

# New NIGERIAN

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- Insist hike in PMS price devaluation of Naira I'll conceived
- Lament that govt is bereft of appropriate measures to ameliorate burden
- Note that time for empty promises, excuses over



The CEO of Kaduna Electric Dr. Umar Abubakar Hashidu also received on a courtesy visit the Acting Chief Medical Director, National Eye Centre Kaduna, Dr. Aminatu Abdulrahman and her team at the Head Office on February 7, 2024.

By: IMRANAABDULLAHI, Kaduna

Amid rising tension and protests in parts of the country emanating from rising inflation, blamed on the unplanned removal of subsidy on Petroleum products by the federal government, the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) and the Trade Union Congress of Nigeria (TUC) have handed down a two-week ultimatum to the President Tinubu-led government to implement a 16-point agreement reached in October 2023, or risk shut down of the economy. NLC and TUC expressed this in a statement jointly signed by their presidents, Comrade Joe Ajaero and Comrade Festus Osifo respectively, made available to the press yesterday.

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## Timi Frank Condemns Senegal's President Sall For Illegal Election Postponement

*\*Says action harbinger for political instability, coup*

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Former Deputy National Publicity Secretary of the All Progressives Congress (APC), Comrade Timi Frank, on Wednesday, strongly condemned the President of Senegal, Macky Sall, over his unilateral and illegal postponement of presidential election.

Sall had indefinitely postponed the Senegal's presidential election that was scheduled to take place on February 25.

Curiously, Senegal's National Assembly has accepted the shift and passed a bill that fixed the new date for December 15.

Frank in a statement in Abuja, described Sall's action as coup against the constitution of Senegal which Sall swore to uphold.

He described the action as undemocratic, dictatorial, unjust and unfair to the people of Senegal and democracy in the West African subregion.

He said Sall has sown the seed capable of breeding discontent, political instability and coup in Senegal and "the earlier he retraces his steps the better."

He insisted that President Sall in cahoots with the National Assembly of Senegal has through the action illegally extended his tenure of office through the back door.

He said that Sall has shown that he is not keen to keep his promise not to seek another term in office.

Frank said: "The



Timi Frank

restriction of mobile internet access and the suppression and persecution of the media through licence revocation in the country are tell tale signs that Sall has become corrupt and absolutely dictatorial.

"This is a rape of democracy and a deliberate denigration of the country's constitution in an unprecedented manner.

"Already the parliament has rubber-stamped Sall's decision after a chaotic voting process where opposition lawmakers were forcefully booted out of chamber by government security forces.

"One of the provisions of the election delay bill, adopted by the National Assembly, means that Sall's tenure — due to end on April 2 — will be extended until the new election is held on December 15.

"This amounts to illegal tenure elongation for Sall who promised in July last year that he will not seek another term in office."

Frank who is the United Liberation Movement for West Papua (ULMWP) Ambassador to East Africa and Middle East, called on the authorities of heads of states and government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to urgently intervene to ensure that Senegal's election timetable is strictly adhered to and Sall's bid to elongate his tenure annulled.

"This is the time for the Chairman of ECOWAS and President of Nigeria, President Bola Tinubu, to lead a delegation of sister presidents and respected leaders in the subregion to Dakar to prevail on Sall to respect Senegal's constitution by reversing his unilateral and illegal

decision to postpone presidential election indefinitely.

"Sall must not be allowed to plunge the country into needless crisis or to lay foundation for a possible forceful takeover of power by the country's armed forces.

"The coups in Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger and the recent action of pullout from ECOWAS by Juntas in those countries should serve as a lesson and warning to ECOWAS leaders over what might happen if Sall is allowed to succeed with his criminal greed and corruption to hang on to power," Frank said.

He called on the governments of the United Kingdom, United States of America and the European Union to place a visa ban on Sall over his attempt to derail democracy in Senegal should he refuse to revert to the February 25

## Adamawa Govt Plans To Wipe Poverty From State By 2027

*\*Spends N4.4bn on youth, women empowerment*

By: TINA PHINEAS, Yola

The Adamawa State Poverty Alleviation and Wealth Creation Agency (PAWECA), in its renewed quest at wiping poverty from the state by 2027, has said that it has spent over N4.4 billion in empowering youth and women for self actualisation in the last couple of years.

The Coordinator of PAWECA, Hajiya Aisha Bawa who addressed newsmen on the activities of the agency, said it has achieved much in raising the status of the poor and vulnerable since the agency was revived in 2019.

According to her, the agency is working toward getting every Adamawa person gainfully engaged by the next three years, and wipe poverty from among people of the state by the year 2027.

The agency's coordinator explained how the agency spends money under its wealth creation or skills development or empowerment programmes.

"Under social support

service, we have 15,000 beneficiaries: those that are having N10,000; N20,000; N30,000 and N50,000 depending on which category you belong.

"We work to keep poverty and unemployment to the barest minimum," the coordinator added.

She said her agency places much focus on personal skills development of beneficiaries because, "All over the world, it is not your educational qualification but what skill you have."

Bawa posited that PAWECA is championing the revival of micro, small and medium enterprises, adding that the agency has empowered over 7,000 micro businesses across Adamawa State, and many have earned support grants to grow their businesses.

"Government has very good plans for the poor and vulnerable and we are determined to push the plans through. By the special grace of God, by the year 2027 we will kick poverty and unemployment out of Adamawa State," she stressed.

## Plateau Seeks Collaboration With German Govt To Address Insecurity

By: BUHARI B. BELLO, Jos

Plateau State Governor, Barr. Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang, has called for increased collaboration with the German Government, facilitated through the GIZ, to address the longstanding security challenges plaguing the state.

Governor Mutfwang made the appeal during a meeting with the German Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development, Ms. Svenja Schulze, at the New Government House in Little Rayfield, Jos, Plateau State.

He expressed the determination of his

administration to resolve the ongoing security issues, and emphasized the importance of leveraging the enduring relationship between Germany and Nigeria to expand cooperation with Plateau State.

He stated, "We are currently focused on finding sustainable solutions to our security challenges, and we rely on partnerships with key European countries to assist us in this endeavor."

Governor Mutfwang highlighted efforts to address poverty and enhance education in the state, in view of their significant

role in exacerbating security concerns.

Acknowledging Plateau State's vast agricultural potential, particularly in the production of Irish potatoes, the Governor underscored the need to introduce technology to bolster agricultural activities, with a view to tapping into German expertise in this area.

Governor Mutfwang also expressed interest in collaborating with the German Government to improve electricity infrastructure and promote renewable energy, thereby stimulating economic growth in the state.

Responding, the German Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development, Ms. Svenja Schulze, commended Governor Mutfwang's leadership and expressed readiness to deepen collaboration with Plateau State to foster its development.

Ms. Schulze affirmed her team's visit to Plateau State to address the challenges facing the region and explore avenues for partnership.

# Land, Houses Buyers Must Be Screened In Katsina, Governor Orders

\*Says all land-related matters must go through Ministry of Lands

\*Plans for future expansion to accommodate | growing need for shelter, infrastructure

By; SULAIMAN AHMED MISAU, Katsina

Governor Dikko Umaru Radda of Katsina State has ordered estate agents and others involved in land sale businesses in the state to register and obtain licenses to operate.

Speaking during the engagement on land and physical planning related matters held at the Presidential Banquet Hall, General Muhammadu Buhari (Government)

House Katsina, Governor Radda noted that, the importance of legalizing and sanitizing the land sale business would prevent criminals from gaining access to rent residential and business premises within the communities.

The governor explained that, the law establishing the State Community Security Watch Corps has empowered Community Development Committees to screen individuals interested in purchasing residential houses or land within their respective communities.

This measure he said would ensure thorough knowledge of individuals

relocating to reside in their communities.

According to him, the state government would collaborate with land administrators of the local government areas to enhance awareness of their roles, adding that, the government would also conduct a thorough examination of all land allocations made in the cities to ensure compliance with established procedures.

Governor Dikko Radda warned that, henceforth, all matters related to land allocation, building permits, and building plans must be channeled through appropriate government agencies.

Meanwhile, Governor Dikko Umaru Radda expressed concerns over disregard for existing laws and procedures by some local government officials and traditional institutions, which has led to illegal land allocations and other unauthorized transactions.

Governor Radda in a statement by his Chief Press Secretary, Ibrahim Kaula Mohammed emphasized that, the Land

Use Act of 1979 entrusts the custody of all urban lands to the control of the state governor, encompassing lands within the 34 local government headquarters and all gazetted forest reserves.

Furthermore, Law No. 2 of 2011 empowers the State Urban and Regional Planning Board (URPB) to oversee issues pertaining to physical planning and development across the state, while the Katsina Geographic Information Service (KATGIS) handles land matters and registration.

Governor Radda directed local government council chairmen in the state to strictly adhere to established procedures, underscoring that all land-related matters must go through the Ministry of Lands and Physical Planning and KATGIS. Non-compliance with existing laws and procedures will result in severe consequences.

The State Commissioner for Lands and Physical Planning, Dr Faisal Umar disclosed that approximately 250 kilometers of land have been developed across the 34 local governments in the

state.

Anticipating a significant population increase over the next 25 years, the government aims to proactively plan for future expansion to accommodate the growing need for shelter and infrastructure.

In response to the government's initiative, traditional leaders, including the Galadiman Katsina District Head of Malumfashi, Retired Justice Saddiq Abdullahi Mahuta, Dan Madamin Katsina District Head of Daddara Alhaji Usman Usman Nagogo, and their Bakori counterpart, commended Governor Radda for prioritizing control over land and physical-related matters.

They proposed the distribution of pamphlets containing regulations to raise awareness among local governments.

Several council chairmen echoed similar sentiments, recognizing the importance of the stakeholders' meeting in fostering collaboration and clarifying boundaries.

## Fuel Subsidy Removal: Amidst Tension, Hunger Protests, Labour Unions Issue Strike Ultimatum

■ Say Nigerians left wondering where their next meals will come from

■ Insist hike in PMS price devaluation of Naira I'll conceived

■ Lament that govt is bereft of appropriate measures to ameliorate burden

■ Note that time for empty promises, excuses over

"The government's failure to uphold its end of the bargain is deeply regrettable and unacceptable to the working people and the citizenry.

"Constrained by this development and recognizing the urgency of the situation and the imperative of ensuring the protection and defense of the rights and dignity of Nigerian workers and citizens, the NLC and TUC hereby issue a stern ultimatum to the Federal Government, to honour their part of the understanding within 14 Days from tomorrow, the 9th day of February, 2024," the joint statement said.

According to the statement titled, "NON-IMPLEMENTATION OF AGREEMENT BY FEDERAL GOVERNMENT: DEEPENS MASS SUFFERING AND A SHOW OF BAD FAITH" NLC and TUC

expressed profound concerns over the non-implementation of the 16-point agreement reached with the Federal Government on October 2, 2023.

"Despite the passage of time, the majority of these crucial agreements remain unmet or negligibly addressed, indicating a blatant disregard for the principles of good faith, welfare and rights of Nigerian workers and Nigerians.

"These agreements which were reached with the federal government were focused on addressing the massive suffering and the general harsh socioeconomic consequences of the ill conceived and ill-executed IMF/World Bank induced hike in the price of PMS and the devaluation of the Naira.

"These dual policies have had as we predicted dire economic consequences for the masses and

workers of Nigeria," the statement said.

The labour unions pointed out that widespread hunger is now ravishing millions of Nigerians, with the workers purchasing power significantly eroded, while insecurity has assumed an increasing dimension.

"Nigerians are left wondering where their next meals will come from and what tomorrow might bring.

"The level of panic and anxiety amongst the populace has become nightmarish unfortunately, in the midst of all these, it appears our government is bereft of appropriate measures to ameliorate the huge burden it has foisted on the citizenry," it added.

They therefore, stated that these agreements, which encompass a wide range of issues crucial to the well-being of Nigerian

masses and workers, have not been honored as pledged by the Federal Government.

"From Wage Awards, Palliative adjustments to improved access to public utilities; to the meddlesomeness in the internal affairs of the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) and the interference by the Lagos State Government in union activities, the case of illegal and unlawful proscription of Road Transport Employers Association of Nigeria (RTEAN).

"It is regrettable that we are compelled to resort to such measures, but the persistent neglect of the welfare of citizens and Nigerian workers and the massive hardship leaves us with no choice.

"Therefore, everything must be done within the two weeks to avoid a situation where we may

be compelled to take appropriate steps to protect Nigerian workers and masses," it said.

They called upon the Federal Government to honor its commitments without delay.

"The time for empty promises and excuses has passed. The time for action is now. Our patience has worn thin and the situation has become unbearable for workers and masses all over the federation.

"Further silence amounts to committing mass suicide and this remains the action left for us and Nigerians to compel remedial feasible course by Government.

"We are committed to this resolve towards salvaging Nigerian workers and masses from the apparent insensitivity and lethargy of those in the corridors of power who are supposed to be the bastion of public trust," they declared.



# Senate Rejects Operational Model Of Multinational Oil Companies

**\*Impressed with \$70m grant on oil/gas research**

By; BASHIR BELLO DOLLARS,  
Abuja

The Senate Committee on Local Content has rejected the extractive operational model being carried out in Nigeria by the following oil firms: Chevron, Exxon and other oil companies.

The committee stated that the oil companies do not have manufacturing content.

This followed the interaction between the committee and the National Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB).

The NCDMB had told the committee to invite the oil companies for explanations on their extractive mode of operation without manufacturing content.

The Senate committee during its session with management of NCDMB on Wednesday, specifically observed that Chevron apart from crude oil exploration in Saudi Arabia, also manufactures Polypropylene one of the waste products from Gas to produce Syringe which fetches Saudi Arabia \$6billion annually.

It also noted that Exxon oil does same in United States of America (USA), by making the country, the third largest producer of Polypropylene (PP).

The committee which was chaired by Senator Natasha Akpoti - Uduaghan (PDP Kogi Central), queried why the same international oil companies exploring crude oil in Nigeria, don't go the extra mile of using waste products from Crude oil for manufacturing of needed products in the country.

The committee further observed that the lack of operational model of the International Oil companies had led to the collapse of Jubilee Syringe Plant in Bayelsa due to lack of the needed raw material (Polypropylene).

According to the Chairman of the committee, since NCDMB says it doesn't have the power to make the international oil companies diversify their mode of operations, they shall be summoned to give explanations on why they are turning Nigeria to extractive zone and not manufacturing one, as done in other climes.

"We cannot just allow the oil companies to turn Nigeria to just an extractive zone as far as exploration of crude oil is concerned but a manufacturing one as well with attendant economic value.

"This committee shall therefore summon the affected oil companies to appear before it on how what are available in Saudi Arabia, USA etc, can be replicated in Nigeria," she said.

The committee was however, impressed with disclosure made by the Executive Secretary of NCDMB, Engr Felix Ogbe on \$50million grant for research and \$20m dollar for women in oil and gas.





