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National Youth Alliance Moves To Register 50m Members

President visits Jos, Lafia, to inaugurate Jigawa Chapter on Sunday

By: BASHIR BELLO
DOLLARS, Abuja

Head of the 2027
general elections
in Nigeria, a
frontline group, National
Youth Alliance (NYA) has
kick started moves to
register no fewer than 50
million youth into its
network through its "We
Move 9ja Project" to
engender change that will
see to a masses friendly
government.

This was disclosed by
NYA National President,
Ambassador Aliyu Bin
Abbas, while addressing

some select youth leaders
in Jos, the Plateau State
capital yesterday.

A statement signed by his
SA Media and Publicity,
Okpani Jacob Onjewu
Dickson, made available
on Thursday February 1,
2024, said that
Ambassador Abbas told
the gathering that the time
to be patriotic is now.

He said, "Nigeria is our
home, we don't have
anywhere else to call our
fatherland, hence we must
all come together in
patriotism and save our
nation by ensuring only

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FG Commends Dangote
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*Minister lauds Cement Plant's
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Katsina Governor Moves To Revive 2 Songhai Farms Established By Shema



Gov Radda

By; SULAIMAN AHMED MISAU, Katsina

Governor Dikko Umaru Radda of Katsina State will revive two moribund Songhai Farms in the state. The two Songhai Farms' Centres were established by the administration of the former governor of the state, Barrister Ibrahim Shehu Shema at Makera Village attached to Zobe and Mairuwa Dams in Faskari and Dutsinma local government areas respectively.

Governor Radda in a statement by his Chief Press Secretary, Mohammed Kaula gave the assurance when he led some top functionaries of the State Government and Dr. Salisu Ingawa, the former chairman Songhai Farm Centre to the Songhai Farm in Porto-Novo, Benin Republic, on Friday.

Speaking after touring the Porto-Novo Songhai farm, the Governor bemoaned the decay of the two Katsina Songhai models and pledged to resuscitate them, the reason he added necessitated his visit to Benin.

"As you are aware, we have a similar centre built about 10 years ago by one of our former Governors. But the project, as I speak with you today, is in a very sorry state," Governor Radda emphasized.

He said "It is totally dilapidated, and the place has not been put to full use for the benefit of teeming young men in our state. But as an administration desirous to changing the narrative of the farms, we decided to come back to the base."

Governor Dikko Radda, however, said "We want to copy the concept here. Because it is here that our students were trained back then. About 60 of them, specifically. As we are here now, we have seen everything. And by the time we return, we can be able to revive our Songhai farm centres.

"Because that is the only way our teeming youths can benefit from the investment that was put in place. A lot of tax-payers money were used to establish the centres. And it was conceived in such a manner that it can be useful, in terms of developing the economic fortunes of our Katsina state, and Nigeria in general," he said.

Radda further noted that he and his delegation are particularly interested in learning about the management structure of the Porto-Novo Songhai farm centre, in order to effectively manage the moribund centres in Katsina.

"We want you to advise us accordingly on how to run the centre. And if possible, we can enter into a partnership on running our Songhai farms. This will entail that you help us develop it for a certain period of time, before our people take over," he reiterated.

While taking Governor Radda and his delegation round the farm, Father Godfrey Nzamujo, the founder of Songhai Farms, commended the Katsina Governor and his vision to revamp the Songhai farms in the state.

He promised to support Governor Radda to actualize his lofty dream

Anambra 2025: You're Scared Of Me, Ubah Tells Soludo

By; MIKE ODEH JAMES, Kaduna

Senator Ifeanyi Ubah, representing Anambra South Senatorial District, has alleged that Governor Chukwuma Soludo's recent actions against him stemmed from fear.

Ubah, who is a chieftain of the All Progressives Congress (APC) told reporters on Monday January 29, in Nnewi, that since declaring his intention to vie for the 2025 governorship election, Soludo has persistently targeted him. However, he pledged that he would do only four years if given the opportunity by the people of Anambra, while advising Soludo to concentrate and give the people the good governance he promised them instead of being afraid of his shadows.

Explaining the rationale behind a single term, Ubah emphasized the commitment to honour the rotational arrangement established by a gentleman's agreement, ensuring equitable representation for the Anambra South Senatorial District.

This arrangement has governed the zoning and rotation of the state's governorship position since 2014.

Soludo, is also, from Anambra South Senatorial District and is in the



Sen. Ifeanyi Ubah,

second year of his first tenure in office.

Ubah said he would not only do one term of four years, but also conduct local government elections in the state within four months if allowed to serve Ndi Anambra.

He said four years are enough for any focused governor of a state to do great things and change the lives of his people positively.

Describing the development in the state as very slow, Ubah said 80 per cent of his blueprints or ideas for the development of the state are innovative and beyond

the capacity of his opponents.

He said if voted governor, Anambra state would be both the commercial and health hub in the Southeast and Nigeria in general.

He expressed disappointment with the way the incumbent governor of the state, Prof Chukwuma Soludo, was disrespecting the traditional institution in the state.

He said the governor's action was petty and unfortunate, adding that he would do much better in the classroom than in government.

Ubah said: "Everybody has his or her calling.

Some are in the classroom, others in business and vice versa. The Governor is not good at what he is doing now, we have to tell ourselves the truth.

"My plans for the development of Anambra State are huge. As a private person and politician, I have done great in the transformation of the lives of many people.

"I have equally done it both in sports, education, commerce, employment and in overall youth and women empowerment. I have the capacity to make the people of my state happy again and I am ready too."

Delta CPS Pays Enrolment Fees For Indigent Students

By; UTEBOR PETER, Asaba

Chief Press Secretary to the Governor of Delta State, Sir Festus Ahon has paid West African Examination Council (WAEC) enrolment fees for all indigent students of Erhavwen Secondary School, Ekrethavwen-Agbarho, Ughelli North Local Government Area of the state.

Making the payment on Tuesday in Ekrethavwen-Agbarho when he visited the school, Sir Ahon said the gesture, is in line with Governor Sheriff

Oborevwo's MORE Agenda for all Deltans.

According to him, "we are here to assist indigent students of this school to pay for their WAEC enrolment fees in line with the MORE Agenda of Governor Oborevwo for all Deltans.

"We are here to support them to make sure that non of them is left behind in their educational pursuit.

"Education is key to the development of any community and once our children are educated they will be able to contribute their quota to the development of the

community in the future". He appealed to the Principal and staff to dedicate their time to teach and guide the students to be of good conduct and avoid social vices that may hinder their education and goal in life.

