to take active parts in this celebration,"

Iseyin District Grammar School (IDGS) was established in 1964 and was recognized as a district school, as students were at a period attending the school from Tede, now Atisbo local government, Otu, Itesiwaju local government, Okeho, Kajola local government among other district communities in the Oke-Ogun region of Oyo State.

## Governor Mutfwang Reaffirms Commitment To Enhanced Welfare For Armed Forces

By; BUHARI B. BELLO, Jos

Activities marking the 3024 Armed Forces Remembrance Day in Plateau State have been rounded up with the laying of wreaths at the J.D. Gomwalk Secretariat Cenotaph.

Among those who laid the wreaths were, Governor Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang, Speaker Plateau State House of Assembly, Rt. Hon. Gabriel Dewan, Chief Judge of Plateau State, David Mann, General Officer Commanding 3rd Division, Nigerian Army and Commander Operation SAFE HAVEN, Gen. A. Abubakar, NAF Commander 557 AVM Usman Abdullahi, Commissioner of Police, Julius Okoro, the Chairman State

Traditional Council and the Gbong Gwom Jos, Da Jacob Gyang Buba, Chairman Nigeria Legion and Representative, and wives of Fallen Heroes.

In an interview with journalists later, Plateau State Governor, Barr. Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang, restated his commitment to championing improved welfare for both retired and active security personnel for effective service delivery.

Governor Mutfwang underscored his administration's unwavering commitment to providing essential support to enable serving officers to fulfill their constitutional duties amidst provocations from terrorist elements targeting innocent communities.

He applauded the

professionalism of security officers, especially the General Officer Commanding 3rd Division and Operation SAFE HAVEN Commander Major Gen. A E. Abubakar, and stressed the need for proactive approach in identifying and addressing any issues among the ranks to ensure optimal service delivery.

"We will continue to honor our fallen heroes who sacrificed for our nation's security," affirmed Governor Mutfwang.

He used the opportunity to convey condolences to the families of those who lost their lives or were injured in service.

Governor Mutfwang called on the people of Plateau State to support government initiatives aimed at restoring lasting peace.

Former Governor, Sen.

Jonah David Jang, speaking at the RHINO Officers Mess, Maxwell Khobe Cantonment, lauded the efforts of serving officers in addressing the nation's current security challenges.

He called for closer collaboration between serving and retired officers to contribute to the fight against terrorism and other criminal activities.

Chairman of the Nigerian Legion, Plateau State Col. CNC Sati B. Yilwat expressed gratitude to Governor Mutfwang for his intervention towards improving the living conditions of his members.

He reassured the contribution of his members towards a peaceful and a united Plateau.



# Gov Nwifuru Swears-in 64 Development Centre Coordinators, SAs In Ebonyi

*\*APC Senatorial candidate enjoins them to always do good*

By: MKPUMA ENYINNA, Abakaliki

Governor Francis Ogbonna Nwifuru of Ebonyi State has sworn-in 13 women and 51 men as Development Centre Coordinators across the 13 local government areas of the state on Tuesday.

The DC coordinators and SAs were sworn-in at the State Executive Council Chamber of Government House, Centenary City, Abakaliki.

Governor Nwifuru, however, charged them to go to their various local government areas and step down development to the grassroots in line with the People's Charter of Needs agenda, urging them to be committed and dedicated in discharging their duties.

Also speaking, the Ebonyi South APC Senatorial candidate, Prof. Anthony Ani charged the newly sworn-in DC coordinators and SAs to always do good and represent their people well by bringing democracy dividends to the grassroots, saying that If they have the willpower to do good, Ebonyi will be better. He also pledged to build on already existing foundation that was laid by his predecessors in order to bring massive development to Ebonyi South Senatorial zone.

"If you have the willpower to do good, Ebonyi will be better. I know that the coordinators today, are celebrating. I am going to play on already laid foundation of my predecessors. I have done well in the area of Health, Education Infrastructure and others.

"What I have done, is what I am

going to build upon by giving better correction to whatever thing I have done before. We don't need to be on the same page every time; we need improvement, progress, forward movement.

On his part, the Special Assistant to the Governor on Youth Development, Hon. Okechukwu Chima Ogbuagu expressed joy and gratitude to God and also to Governor Francis Ogbonna Nwifuru for finding him worthy to be part of the team that will work to develop Ebonyi state.

He used the opportunity to commend the judiciary for affirming the election of governor Francis Nwifuru whose victory is a confirmation of the popular selection of Ebonyians.

"I am very excited today for the governor to find me worthy to be part of the team that will develop Ebonyi state. The supreme court judgment is not in dispute. We have 13 local government areas in Ebonyi state and out of it, 11 voted for the governor, and he won even by number because they masses wanted him to be governor of Ebonyi state. The judgement was just a confirmation of the popular selection of Ebonyians. We thank the judiciary for doing the right thing.

In their separate interviews, the newly sworn-in coordinator of Anuagata Development Centre, Hon. John Osi (Jnr) appreciated God for the His grace, saying that his appointment is divine. He also thank Governor Francis Ogbonna Nwifuru for keeping his word,



pledging to justify the confidence reposed on him as the coordinator of Anuagata DC.