## Kaduna Electric MD Reveals Why Power Generation In Nigeria Hovers Around 4,000 Megawatts

*\*Says Nigerians responsible for stagnant power generation*

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The Managing Director/CEO of Kaduna Electric, Dr. Umar Abubakar Hashidu has attributed the abysmal power generation in the country over the years to severe liquidity challenges facing the power sector arising from poor remittance by Nigerian electricity consumers.

Dr. Abubakar Hashidu made the assertion on Wednesday in Kaduna, when he received the Chief Medical Director, National Eye Center, Kaduna, Dr. Aminatu AbdurRahman in his office.

He said because of the widespread default by electricity consumers across the Country, the Distribution Companies have been unable to discharge their market obligations, thereby denying all players in the sector of the needed resources for adequate investment in network rehabilitation, expansion and infrastructure

upgrade.

Dr. Hashidu, who took time to explain the dynamics of the Nigerian Electricity Supply Industry, from gas suppliers, generation, down to the Distribution Companies, disclosed that there is renewed effort by all relevant stakeholders to change the narrative.

He warned that, "Nigerians must collectively accept the fact that those who continuously default or deliberately evade payment of their electricity bills constitute the clog on the wheel of the nation's power sector development".

He assured the National Eye Center CMD of the Company's resolve to ensure sustainable improvement in service delivery and prompt response to all their demands.

"We are adopting new mechanism and deploying relevant technology to increase visibility and endure that our staff live up to their responsibilities at all times", he said.

Earlier in her remarks, the Ag. Chief Medical Director, National Eye Center, Kaduna, Dr. Aminatu AbdurRahman expressed deep appreciation to the Management of Kaduna Electric for what she described as "uncommon consideration being given to the Center.

Dr. Aminatu AbdurRahman, who disclosed that the National Eye Center is the only tertiary eye care institution in Nigeria, promised to ensure that the National Eye Center's obligations to Kaduna Electric are discharged in accordance with the agreed terms.

In a related development, the Managing Director/CEO of Kaduna Electric, Dr. Umar Abubakar Hashidu has assured the military high command of the unwavering commitment of the Company to continue to provide steady electricity services to military formations in its franchise.

Dr. Umar Hashidu gave the assurance when the

Commander of the Nigerian Air force, 453 Base Services Group, Kaduna, Air Commodore Mohammed Adamu Garba paid him a courtesy visit in his office today.

He disclosed that Kaduna Electric shall continue to give sufficient consideration to the Airforce Base and all other military formations in its franchise given the critical importance of such establishments to national security.

"As we pride ourselves as the home of the armed forces, we are delighted to be part of the success stories of the military and shall remain undaunted in our commitment".

In his address, the Commander, 453 Base Services Group, Air Commodore, Mohammed Adamu Garba thanked the Managing Director for granting audience to his team at short notice and pleaded for more collaboration with Kaduna Electric in addressing some lingering electricity challenges in the base.

## Gombe Earns Top Spot in Socio-Economic Performance Index, Secures AAA Rating

*\*PCL Lauds Governor Inuwa's effective governance, growth initiatives*

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Gombe State has been rated best in the socio-economic performance index among the 36 states and the FCT.

A statement signed by the Director-General (Press Affairs)

Government House Gombe, Ismaila Uba Misilli, made available yesterday, said that the state secured this enviable position with a PSPI Score of 0.80, ranking first with an AAA rating, indicating an excellent performance. Gombe is followed in declining order by Jigawa, Ekiti and FCT which occupied second third and fourth positions respectively.

The statement explained that this was contained in the 2023 National Assessment Report by pcl. State Performance Index (PSPI), an independent organisation which provides insights into the socio-economic performance and risk profiles of Nigerian states. Gombe was rated high in most of the socio-economic parameters that were considered to include: economic potentials, socioeconomic performance and risk management.

At regional level, the report indicated that Gombe State stands out as the top-performing state in the North-East affected by Boko Haram Insurgency. "Despite being in the least position in terms of socio-economic potential, the Gombe State government; efficiently utilises its limited resources to drive significant socio-economic performance", the report noted.

The report attributed the high rating of Gombe state to "the continuity in government, ongoing investments in infrastructure, alignment with federal initiatives, economic diversification,

and strategic agricultural programmes", underscoring the role of the state government in being catalyst for turning around the fortunes of the state and putting it on the sustainable path of growth and development.

PCL maintained that "the state government is well-positioned to maximise the benefits of federal government initiatives and programmes, while appreciating efficient resource utilisation, effective citizen engagement and the government's responsiveness to the genuine concerns of its people.

On improvement in security, the report affirmed that despite its location in the North-East, a region seriously affected by Boko Haram insurgency, Gombe State has experienced unparalleled peace and security.

"Gombe state has effectively managed the coexistence of diverse ethnic and occupational groups, notably farmers and herders. The state government's proactive approach to security issues and its commitment to fostering peaceful coexistence contribute to its stable outlook. This stability is a solid foundation for sustained progress and economic growth", it said.

The group expressed confidence in the current economic policies and programmes of Inuwa-led administration, pointing that "Gombe State can solidify its position as a beacon of sustainable development and a model for other states to emulate.

"As the state continues to engage its populace, invest in education, and pursue collaborative initiatives, it is well on its way to achieving even greater prosperity and fostering socioeconomic growth", PCL noted in the report.



*The CEO of Kaduna Electric Dr. Umar Abubakar Hashidu also received on a courtesy visit the Acting Chief Medical Director, National Eye Centre Kaduna, Dr. Aminatu Abdulrahman and her team at the Head Office on February 7, 2024.*



# Kwara Gov Appeals For Patience As Govt Ramps Up Efforts To Shore Up Naira, Reduce Food Price

*\*Gov meets labour, transport/market unions, artisans, students' leaders*

*\*Kwara to distribute grains, release more buses*

*\*More support on the way - Gov*

*\*Labour commends Gov's efforts, seeks improved welfare for workers*

*\*Transport unions, artisans urge support for govt, call for calm*

*\*Investment on Kwara Hotel in order - TUC chief*

By; **BILIQIS ONAOLAPO OLAJUMOKE, Ilorin**

**K**wara State Governor, AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq on Tuesday in Ilorin, the state capital, briefed different segments of the state on developments in the country, including efforts of the government to ease things for the people.

Held in different sessions, the hours-long engagements involved labour union chiefs, transport sector leaders, artisans, leadership of the market unions, and students drawn from varying backgrounds in the state.

Different federal government committees are working round the clock to plug the spiraling fall in the value of the naira and its impacts on consumer goods, while different measures are taken to ease the effects on the public, the Governor said.

He said the government is immediately working to force down the cost of key staple foods by releasing grains from the strategic reserve and distributing same to the people at intervals.

He said the devaluation of the naira meant that merchants from neighbouring countries are mopping up grains from Nigeria because it is far cheaper to buy from the country and then resell at higher prices in their own countries, especially in the West African subregion.

Acknowledging the spike in inflation, the Governor urged the people to be patient and that the government's investments in gas-powered vehicles will soon manifest when the vehicles are eventually distributed in the coming months, including (first) to the University of Ilorin campus and later to the other campuses.

He also commended the Kwara State University for its initiative on gas-powered vehicles, which he said the government will continue to encourage.

He said the state government will soon deploy more vehicles to different parts of the state to support people's movement, especially students who come from different homes, while grains will soon be distributed to the people as a form of support.

"You will observe that due to the removal of fuel subsidy and the step taken on foreign exchange by the Federal government, there is inflation in the country. The government is working hard to address the resultant challenges," he said at each of the meetings with the stakeholders.

"Our major problem is foreign exchange. We are getting US dollars from sales of crude oil, whereas we have low sales at the moment. We used to experience



**L-R: Technical Assistant on Transport Hon. Musbau Olushola Abubakar; State Chairman National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) Alhaji Abdulrasak Ariwo; President Kwara State Artisans Alhaji Jimoh Ayinla Adesina; Governor AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq (CON); Chief of Staff Prince Mahe Abdulkadir; Senior Adviser and Counsellor Alhaji Sa'adu Salaudeen; Senior Special Assistant Labour Matters Alhaji Abdulkareem Mumini Onagun; and Alhaji AbdulRazaq Jiddah; after an engagement the Governor had with different stakeholders in Government House, Ilorin, on Tuesday.**

pipeline vandalism. But, since the assumption of Tinubu's government, production of oil has increased. Not only that, the government realised recently that the crude oil we are, and will be, getting in the next six months or so had been sold in advance. So, they don't get value for whatever they are selling now. But gradually, things will change, and we need your support to understand us.

"The government has started ordering gas-powered vehicles and is making serious efforts to stabilise the Naira. But more importantly now is how to address the hike of food prices. We held a meeting this afternoon. I joined them through zoom, and it is a continuation of previous meetings. The government is launching programmes to checkmate the rising food prices."

He said the government is not taking the issue of insecurity lightly, citing the immediate arrest of abductors in Ekiti LG of the state by the combined security agencies.

AbdulRazaq appreciated the labour movement and every segment of the state for their continued understanding and dialogue, as the government strives to meet their demands in phases.

"Our main challenge now is the new minimum wage. Now that a tripartite committee has been set up at the federal

level, we are looking forward to setting up our own at the state level basically to be prepared for what is going on at the federal level," he said.

State Chairman for the Trade Union Congress (TUC) Comrade Joseph Tunde Meshach, NLC Chairman Comrade Saheed Olayinka, and NUT representative, in their separate remarks, commended the Governor for making the welfare of workers a priority, and for the ongoing efforts to relieve the pains from fuel subsidy removal.

Meshach lauded the government's decision to upgrade Kwara Hotel to a standard that it deserves, saying the facility occupies a strategic place and deserves a top-notch upgrade the government is giving it.

"On the issue of Kwara Hotel workers, we thank Your Excellency very much for paying their (workers') salary as and when due. We also want to congratulate you on the work being done on (Kwara Hotel) in order to give us a more befitting one," the TUC Chairman said, acknowledging the open-door policy of the administration with the labour movement.

Olayinka, for his part, said AbdulRazaq was the the first Governor to introduce palliative as a means of reducing the burden affecting the common man, especially the fixed income earners,

saying such was commendable.

The labour leaders said they want more to be done for the workers, nonetheless.

Other union and students' leaders who attended the other sessions included the state Chairman for Road Transport Employers Association of Nigeria, Alhaji AbdulRazaq Ariwoola; and state Chairman Artisan Congress, Alhaji Jimoh Adesina; President National Association of Nigeria Students (NANS), Kwara State chapter, Comrade Issa Abdulgafar; President, National Association of Kwara State Students (NAKSS), Comrade Abdulwahab Habibullahi Are. They all acknowledged the government's constant support to their groups, pledging the support of their members in this trying time.

President National Association of Nigeria Students (NANS), Kwara State chapter, Comrade Issa Abdulgafar, appreciated the Governor for his contributions to the students' constituency and the huge investments to reposition the education sector.

NAKSS leader Comrade Abdulwahab Habibullahi Are thanked the Governor for increasing their bursary award from N5,000 to N10,000 and the constant payment of the money as well as other support for the students.



# GPFN Commemorates World Interfaith Harmony Week In Kaduna

*\*Says conflict entrepreneurs frustrating peace building efforts in Nigeria*

**By; ISAAC ODEH, Kaduna**  
Global Peace Foundation Nigeria, (GPFN) has met with Faith Leaders to commemorate the 2024 World Interfaith Harmony Week on the theme, "Celebrating Unity In Diversity: Building Bridges Of Harmony."

The Country Director, GPFN Rev. John Joseph Hayab, in Kaduna on Tuesday, said that the event is a celebration of people of faith beginning from 1st to 7th of February every year, as instituted by the United Nations in 2010.

He added that the essence is for faith leaders to come and discuss the importance of harmony, tolerance and respect for one another.

The peace Ambassador who also lamented the activities of conflict entrepreneurs in Nigeria, said that they are frustrating peace building efforts in the country, as division amongst residents gives political class opportunity to milk common wealth freely.

While calling on Nigerians to resist the temptation of seeing their fellow human being as enemy, the Country Director urged that members of the two major Faiths in the Nigeria should team up together as one family under God and thereafter synergize to get what belongs to them from the political class.

"We realized that those who further the division do that

because through that they can continue to have a filled day milking from our common wealth and we cannot challenge them. The reason why today we see that patriotism is not really strong in our country is because we are not treating citizens as citizens but as though they are visitors, creating divisions amongst them as if it is we versus them.

"Every citizen is a citizen and has equal rights in the constitution. Therefore, this nation should not be divided using any form of identity but let everybody be respected, treated equally with justice, equity fairness. When people know that their country care, love and want to defend them, they will be patriotic.

"At the global peace foundation we try to promote that we are one family under God, we have gathered Faith leaders across the wide today to remind them of the important of this day so that we can continue to promote peace together we want a situation where every faith leader cut across the two major religions make a new friend today and even follow up to know each other's family." He said.

Meanwhile, the Deputy Director, Bureau Of Interfaith, Kaduna state, Rev. Fr. Anthony Shawuya, said that they are doing everything possible to ensure that their mandate to see religious harmony and peaceful

coexistence in Kaduna state thrive at all costs.

Shawuya, disclosed that they have established an inter-religious harmony committee and as well as religious preaching bill, to curb the menace of hate speech especially by clerics who use their podium to instigate their followers to cause different degrees of unrest in the society.

Speaking with newsmen shortly after the event, the Project Leader for Global Peace Women in Nigeria, Aisha Yakubu, said "women are more vulnerable and at the receiving end when it comes to whatever kind of conflict in the society, adding that meeting like this that fosters harmony, peaceful coexistence will give room for peace and more economic development for women and social inclusion because what causes the vulnerability is the lack of social inclusion.

"So gathering like this should also include a lot of women so that women can be given the chances to speak because they are the first respondent to Violence and conflict."

In his remarks, the Northern Coordinator, GPFN Sheikh Abdullahi Halliru Maraya, called on the political class to concentrate more on their constitutional mandate of protecting the lives and properties of the citizenry and prepare social welfare for the

people, stressing that Nigerians today is suffering multidimensional challenges.

One of the participants, Coordinator, Justice, Development and Peace Caritas, (JDPC) Kaduna state, Rev. Fr. Joshua Achir explained that, "as stakeholder in peace building and the promotion of inter-religious dialogue, the meeting will bring about awesome resolutions that will help us to live aright especially as brothers and sisters.

"You see Christians and Muslims interacting on issues of common interests, you see us eating together, talking about breaching peace and the call that we should not just be seen preaching peace but also should be seen living what we preach as practical examples of our expectation from our followers."

In the same vein, the new Chairman, Christian Association of Nigeria, (CAN) Kaduna state Rev. Ma'aji Caleb, said his leadership will leverage on the existing relationships between the two major religions in the state.