Responding, the School Principal, Mrs Patience Ekakitie commended the Governor's spokesman for his kind gesture, adding that the students would justify the gesture by doing well in their exams and focused.

Also speaking, a teacher in the school and trustee of the Ekrethavwen-Agbarho

community, Mr Sunday Damatie lauded Sir Ahon for his humanitarian works in the community and appealed to the Governor's spokesman to use his good office to get the state government to fence the school to avoid the encroachment of the land.

"As an illustrious son of Ekrethavwen community, we appreciate your kind gesture of humanitarian service in this community and beyond and it is our prayer that God will continue to elevate you to render more services to mankind," Damatie said.

National Youth Alliance Moves To Register 50m Members

President visits Jos, Lafia, to inaugurate Jigawa Chapter on Sunday

credible leaders emerge. "We are expected to have offices in all the 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) and you seated here, are expected to champion this movement in this state." He explained to them that the National Youth Alliance in its continued dedication to creating new vistas, is an avowed decision in favour of the Nigerian Youth, which will leave no stone unturned in achieving same.

On Wednesday January 31, 2024 in Lafia, the Nasarawa State capital, he said, "We are in Nasarawa to reiterate our support for the youth and women who have consistently rejected the bully and wicked All Progressives Congress (APC) government that has incarcerated our sisters and mothers who protested against electoral injustice who stole the votes of a clear winner.

"We remain resolute and faithful to electoral impartiality and judicial steadfastness. Democracy is only sustained by a fair and just practice," he said. He disclosed that in view of that, the Jigawa chapter of NYA would be



inaugurated on Sunday February 4, 2024.

He was optimistic that before the ending of February 2024, about one million youth would have willingly joined the movement.

The We Move 9ja Project was set up on the following objectives;

1. To operate as a non-aligned political organization

2. To galvanize Nigerians,

young and old to discharge their duties and obligations to the progress of Nigeria.

3. Advance and protect the interest of Nigeria and Nigerians

4. To ensure the government discharges its duties and obligations to the good people of Nigeria.

5. To operate as a check to excesses hindering the smooth progress of

Nigeria.

6. To enlighten Nigerians on the need to be actively involved in politics and good governance of Nigeria for the development of Nigeria's democracy.

"Hence, Nigerians are called upon to join the noble cause, by registering online via, <https://forms.gle/4fstZLoFPa4373ro7>" the statement said.

PDP Governors' Forum Commiserates With Plateau, Contributes N100m To Victims Of Attack

*Advocates establishment of state police

By; BUHARI B. BELLO, Jos

The People's Democratic Party (PDP) Governors' Forum has expressed condolences to the government and people of Plateau State in the wake of the Christmas eve attacks and recent security breaches in Bokkos, Mangu, and Barkin-Ladi local government areas.

As a gesture of solidarity, the governors contributed N100 million to aid the survivors.

Senator Bala Mohammed, Chairman of the Forum and Governor of Bauchi State, led the delegation to the New Government House in Little Rayfield, Jos.

He conveyed the forum's sympathy to Governor Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang and the survivors, while advocating for the establishment of state police to address the prevailing security challenges.

"We, representing the PDP Governors Forum, extend our heartfelt condolences to you and the people of Plateau. The crisis is unfortunate, and we urge you to remain focused amidst these challenges," Sen. Mohammed remarked.

Acknowledging Plateau's role as a home for

everyone, he emphasized the need for state-specific security measures. Sen. Mohammed appealed to the Federal Government and security agencies to intensify efforts in tackling the nation's security challenges.

Governor Mutfwang, in response, expressed gratitude for the support and committed to fostering unity across faith and ethnicity on the Plateau.

He stressed the importance of rebuilding trust among communities to address criminal activities effectively.

"As governor, I believe in the unity of our people. If we rebuild trust and treat criminality uniformly, we can overcome these challenges," Governor Mutfwang stated.

He affirmed the PDP's significance in Plateau and across Nigeria, pledging to continue delivering democratic dividends to the people.

Among the governors who came for the visit, include, Sen. Ademola Adeleke, Osun State, Rt. Hon. Ahmadu Umaru Fintiri, Adamawa State, Seyi Makinde, Oyo State, Godwin Obaseki, Edo State, Mr. Peter Mba, Enugu State and the Director General of the PDP Forum, Hon. C.T.O Maduabum.

Police Nabs Cafe Operators For Defrauding 300 Kaduna Varsity Students Of N60m Tuition Fees

By; AMOS TAUNA, Kaduna

Kaduna State Police Command has arrested a syndicate of three internet fraudsters for defrauding unsuspecting students of Kaduna State University (KASU) of their tuition fees to the tune of N60 million.

The Command's Police Public Relations Officer, ASP Mansir Hassan, in a statement on Wednesday, said the suspected fraudsters have so far, defrauded over 300 students of the university. The Police spokesman gave names of the suspects as, Muhammad Uthman

Busari of Nariya Kaduna, AbdulAzeez Hamza of Hayin Dan-mani Kaduna and Noel Nims Audiya.

According to him, "the suspects who are mainly cybercafe operators compromised the students' registration portal and took undue advantage of students who chose to pay their fees online rather than via the normal banking platforms.

"The suspects often collect tuition fees from students in full but will pay a lesser amount into the State's Treasury Single Account (TSA) and go further to intercept and manipulate the electronic transaction receipts from

the TSA to read complete payment.

"So far, the suspects have short-changed over three hundred students of KASU and the total amount involved is put at over sixty million naira which the principal suspect Muhammad Uthman Busari have used in building and furnishing a house, purchase of a car, electronic appliances, gadgets and plots of lands in both Kaduna and Kwara States.

"The suspects have since been charged to court for prosecution. In order to checkmate activities of computer related crimes in the State, the Kaduna

Police Command wishes to inform members of the public of the newly established cybercrime unit by the Commissioner of Police, CPA.D. Ali, psc which is targeted at investigating cybercrime related offences.

"Thus, victims of social media accounts hacking, fake purchase alerts, deceptive social romance, cryptocurrency/Forex frauds among many other offences within the State, should forward their complaints to the Commissioner of Police through the newly created unit for diligent investigation."



By-elections: INEC Constituting Itself Like Arm Of APC - CUPP

***Says electoral umpire obstacle to Nigeria's democracy**

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The Coalition of United Political Parties (CUPP) has expressed reservations on the role of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) as By-elections hold across the country tomorrow.

This was expressed in a statement signed by National Secretary, CUPP, High Chief Peter Ameh, made available to our correspondent yesterday.