"I believe my appointment is divine. I want to thank Governor Francis Ogbonna Nwifuru, he is a man that keeps his word. For people of Anuagata DC, this is just the new beginning, through God that sent me, I will deliver dividends of democracy to them.

Also speaking, the Coordinator of Ohaozara DC, Hon. Nwabueze Obasi Edward expressed gratitude to God who made it possible for him to be appointment as coordinator.

He further appreciated and thank Governor Francis Ogbonna Nwifuru and other stakeholders for finding them worthy for the appointment.

"I want to thank God today that I am the incumbent Coordinator of Ohaozara Development Centre; I was inaugurated and swear-in today and I am very grateful to God Almighty who made it possible.

I want to say a very big thank you to the governor of Ebonyi state, Hon. Francis Ogbonna Nwifuru; want to also thank my boss, Chief Enekwachi Akpa, the chairman of

Ohaozara LGA, Hon. Aja Chinonso Consider; the minister of works, and SSA to president, Barr. Chioma Nweze because these are people you will follow and will never regret.

It important to note that Development centres are subdivisions of local governments in the state. They were created by the first civilian governor of the state, Sen. Sam Egwu, to bring development closer to its roots.

34 of them were created by the Egwu administration, while Egwu's successor, Chief Martin Elechi, increased the number of centres to

## FG Commercializes TELA Maize Varieties

By: SANIALIYU, Zaria

The Federal government has approved the commercial release of transgenic insect resistant and drought tolerant maize varieties, known as TELA maize.

The approval was granted by the National Committee on Naming, Registration and Release of Crop Varieties, Livestock breeds/Fisheries (NCRRCVLF) headed by Prof Olusoji Olufajo at its 33rd meeting at the National Centre for Genetic Resources and Biotechnology (NACGRAB), Ibadan.

The four varieties approved by the NVRC are, SAMMAZ 72T, SAMMAZ 73T, SAMMAZ 74T, and SAMMAZ 75T.

Accordingly the new maize varieties are drought tolerant and are resistant to stem-borer and fall armyworm resulting in yield advantage of up to 10 tonnes per hectare under good agronomic practices.

The national average for similar hybrids is 6 tonnes per hectare. The varieties are suitable for Rain Forest, Guinea, and Sudan Savannas.

Stem-borer reduces maize production in several countries in Africa, while fall

armyworm can destroy up to 20 million metric tons of maize in Africa each year, enough to feed 100 million people.

The release and registration of the four varieties followed environmental release approval in October 2021 granted by the National Biosafety Management Agency (NBMA).

Also the development of the improved varieties was led by the Institute for Agricultural Research (IAR) Samaru, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria through the TELA Maize Public-Private Partnership coordinated by AATF.

The TELA Maize Project is currently being implemented in five countries – Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, and South Africa.

Prof Ado Yusuf, Executive Director, IAR expressed satisfaction with the release of the new four maize varieties saying, IAR is very proud of its scientists who are addressing the maize productivity challenges in the country and beyond.

These varieties have undergone thorough research and have been developed using the tools of biotechnology over several years of continuous testing and

revalidation.

Dr Canisius Kanangire, AATF's Executive Director, said, "the release of TELA Maize in Nigeria will contribute to food and nutrition security in line with the Federal Government's Agricultural Transformation agenda.

"AATF reaffirms unwavering commitment to addressing challenges faced by farmers across the continent."

Professor Garba Sharubutu, the Executive Secretary, Agricultural Research Council of Nigeria (ARCN) said the approval of the TELA Maize variety in Nigeria is a critical milestone that confirms the potential of biotechnology in ensuring food and nutrition security, and improved livelihood of farming households in Africa.

Prof. Mustapha Abdullahi, Director-General, National Biotechnology Development Agency (NABDA) celebrated the release saying that, with the advent of TELA Maize, farmers will reduce the use of pesticides on maize to the bare minimum which is beneficial to humans, livestock, and environment.

Dr Sylvester Oikeh, the TELA Maize

Project Manager celebrated the decision by Nigeria by calling on other countries in Africa to act for farmers.

"I am encouraged by this decision by the Federal Government of Nigeria that reflects their commitment to the needs of farmers".

He congratulate the scientists for their hard work and dedication that has seen the product getting closer to farmers and look forward to other countries making similar decisions for the good of the farmer, he said.

The other partners in the TELA Maize project include National Agricultural Research Institutes in Kenya, Mozambique, Ethiopia, and South Africa, International Maize, and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT), Bayer, with funding from Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and USAID.

AATF is an international not-for-profit organization that is empowering smallholder farmers across Sub-Saharan Africa with a wide choice of agricultural innovations that contribute to food and nutrition security to generate health and wealth for their families and communities.