Rev. Caleb who expressed his dissatisfaction over the rate at which clerics use sacred places of worship for political rallies and campaigns, reiterated that, "we need to have a robust relationship, a proper understanding to deepen our appreciation in the way we understand, live, work, correct

and appreciate each other for the sole purpose of improving our faith, our relationship in ensuring that peace and harmony is achieved, and that can only be done where we have a remarkable relationship that exists between the two adherent major faith in our land.

"By the grace of God I want to leverage on the relationship between Christians and Muslims. Clerics must consider their podium as sacred place for sacred worship and services to draw the heart of men closer to God for proper relationship between man and his creator because after our sojourning on earth, we shall go back to God.

"Politicians should know their boundaries and operate within their boundaries. We must accord proper respect and honor to these sacred places of worship but that will begin with the religious leaders."

The Secretary, JNI Kaduna chapter, Ibrahim Kefena, who also spoke with Journalists, at the event caution politicians against instigating any sect of persons to cause conflict for their own selfish gain.

He reminded them that whatever they do here on earth, they will die one day and meet with God to give account of their stewardship to God, even as he explained that all sins committed by man especially murder will attract heavier punishment.

## Bishop Paul Zamani Transformative Leadership Signifies Hope For Jaba LGA - Caleb Danladi

**By; ACHADU GABRIEL, Kaduna**

Bishop Paul Zamani's stands as a beacon of hope and development in Jaba Local Government Area (LGA) of Kaduna State, embodying transformative leadership and community upliftment, is a shiny initiative worthy of emulation, Caleb Danladi Bako has said.

Danladi Bako, in a commendation statement yesterday, noted that "Through his visionary approach, Bishop Zamani has catalyzed positive change, fostering a sense of hope and empowerment among the residents of Jaba.

"As a spiritual leader, Bishop



**Bishop Zamani**

Zamani has not only tended to the spiritual needs of the community but has extended his efforts towards holistic development.

"His commitment to education is evident through the establishment of schools, providing access to quality education for the youth of Jaba LGA.

"This educational focus serves as a powerful tool for empowerment and breaking the cycle of poverty", Mr Bako of the Caleb Danladi Foundation CEO has stated.

Additionally, Bishop Zamani's emphasis on healthcare initiatives has improved the well-being of the community", Bako stated.

"By supporting the establishment of medical facilities and organizing health outreach programs, he has addressed critical health needs, enhancing the overall quality of life in Jaba.

"Through his advocacy and collaboration with various stakeholders, Bishop Zamani has

been instrumental in attracting developmental projects to the area. This includes infrastructure improvements, such as a more conducive environment for economic activities and daily life.

"Bishop Paul Zamani's unwavering dedication to community empowerment has created a ripple positive effect, inspiring local residents to actively participate in their own development.

"His leadership serves as a guiding light, fostering a sense of unity and resilience in the face of challenges, making Jaba LGA a shining example of positive transformation under his influence", he stated.



# Promoting Vocational Education Would Facilitate Self-reliance, Reduce Unemployment - Entrepreneur

By; JABIRU A. HASSAN, Kano

Vocational education has been described as one of the channels towards promotion of self-reliance through creation of different skills acquisition programmes that reduce unemployment in Nigeria.

This was stressed by Malam Yusuf Sa'ad, when our correspondent visited local key holder industry at Kunnawa Majema in Dawakin Tofa Local Government Area, adding that local key holder

production has become an employment opportunity to their kids, especially at present when the globe is advancing in self-reliance.

"We are happy to inform you that our kids are now equipped with good knowledge on how to depend on themselves like what you have seen and we are here with the children daily after school hours, and I assure you that the local key holder production is a nice occupation that brings profit daily," he said.

In his remarks, Malam Nasir Dalha announced that people

of all categories are busy in Kunnawa Majema because their town is very popular in all kinds of hides and skin remodelling that is being exported to different countries.

He called on the federal, states and local government councils to establish vocational training centres for the young generation and other categories of people to develop economic progress, especially nowadays with the growing need to switch to entrepreneurship at all levels.



Key holders produced at Kunnawa Majema, Kano State

# Malami: Mahdi Shehu Denies N500m Extortion Allegation Attempt

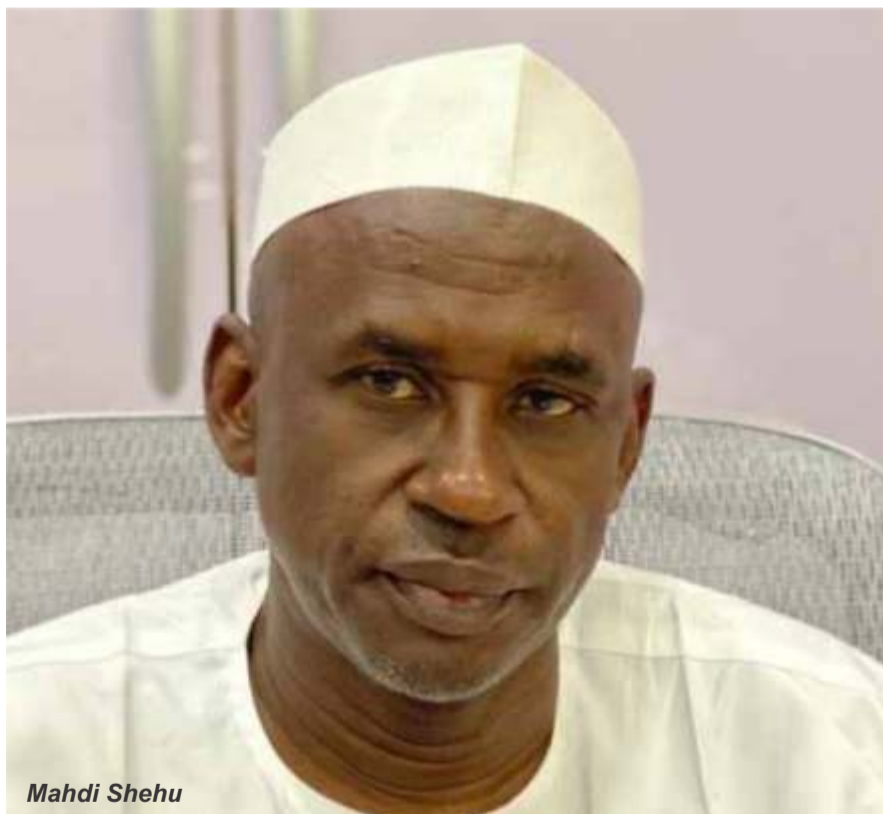
By; ALEX UANGBAOJE, Kaduna

Mahdi Shehu, has denied involvement in an allegation of an attempt to defraud former Minister of Justice, Abubakar Malami, of the sum of N500m.

Mahdi, in a statement through his law, Abubakar Mustapha, disclosed that he was arrested and detained in Abuja by the Inspector-General of Police (IGP) Monitoring Unit ostensibly on a petition written by A. A. MALAMI, SAN & CO. (the law firm of the immediate past Attorney-General of the Federation) for and on behalf of ABUBAKAR MALAMI, SAN the said immediate past AGF and his family.

According to him, "Although, the petition made allegations of hacking and compromise of emails and bank accounts of the former AGF and some members of his family as well as an attempt to open a fake bank account in the name of a member of the family and extortion of about N 20,000,000.00 (twenty million Naira) from a member of the family by a syndicate, no mention was made of the name of Muhammad Mahdi Shehu in the Petition.

"However, the Police claimed to have arrested Muhammad Madhi Shehu in his hotel room in



Mahdi Shehu

Abuja based on a tip by Abubakar Malami, SAN relating to an alleged WhatsApp chat between him and Madhi Shehu claiming that the latter attempted to extort N500,000,000.00 (five hundred million naira) from him.

"The said allegation by Malami, SAN and the arrest of our Client, Mahdi Shehu is coming just a day after he made a tweet on X (formerly Twitter) accusing some prominent members of the Government of former President

Mohammed Buhari from the North of sponsoring a campaign of calumny against Obazee, the Special Investigator appointed by President Bola Tinubu to investigate the affairs of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) under the leadership of Godwin Emefiele in a recent Report in the Daily Trust Newspaper."

He added that "Mahdi Shehu had also in the past few months made publications very critical of some prominent members of the

Government of former President Mohammed Buhari especially Malami, SAN and specifically called for his arrest and prosecution.

"The arrest and detention of our Client may therefore not be unconnected with concerted efforts by Malami, SAN and other prominent members of the Government of former President Mohammed Buhari accused by Mahdi Shehu to deal with him for having the temerity to dare them publicly and to silence and put him away from circulation for a long time

"It will be recalled that our client, Mahdi Shehu was similarly arrested and detained twice over long spans of time by the same

IGP Monitoring Unit between 2021 and 2022 over allegations he made against top officials of the Katsina State Government under the leadership of then governor of the state, Aminu Bello Masari of corruptly and fraudulently diverting billions of Naira belonging to the Katsina State Government under the guise of security spendings.

"On those occasions, the FCT High Court and the Federal High

Court, Abuja Division found the arrest and detention of Mahdi Shehu unlawful and unconstitutional and respectively awarded N5,000,000.00 (Five Million Naira) and N20,000,000.00 (Twenty Million Naira) to him against the Police for his wrongful arrest and detention.

While we concede to the right of the Police to investigate any allegation of crime against any citizen including our client, we humbly call on the Police to respect the constitutional right of our client to be released on bail pending investigation or charged to court within 24 hours of his arrest regard being had of the fact that there are Courts of competent jurisdiction within Abuja to entertain any charge in respect of the allegations against him (section 35(5)(a) of the 1999 Constitution). We also call on the Police to respect our Client's right to the dignity of his human person (section 34(1) of the 1999 Constitution) by affording him decent treatment while in their custody."

He therefore, noted that his client denies categorically the allegation of extorting money from Malami, SAN or any member of his family and indeed any of the allegations made against him by Malami, SAN and his chambers or family.



# TY Buratai Humanity Care Foundation Celebrates With Nigerian Defense Academy @60

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

In a display of solidarity and appreciation, the TY Buratai Humanity Care Foundation has celebrated with the Nigerian Defense Academy (NDA) as it marks its 60th anniversary.

The foundation, led by its Grand Patron, His Excellency Ambassador Lt Gen Tukur Yusufu Buratai (Rtd) CFR, former Chief of Army Staff, recognizes the significant role the NDA played in shaping his illustrious military career.

This was expressed in a statement signed by the Chairman of the foundation, Amb Ibrahim Dahiru Danfulani Sadaukin Garkuwan Keffi and Betara of Biu, made available to the press.

The statement highlighted the deep connection between General Buratai and the NDA, as he rose from a young officer to become the Chief of Army Staff.

The TY Buratai Humanity Care Foundation has consistently demonstrated its commitment to supporting various humanitarian causes in Nigeria.

With a focus on education, healthcare, and empowerment, the foundation has positively impacted the lives of many Nigerians, particularly the less privileged. The celebration of the NDA's 60th anniversary is a testament to the foundation's recognition of the academy's contribution to national security and development. The NDA has been instrumental in training and nurturing young officers who have gone on to serve the nation with distinction.

The TY Buratai Humanity Care Foundation's support for the NDA is a reflection of General Buratai's gratitude for the academy's role in his own career. As the Grand Patron of the foundation, he has consistently advocated for the empowerment and well-being of the Nigerian military, recognizing their sacrifices and dedication to national security.

The foundation's involvement in the NDA's anniversary celebrations underscores the importance of collaboration between the military and civilian sectors in achieving national

development goals. By recognizing and supporting institutions like the NDA, the foundation aims to inspire future generations of military officers and contribute to the continued growth and success of the Nigerian armed forces.

As Nigeria commemorates the 60th anniversary of the Nigerian Defense Academy, the TY Buratai Humanity Care Foundation stands alongside the academy in celebrating its rich history and contributions to the nation. With its unwavering commitment to humanitarian causes, the foundation continues to make



a positive impact on the lives of Nigerians, guided by the vision and leadership of General Buratai.

The TY Buratai Humanity Care Foundation remains dedicated to its mission of promoting education, healthcare, and empowerment for all Nigerians.

The foundation aims to create a brighter and more prosperous future for the nation

# Beverages Workers, Traders, Others Protest FG's Ban On Sachet, PET, Below Bottles Alcoholic Drinks

By: BAYOAKAMO, Ibadan

Distillers and Blenders Association on Wednesday, protested the plan to ban the manufacture, distribution and sales of alcoholic beverages in sachets, PET, and glass bottles of 200ml and below.

The protesters stormed the NAFDAC Complex office, Isolo, Lagos in thousands, carrying placards with various inscriptions condemning the ban.

Stakeholders at the protest included the Distillers and Blenders Association of Nigeria and concerned citizens represented by the Food Beverages and Tobacco Senior Staff Association and National Union of Food Beverages and Tobacco Employees (NUFBTE).

According to the protesters, the ban will among others, have negative impact on employment as over a million jobs would be at stake thereby threatening the livelihoods of countless breadwinners who rely on the alcoholic beverage industry for their income.

Speaking with journalists, one of the protesters, Adeolu Badejoko said in a country already grappling with high unemployment rates, the move by the NAFDAC risks exacerbating the job crisis and pushing even more individuals into the oversaturated Nigerian labour market.

Emphasizing that "Beyond the immediate economic repercussions, there is a genuine fear that the ban could inadvertently contribute to an increase in



criminal activities, such as kidnapping and robbery", he said the unemployment has long been identified as a catalyst for crime, and removing a significant source of employment could potentially drive desperate individuals towards illicit means to sustain themselves and their families.

Another protester, Muideen Kolawole said the government must carefully consider the broader societal implications before implementing a measure that might inadvertently compromise public safety, adding that the ban may have adverse effects on the

informal economy, where many small-scale businesses operate within the alcoholic beverage sector.

"These businesses, often run by local entrepreneurs, contribute to the economic fabric of communities and provide a source of income for numerous families. Disrupting this ecosystem without adequate alternatives could lead to a domino effect, impacting various sectors connected to the alcoholic beverage industry".

A Public Affairs analyst based in Lagos, Comrade Ojo Olorunmola on his part while NAFDAC's intention to regulate and ensure public health is commendable, it is essential to strike a balance between achieving regulatory goals and safeguarding economic stability, saying rather than an outright ban, a collaborative approach involving industry stakeholders, regulatory bodies, and the government could be explored. "Government's blanket ban is not in the interest of the masses especially workers in the alcoholic beverages industries and petty traders and distributors who earn

their living through the banned products. There should be a mitigating measures against unemployment before government can take such harsh decision. There is high unemployment rates in the land, government should create enabling environment for job creation before such decision", he said. Comrade Olorunmola added, "I call on the Federal Government to reverse the decision and ensure that the suffering masses are not further suffocated. Government should equip NAFDAC and Environmental officers to be up and doing in enforcing the necessary regulations guiding the production and distribution of the alcoholic beverages rather than ban the products.

"This would allow for the development of comprehensive regulations that address health concerns while preserving jobs and mitigating potential social consequences. It is very obvious that the ban on alcoholic drinks in sachets proposed by NAFDAC has sparked legitimate concerns regarding unemployment and its potential contribution to increased criminal activities.