"CUPP is in trepidation that INEC is beginning to constitute itself as an arm of the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC). We are at a loss, and find it extremely hard to hazard any guess as to the reason for its removal of PDP from the ballot, only, but to make it an easy ride to victory for APC candidates," it said.

According to the statement titled, "INEC AS AN OBSTACLE TO NIGERIA'S DEMOCRACY" CUPP frowned at the alleged denial of People's Democratic Party (PDP), the chance to field candidates in Plateau.

"The Coalition of United Political Parties (CUPP) has observed with great dismay the ignoble role the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), is about to play in the forthcoming bye elections in Plateau North

Senatorial District by denying the People Democratic Party (PDP) the right to contest as a party in the elections.

"INEC has hinged its refusal to manifest PDP on the ballot papers on a judgement of the Election Panel of the Court of Appeal that has already been discredited by the Supreme Court as miscarriage of justice, unjust and obnoxious, on the grounds that the Court of Appeal had no jurisdiction to entertain a pre election matter.

"At no point was PDP barred from representing its candidates for any by election, and as a matter of convention, a by election is meant for those who had participated in the earlier election," CUPP said.

The coalition added that, "With this development, the majority of people of Plateau North Senatorial District will be disenfranchised by denying them the opportunity of choosing the candidates they overwhelmingly voted for in the February, 2023 National Assembly election".

CUPP therefore, used the opportunity to put Nigerians on notice and at alert on the ignoble and obnoxious behaviours of INEC past and present that is capable of undoing our democracy.

Federal Workers Say FG Not Sincere With Payment Of Minimum Wage, Bonus, To Shut Secretariats From Monday

**Says no extension of 14 days ultimatum to FG*

**Demands solidarity from CSOs*

By: BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

The Federal Workers Forum (FWF) on Monday, alerted that the Federal Government is not been sincere with payment of wage award and the quest for a new national minimum wage for workers.

Raising the alarm in a communique issued at the end of an online meeting of the forum, signed by its National Coordinator, Comrade Andrew Emelieze, FWF said there will be no extension of its 14 days ultimatum to the Federal Government.

The forum noted that, "Government has been speaking with different lips. We have reviewed the situation at hand as regards the payment of the wage award to federal government workers, the new minimum wage and the state of the nation.

"It was generally agreed that the federal government has not been sincere with the payment of the wage award

and the quest for a new national minimum wage", it said.

FWF added, "Government has been speaking with different lips. At a time, government claimed that it will clear all the outstanding arrears of the wage award owed and at another time, the Accountant General of the Federation (AGF) has come to give reasons why government cannot pay the wage award.

"Most workers only got the September payment and most of the federal workers are now being owed four months wage award arrears. Most unfortunately, the purpose of putting in place the wage award has been defeated".

According to the forum, "The question has been that if government is treating the issues of 35,000 Naira wage award for federal workers this way, then there is no hope of the actualization of a living wage for the Nigerian workers within this period".

The forum noted, "Workers

have endured this hardship enough and we have decided that there shall be no extension of the 14 days ultimatum", saying, "we are left with no other option other than to call out all our members out to exercise their constitutional rights to protest against the mass suffering faced by workers".

FWF stressed, "If after seven days, government fails to respond, the protest will lead to a total shut down of all federal government secretariats nationwide from Monday, February 5th, 2024", vowing, "We will not take any flimsy excuse for not paying the wage award as put by the AGF neither are we going to tolerate the staggered payment as done before nor accept part payment of the wage award again".

It maintained that the "protests is continuous until all outstanding wage award is cleared. That workers nationwide gather in front of all federal government secretariats nationwide and

occupy it.

The communique reads further:

"That wherever possible in all MDA's, especially in federal government higher institutions, protest should also go on. That all federal government workers should take this call as a matter of duty and not betray the struggle. We shall all assemble for the peaceful protest and demonstrations.

"We call for the solidarity of the civil society and the mass populace to join us in this struggle against oppression. Together we will resist hardship and mass suffering on the land. We are using this opportunity to call on the federal government to pay all that is owed the federal workers else the protest shall continue. Workers have suffered enough. We are ready for the protest. No going back, mobilization is in top gear. No retreat no surrender. Forward ever backward never.

Katsina Governor Receives 35 Abducted Persons Rescued By Troops

**Introduces free medicare to victims of bandit attacks*

By: SULAIMAN AHMED MISAU, Katsina

Governor Dikko Umaru Radda of Katsina State has received 35 abducted Persons rescued by troops of the Nigerian Army recently kidnapped by armed bandits in Tashar Nagulle and Nahuta in Batsari Local Government Area of the state.

Chief Press Secretary to the Governor, Ibrahim Mohammed Kaula said in a statement, that the victims were rescued and handed over to the governor at the

Katsina State Government House by the Commander, 17 Brigade of the Nigerian army, Brigadier General O.A. Fadairo.

Speaking at the occasion, Governor Radda thanked the "Almighty Allah for rescuing the victims without any casualty from the security operatives or the hitherto abducted civilians."

The governor maintained that success was being recorded in the fight against banditry and many terrorists in the state have been killed, with their camps dislodged

and a lot of weapons recovered through the joint efforts of security operatives in the state.

While commending the efforts of the Army and other security operatives, Governor Radda reiterated that, his administration would deal with Persons 'romancing' with terrorists in the state.

Governor Dikko Umaru Radda said the state government has also introduced free medicare to victims of bandit attacks, and allowances to security

agencies, as well as educational support to those who lost their parents during violent attacks of terrorists.

Governor Radda donated "One hundred thousand (100,000) Naira each to the 35 rescued persons for them to revive their normal business when they arrive home."

Earlier, Brigadier General O.A. Fadairo, said the victims were rescued at Dumburum Forest after an intensive gun battle between soldiers and the bandits.

SPANCI To Gov Makinde: Don't Present Staff Of Office To Olakunle As Alamura of Amura

By: BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

A human rights group, Save The Poor and Needy Charity Initiative (SPANCI) yesterday, advised Governor Seyi Makinde not to present staff of office to Deacon Samuel Olakunle, as the Alamura of Amura land in Orire Local Government Area of the state.

SPANCI in a petition addressed to Gov Makinde, signed by its President, Comrade Yemi Ezekiel Bello alleged that Olakunle is standing a criminal trial in suit No: MI/1047C/2023 at Magistrate Court in Ibadan.

According to the SPANCI President Oyo State Government has prosecuted and arraigned Olakunle in a magistrate court in Ibadan after he refused to appear for interrogation and investigation on some criminal allegations bothering on land grabbing, sponsoring

hooligans and thugs.