# AFCON: Super Eagles Soar Over Hosts Cote d'Ivoire In Crucial Encounter



By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The Super Eagles of Nigeria proved to be the better side as they soared over hosts, Cote d'Ivoire 1-0 in a highly explosive encounter yesterday in the ongoing Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON). Super Eagles goal came in the second half after an infringement by the Ivorians in the box, leading to a penalty awarded after the centre referee, assisted by VAR that Nigeria's star boy Victor Osimhen was brought down in the box. Nigeria's stand in captain, Trust Ekong converted the shot and out the Eagles one goal up. The hosts failed to replay their victory recorded

against Guinea Bissau in the 2023 AFCON opening match, thereby throwing the group open. Nigeria had in their opening game, forced Equatorial Guinea to a 1-1 draw after leveling up. Despite several chances in that game, Equatorial Guinea's goal keeper kept frustrating the efforts and it earned him man of the match. With their win over Guinea Bissau yesterday, Equatorial Guinea top the group on goal advantage, with four points, Super Eagles are second with four points, hosts Cote D'Ivoire are third with three points, while Guinea Bissau trail behind after failing to record any point.



Persons With  
Disability To Sit For  
JAMB Free - Registrar

Story on Page 15

## CSO To Tinubu: Halt Moves To Replace Companies Awarded Contracts By Works Ministry

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

An Abuja based civil society organisation, Collective Action Against Corruption has raised the alarm over plots by the ministry of works to shortchange some contractors awarded road construction jobs by replacing the names of their companies with different ones without plausible reasons.

It was gathered that the ministry awarded contracts each for some road construction to some indigenous companies after the

ministerial tenders' board had duly certified the contracts and all the necessary processes including payment of remita and certification by the BPP, but the ministry is allegedly planning to change the names of the companies.

The CSO through its spokesman, Bala Ibrahim, said information at its disposal showed that the ministry has concluded plans to change names of the companies awarded the multibillion Naira contracts in different parts of the country to preferred companies, some of which have ties with

some vested interests.

They insisted the action runs contrary to the provision of the procurement act and urged the ministry to read the act.

"Documents at our disposal showed that after letters of award had been issued with all the processes required by law completed, with a no objection certification from the Bureau of Public Procurement, the ministry is set to change the names of companies already awarded the contracts"

The CSO described the move as unfair, unfortunate and runs

contrary to the clamour for a level playing field in conduct of government business even as it questions the rationale for the action and wondered why the previous companies were not told right from the bidding process if indeed, they lack the requisite skills to deliver the job. While urging the ministry to urgently reverse the planned name change, the CSO harped on the need for transparency in the conduct of government activities.

It appealed to the president to urgently intervene and halt what

it described as sheer deliberate attempt to contravene rules and procedure in the conduct of government activities assuring that should the ministry proceed with the change; it would be compelled to seek legal redress. When contacted the newly posted Permanent Secretary said he was not aware and referred our reporter to seek clarification from the minister, even though findings showed that that the permanent secretary was the signatory to letter for change

## 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.

## Supreme Court Dismisses ADC's Election Appeal Against Governor Inuwa Yahaya

\*Adjourns PDP's Appeal for judgment today

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The Supreme Court yesterday, dismissed the appeal brought forth by the African Democratic Congress (ADC) and its candidate, Nafiu Bala, against the victory of Governor Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya in the March 18 governorship election, which was earlier upheld by both Election Tribunal and the Court of Appeal.

ADC and Nafiu Bala had

sought to contest the outcome of the election despite scoring less than 2,000 votes in the election. However, the Apex court requested to know what the party and its candidate wanted to achieve by the appeal. In understanding the mood of the court, the lawyers representing Nafiu Bala and ADC promptly withdrew the appeal, leading to the dismissal of the appeal by the apex court.

Recall that Governor Inuwa Yahaya of the All

Progressives Congress (APC) had been declared the winner by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), securing a substantial 342,821 votes out of the total cast.

Meanwhile, the Supreme Court has adjourned its judgment in the appeal filed by the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and its candidate, Muhammad Jibrin Barde after hearing all the parties.

## Oil Theft: NNPC Says 5,686 Illegal Refinery Sites Destroyed

By: AMOS TAUNA, Kaduna

The Group Chief Executive Officer of the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited (NNPC), Mr. Mele Kyari, has said that over 5,686 Illegal Refinery (IR) sites and the removal of 4,480 Illegal Connections (ICs) from 2021 to the present through the establishment of a command-and-control center that has aided the detection and destruction. Speaking as a Guest Lecturer during the 2024 Faculty Lecture titled, "Energy Security, Sustainability and Profitability in Nigeria: Advances, Challenges and

Opportunities," organized by the Faculty of Science of the Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU), Ile-Ife, Osun State on Wednesday, Kyari said, "The centre provides livestreaming of surveillance data to security forces, contributing to the detection and destruction of the illegal refinery (IR) sites."

Kyari disclosed that a strategic shift, focusing on increased products trucking and storage in underground tankages at NNPC filling stations nationwide following the severity of vandalism and oil theft.

He suggested the need for collaboration between the

academia and the Oil & Gas Industry towards addressing the challenges of energy sufficiency and sustainability.

Kyari noted that the academic communities played important role in safeguarding national energy security through research and collaboration with the industry.

Kyari identified energy conservation, diversification, and efficiency measures as major avenues for enhancing energy security, lamenting that rapid population growth, pipeline vandalism, and crude oil theft hindering energy security in the country.