"As the government contemplates regulatory measures, a holistic and consultative approach is imperative. Striking a balance between public health and economic stability will ensure a more sustainable and effective solution for all stakeholders involved".



# Women At Forefront Of Nigeria's Development - NCWS Coordinator

By: ABUBAKAR RABILU, Gombe

Women in Nigeria have been at the forefront of the country's development due to their high population.

The National Coordinator of the National Council of Women Society (NCWS), Hajiya Lami Adamu Lalu, made the disclosure in Gombe shortly after the election and inauguration of the state chapter executive.

According to her, there's no way women would be left behind in any effort aimed at seeing that the country succeeds because they have a large number in terms of population.

She gave some few instances of such positive impact to include the campaign by NCWS in many states against the deadly Hepatitis B which has no free medication like HIV and AIDS.

Lalu called on the Gombe State Governor, Muhammad Inuwa Yahaya, to work with the Ministry of Women Affairs to screen and assist the patients.

She promised to revive the NCWS in all the North Eastern states and make them functional unlike the past, adding that, in Gombe State, there was no EXCO since 2016 until now that she came on board.

In her remarks, the wife of the Gombe State Governor, Asmau Inuwa Yahaya, commended the National Coordinator, Lalu, for her zeal to reviving the council in the state.

Asmau Inuwa Yahaya, said at least women make up 75 per cent of the population and called on them to be united and use their numerical strength to bring more activities and development to the state and Nigeria at large.

In her speech, the Commissioner for Women Affairs and Social Development, Asmau Muhammad Iganus, said the event was a culmination of an enormous collective effort which promotes the wellbeing of Gombe State women and encourages them to be self-reliant as well.

She explained that the mission and goals of NCWS includes among others, to improve the welfare, progress and standard of living of women in Gombe and to increase the role of women in affecting political life through access to decision making.

Asmau Iganus, who is the Uwar Soron Shongom, Azurfar Dukul, added other aims of NCWS to include, ensuring thorough legal and political ways of addressing the problems of women in their communities for their growth and development.

She thanked the leadership of the National Council for Women Society for their support to women in Gombe State and taking time to honour the invitation by coming to the state chapter. She also thanked the Gombe State Governor, Muhammad Inuwa Yahaya and his wife, Asmau Inuwa Yahaya, for supporting Gombe State women in



various aspects of life.

In her acceptance speech, the newly elected chairperson, Hauwa Adamu Saraki, vowed to do everything humanly possible in uniting the women of Gombe State through their platforms. She commended the National

Coordinator, the wife of the Governor and the Honourable Commissioner, Women Affairs Asmau Iganus, for their support to the success of the conversation and inauguration.





## Emir Of Kaura Namoda Solicits Timely Approval, Take Off Of Zamfara College Of Legal, Islamic Studies

By; I M R A N A  
ABDULLAHI, Kaduna

Emir of Kaura Namoda, Major Sanusi Mohammed Ahmed Asha (rtd) has solicited for the timely approval by the Executive Governor of Zamfara State, Dauda Lawal, the take off of Zamfara State College of Legal and Islamic Studies, Kaura Namoda.

The emir made the plea during the distribution of fertilizer, tillers and other inputs to farmers in the emirate for irrigation, performed by Governor

Dauda Lawal on Sunday in Kaura Namoda.

Major Sanusi Mohammed (rtd) who commended Governor Dauda Lawal for keeping promises and initiatives aimed at developing the state in all ramifications said the Emirate is in full support of the state Community Protection Guards (CPG) nicknamed 'AskarawA' recently inaugurated by the governor to augment the effort of the conventional security operatives to restore normalcy in the state.

The Emir who in his

remarks during the event, thanked the Governor for allocation of over N350 million for the total renovation of General Hospital Kaura Namoda and over N200,000,000.00 for the construction of women development center, in addition to the governor's decision of total renovation Kaura Namoda Emir's Palace which he promised to commence this year, said his emirate is indebted for the kind gestures from the governor.

He noted that there is an

ongoing overhauling of Kaura Namoda Dam and provision of an irrigation farming site which, according to him, will in no small measure improve food security of the state and beyond.

The monarch also recognized the effort of the governor in revamping farming activities, which he said the state's slogan is "Zamfara State farming is our pride" he therefore urged farmers to actively support the government's initiatives aimed at restoring the lost glory of farming in the region.



## World Cancer Day: Remi Tinubu Urges Nigerians To Support, Care For Patients

By; AMOS TAUNA,  
Kaduna

The First Lady, Senator Oluremi Tinubu, has enjoined Nigerians to continue to show care, love, empathy and support for cancer patients and survivors.

In her message on Sunday to mark World Cancer Day, Mrs Tinubu urged Nigerians to deepen efforts in putting in place necessary infrastructure to address the health challenges towards better care for cancer patients and survivors.

According to her, "This year's World Cancer Day presents an important opportunity to raise awareness and elaborate further the message of prevention, early detection, and treatment of

cancer."

With the theme for this year, 'Closing the Care Gap', she stated that the theme speaks to the fact that people are to deepen their efforts in putting in place necessary infrastructure to address the health challenges towards better care for cancer patients and survivors.

The First Lady opined that no one should have to face the challenges of cancer alone, urging Nigerians to continue to show empathy, care, love, and support for cancer patients and survivors, even as they create more awareness and advocacy for better service delivery.

She stressed the need to celebrate those who are cancer free.

## Bukar Ibrahim: Dikko Radda Condoles Yobe Govt, People

By; SULAIMAN  
AHMED MISAU,  
Katsina

Governor Dikko Umaru Radda of Katsina State has expressed deepest condolences with the government and people of Yobe State over the demise of a Former Governor of the State, Senator Bukar Abba Ibrahim.

Senator Abba Ibrahim, a former two-term Governor of Yobe State, passed away in Saudi Arabia, last weekend.

According to reports, the late Abba Ibrahim died at a Saudi-German Hospital in Makkah, Saudi Arabia, on Sunday.

The deceased governed Yobe from January 1992 to November 1993 during the Third Republic. He was re-elected and sworn in on 29 May 1999 and served for two-term under the All-Nigeria People's Party (ANPP).

Reacting to the death of the ex-governor, Dikko Radda in a statement by his Chief Press Secretary, Ibrahim

Mohammed Kaula said Yobe State, and Nigeria, in extension, has lost a patriotic elder statesman, who was truly committed to national service.

Governor Radda described late Senator Abba Ibrahim as a distinguished leader, who contributed significantly to the socio-economic growth of Yobe and human capital development of the people of the state, in great ways.

"Indeed, the leadership qualities of Senator Abba Ibrahim are unmatched. He led a life of true impact, wholly devoted to advancing the cause of his people and other Nigerians dwelling in Yobe state. May Allah (S.W.T) grant him Jannatul Firdaus. Ameen," Governor Radda emphasized.

"Meanwhile, the people and government of Katsina State mourn his exit, which is so shocking and painful. We commiserate with my brother, Governor Mai Mala Buni and the entire Yobe people at this sombre period," he said.

## FG To Make NYSC Revenue-generating Agency - Minister

By; AMOS TAUNA,  
Kaduna

The federal government has announced plans to reform the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) to make it a revenue-generating agency.

Jamila Bio-Ibrahim, the Minister of Youth Development, made the disclosure while speaking on Channels Television's Sunday Politics programme. The minister also explained that the Federal Government is working on reforming the NYSC scheme to reflect the present realities of the nation. She further explained that they all understand that

resources are dwindling, even oil revenues are not as they used to be, stressing that they would find innovative ways of ensuring that corps members' welfare is well-taken care of.

When it comes to remuneration and looking totally at the holistic funding of the NYSC, she said that they have announced a reform of the NYSC scheme itself, pointing out that they want the scheme to go beyond the social programme of government to be that revenue-generating scheme and agency.

According to her, "The reforms which transform the NYSC into a revenue-

generating agency and prepare the corps members for the job market and to be decently and gainfully employed or to be employers of labour through entrepreneurship and of course, perfect matching into primary assignment and all the support they need in that career path."

She also disclosed that corps members were no longer posted to states deemed unsafe in the wake of worsening security conditions in the country.

As an immediate intervention of the government and the NYSC as an agency, she noted that they have actually stopped

posting corps members to the very unsafe states, saying that they have been doing it, the government has been doing it in the past, as there are states they have not been posting corps members to to ensure their safety.

The minister explained that the security of corps members requires collaboration with other agencies of government, saying that when it comes to security matters, it is a multi-sectoral approach and so, it is not the NYSC alone and the ministry that is involved but they are working with security outlets to ensure corps members are safe.



# CSO Commends NAHCON On Hajj 2024 Fare, Cautions Against 'Unrealistic Promises'

By: JABIRU A. HASSAN, Kano

Independent Hajj Reporters (IHR), a Civil Society Organization (CSO), that monitors and reports on Hajj and Umrah activities, has commended the leadership of the National Hajj Commission of Nigeria (NAHCON), for coming up with the most realistic Hajj fare for 2024 pilgrims.

NAHCON had on Saturday announced this year's Hajj fare for intending pilgrims from Nigeria in which those from the southern part are expected to pay N4, 899,000, while their counterparts from the north will pay N4,699,000 while pilgrims from Yola and Maiduguri are to pay N4,676,000.

The announcement of the fare comes after NAHCON announced that it has succeeded in cutting down the cost of the Hajj through a downward negotiation of the prices of vital services such as flight tickets and accommodation.

The announcement also came at a time when the exchange rate of the US dollar, which constitutes about 85% of Hajj expenses was hitting the roof on a daily basis. IHR in a statement Monday, signed by its national

coordinator, Ibrahim Mohammed said it is aware that "the average cost of Hajj this year across the globe is about \$6000 and based on the prevailing exchange rate in Nigeria, the fare for Hajj would have translated to over N6 million".

The group, therefore, said the highest fare of N4.899 million indicates that the shrewd negotiation tactics employed by NAHCON have saved Nigerian pilgrims around N1.5 million each.

Word of caution IHR however, advised the Hajj Commission to refrain from unnecessarily raising intending pilgrims' hopes of a reduced fare until all options are considered and decisions taken.

The Chairman of NAHCON, Mallam Jalal Ahmed Arabi has repeatedly assured that the cost of the Hajj this year will not be more than the N4.5 million announced as a deposit for all pilgrims.

In the same vein, a recent statement by the Head of Public Affairs of the commission has given details of the reduction of prices of vital services ahead of the announcement of the fare, thereby, raising the hope of the



pilgrims that the fare may not be up to N4.5 million after all.

For example, the statement said the "cost of accommodation in Madinah dropped from SR 2,080 (Saudi Riyals) of 2023 to SR 1,665 this year.

Similarly, cost of accommodation in Makkah was negotiated at SR 3000 against SR 3,500 for the previous year. Pilgrims of 2024 Hajj will pay SR 4,770 for Masha'ir package (VAT inclusive) against SR 5,393 paid by last year's

pilgrims.

For airfare, the Commission was able to beat down the cost with a \$138 discount from what was paid last year". This short analysis triggered the hope of a possible reduction in Hajj fare that will be below the initial N4.5 million promised by the NAHCON Chairman irrespective of foreign exchange rates.

Intending pilgrims might not be aware of arithmetic intricacies involved in hajj fare

computations. In the same vein, contrary to age-long practice, the statement announcing the Hajj fare was silent on the amount of Basic Travel Allowance (BTA) that each pilgrim is expected to receive.

"We urge NAHCON to immediately inform all intending pilgrims how much they will be receiving as their BTA to aid their proper planning for the pilgrimage and also promote transparency and

## Commissioner Hails Dikko Radda's Commitment To Katsina Citizens Needs

By: SULAIMAN AHMED MISAU, Katsina

Governor Dikko Umaru Radda of Katsina State has been appreciated for his commitment to better the lives of the common people in the areas of education, health, agriculture, water supply and others sectors of human endeavours in the state.

The State Commissioner for Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs, Professor Badamasi Lawal made this known when he led a powerful team from the Ministry to inspect Phase 2 Projects undertaken by the Chairman of Mani local government area.

It would be recalled that the governor released 1.8 billion Naira to local council chairmen to execute Phase 1 Projects subject to consultation with local communities, after which he recently released another 2.4 billion Naira to same chairmen to undertake Phase 2 Projects.

The projects according to the commissioner, include, rehabilitation and renovation of both Western and Islamic schools as well as clinics and dispensaries, construction of mosques and



*Katsina State Commissioner for Local Governments and Chieftaincy Affairs, Professor Badamasi Lawal inspecting Projects in Mani Local Government Area.*

roads, provision of potable drinking water and electricity among others.

Professor Badamasi Lawal was overwhelmed with how two blocks of two

classrooms each and three classrooms block were rehabilitated at Ajiya Primary School Mahuta, where the commissioner personally pledged to provide uniforms to

some pupils and directed the education secretary of the area to ensure the commencement of school activities next Monday.

The commissioner and his team also inspected a 350m long drainage with seven culverts along Katsina/Mani road in Gawon Mala Village.

Construction of a Juma'at Mosque was also inspected at Hakon Hawa Village with an ongoing constituency project of 3.2Km rural feeder road from Mani/Dutsi road Junction to Bujawa Village.

In a remark, Permanent Secretary of the ministry, Alhaji Salisu Musa Batsari commended the chairman for a good job and urged the benefitting communities to ensure proper utilization of the projects.

The chairman of the local council, Dr. Yunusa Bagiwa expressed appreciation and applauded the state government and Ministry for Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs for showing much concern on the plight of the common man.



# Foundation Trains Journalists On Transitional Justice Media Reporting, Advocacy

By; SADIQABUBAKAR, Maiduguri

Allamin Foundation for Peace and Development, has organized a one day training workshop on Gender Mainstreaming in Media Reporting and Community Advocacy of Transitional Justice and Reconciliation on Monday in Maiduguri, held at Hajja Mangal Memorial Hall, Giwa Barrack Area Maiduguri.

In her opening remarks, the Executive Director, Allamin Foundation for Peace and Development, Hajiya Hamsatu Allamin said the workshop was organized to acquaint the media practitioners with the nitty gritty of gender reporting and advocacy on Gender Based Violence (GBV) in conflict or crisis environment.

She added that the training is aimed at orienting Maiduguri based working journalists on how to handle issues, problems and challenges of reporting categories of gender in conflict areas, as well as approaches required at the field in relating and interviewing gender in violent or conflict communities among others.

According to her, the workshop became necessary due to the peculiarities associated with the effects of the insurgency and nature of the culture, tradition and norms of the people of Borno State as the epic center of the crisis and

are badly affected by the insurgency in terms of livelihood, survival welfare, labour or employment and security.

The Executive Director while presenting a paper titled, "Gender Mainstreaming in Media Reporting and Gender Sensitive Indicators for Situation Analysis & Early Warnings" said these questions serve as a guide for undertaking gendered situation analyses/reporting in societies affected by conflict and transition for media practitioners and CSOs.