Comrade Bello noted that the Oyo State Ministry of Local Government and Chieftaincy Matters is aware that Olakunle has pending criminal cases against him in the court and pending petition before the ministry.

"Urgent petition against an act of unlawful upcoming presentation of staff of office as traditional ruler to deacon Olakunle Oladejo Samuel as the Alamura of Amura land Orire local government Ikoyi Ile Oyo state, an act that can lead to perversion, prevention, obstruction and defeat of cause of justice in suit number: MI/1047C/2023", it said.

SPANCI added, "We have being reliably informed and have also confirmed from our clients Pa Thomas Ademola Bamigbala and Chief Adeoye Akinpelu the Onilodo of Ilodo and instructed by them to write this letter so that their rights might be protected".

"Our client said the ministry for local government already knows that deacon Oladejo has pending criminal cases against him in the court and pending petition before the ministry and also referred to them from the state's real property protection and anti land grabbing task force bothering on the real alamura of amura title between him and Pa Moses Ajani".

It stressed further "We believe that the administration of his Excellency, Engineer Seyi Makinde is a very noble and justice serving administration and will never be involved in illegality and also the office of honorable Commissioner for local government and chieftaincy matter should not be involved in any act that can lead to perversion, prevention, obstruction and defeat of cause of justice as the honorable Commissioner is a law abiding and God

fearing personality per excellence"

SPANCI emphasized ""We also know that it is wrong for state government to prosecute someone and also select for coronation or presentation of staff of office to the same person standing criminal trial in court of law as this will be a bad precedent", adding, "We therefore humbly refer the state through the ministry for local government and chieftaincy matters to the state's taskforce on real property protection and anti land grabbing for verification of our claim since his case file is with them".

"We also humbly request for immediate removal of Deacon Olakunle Oladejo Samuel, the self acclaimed Alamura of Amura from those who will be presented with the staff of office on Friday 2nd of February 2024 just two days more in the interest of justice and not politics.

Governor Inuwa Opens New Vista Of Investments Into Gombe

*Woos investors, capital market operators as Gombe plans bond issuance to finance critical projects
*Rings historic Closing Gong at NGX

By; JACOB ONJEWU
DICKSON

Gombe State Governor, Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya Wednesday, made the first move among the subnationals in Nigeria to source for green bond funding to execute his environmental friendly projects.

A statement signed by the Director-General (Press Affairs) Government House Gombe, Ismaila Uba Misilli, made available yesterday, said that the governor met a broad spectrum of investors, investment experts, stock brokers and array of capital market players to source for the green bond funding window as a means of consolidating his investment drive into Gombe State.

The meeting at the Nigerian Exchange Limited (NGX) is a precursor to the second edition of the Gombe State Investment Summit tagged Go-Invest 2.0. which is billed for November 2024 in the Gombe State capital. Governor Inuwa Yahaya said he led his team to the NGX to showcase to the whole world the potential in Gombe State and invite investors over.

"We need this funds to engage in viable projects that are eco-friendly, sustainable, and in conformity with international policy on climate change. It is also to invest in eco-friendly projects that will contribute to the well being of the citizens and minimize the impact of climate change on their livelihoods.

"We shall be expanding the frontiers of our afforestation programs which our administration has been prosecuting under the Gombe Goes Green project. In addition, we will also pursue the solar energy project which has helped Gombe State tremendously since we embarked on solar energy as an alternative source of power in Gombe State.

"We are expecting to raise N30 billion, but we will do it in tranches. We are sourcing for N15b for now and when we see how well that is doing, we can now come back.

He explained that Gombe is an agrarian economy with over 70% of the population actively engaged in the sector, adding that "we will expand the agricultural sector potentials with more funding".

The Chairman of the Northern



Governors' Forum is very optimistic of his success at the NGX. He said, "I'm sure from the acceptance we have received from the investors and feelers from the exchange floor we are sure of meeting our target".

"We are at the centre of North East Nigeria, we are relatively peaceful and infact number one in peace and cordiality in Nigeria. We have every cause to invite investors to Gombe State because we can guarantee the safety of the investors and their investments, he added.

"We are currently leading Nigeria in the ease of doing business, winning it back to back in 2021 and 2022; we run a very transparent government devoid of bottlenecks. We are digitally compliant and our procurement processes are very open and seamless", Inuwa Yahaya told the investors.

"I also make bold to say that all the enabling environment for business success have been provided in Gombe State. We have the Dadinikwa Hydroelectric Power Station with a capacity for 40 MW power supply which is already commissioned. The Network Eleven - 100 road network which connects all the rural areas with the metropolis has seen over 1000 kilometers of road already constructed and we are still working", the governor added.

The well attended event which had virtually all the investment

sector representatives in attendance witnessed a torrent of commendations for Governor Inuwa, as investors were impressed with the way he sold his State to the sector, demonstrating both passion, ownership and ebullience of a business man who not only knows his onions but has done his homework very well.

The stockbrokers assured the governor that his request for funding has been well received and that he will get all he came for.

Obviously winning the confidence of the investors present, Hassan Bello who has served as the chairman of Nigerian Shippers Council for eight years, had this to say about the visiting Governor. "Whoever listens to your presentation and didn't take action is not a serious minded investor."

He however expressed his desire to invest in the area of dry port infrastructure, to which the Governor reeled out the huge opportunities that abound in Gombe State.

Waheed Olagunju, a former managing director of the Bank of Industry commended the huge steps taken so far by the Gombe State government under the leadership of Governor Inuwa Yahaya but opined that it is expedient to guarantee the coming investors of political security. To this, Governor Yahaya expressed the fact that in

Gombe State there's always a continuity of projects. He added that his 10 - Year Development Plan, DEVAGOM has taken care of investment and socioeconomic stability for the next seven years even after his exit.

The Managing Director/ CEO of the Nigeria Exchange Limited, Teni Popoola, praised the Gombe State Governor as a worthy partner in progress.

"You're one of the few pillars of support for the exchange, who have confidence in the exchange for funding. We have done over N55 billion fund across the states and we are delighted and eager to work with Gombe State having seen the huge potentials of your state as you have eloquently and convincingly presented it to Nigeria Exchange today".

Before departing from the Nigeria Exchange Building, Governor Inuwa Yahaya performed the ceremonial closing bell ringing at the trading floor amidst cheers and eulogies. He becomes the first dignitary in the year 2024 to ring the closing gong.