She noted also that because media plays a vital role in conflict resolutions and mediation through various media platforms in different forms of media communication policies and intercultural perspectives such as peace journalism and sensitive conflict reporting out of experiences and trainings.

Hajiya Allamin further explained that Gender Sensitive Indicators are factors for Situation Analysis & Early Warning, where questions such as do men and women differ in how they define/experience security concerns and needs? How? Are they experiencing changes for better/worse? What threats do civilians face in terms of movement served as criteria for assessing situation.

She added that questions such as do men and women have equal freedom of movement? Are men or women walking

alone or in groups at night or during the day? Is there sufficient lighting? Who travels, how and in what circumstances?) Are there reports or indications of change in experiences or particular regions –vis-à-vis particular men/women in communities? Or behavior of security or community actors?.

"Differential experiences for men/women? What crimes are being committed or reported? Who are the perpetrators? Who are the victims? To whom are crimes being reported? Are there new types of crimes? Gendered attacks? Are people reporting more/less? Increase research on gender.

"Others Include the type of weapons that are being used? Are the weapons used against women the same as the ones used against men? Is there a change in type of weaponry like light to heavy arms, use of knives? Illicit or legal? Who has weapons? Where do they get them from?" The Executive Director added.

The Director also said the type of reports of weapons that flow such as are women/men implicated in smuggling? Is inadequacy of pay a factor in making the police corrupt? Is the police/security sector behavior changing – better/worse?

"What reports or incidences of sexual assault like often women's organizations are the holders of this type of information.

Are there community-based policing structures in place? What role do women and/or men play? Are women/men coming to meetings? Feeling safe to discuss/raise issues? How are women and men experiencing interactions with police/military forces?

" How do men react / treat women if the women are abused by "power structures" and / or sexually attacked by militias or men of other ethnic origin? Can it generate inter-communal militarization of society? What factors are promoting or influencing recruitment into armies or militias?

"Who is being recruited or is most vulnerable to recruitment? Why? How are women/men being approached/engaged for recruitment/support to armed actions like violent extremist movements, or state led crackdowns domestically or war?

"What dangers do men and women face in terms of abduction / forced recruitment? What elements are active to resist militarization? Are they feeling increased pressured/threats to self-censor? Have there been any programmes for disarming, demobilization and reintegration? How successful have they been? Were women and girls included or excluded? How?", Hamsatu said.





# Gov Uba Sani Blames Hunger, Poverty For Rising Insecurity

By: FUNMI ADERINTO, Kaduna

**K**aduna State Governor, Senator Uba Sani on Monday, said that poverty and unemployment are responsible for the security challenges of banditry and kidnapping bedeviling the North-West region of the country and the best way to tackle the challenges is through good governance.

The governor stated this when he received the Kaduna Elders Forum, led by General Zamani Lekwot (rtd) and Alhaji Abubakar Mustapha at the Chambers of Sir Kashim Ibrahim House to congratulate the Governor on his Supreme Court victory.

"Good governance is a way to end banditry, good governance is a key," he said.

According to him, "when we inaugurated this committee I made it clear to everyone that, it is not something that we will start and abandon our initiative, it is something that we will work closely with them for advice.

"Elders committee is a permanent committee that will continue to guide, advice and support our government, we don't have monopoly of wisdom, we always go back to our elders for advice, wisdom, experience and knowledge we really want to succeed.

"I am happy that other states are emulating what we started in Kaduna State, we are the first to inaugurate our elders committee in Nigeria under this dispensation, we have seen the result, we have seen the benefits, most of the achievements we made so far because we listen to their advice and input, while we consider most input in implementing our own programmes".

He said this government is an open and carries everyone along, "we are running inclusive government, pro-people and pro-development in Kaduna, hence if we consider the input of every citizens, that is the only way we can succeed."

While speaking on the security of the state, Governor Sani said as Kaduna intensifies military actions against banditry and kidnapping with the support of the Defence headquarters to build additional two Forward Operation Bases in the state, his government is also adopting good governance as the best non-kinetic solution to the security challenges.

Governor Sani noted the alarming rate of out-of-school children must also be addressed to ensure a secure state and region, disclosing that, the state is getting \$28 million in support from Kuwait to address the problem of out-of-school children.

According to the governor, "The Chief of Defence Staff, the Chief of Army and the Chief of Air Staff, have assured us of their support to our security efforts. They have decided to set up two Forward Operation Bases (FOB) in Kaduna, one in Southern Kaduna, Zangon Kataf to be precise and the other one in Birnin Gwari to serve Birnin Gwari down to Giwa. The FOBs will be set up in the next three weeks.

"This is one of the most important interventions by the Defence

Headquarters because we have always said that, we need more boots on the ground and we need the support of the military generally and we are grateful that we are having that support.

"We have also announced last week that we would be setting up a security trust fund. By the grace of God, tomorrow, I will be signing the bill for the establishment of the Security Trust Fund 2024. We are amending the one that is obsolete and coming up with a new one. This will give room for the private sector to come in and work with us.

"We are also looking at the non-kinetic approach to addressing the security challenges. But the issue of the non-kinetic approach is not just about talking with the bandits, negotiating and asking them to submit their weapons, that is only one aspect of it.

"The most important aspect of the non-kinetic approach is good governance. No matter how much we talk and try to bring about peace, if we don't look at the area of good governance, we will never end the problem of insecurity in Northern Nigeria in particular.

"People always talk about how the problem of insurgency ended in the North-East, but the insurgency is not the same as the problem of banditry and kidnapping that we have in the North-West. The North-East issue was about people who came from nowhere and talked about the ideology of Boko.

"What we have in the North-West is an economic problem where people kidnap and ask for money. What brought about that? Hopelessness, lack of education, lack of economic prosperity.

"The problem of the North West is lack of education and financial exclusion. Over 85 per cent of the people in the North West are either not educated or financially excluded. So, there is poverty if we don't address the poverty by supporting our farmers and increasing productivity, we will not address the problem of insecurity.

"So, we need to look at the issue of good governance, good governance is key. Many states in the North-West including Kaduna have a large number of out-of-school children, which is unacceptable. Even access to healthcare, which is not a privilege but a right is poor.



"Education is the greatest enabler, so, we must educate the children of the poor to compete favourably with the children of the rich. If we don't do that, the problem of insecurity cannot be addressed. Happy that a lot of people are already looking at that.

"In Kaduna State, we have over 600,000 out-of-school children. But, because they realized how proactive we have been, Kuwait Fund is supporting us with \$28 million to lift out-of-school children back to school," the Governor said.

"We believe business community have suffer a lot, we will involve, security agencies, religious leaders, government officials, private sector, elders so that we can have a very strong board committee that will be able to champion all the problem of insecurity that we having in the state".

Earlier, the Kaduna Elders' Forum led by General Zamani Lekwot (rtd) and Alhaji Abubakar Mustapha while congratulating the governor over his electoral victory, said his governance approach of developing the rural area is already yielding positive results.

He said, so far, people are happy in terms of skill acquisition, good governance, which will unite them together.





# Kogi: Anti-Corruption CSOs Warn EFCC Against 'Cankercorns Of Previous Management'

\*Advise Olukoyede to shut out miscreants mistaking EFCC for political structure  
\*Say latest charge against ex-Kogi Gov embarrassing, reflects victimization

By: ADEBOYE ADO, Akure

Anti-Corruption Civil Society Organisations, on Wednesday, warned the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), under the leadership of Ola Olukoyede, to refrain from allowing "cankercorns of the previous management left in the system" rubbish his credentials as the head of the commission.

The over 300 anti-corruption activists, under seven broad frontline organisations, noted that it was pertinent for them to sound an early note of warning in view of the fact that the misuse of the EFCC by political gladiators, as a veritable tool of victimization and score-settling, which they thought had been tackled, was suddenly rearing its head again.

The anti-corruption Civil Society Organisations advised the EFCC boss to sit up and stop the Commission from being accessed by "political miscreants who think EFCC is an extension of their political structures to be manipulated at will."

They specifically referred to the Kogi State Government's press statement, which was released on Tuesday, alerting the public to an alleged fresh move by the Commission to witch-hunt the ex-Governor with spurious claims for political reasons.

The activists pointed out that the crux of the latest persecution, going by the EFCC's amended charge sheet, which featured ex-Governor Bello's name, showed a clear case of desperation for spurious claims to whip up public sentiment against the target, adding that any litigation on corruption founded on political conspiracy would always have no merits to pursue it.

"While we stand solidly behind any credible anticorruption drive, we, however, oppose and condemn unequivocally any and all corruption allegations with the trappings and trademarks of political victimization as this Kogi case clearly seems to be," they declared.

They described the latest amended charge as extremely embarrassing, saying, "A Court document at our disposal submitted to the Court by EFCC is alleging that the former

Governor and his nephew, one Alli Bello, converted Kogi State's money to the tune of over Eighty Billion Naira since September 2015!

"This looks like a hurriedly prepared amendment targeted at an individual without paying much attention whatsoever to facts. Except the Commission is able to prove before the court that the duo had been involved in financial transactions with Kogi State money before Yahaya Bello assumed office in January 2016 as Kogi State Governor, then they have a lot of questions to answer Nigerians."

"This is always how bad-intentioned and politically motivated allegations are exposed and it smacks of a profound dearth of professionalism on the part of the EFCC. If they come up with a nebulous excuse of typographical error, this further exposes their lack of professionalism and calls to question the competency of the EFCC leadership and legal team/department," the activists noted.

They vowed to expose political actors behind the incessant EFCC political victimization, stating, "We are working with others across the country and we are ready to expose those behind this witch hunting and also expose their dirty dealings which have continued to undermine the current administration's efforts at economic revitalisation, to the public."

While referring to a recent statement by Olukoyede against the conduct of some EFCC officials, the anti-corruption activists said, "If the EFCC chairman doesn't want the embarrassing public image he personally painted and actually known to all Nigerians to continue, he should sit up and get rid of all politically motivated allegations and stop the EFCC from being accessed by political miscreants who think EFCC is an extension of their political structures to be manipulated at will."

They stated, "After two decades of its establishment, we believe that the EFCC should have garnered enough experience to be strictly professional. But, alas, that doesn't seem to be the

case now. The Commission commits unforgivable legal and procedural faux pas that makes it lose considerable percentage of its cases in Court. For one, the Commission's agents don't seem to be thorough enough in their investigations especially in cases that have political undertones.

"Due to lack of merits in those cases, oftentimes, the Commission exposes itself to unnecessary public ridicules and embarrasses itself in Court. Any litigation on corruption founded on political conspiracy will always have no merits to pursue it because the Courts won't ever be convinced otherwise."

"We can see that one of the major agenda of the current administration of President Ahmed Tinubu is also to fight corruption. We doubt very much that the Commission can meet up with the expected standards as envisaged by the current administration," their statement added.

Giving a background of their age-long activities geared towards fruitful anti-corruption struggles, the frontline activists noted, "As rights anticorruption organizations, we have been in the Vanguard of clamoring for corruption to be eliminated from Nigeria's civil service and governance for years. We are convinced that corruption, above any other factor, is responsible for the myriads of developmental challenges confronting Nigeria from a long time even before now.

"That was why we celebrated the establishment of the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission in the year 2000 and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, in 2003 believing that these two elite anticorruption agencies would stamp out corruption from our system if not completely but, at least, considerably. It was a good step in a good direction.

"But we have observed a disturbing trend in the operations one of these two anticorruption agencies, the EFCC, which tends towards political witchhunt. Of course, this didn't start today but we have to exorcize that spirit from the soul and body of the EFCC.



Ola Olukoyede

"There are two major disagreeable patterns in EFCC's modus operandi for a long time now that should never have been part of any anticorruption regime and these are politicization of cases and media trials through excessive sensationalism of cases under investigation.

"We have witnessed occasions in this country when the EFCC arrested all members of a state assembly, whisked them to their Abuja headquarters, only for the latter to return to their state and commence impeachment proceedings against their state Governor. Any anticorruption exercise that applies tools of intimidation and blackmail loses its integrity and public trust ultimately, including international support.

"One instance would suffice here. We remember vividly how only five out of a 24-member legislature of Plateau state in 2006 met at 6:00am and 'impeached' Governor Joshua Dariye after their alleged meeting with EFCC operatives. We cried out at that time that politicizing the operations of the Commission would kill its noble objectives. Moreover, you don't need to use extra-constitutional means in fighting the anticorruption war because you cannot use corrupt means to fight corruption successfully. There were, at least, three more instances in this regard.

"After much advocacy by NGOs and other concerned activists,

this trend seemed to stop for a while only to rear its ugly head again under the ignoble tenure of Mr. Rasheed Bawa. That error of judgment and the heavy corruption allegations against Bawa were mostly responsible for his premature but well-deserved removal from office last year.

"We had assumed that that would be the end of such misuse of the EFCC by political gladiators who have discovered the use of the Commission as a veritable tool of political victimization and score-settling. But it does seem now that we are wrong.

"We are disappointed that the current EFCC leadership seems to have decided to tow the line of the ignoble Bawa way of doing things the wrong way."

The statement was signed on behalf of others by the Director, Publicity and Research, Sustainable Initiative for Nurturing Growth, Fisayo Abayomi; Chairman, Zero Graft Coalition, Dr. Olusegun Adesanmi; and National Coordinator, Integrity Forum, Engr. Mohammed Zakari.

Others include, the President, Transparency Movement of Nigeria, Barr. Esther Ezechukwu; Chairman, Stop Corruption Coalition, Arc. Samuel Ogedegbe; Executive Director, Africa Accountability Centre, Godwin Ozogula; and Comrade Isiak Aderounmu for Youthcentric Advocacy Initiative.



# MAAUN Matriculates 1,380 Students For 2023/2024 Academic Session

By; IMRANA ABDULLAHI, Kaduna

**M**aryam Abacha American University of Nigeria (MAAUN), Kano, has matriculated a total of 1,380 newly admitted students for the 2023/2024 Academic Session.

The Third Matriculation Ceremony, which took place on Friday, 2nd February and Saturday, 3rd February 2024, was held at the Professor Abubakar Adamu Rasheed Twin Lecture Theatre, where invited guests, including parents and other well wishers attended the event.

The two-day program started with students of Schools of Law and Social and Management Sciences for the first day, while the students of Schools of Computing, Health Sciences and Nursing Sciences were matriculated on the second day.

In his address at the occasion, the President of MAAUN, Prof. (Dr.) Mohammad Israr said the event marks the official enrollment of the matriculating students into the university academic program as approved by the National Universities Commission (NUC).

He congratulated the students for securing admission into the university and urged them to embrace self-discipline and face their studies with seriousness.

"Maryam Abacha American University of Nigeria, Kano, has now come of age. It has a strategic vision to offer the best in cutting edge research and

service delivery in science, leadership and management.

"The vision of Maryam Abacha American University of Nigeria, Kano, is a lofty one. I call on everyone to join the Founder and his team of sound academics and intellectuals to see to the fulfillment and further expansion of the University," he said.

He said the university offers only courses that are of commercial value to students stressing that the teaching approach in the university is market-oriented and entrepreneurially based.

In his address, the Founder and President of MAAUN Group of Universities, Prof. Adamu Abubakar Gwarzo, said MAAUN is an international university as there are students from other countries including China.

He advised the matriculating students to face their studies with seriousness as any one who fails to measure up will be shown the way out.

He said the new students should count themselves lucky for getting admission into the University saying MAAUN certificate is recognized in the United States of America.

Prof. Gwarzo said the matriculating students should



also be proud of being a part of MAAUN family because they will benefit from its profound intellectual and material investments.

He said the university is committed to providing quality education in order to produce quality graduates who would contribute their quota towards the development of the African continent and the world at large.

In his goodwill message, the Vice Chancellor of Franco-British International University (FBIU) Kaduna, Prof. Abdullahi Mohammad Sabo advised the students to set their target from the day they were matriculated in order to graduate with flying colours.

He also enjoined the

matriculating students to be of good character so as to preserve the University's brand name and achieve their desired career goals.

Also in his goodwill message, the Vice President MAAUN Maradi, Dr. Shu'aibu Tanko said MAAUN impacts not only the knowledge but skills that will enable students to be self-reliant after graduation.

"You are here to get the best so that you will stand on your own after graduation," he said.

Also in his goodwill message, the Vice Chancellor of NorthWest University, Sokoto, Prof. Ahmad Maigari Ibrahim who was represented by Dr Rabi'u Muhammad advised the matriculating students

against indulging in acts capable of denting their image and that of the university.

The Vice President Administration, Dr. Habib Awais Abubakar who led the proceedings during the matriculation ceremony, administered the matriculation Oath to the new students.

Other Management staff present during the occasion include; the Vice President Campus Life, Dr. Hamza Garba and Director Academic Planning and Quality Assurance, Dr. Nura A. Yaro.

Others were Head, MAAUN International Office, Engr. Bashir Garba, Deans of Schools, Chairs of Departments, Security Personnels and invited guests, among others.

# Katsina Commissioner Elected FGC Daura PTA Chairman

By; SULAIMAN AHMED MISAU, Katsina

**K**atsina State Commissioner of Information, Dr. Bala Salisu Zango has been elected Chairman Parent Teachers Association (PTA) of Federal Government College (FGC) Daura unopposed.

Other new officials include, Alhaji Mustapha Lawal Vice Chairman, Alhaji Nasiru Sani Treasurer and Mr. Levi

Chekweozie Public Relations Officer (PRO).

Others are, Hajiya Asma'u Yusuf Financial Secretary and Malam Kabir Mamman, Secretary who were nominated by the school management.

In an address, the Principal of FGC Daura, Alhaji Abdullahi Muktar Gulma spoke on the achievements of the school, since he assumed duty.

Alhaji Abdullahi Gulma said over ninety per cent (90%) of

the students got five credits including English and Mathematics in West Africa Examination Council (WAEC), while over Seventy Percent (70%) of the students got similar result in National Examination Council (NECO) last year.

Alhaji Abdullahi Muktar Gulma commended the Parent Teachers Association for its support to the management of the College.

Alhaji Muktar Gulma appealed to Parents and Staff of the

College to work hand in hand for the development of the school.

In his speech, the new PTA Chairman, Dr. Bala Salisu Zango expressed his Gratitude to the Parents and Staff of the College for electing him unopposed. Alhaji Salisu Zango solicited the support of the school management for the development of the College.

Dr. Bala Zango promised to operate an open door policy, especially on Financial matters

and pledged to abolish all unnecessary Financial expenditure in the School.

Dr. Bala Salisu Zango noted that, no meaningful development could be achieved without co operation.

The election was monitored by Officials from the Federal Ministry of Education, Abuja.



# Hunters As Missing Link In Nigeria's Security Architecture

By: BASHIR BELLO

Until Nigeria takes necessary and bold steps to commission a special security agency that is dedicated and committed to fighting crimes and criminality that are planned and executed within and around forests, all efforts by the government towards ending heinous crimes like banditry, cattle rustling, kidnapping and others would continue to be a mirage.

Nigeria has the Police which fights and prevents crime within cities and rural communities and the Nigeria Army which was created to protect the nation from external aggression and insurrection while the Navy fights crime within the nation's territorial waters and the Air Force to defend our air space, while the NSCDC oversees national assets and work to stop pipeline, public electricity and other forms of vandalism and related crimes.

The only drawback has been the failure or refusal of successive governments to set up a special force to protect the country's vast forest, which is estimated to cover about 214,637sq. km as at 2021.

Nigeria's forest area earlier was 245,664 sq. km in 2002 but reduced to 214,637 sq. km in 2021 due to desert encroachment.

Unfortunately, Nigeria's forest as large and critical to the nation's security and national wealth has been left unprotected by successive administrations, leaving them as safe haven for all manner of criminal operations, including illegal mining, kidnapping, banditry and others.

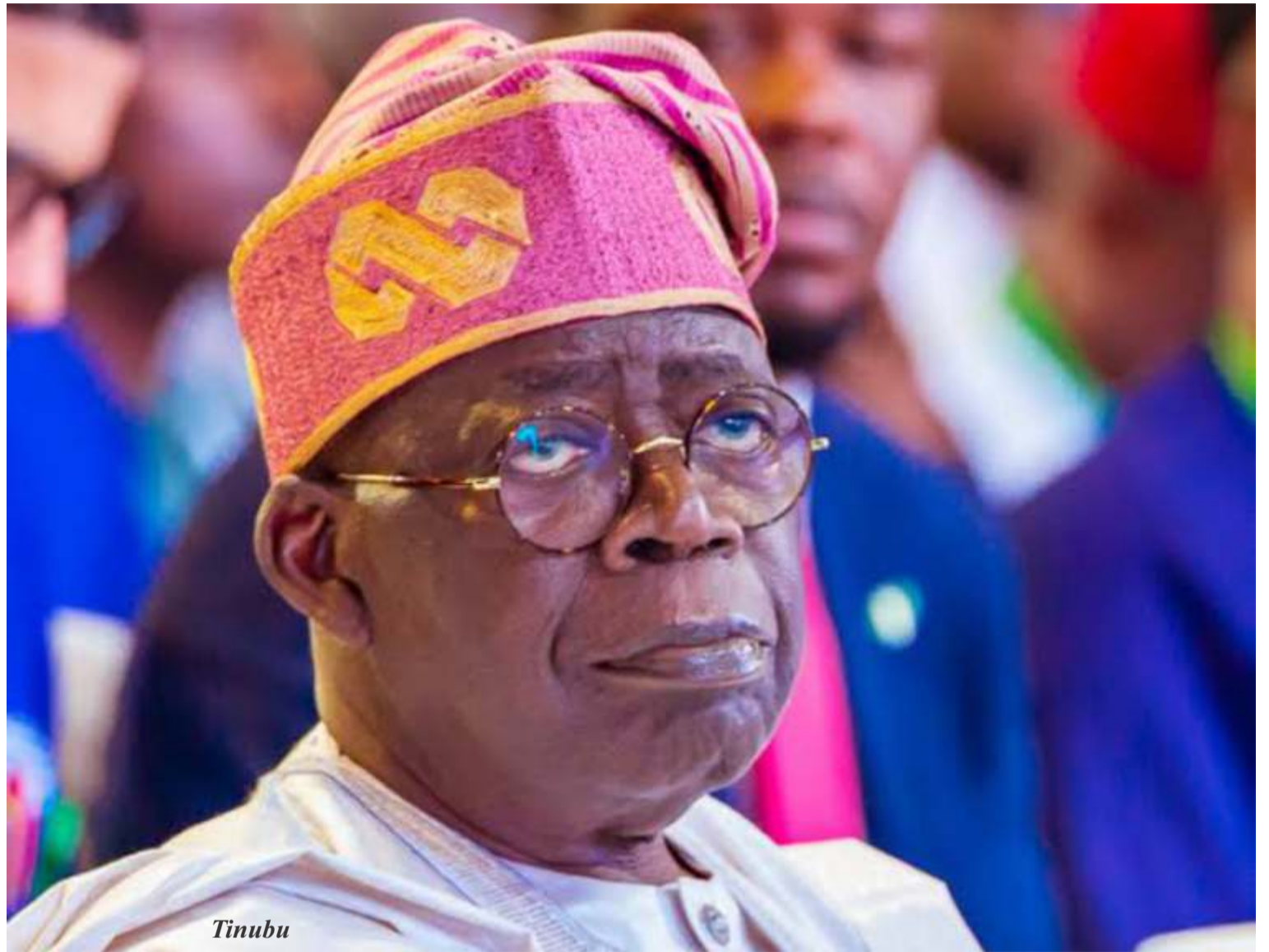
To underscore the strategic importance of establishing a forest-oriented security force for the country, the 9th National Assembly after painstaking clause by clause consideration, public hearing and robust debates, finally passed the NHFSS Bill and transmitted same to former President Muhammadu Buhari who as usual, 'did not see or know about it' until he left office with the bill still on the presidential table.

Interestingly the Speaker of the House of Representatives who presided over the activities of the House when the Nigerian Hunters and Forest Security Service (NHFSS) Bill was passed by the National Assembly, Rt. Hon. Femi Gbajabamila, is the Chief of Staff to President Tinubu.

One would think that from such a frontal position at the topmost level of the federal government, Gbajabamila would have drawn the attention of his boss to the NHFSS Bill and explain to him why it should be assented to.

Should we then say that Gbajabamila did not believe in the project when he graciously supervised its passage or as Reuben Abati, former presidential spokesperson suggested, that there is a bug that bites people at the presidential villa which makes them transmute from their original self? Which one should we take as the reason?

It is therefore, not surprising that while many patriotic citizens including traditional rulers have been calling on government, to sign the Nigerian Hunters



Tinubu

and Forest Security Service (NHFSS Bill) into law in order to deploy thousands of youths to protect the nation's forests and therefore prevent enemies of Nigeria from using them to commit crimes some unscrupulous elements have been making frantic efforts to frustrate and prevent the commissioning of NHFSS because of their parochial interests.

The regrettable thing according to findings is that, the various interests fighting against the signing of the NHFSS Bill into law are many in government and other sectors and are said to occupy strategic positions from where they exert negative influence on the government including Tinubu's presidency unfortunately.

However, one should be expectant that Tinubu will assent to the NHFSS Bill because during his campaigns in 2022 and early parts of 2023 he made it clear that one of the cardinal focal points of his administration should he win the election-would be to tackle insecurity which of course is the first and most important job of any leader. In demonstration of his sincerity and commitment to secure all citizens and others living in the country President Tinubu took the bold step to appoint some of the finest officers and men as Service Chiefs while one of the most tested and trusted former Police Officer was made National Security Adviser by the President.

In spite of these bold and commendable steps taken by Tinubu, the question is why are crimes like banditry, cattle rustling,

kidnapping and other heinous crimes still escalating across the country? The fathomable answer is that the prevailing crimes are being committed within and around the forests where no serious attention has been given by successive federal administrations.

And that is the primary reason also why the various achievements of the President in the area of security are being muffled by the hourly molestation and killing of Nigerian citizens and foreigners in the country as well as destruction of their properties and means of sustenance by criminal elements.

Across Ebonyi, Benue, Taraba, Plateau, Kaduna, Borno, Ekiti and Ondo states that are considered as the main food producing states, farmers no longer go to their farms for fear of being raped, kidnapped or out rightly killed by cattle rustlers, bandits and others. Among the states mostly affected by these forest-based crimes include Benue, Kaduna, Katsina, Zamfara and Plateau among others.

Only recently, it was reported in the media that 55 persons were killed in Benue and Plateau states in two days. In Benue over 35 persons were reportedly killed by the so-called militiamen. The case is not better in Imo and Anambra states in the south east where reports of wanton killing by gunmen and bandits as well as incidences of kidnapping for ransom have refused to abate in spite of efforts by state governments to mitigate the carnages.

The same is the case in the south west region of the country where only last week

on January 30, 2024, two traditional rulers, the Elesun of Esun Ekiti and Onimojo of Imojo Ekiti were shot dead by suspected bandits.

The third monarch among them, the Alara of Ara Ekiti, Oba Adebayo Fatoba however escaped death. On the same day news came that some school children were kidnapped in Eporo Ekiti, Emure LGA when the armed men ambushed a school bus.

According to the President-General of Agbekoya Farmers Association, Chief Kamorudeen Okikiola, herdsmen and other criminal elements have attacked and killed no fewer than 8,700 people in the past eight years; 4,000 of the victims were farmers in various towns and communities of the South-west.

He stated this while addressing the media on February 13, 2021, adding that in most of the villages and towns in Yoruba land farmers have deserted their farms and people cannot move about freely to conduct their business activities because of the fear.

It may not be right to say that President Tinubu and his security Chiefs and Advisers like their predecessors seem to have ignored the concerns being expressed by the Nigerian people over the killings as well as calls by stakeholders in the Nigerian project for the government to block the yawning security gap.

If the governments of Canada, Russia, the United State and even Liberia with their



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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

### TERMS OF ADVERT PLACEMENT

- All adverts are expected to be in cash or bank draft in favour of New Nigerian Newspaper's Limited.
- Series discount is subject to the stipulated number of insertions, and it is payable only at the end of a campaign (to be deducted from balance pay).
- COPY DATE:** for all the Title Heads is three working days for the North and four working days for the South.
- Cancellation of previously booked advert will be accepted in writing within four working days notice, less than 24 hours to the date of publication will attract 25% surcharge.
- Advertisers/Agencies are to provide their Camera ready artwork in electronic copies, in PDF, or JPEG format.
- Advertisers will be surcharged 20% of the applicable rate where artworks are not provided.
- Adverts may not be published if the visuals given are considered too poor as to affect the reproduction.
- Alterations to original order should be conveyed in writing at least 24 hours to desired alteration date.
- Colour guides are to accompany coloured adverts.
- The management of New Nigerian Newspapers Limited reserves the right to reject an advert or any publication in any of its titles where such materials are considered distasteful for public exposure or libelous.

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)	550,000.00	41,250.00	591,250.00
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



# Hunters As Missing Link In Nigeria's Security Architecture

low level of such crimes as banditry and kidnapping could commission Forest Security Services why is Nigeria underestimating the critical relevance of that arm of security for the country.

Even while it has not received official recognition the Nigerian Hunters and Forest Security Service has been playing a complimentary role with the Police and other security agencies in the country, especially in the areas of intelligence gathering. Their officers and men have also apprehended many criminal elements operating within the forest who they usually handover to the Police.

The Nigeria Police which some analysts have wrongly fingered in the past as working against the signing of the NHFSS Bill only recently commended the Hunters for their invaluable contributions towards curbing insecurity in the country, especially in the areas of banditry and other crimes committed in and within forests.