Fielding questions after the closing ceremony, Governor Inuwa Yahaya further shed light on his mission to the NGX.

The Governor was satisfied with the visit to the exchange, passing a vote of confidence in their ability to deliver.

"Nigeria Exchange is a key player in the world exchange and

we have confidence in its ability to deliver our needs". He concluded.

Dr. Umaru Kwairanga, Chairman of Nigerian Exchange (NGX) Group Plc, commended Governor Inuwa Yahaya for his visionary leadership in Gombe State, acknowledging the Governor's efforts in setting the pace for business-friendly policies.

He urged members of the capital market community to rally behind and support Governor Inuwa Yahaya's initiatives, citing Gombe's potential as an ideal investment hub.

"We have vast lands for agriculture and food production, almost every kind of mineral resource that you can think of, and a large hardworking populace in Gombe," affirmed Dr. Kwairanga, underscoring the promising prospects that make Gombe State an attractive destination for investors.

Governor Inuwa was accompanied by Speaker Abubakar Mohammed Luggerewo, Hon. Ali Baba Manu, Commissioners of Finance and Economic Development, Muhammad Gambo Magaji; Trade, Industry and Tourism, Nasiru Mohammed Aliyu mni, Budget and Economic Planning, Salihu Baba Alkali, members of GoInvest steering committee; Dr. Ishiyaku Mohammed, Benson Yahaya among other

Zulum Lays Foundation Stone For Qatar Charity Foundation Projects In Borno

*Approves 2.5 hectares of land, issues C of O

By; SADIQ ABUBAKAR, Maiduguri

Borno State Governor, Babagana Umara Zulum, has facilitated the execution of eight projects, including a school, orphanage, clinic, shops, staff quarters, sports ground, charity office and a Juma'at mosque by the Qatar Charity Foundation in Maiduguri.

The governor disclosed this on Sunday, while laying the foundation stone for the construction of the eight projects in Bolori area of Maiduguri metropolis.

Zulum said, "It gives me pleasure to stand here today to lay the foundation for the construction of an integrated school, orphanage, clinic, and many other projects by the Qatar Charity Foundation in Maiduguri. I have been working towards this since 2015, and today we have seen the light at the end of the tunnel."

The governor also lamented the devastating effects of insurgency for over a decade of Boko Haram insurgency when

several people were killed and many properties worthy billions of Naira were destroyed.

Zulum said, "We have identified a total of over 100,000 orphans resulting from Boko Haram crisis. These figures are the official ones; the unofficial figures are even higher than this.

"In the past seven years, we had about 3.2 million displacements, with about 50% being resettled and about 1.2 million still in the IDP camps. 432 health centres were destroyed, 900,000 houses were destroyed and over 5,000 classrooms were destroyed."

Zulum however, expressed gratitude to the Qatar Charity Foundation for choosing Borno State to execute numerous projects that will have a direct impact on the lives of the people.

"What you are doing today will, In sha Allah, have a positive impact on our society. On behalf of the people and government of Borno State, I want to

express my deep appreciation to the Qatari Foundation for this giant initiative. Be assured that the government of Borno State, under my leadership, will collaborate with you to ensure the success of this project," Zulum said.

Earlier in his address, Nigeria's Representative for Qatar Charity, Foundation, Sheikh Hamdin Bin Abdul, said the projects will expand to all 27 local government areas of Borno State

"It gives us great pleasure to execute projects here in Borno. We thank the Governor for all the support. In sha Allah, we will use this centre to cover all the local governments in Borno State," Sheikh Hamdin pointed out.

"The Qatar Charity's Nigerian representative also stressed that the foundation will work in several sectors including water resources, social housing, economic empowerment, health, education, and social services for widows and orphans," Sheikh Abdul said

Meanwhile, Governor Babagana Umara Zulum has approved 2.5 hectares of land for use by Qatar Charity Foundation to execute the eight projects in Borno State.

The governor presented the certificate of occupancy (CofO) granting legal right for the use of the land to the Qatar Charity Foundation Representative, Sheikh Haruna Abdul, while assuring the provision of all the support needed to Qatar Charity to meet up with its objectives.

Zulum further directed the Secretary to the State Government (SSG), Him. Bukar Tijani to grant express approval to all the requests made by the Qatar Charity Foundation.

"Let me direct the Secretary to Borno State Government to give them maximum cooperation. Whatever they need, immediately grant their request before even forwarding the papers to me," Zulum said.



8 Children Benefit Lagos Free Eye Surgical Expedition

By; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

At least, eight children at the weekend smiled home in Lagos, regaining their sight as they benefitted from the free eye surgeries programme offered by the state government.

The expedition was part of a compassionate initiative aimed at addressing blinding eye conditions in the community.

In a statement on Sunday, the Director, Public Affairs Ministry of Health, Tunbosun Ogunsanwo said that the successful surgical expedition took place at General Hospital, Odan, Lagos on January 26, 2024.

He attributed it to a collaborative effort between the Lagos State Government, the Consulate of the People's Republic of China, and the Chinese Community and Enterprises in Nigeria.

Ogunsanwo hinted that the program aimed to bringing light into the lives of residents, particularly children, by restoring their sight.

Speaking during his visit to the beneficiaries, the Permanent Secretary, Lagos State Ministry of Health, Dr. Olusegun Ogboye expressed the outreach's focus on ensuring a brighter future

for children with cataracts. He highlighted the government's ongoing eye care outreach to communities, emphasizing the commitment to improving access to quality eye care services and preventing avoidable blindness.

"The collaboration with the Chinese Consulate and Government targets a brighter future for children suffering from cataracts, enabling them to learn in school properly and reach their full potential," Dr. Ogboye affirmed.

He Ogboye explained further that medical expeditions are part of the Ministry's strategies through outreaches under the state Blindness Prevention Programme to support the routine health care system targeting specific populations who cannot afford treatment for eye health care services, adding that the Blindness Prevention Program deals with a whole range of eye conditions.

Reiterating the government's commitment to preventing avoidable blindness, Dr. Ogboye emphasized the prioritization of sustainable healthcare delivery for various health-related conditions and welcomed collaborations with the private sector and relevant stakeholders. He commended the Chinese

Consulate and the Chinese Community and Enterprises for their productive collaboration. Representative of the Consul General, People's Republic of China, Mr Lei Yu who applauded the State Government for its support in the success of the free eye surgical outreach program, stated that the members of the Chinese community in Nigeria sees Nigeria as their home and will do anything within their capacity to assist the needy in accessing basic amenities.