The Commissioner of Police for Delta State, CP Wale Abbas stated this when he paid a courtesy visit to the Burutu Area command and stressed the need to have officers and men of NHFSS within forests and farms in the state.

According to reports- CP Wale Abbas also specifically requested that the Delta state command of the Hunters Service should deploy the operatives and pledged the readiness of the state Police Command to work with them adding that the NHFSS are the only solution to the crimes committed in the nation's forests and farms. He said he is fully committed and ready to collaborate with the NHFSS in Delta State.

Adebayo Ojo, a security analyst in a recent interview with an online TV platform gave some reasons why Nigeria cannot rely on regional security outfits and community vigilantes to fight crimes and insecurities adding that the only solution lies with the commissioning of hunters across the country by establishing them as a formidable force to concentrate on the forests.

Ojo said that the only option left for the country for now is to sign the NHFSS Bill into law and commission the organization to complement the efforts of the Police and other security agencies in fighting insecurity in the country. He pointed out that the relevance of NHFSS cannot be overlooked as they are the only organization that is specialized in fighting crimes that are planned and executed in

the forests.

Among prominent Nigerians that have called on President Bola Tinubu to sign the Nigeria Hunters and Forest Security (NHFSS Bill ) into law include the Emir of Borgu Kingdom in Niger State, HRM, Barrister Muhammed Sani Haliru Dantoro who on Thursday, February 1, 2024 commended officers and men of NHFSS for their immeasurable contributions to the security of lives and properties of the citizens of Nigeria. He commended the efforts of the Commander General, CG, Dr. Wole Joshua Osatimehin, and the Deputy Commander General, DCG in charge of Technical Service, Amb John Metchie and the management team for their sacrifices while championing the cause of the organization.

The monarch also urged President Bola Tinubu to sign the NHHFS Bill into law to enable officers and men of the Service to have Federal Government's full backing. According to him, that would be a way to empower and embolden them to collaborate with the Police and other agencies in tackling security challenges in the country.

The Ooni of Ife, Oba Adeyeye Enitan Ogunwusi on July 2, 2023 also called for constitutional recognition of the Nigerian Hunter and Forest Security Service in the nation's security architecture. According to a statement from his office the monarch made the call when the Commander General of NHFSS, Joshua Osatimehin, visited him in his palace in Ife.

He commended the efforts of the Commander General and his management team in complementing the activities of other security agencies in tackling insecurity in the country over the years. He said giving constitutional recognition to NHFSS would go a long way in reducing banditry, kidnapping, terrorism and other forms of security challenges confronting Nigeria.

All eyes are therefore, on President Bola Tinubu at the moment to see if he would seize the opportunity and the support of Nigerians to make a positive deviation from his predecessors by connecting and commissioning the NHFSS as part of the nation's security architecture by signing the NHFSS Bill into law rather than allow the ugly status quo, which thereby, continues to give impetus for fellow countrymen and women to be butchered like goats on daily basis.

# Safe, Violence Free School Environment: Collective Responsibility - Education Stakeholders

By ; A L E X UANGBAOJE, Kaduna

Stakeholders in the education sector in Kaduna State have emphasized the need for the school environment to be made safe and violence free for learning.

The group noted that the safety of schools cannot be left with government alone, instead it has to be a collective responsibility of everyone in the state.

According to them, a safe school environment will not only guarantee and safeguard the future of the youth, it will also contribute to the collective pursuit of a more harmonious society and academic excellence for children.

They therefore, resolved to join hands with government in promoting peace, safety and violence free schools in Kaduna State to secure the future of the children.

The resolution was made on Wednesday, at a Media Parley and Stakeholders Roundtable meeting to commemorate the International Day of Education in Kaduna State with the theme, "Promoting Safe and Violence-Free Schools: Learning for Lasting Peace" organized by Partnership for Learning for All in Nigeria (PLANE) in collaboration with the Kaduna Basic Education Accountability Mechanism (KADBEAM).

In her opening address, the Safeguarding Advisor of PLANE, Hadiza Nasiru, noted that incidents of violence and insecurity are casting shadows over the educational landscape.

She said the parley was aimed to share commitment to change the narrative by recognizing that promoting safety and fostering a culture of peace within the schools is not merely a lofty aspiration but an urgent imperative.

"For it is within the walls of these institutions that we have the power to sow the

seeds of empathy, respect, and understanding -the very foundations upon which lasting peace is built.

"Through collaborative efforts, proactive strategies, and unwavering dedication, we aim to create learning environments where every student feels valued, supported, and empowered to reach their full potential. "Together, let us champion the cause of safe and violence-free schools, for in doing so, we pave the way for a future where learning truly becomes a catalyst for lasting peace." Hadiza added.

On his part, the Executive Chairman, Kaduna State Universal Basic Education Board (KADSUBEB), Tijjani Abdullahi, who said though safety and insecurity of schools is still a major issue, explained that the domestication of the National Policy on Safety, Security and Violence- Free Schools along with its Implementing Guidelines was one of the measures already take by the government to guarantee safety in schools.

Others according to him includes; "the domestication of Child Protection Law and Social Protection Policy against Violence. Exploitation, Abuse, Neglect and Harassment, Safeguard regulating teams in the 23 LGAs and Peace Clubs across the Basic Schools were formed.

"Gender based toilets and perimeter fence around schools were constructed, Engagement of Kaduna State Vigilance Service (KADVIS) to man school gates for security: Furthermore, the KADSUBEB's Values on School Safety and Peace against violence and harassment enhances, amongst others."

He therefore assured that free, quality and safe education delivery can not be compromised, noting that safe school and

violence free environment is fundamental as a factor that determines development and maintenance of learner's academic focus to their schoolwork.

In his response to some of the issues raised during a panel discussion, Director, Planning, Ministry of Education, Salisu Baba Lawal, said the ministry already initiated School Safety Initiative and peace curriculum in learning institutions to promote and ensure peace and security in schools environment.

On the increasing level of out-of-school-children in the State, Lawal, disclosed that the ministry is reaching out to communities where children are dropping out of school as a result of insecurity.

UNICEF Kaduna, Education Specialist, Bala Baba, reiterated the UN agency's commitment to improve children's education in the State.

Bala, noted that UNICEF is supporting the Kaduna government to ensure an effective implementation of the National Policy on Safety, Security and Violence- Free Schools and other relevant laws and policies that guarantees child protection and survival.

Representative of KADBEAM Co-chair, Mr. Steven Wayah, said the collaboration with PLANE was aimed at ensuring all MDAs, donor partners, Civil Society, the media and other stakeholders within the education ecosystem understands their roles in promoting safe and violence free schools in the State.

The parley was well attended by other stakeholders such as Save the Children, Kaduna State Peace Commission, Kaduna State Interfaith Bureau, Persons with Disabilities, Christian Association of Nigeria, Jamatul Nasril Islam and the Media.



# Sardaunan Badrawa's Son Bags Degree In Civil Engineering From London University

By; IBRAHIMADAMU, Kaduna

**S**on of Former Interim Chairman of Kaduna North and Chieftain of All Progressives Congress (APC), Hon. Usman Ibrahim, popularly known as Sardaunan Badarawa has bagged a degree in Civil Engineering from Brighton University, London. Huzaifa Usman graduated with honours

after satisfying the academic board of the school in knowledge and character as stipulated in curriculum of the famous citadel of excellence.

The junior Sardaunan Badarawa has been a philanthropist, dedicating most of his time visiting orphanage homes and contributing to upkeep of orphans and the less privileged.

Bagging a qualification in the field of engineering, Huzaifa Usman could be said to have taken after his father, who himself is an engineer.

While dedicating his academic success to Allah for His guidance, the young civil engineer expressed gratitude to his father whom he described as a pillar of support and committed father to the

family.

Engineer Huzaifa Ibrahim reiterated commitment to utilize and leverage on his profession in service to country and humanity in general.

"I must first of all, give thanks to Almighty Allah for seeing me through all the rigorous stages of my academic years in the university.





# EFCC In Kaduna Arrest Three Suspected Naira Racketeers



By AMOS TAUNA, Kaduna

Three persons have been apprehended by the operatives of the Kaduna Zonal Command of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), in connection with suspected racketeering of N1,307,400.

The spokesperson for the EFCC, Dele Oyewale, in a statement on Wednesday, disclosed the development.

Oyewale said that the suspects, Musa Gideon, Abdul Adamu, and Justine Musa were arrested along Yakubu Gowon way, Kaduna on Wednesday, February 7, 2024, while trying to sell new Naira notes to an EFCC's undercover

operative.

The operative, the statement added, a member of the Special Task Force set up for the enforcement of extant laws against currency mutilation and dollarisation of the economy by the EFCC Chairman, Ola Olukoyede, functioned in a sting operation carried out by the team.

The statement explained, "The operation yielded the arrest of the three suspects selling new and old naira notes to the tune of N1,307,400 and many Automated Teller Machine cards."

It said that the suspects would be charged to court as soon as investigations are concluded.

A Special Task Force has been raised by the

EFCC across its commands, against the backdrop of the falling naira as its operatives clamp down on individuals mutilating the Naira and dollarizing the Nigerian economy.

The spokesperson for the anti-graft agency, Oyewale, in a statement on Wednesday, revealed that the EFCC had arrested some perpetrators issuing invoices in dollars and mutilating the Naira in Lagos and Rivers states.

Oyewale said that the EFCC has raised a Special Task Force in all its zonal commands for the enforcement of extant laws against currency mutilation and dollarization of the economy.

The statement explained that the task force,

inaugurated by the Executive Chairman of the commission, Ola Olukoyede, was raised to protect the economy from abuses, leakages and distortions exposing it to instability and disruption

Already, it said that the commission has made some arrests of perpetrators of issuance of invoices in dollars and mutilation of the Naira in Lagos and Port Harcourt.

It noted that proprietors of private universities and other institutions of higher learning charging fees in dollars have been invited by the commission.

It said that the commission is committed to the enforcement of all laws in place for the reflation and stimulation of the

## Oyo NSCDC Arrests Illegal Miner, 7 Other Criminal Suspects

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

The Oyo State Commandant of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps,(NSCDC), Mr Augustine Padonu has disclosed that eight suspected criminals are now in the command's net. Mr Padonu who said this while parading the suspects on Wednesday at the State Command Headquarters in Ibadan, disclosed that the suspects were arrested following credible intelligence over the activities of criminal elements in every nook and cranny in the state

The NSCDC State Commandant identified the arrested suspects as Bande Mohammed, male, age 45yrs, Useni Yoyo, male 45yrs, Olalekan Ibrahim, male, age 25yrs, Akinpelu Ibrahim, male, age 25yrs, Folarin Bankole, male, 52yrs, and Olokun Olawale male, 33yrs, others are Abdulkadir Sahadu male, age 50yrs and Afolabi Moses male, 44yrs.

According to Commandant Padonu, Bande Mohammed was arrested on Saturday February 3, 2024, at 1500hrs at a Fulani settlement in Iwajowa Local Government Area of Oyo State for allegedly dealing in illegal mining activities at a neighbouring community known as Dabo-Zamia village in collaboration with a suspected illegal miner, who is at large, operating without license. He stressed that Malam Useni Yoyo was nabbed by a combined team of NSCDC Agro Rangers for allegedly grazing his herd of cattle with crops on farmland of an innocent citizens of Ilora

Community and thereafter willfully destroyed the farm produce worth about N5m without any compensation.

The Oyo State NSCDC command Commandant stated that two other suspects, Olalekan Ibrahim and Akinpelu Lekan on facemask who both specialized in motor spare parts theft were arrested by the command with Items recovered from them including one tipper gear selector, one cap gear, one gear flag and eight belt buckles.

He stressed further that another two suspects, Folarin Banko and Olokun Olawale, who preliminary investigation revealed used their point of sales (POS) machine to fraudulently received money from a cellphone forcefully collected from an unsuspecting members of the public at a gunpoint during an armed robbery operation in November last year by yet to be identified fleeing armed robbery gang who went with the complainants Highlander Toyota Jeep.

He stated that two other suspects Abdulkadir Sahadu male 50yrs and Afolabi Moses male 44yrs were arrested for stealing a Bajaj Motorcycle with registration BDJ 413 UG reportedly parked at CAC Oke Agbara, Ashi, Bodija, on 2nd February 2024, around 1126hrs.

Commandant Padonu then urged members of the public to be vigilant and also ready to provide useful information to NSCDC and other Security agencies so as to collectively fight crime and criminality in the State. The suspects will be arraign in Court after the completion of the investigation.



The suspects arrested by Oyo NSCDC



# AFCON 2023: Ladipo Seeks Federal, State Govts Support For Supporters Club

By: AYO OJEDOKUN, Lagos

President General of Nigeria Football Supporters Club, Dr. Rafiu Ladipo has said that there is need for both federal and various state governments to financially appreciate hundreds of members of the club who are presently in Cote d'Ivoire supporting the Super Eagles.

Ladipo lamented that despite members of the club using their hard earned money to transport themselves to Cote d'Ivoire, pay their hotel bills, transport themselves to match venues and take care of other expenses, both the federal and state governments are not doing anything to support these set of patriotic Nigerians.

"It's an irony that both the Federal and state governments have not deemed it necessary to support these patriotic Nigerians who have risked their lives and hard earned resources to project the image of the country.

"At the beginning of the championship, 24 countries started the competition and all their supporters clubs were sponsored

by their governments and even given allowances to make their stay in Cote d'Ivoire comfortable.

"Right now, there are four countries remaining and it's only Nigeria that has not deemed it fit to give financial support to its supporters club, who have been drumming support for the Eagles, which is not encouraging", he lamented.

He noted that it's not easy doing the



voluntary work which is helping in projecting good image for the country, just as he appealed to both federal and state

governments to do something urgent and give financial support to the club before Sunday's final of the Nations Cup.

## SWAN Celebrates Super Eagles Triumph Over South Africa, Another AFCON Final Ticket

### *\*Hails FG, NFF, Pillar of Sports*

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The Sports Writers Association of Nigeria (SWAN) has hailed the determination and resilience of the Super Eagles which culminated to their victory against South Africa's Bafana Bafana in the semi-final of the ongoing Africa Cup of Nations in Ivory Coast.

The match ended 4-2 after penalty shootout.

SWAN President, Mr. Isaiah

Benjamin, in a statement yesterday, through the association's Secretary-General, Amb. Ikenna Okonkwo, said the team's qualification to another AFCON final is a testament that their fourth title pursuit is no fluke.

"On behalf of teeming Nigerian Sports Writers covering AFCON, I heartily congratulate Super Eagles players and technical crew for remaining focused from the beginning of the tournament till the final.

"The team's display shows resilience and commitment. From their play pattern, all the players exuded a high level of discipline, cooperation and unity of purpose.

"By this victory, the Super Eagles have affirmed that they are not in Cote D'Ivoire for a party, but to defend our national prestige and will certainly bring the trophy back to Nigeria, by the grace of God," the SWAN President said.