"For us in the Chinese community, some of us have been here for long. Nigerian is our home. We are willing to do anything within our capacity to help the needy since we are here together as family. This is just the beginning and we will continue to do more and more and aside from the eye surgery we are also doing a lot in education". He said.

Speaking in the same vein, Coordinator, Lagos State Blindness Prevention Program, Dr. Ifeyemi Adeniran who also commended the Chinese Consulate and the Chinese community for the collaboration explained that the Blindness Prevention Program Unit of the Ministry of Health is saddled with the responsibility of reducing

blindness among the citizens of Lagos State.

Dr. Adeniran explained further that the government recognises the importance of good eyesight in the productivity and functionality of individuals in society. She, however, assured that the State Government will not relent in putting in place strategies geared towards making quality eye care services accessible to all.

Father of two of the beneficiaries, Mr. Tomiluyi Temitope expressed gratitude for the laudable initiative. His twin boys, who benefited from the free eye surgery, underwent tests at Ijede and Epe General Hospitals, revealing significant cataracts. He appreciated the timely and cost-free operation facilitated by the Lagos State Government and the Chinese Consulate.

He said: "we visited hospitals in Ijede and Epe, so several tests were conducted on them, it was then discovered that the cataract was almost covering their eyes. The cost of operating one eye is very high, not to talk of operating the four eyes. We came here on Monday and we were told the operation will be carried out on Friday and all costs have been paid"

Makinde Completes New Garage-Challenge - Apata Road Project, 14 Years After Take Off

**Its quality, world standard - Kopek Construction Limited*

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

It was jubilation galore as Gov Seyi Makinde-led Oyo State Government completed the New Garage-Challenge - Apata road project, 14 years after it was initiated by late Governor Adebayo Alao-Akala.

The 11.8 kilometer road, expected to boost socio-economic activities in Oyo State, was handled by the construction giants, Messrs Kopek Construction Limited

Speaking on behalf of Messrs Kopek Construction Limited, Engr Paul Chamoun, the site engineer on the project, said the quality of the road can be compared with the best anywhere in the world and that the road would be adequately maintained for a whole year.

Engr Chamoun lauded the residents of the communities covered by the 11.8km road for their help, support and cooperation within the period the project lasted, despite the painful decision to demolish a big estate to pave way for the construction of the road.

"There were lot of compensation on the road. After the compensation were fully done, we started the demolition, and it took us less than a year to complete the project. Honestly, we thank God we didn't face any challenge", he said.

Engr Chamoun added, "As for the community, they were very helpful, really they are very friendly. From the government also, there was no delay in any payment, and there was no challenge in all these. You know".

"Kopek Construction Limited is a well known company, we are more than 35 years in the construction business especially in the South West, we thank God that we are known for quality job, and we try our best the maximum we can do to

make sure that we deliver the best job and the best quality".

Speaking further, "On the maintenance, we have one year for the maintenance of the road, but I can assure you that the work we did on the road is superb, and standard,"

According to Engr Chamoun, "the inner road has finally been completed by the current administration led by Engr Seyi Makinde for socio-economic growth of the state, saying, the project is hundred percent completed and awaiting commissioning.

One of the landlords in Kuola area of Apata, Ibadan, Pa Mathew Adejobi said despite the initial setback and the decision by late Sen Abiola Ajimobi not to touch the project for eight years, Gov Makinde showed exemplary leadership by ensuring the completion of the project started by late Otunba Alao-Akala.

Another resident of Challenge area of Ibadan, Alhaja Bosede Adeogun expressed gratitude to Gov Makinde for deeming fit to complete the project, adding that the governor has always demonstrated that he cares for the people.

"When the road was started by our former governor Alao-Akala we were so happy and overjoyed. This road has brought uncountable benefits to the people of Ibadan. But after Alao-Akala left, late governor Ajimobi did not touch it for eight years. The people felt the pains because the road was abandoned", she said.

Alhaja Adeogun added, "You can see now that people are very happy with our governor, Seyi Makinde because he completed this road. See, the problem of traffic and pains of sleeping on the road for hours at Apata, that is no longer there because of this new road.

We are happy and we God for the life our governor Makinde," Alhaja Adeogun



The surgeons performing the surgery on the beneficiaries

Hoodlums Reign Terror In Akwa Ibom, Police, Four Others Killed

*Governor reads riot act

By; PATRICK TITUS, Uyo

At least five persons have been confirmed killed gruesomely within last month (January) in Uyo, the Akwa Ibom State capital by unknown gunmen.

The last which occurred on Wednesday, where a police officer, Inspector Osang was murdered at his residence, has made residents to become apprehensive of who may be the next target.

Osang it was learnt, was serving at C Division of the Nigeria Police Force in Uyo before the tragic incident.

Although, facts surrounding death of Inspector Osang, was still in mystery as at when this

report was filed, a source who spoke under anonymity, said, the incident occurred at about 8:30 pm.

According to the source, the assailants which numbered over 10 stormed the residence of their victim located on a lane linking Enen Afaha and Afaha Ube, in Uyo metropolis to reign havoc; shooting while residents and passerbyers scampered for safety.

The State Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), Odiko MacDon confirmed the incident saying, the Command has received the news of the murder of the police personnel describing it as very unfortunate. According to him, "We have

received that information and it is an unfortunate situation.

"Already, an investigation is ongoing and we are committed to ridding the streets of criminal elements.

"Again, we are not deterred and we are committed to ensuring that, criminal minded persons will account for their actions" MacDon, a Police Superintendent said.

When our reporter visited the area yesterday morning, people were seen in clusters, discussing the unfortunate incident while fear of unknown was feasible.

It would be recalled that the latest killing is the fifth of such incidents in January, just as it was rumoured that another

person was killed Tuesday night and body dumped around Ikot Oku Junction along the outskirts of Uyo.

The two incidents occurred after a young lady, was also murdered penultimate Sunday night and the dismembered body tucked in a Ghana-Must-Go bag, dumped by the roadside at Nwaniba Road, Uyo.

Similarly, a woman was reportedly killed at the Banking Layout of Sir Udo Udoma Avenue, two weeks ago.

Earlier, one Samuel Monday Toby, a revenue collector for Mkpato Enin Local Government Area of the state was killed at his residence.

Meanwhile, the state governor,

Pastor Umo Eno has read riot act to criminals in the state, warning that, no criminal should test the resolve of his administration on security matters and go free.

Eno, said at a Gala-Night organised by the state government for Service Commanders who have been transferred from the state, and the newly promoted Military Generals of the state origin.

Governor Eno stated, "if criminals believe that Akwa Ibom State is a place for them to hibernate, I am warning them to stay away. We have credible intelligence that there are those ones living among us...we will come after you and we will use every layer of our intelligence

Bodija Explosion: I'm Not An Illegal Miner, Have No Link With The Blast - Malian Miner Yousouf

By; BAYOAKAMO, Ibadan

Malian miner, Alhaji Sawane Yousouf has declared that he has no connection whatsoever, with the explosion that rocked Bodija area of Ibadan in January this year.

The Malian miner expressed this in a statement he personally signed, titled, "Bodija Explosion: My Own Side Of The Story", dated January 31, 2024 made available to journalists in Ibadan.

Alhaji Yousouf who said he was never an illegal miner and was legally involved in mining activities in Oyo State, in accordance with the provisions of the Nigerian Constitution, also stated that he is not the owner of the building and the explosives that caused the devastating explosion.

He stressed further in the statement that " he neither owned, nor rented the said building" at Bodija and was not the owner of the explosives stockpiled and warehoused in the building and which led to the explosion.

" While we are still mourning the dead and counting our losses, I

felt the need to, once again, state my own side of the story to clear the mind of the public about my alleged involvement in the sad occurrence", he said.

The Malian miner added, "Insinuations are rife that I am the owner of the Ground Zero Building where the explosives that led to the explosion were stockpiled and warehoused, prior to the incident"

" It is against the above that I categorically state and declare here again now that I am not the owner of the building and the explosives in question. Though I live in Ibadan, I have never rented or owned a house at Dejo Oyelese Avenue, Bodija Ibadan, where the incident happened,"

Alhaji Yousouf maintained " I also don't have anything to do with the explosives that led to the huge loss of human lives and the collateral destruction of property at the scene of the incident."

Emphasizing "While it is true that I am into mining in Oyo State, all my activities are legal, in accordance with the provisions of the Nigerian Constitution", the Malian miner called on Oyo State government, security agencies and other

authorities to look further in the course of investigating the explosion".

Alhaji Yousouf tasked the Oyo State Government, security agencies and other appropriate authorities to beam their searchlight further to reveal the identity of the real owners of the building and the explosives that led to the explosion.

"Meanwhile, I am readily available, whenever I am needed, to help the security agencies in the course of further investigation into the sad incident. Many innocent souls perished, while several buildings



Yousouf

and other property were totally destroyed and lost to the sad occurrence. May God rest the souls of the dead and grant the victims and the Oyo State Government the serenity to bear the loss"

New Nigerian recalled that Gov Seyi Makinde had, following the

explosion at Dejo Oyelese Close said preliminary investigation showed that Ground Zero, the building where the explosives were stockpiled, belonged to illegal foreign miners.

FG Commends Dangote Cement for Vital Roles in Economic Diversification

**Minister lauds Cement Plant's promotion of best practices*

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The Federal Government has commended the leading roles being played by the Dangote Group to complement government's efforts to diversify the nation's economy and the company's dedication to promotion of best practices in all its operations.

The commendation came even as the Ogun State Government said the Dangote Cement is a key driver of the state's economy with the citing of the continent's second biggest cement plant in the state.

Minister of State for Environment, Dr. Iziaq Salako made these remarks while on a familiarisation visit to Dangote Cement plant, Ibese, Ogun State. The visit was followed by a community engagement preparatory to the Expert Panel Review of the report of an Environmental Impact Assessment carried out on Coal milling at the Plant.

The Minister declared: "Dangote Industries as a whole is an international conglomerate and I am happy that the company is at the forefront of promoting best practices in terms of conception, planning, implementation, management of factories that are manufacturers like this."

Dr. Salako and his entourage, who were received by the Plant Management led the Plant Director, Mr. Azad Nawabuddin, described mining as one of the key industrial sectors that President Bola Tinubu's administration has targeted for economic diversification as the nation embarks on gradual shift from oil and gas dependency.

He said it was for this reason that Dangote Cement should be commended for the huge cement plant which is creating jobs and opportunities for export. He added that limestone mining

activities, a key raw material in cement manufacturing is one such area that attention of the government is shifting to.

Dr. Salako pointed out that while mining sector has huge potential to develop the nation's economy, many challenges are associated with mining activities. He then commended Dangote cement for its adherence to best practices, saying, "having gone round to see the operations in the plant, I give kudos to Dangote Cement for the automation and high technology-driven operations."

He explained that his visit was not unconnected with the Environmental Impact Assessment, which is being done on the plant Coal Mill, noting "there is a need for mining operations to be done in a sustainable manner so that the environment is not adversely affected. But I applaud Dangote Cement for being at the forefront of promoting best practices."

The Minister said further: "For us in the ministry of environment, it means we must also sit up. Mining as it comes with its advantages, also comes with its challenges. So, we must be up and doing, as we expand the economy and grow Nigeria. We should also do it in a sustainable manner so that the environment is not adversely affected."

"We must continue in that respect to ensure that best practices are always promoted, environmental and social impact assessments are properly carried out, the stakeholders are properly involved, and the environment is properly



protected so that our growth can be sustainable. That's why we are here and I am happy that Dangote is at the forefront of that."

While speaking also, the Ogun State Commissioner for Environment, Ola Oresanya who represented the Governor, Dapo Abiodun said the state is a beneficiary of Dangote Cement presence with the amount of levies and taxes it has paid into the state coffer.

He called for a more collaboration between the state agencies and the company noting that the state was not unaware of the activities of the plant to lift its host communities. He added that the state would be more than ready to assist the company in any way possible.

In his remark, Mr. Nawabuddin took the minister through the social investments and infrastructural milestones recorded by the Plant since inception, saying the Company

has been able to substantially contribute to infrastructure development and employment in the host communities.

The Plant Director told the Minister that the plant deals with 17 host communities across Yewa North and Ewekoro Local Government Areas of the state, saying they have greatly felt the impacts of the company through empowerment programmes and provision of infrastructure.

Mr. Nawabuddin told his guests that Dangote Cement Ibese Plant has been a major contributor to economic diversification efforts of both the state and federal governments by creating jobs, exporting cement and clinker to neighbouring countries to attract foreign exchange into the country, and paying humongous taxes and levies to the state and federal government.

The Community engagement that held after the Minister's tour of the plant also saw the communities' leaders thanking

Dangote Cement for its Corporate Social Responsibilities (CSR) projects so far for the people of Yewa.