The number one Sports Writer in

Nigeria, also commended the Federal Government for providing needed resources and the Nigeria Football Federation (NFF) for standing firm despite challenges associated with the preparation and participation at AFCON.

He also hailed Nigeria's Pillar of Sports, Chief Donatus Agu Ejidike, for consistently showing moral and financial supports to country's senior men National team.

Super Eagles will now battle host



Ivory Coast in the final on Sunday February 11, 2024.

## GPFN Commemorates World Interfaith Harmony Week In Kaduna

One of the participants, Coordinator, Justice, Development and Peace Caritas, (JDPC) Kaduna state, Rev. Fr. Joshua Achir explained that, "as stakeholder in peace building and the promotion of inter-religious dialogue, the meeting will bring about awesome resolutions that will help us to live aright especially as brothers and sisters.

"You see Christians and Muslims interacting on issues of common interests, you see us eating together, talking about breaching peace and the call that we should not just be seen preaching peace but also should be seen living what we preach as practical examples of our expectation from our followers."

In the same vein, the new Chairman, Christian Association of Nigeria, (CAN) Kaduna state Rev. Ma'aji Caleb, said his leadership will leverage on the existing relationships between the two major religions in the state.

Rev. Caleb who expressed his dissatisfaction over the rate at which clerics use sacred places of worship for political rallies and campaigns, reiterated that, "we need to have a robust relationship, a proper understanding to deepen our appreciation in the way we understand, live, work, correct and appreciate each other for the sole purpose of improving our faith, our relationship in ensuring that peace and harmony is achieved, and that can only be

done where we have a remarkable relationship that exists between the two adherent major faith in our land.

"By the grace of God I want to leverage on the relationship between Christians and Muslims. Clerics must consider their podium as sacred place for sacred worship and services to draw the heart of men closer to God for proper relationship between man and his creator because after our sojourning on earth, we shall go back to God.

"Politicians should know their boundaries and operate within their boundaries. We must accord proper respect and honor to these sacred places of worship but that will begin

with the religious leaders."

The Secretary, JNi Kaduna chapter, Ibrahim Kefena, who also spoke with Journalists, at the event caution politicians against instigating any sect of persons to cause conflict for their own selfish gain.

He reminded them that whatever they do here on earth, they will die one day and meet with God to give account of their stewardship to God, even as he explained that all sins committed by man especially murder will attract heavier punishment.



# Nigeria Pillar Of Sports Applauds Super Eagles, Promises ₦1m Per Goal Against Cote d'Ivoire In AFCON Final

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The Nigeria Pillar of Sports Chief Donatus Agu Ejidike has applauded the Super Eagles of Nigeria for their epic qualification for the Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) final in Cote d'Ivoire.

The Super Eagles of Nigeria had on Wednesday night, defeated a hard-fighting Bafana Bafana of South Africa via a penalty shoot out (4-2), to pick the final ticket.

Speaking after watching the match with some soccer enthusiasts, and some newsmen, in Ilorin, the elated Sports

philanthropist praised the commitment and disciplined exhibited by the Eagles to achieve success in an encounter the Anambra-born Sports philanthropist describes as gritty.

He charged them to double their efforts as they face a much tougher challenge in the final.

As part of his motivation for the Super Eagles to bring the trophy to Nigeria, the Pillar of Sports who is also the Patron of the Nigerian Football Supporters Club (NFSC), promised to dole out one million Naira (₦1million) for every goal scored by the Eagles in the

regulation time of the final match, come Sunday.

Chief Ejidike commended the federal government, the Ministry of Sports development, the Nigeria Football Federation (NFF) and all Football stakeholders in the country, for standing strong behind the Super Eagles to excel, while also urging them to do more to see the team through to becoming the African champions for the fourth time.

He hailed the José Peseiro-tutored lads, for digging deep against a good and resilient South African team, in a match in which African grit, perseverance and

stamina were on display. The match was so keenly contested that, it ended 1-1 after 120 minutes of robust contest between the two sides. Nigeria won the penalty shootout, by 4-2.

The Super Eagles have never lost an AFCON match against the boys from the Rainbow nation. The team is also, yet to lose a match in the ongoing AFCON, and possess one of the meanest defences, conceding just two goals so far - one against the Equatorial Guinea, and the other against South Africa on Wednesday.

## AFCON: APC Chieftain, Dr Cairo Ojougboh slumps, Dies During Super Eagles Semi-final Clash

By: UTEBOR PETER, Asaba

A chieftain of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in Delta State has reportedly died while watching Nigeria versus South Africa match on Wednesday night.

The former member of the House of Representatives, representing Ika federal constituency 2003-2007 from Delta North, Chief Dr Cairo Ojougboh was confirmed dead in a hospital he was rushed to.

It was gathered that the Akinuwa of Agbor Kingdom in Ika Local Government Area, reportedly died after a penalty was awarded to South Africa.

According to sources, "the APC chieftain died while watching the football match between Nigeria and South Africa on Wednesday, February 7, 2024.

"He was said to be watching the live match yesterday. In course of the match, a penalty was awarded against Nigeria. And as soon as the South Africa team scored against Nigeria, Dr. Ojougboh was reported to have screamed, and then collapsed. Sadly, he passed on. May His soul Rest in Peace.

"The fearless and outspoken politician, Chief (Dr) Cairo Ojougboh, an APC chieftain died while watching the AFCON semi final match between Nigeria and South Africa.

"As soon as a penalty kick was awarded against Nigeria during the AFCON match with South Africa on Wednesday's semi-final clash in Bouake, Ivory coast, he slumped".

Other sources said, "The sad

incident happened when the penalty was awarded against Nigeria. Dr Ojougboh was said to have shouted and slumped due to massive heart attack when South Africa scored. May his Soul rest in peace, Amen."

"P.S. We need to monitor our vital signs regularly and try not to take these football matches too much to heart." Sources added.

However, in a reaction to Dr Cairo Ojougboh's death, a Delta born journalist, Jimita (JP) said, "Chief Dr. Cairo Ojougboh was a simple man. I was a budding reporter with Urhobo Voice, a provincial newspaper in Delta State when I had my first encounter with this politician of note from the Ika speaking area of our multi ethnic state.

"Cairo did the unusual, stopped his long convoy for my sake at Eku community. I called him on phone that morning in 2003, it was speculated that he was gunning for the coveted governorship seat of the oil rich state in sub Sahara west Africa then, Delta State.

"After I introduced myself as a reporter with the Urhobo V and would want to have a media chat with him, interestingly, he asked where I was and I told him I was in Eku community, Ethiopie East Local Government Area. And his response, was heart warming for a reporter hungry for news. He said his convoy was coming from Agbor and he was around Obiaruku, headquarters of Ukwuani Local Government Area.

"As a young reporter, I had this

practice of always getting set for the day before 7am, even if no assignment in view, I would just be prepared for any urgent call that could take me out. So I was already set for the day when we spoke.

"I still remember, French safari suits were my favorite then because they made me look smart, enjoying acceptance within the ruling and the subject class.

"I still recall, I had a Volkswagen Golf car. Since I was already set for the day, pronto, I hopped into my car, headed straight to Eku junction to wait for the guber aspirant. I called to let him know I was opposite the popular Edewor Hotel then. I felt it was the appropriate landmark for him to know where I was.

"I leaned on my car, clutching my Cendo phone /, anxiously waiting for his call.

"Suddenly, I saw a long convoy of cars driving on top speed, my instinct immediately told me to call, that it could certainly be Chief Ojougboh coming. I did, the phone rang out twice. I was already feeling downcast when my Cendo phone rang, behold it was Chief Cairo at the other end. "I still recall his words, let me paraphrase, 'Where are you my brother, I slept off. I just saw your call. Let me wait for you at the secondary school by the road side.'

"I knew the exact spot where he was and with the aid of my Golf car, I caught up with him in split of seconds. He obviously liked



Chief Dr. Cairo Ojougboh

the personality he saw and he ushered me to the seat next to the executive corner in his elegant car. The convoy was still waiting. And he said he was heading to Warri for some political stuff, he would prefer I come to meet him at his residence in Agbor the following day. I alighted and waved at him, wishing him a safe trip.

"The following day I was in Agbor. Chief Cairo was very receptive, gifted with oratory.

"We saw again when he was Vice Chairman South South of the People's Democratic Party (PDP), at the party's zonal secretariat in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. This time, I was the

Bureau Chief, Vanguard Newspaper, Rivers State. He granted an interview on the state of his party.

"My last encounter with him was when he was the Executive Director Project of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC). As journalists, we accompanied his team from NDDC to report his inspection of the Warri - Benin express road.

"Chief Cairo Ojougboh was a simple man, he never had those artificial barriers associated with men of the ruling class.

"May God grant his soul eternal rest." Jimitota Onoyume, JP, the journalist added.



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## AMDF Begins Community Sensitisation On Fact-Checking Misinformation In Kaduna, Nigeria

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The Africa Media Development Foundation (AMDF), has begun a One-Month Community Sensitization Outreach on Fact-Checking Misinformation in Kasuwan Magani in Kajuru and Makera in Kaduna South local government areas of Kaduna State, Nigeria.

The Project which seeks to raise awareness on the prevalence and impact of mis/disinformation in the project communities, will also sensitize and build capacity of over 400 participants in fact-checking methodologies. AMDF said that, "Mis/disinformation affects all aspects of society, impacting all persons and all sectors of human endeavor. It can bring disrepute to persons and institutions, cause conflicts and clashes or escalate them. Thus, polarizing people and communities, impacting economies adversely and stagnate growth."

A statement signed by the Executive Director, Africa Media Development Foundation, Sekyen



Dadik, made available yesterday, said that if not curtailed, the spread of false or misleading information can sow discord, cause division and disunity, promote confusion and uncertainty, and consequently inspire wrong decisions. "In rural or Sub Urban communities where there are few smart phones and internet access is low, misinformation has a greater efficacy. It is generally more readily believable because of low access to alternative narratives, spread by word of mouth and by persons who are known.

"Therefore, the Project aims to reach community individuals with particular focus on the older generation, people living with disabilities and women, considering how unverified information could easily pass as the truth within such groups. "The one month project will involve advocacy to community leaders, sensitization outreaches to the target groups to engage them on simple steps to check, verify and confirm information received before passing it on. "It is believed that at the end of the Project, participants will be able to

verify information and curtail the spread of false or unverified information thereby building informed and empowered communities. "The Community Sensitization Aon Fact-Checking Misinformation being implemented by Africa Media Development Foundation is a project under the FactCheck Africa Program of the Brain Builders Youth Development Initiative funded by the United States of America Department of States and supported by BECERA," the statement said.

## NILEST Staff Attend Digital Skills For Youth Empowerment Training

By; SANIALIYU, Zaria

Some staff of Nigerian Institute of Leather and Science Technology, (NILEST) Zaria were beneficiaries of the Nigerian Communication Commission (NCC) sponsored training of the Nigerian Youths on Digital Skills, which took place in Kano between January 16 to 18, 2024

A statement signed by the institute's PRO, Mr. Remi Bashoun, said the training, titled, "Digital Skills for Youth Empowerment," had selected youths from Northern states represented, while the selected beneficiaries from NILEST who were mobilised to the workshop by the magnanimous permission of the management led by Prof.

M.K. Yakubu, cut across tribes, religions and gender. He said, the permission by the DG for the nominees to participate in the training programme, which held at Niimah Guest Palace Hotel, was necessary because the programme was not NILEST sponsored. The workshop offered the beneficiaries the

opportunity to learn skills to use applications such as Canva, html, Capcut etc., that can be used for web designing, content creation and many others. The 2-day event was capped up by the beneficiaries being issued a certificate of participation and empowered with simless, wireless tablet each."

### Nigeria Pillar Of Sports Applauds Super Eagles, Promises #1m Per Goal Against Cote d'Ivoire In AFCON Final

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## GPFN Commemorates World Interfaith Harmony Week In Kaduna

\*Says conflict entrepreneurs frustrating peace building efforts in Nigeria

By; ISAAC ODEH, Kaduna

Global Peace Foundation Nigeria, (GPFN) has met with Faith Leaders to commemorate the 2024 World Interfaith Harmony Week on the theme, "Celebrating Unity In Diversity: Building Bridges Of Harmony."

The Country Director, GPFN Rev. John Joseph Hayab, in Kaduna on Tuesday, said that the event is a celebration of people of faith beginning from 1st to 7th of February every year, as instituted by the United Nations in 2010.

He added that the essence is for faith leaders to come and discuss the importance of harmony, tolerance and respect for one another.

The peace Ambassador who also lamented the activities of conflict entrepreneurs in Nigeria, said that they are frustrating peace building efforts in the country, as division amongst residents gives political class opportunity to milk common wealth freely.

While calling on Nigerians to resist the temptation of seeing their fellow human being as enemy, the Country Director urged that members of the two major Faiths in the Nigeria should team up together as one family under God and thereafter synergize to get what belongs to them from the political class.

"We realized that those who further the division do that because through that they can continue to have a filled day milking from our common wealth and we cannot challenge them. The reason why today we see that patriotism is not really strong in our country is because we are not treating citizens as citizens but as though they are visitors, creating divisions amongst them as if it is we versus them.

"Every citizen is a citizen and has equal rights in the constitution. Therefore, this nation should not be divided using any form of identity but let everybody be respected, treated equally with justice, equity fairness. When people know that their country care, love and want to defend them, they will be patriotic.

"At the global peace foundation we try to promote that we are one family under God, we have gathered Faith leaders across the wide today to remind them of the important of this day so that we can continue to promote peace together we want a situation where every faith leader cut across the two major religions make a new friend today and even follow up to know each other's family." He said.

Meanwhile, the Deputy Director, Bureau Of Interfaith, Kaduna state, Rev. Fr. Anthony Shawuya, said that they are doing everything possible to ensure that their mandate to see religious harmony and peaceful coexistence in Kaduna state thrive at all costs.

Shawuya, disclosed that they have established an inter-religious harmony committee and as well as religious preaching bill, to curb the menace of hate speech especially by clerics who use their podium to instigate their followers to cause different degrees of unrest in the society.

Speaking with newsmen shortly after the event, the Project Leader for Global Peace Women in Nigeria, Aisha Yakubu, said "women are more vulnerable and at the receiving end when it comes to whatever kind of conflict in the society, adding that meeting like this that fosters harmony, peaceful coexistence will give room for peace and more economic development for women and social inclusion because what causes the vulnerability is the lack of social inclusion.

"So gathering like this should also include a lot of women so that women can be given the chances to speak because they are the first respondent to Violence and conflict."

In his remarks, the Northern Coordinator, GPFN Sheikh Abdullahi Halliru Maraya, called on the political class to concentrate more on their constitutional mandate of protecting the lives and properties of the citizenry and prepare social welfare for the people, stressing that Nigerians today is suffering multidimensional challenges.

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