The Olu of Imasayi, Oba Kuoye Olalekan, a top monarch in Yewaland expressed his subjects' appreciation to Dangote Cement for its developmental strides in the area. "Dangote Cement is the transformer and illumination of Yewaland", he stated.

[01/02, 10:21 pm] Jacob Dickson: Minister of State for Environment, Dr. Iziaq Salako (2nd right); Dangote Cement Ibese Plant Director, Azad Nawabuddin (2nd left); Dangote Senior General manager Special Duty Projects, Abdullaziz Kolo (left); Ogun state Commissioner for Environment, Ola Oresanya (right) during the visit of Minister of State for Environment to Dangote Cement Ibese plant Ogun state

Gunmen Abduct Oyo Tipper, Lorry, Quarry PMS Chairman In Ibadan

By; BAYOAKAMO, Ibadan

It was confusion galore as unknown gunmen on Saturday morning, kidnapped the Chairman of Oyo State Tipper, Lorry And Quarry Park Management System, Alhaji Akeem Akintola.

New Nigerian gathered that the Oyo State Tipper, Lorry And Quarry Park Management System chairman, was kidnapped by the unknown armed men in the early hours of (Saturday), at Jiboye area of Omi Apata, Ibadan.

The gunmen were said to have stormed

the residence of Alhaji Akintola shooting into the air after which he was abducted to an unknown destination.

It was further learnt that, "the gunmen arrived earlier this morning and attacked him without any resistance before whisking him away."

Already, Friends, associates and lovers of the victim have, urged the public on any information about his whereabouts to reach out to the dedicated number: 08034345760 or the nearest police station.



COMMUNITY FOCUS

Gimbiya Foundation Trains Rigasa Community On Peace Building



By: USMAN NASIDI, Kaduna

In an effort to promote and foster peace building across the country, Gimbiya Foundation has recently orchestrated a pivotal step-down training aimed at empowering adolescents and young people in the Rigasa community. During the event held at GSS Makarfi Road, Rigasa Kaduna, the initiative attracted 25 passionate and driven individuals from various wards within Rigasa and neighboring communities. The primary goal of the training was to equip participants with essential skills in peace building and to foster an environment that promotes harmony among the youth in Rigasa and its

surrounding areas.

However, by enlisting a diverse group of participants, the programme is aimed at instilling a sense of unity and shared purpose, transcending ward boundaries for the betterment of the entire community.

Similarly, the step-down training placed strong emphasis on cultivating a culture of peace and cooperation, enabling the participants to become advocates for positive change within their respective circles.

Moreso, by imparting tools and strategies for peace building, the aim was to inspire a new generation of community leaders who are dedicated to promoting

understanding and harmony, leading by example and influencing positive transformation in their local environments.

In a world where young voices are poised to shape the future, initiatives such as the training that represent a vital cornerstone in nurturing the leaders of tomorrow, it also provides a platform for learning, collaboration, and empowerment.

The Gimbiya Foundation's dedication to fostering peace and unity among young people illuminates a path toward a brighter, harmonious future for Rigasa and its neighboring communities.

Meanwhile, the profound impact of this initiative extends beyond the event itself,

fostering hope and catalyzing a ripple effect of positivity throughout the community.

As the insights and knowledge gained during the training permeate into everyday conversations and actions, they sow the seeds for enduring change and progress.

The Gimbiya Foundation is dedicated to driving positive transformation and empowerment within communities, placing a special emphasis on nurturing the potential of youth to become beacons of hope and peace in Northern Nigeria.



Kwara Gov fulfills Promise, Presents N6m Cheques To School Debate Champions

*Says govt will monitor their educational progress, commit billions to sector this year

*History'll be kind to you: PTA Chair Oniye, Adaramaja tell Gov

By: BILIQIS ONAOLAPO
OLAJUMOKE, Ilorin

Kwara State Governor, AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq has presented N6m cheques to the six public school students who recently won the presidential debate competition in Abuja.

That was a fulfillment of his administration's pledge to give the great six one million naira each alongside a full scholarship for their first degree in any public tertiary institution in Nigeria.

The six public school students are: Mashood Kamaldeen (Government Secondary School, Ilorin East LG); Jatto Ramatallahi (Offa Grammar School, Offa); Jimoh Abayomi Emmanuel (Tanke Community Junior Secondary School, Ilorin South); Emmanuel Chioma (St. Anthony Junior Secondary School, Ilorin East); Dolapo Mariam (Offa Grammar School, Offa); and AbdulKareem Uswat (Okelele Junior Secondary School Ilorin East).

AbdulRazaq congratulated them and their parents on the feat, saying the government will continue to monitor their educational programme to succeed in life.

"Once again, I congratulate the victorious students of the 2023 Presidential School Debate of Nigeria. We are happy about the feat. You've made us proud in Kwara state. We are committed to your progress and we will continue to monitor that," the Governor said.

He said billions of naira will be committed this year to various educational and hygiene



programmes, such as AGILE and WASH, to aid learning and improve the safety of pupils in schools.

"We continue to make sure you, and indeed every Kwara child, have a very conducive environment to learn. That is why Kwara is one of the states that engage in the FG/World bank-supported AGILE project (Adolescent Girls Initiative for Learning and Empowerment). We shall be making full advocacy about other programmes the state has subscribed to over the coming months as well," he said.

"This year, billions will be invested to improve educational curriculum and infrastructure in our schools. We are taking this very seriously. We will make

sure we cover most schools as we go along.

"To the teachers and parents, I urge you to keep up your support for these kids and for their education. Let us continue to strengthen our patriotism to the state and to Nigeria as a whole."

He appreciated the management and staff of the SUBEB for what he called a remarkable improvement in their commitment to work, and pledged his continued support to the agency to sustain the tempo.

AbdulRazaq also thanked the traditional institutions for their support and sought their continued engagement and suggestions that will improve service delivery in the education sector.

The ceremony was attended by

some government officials and traditional chiefs, including the Chairman House Committee on Education Hon. Baba Muhammed Boriya; Hon. Mariam Yusuf Aladi; Hon AGF Sallaudeen; Chief of Staff to the Governor Prince AbdulKadir Mahe; Commissioner for Education and Human Capital Development Hajia Sa'adatu Modibbo Kawu; Commissioner for Communications Bola Olukoju; Chairman for Kwara SUBEB Prof Sheu Raheem Adaramaja; and parents and guardians of the victorious Team Kwara.

Others include Balogun Gambari of Ilorin Alhaji Adebayo Aliyu; Magaji Are Alhaji Aremu Subair; Balogun Fulani Alhaji Abubakar Atiku;

Balogun Ajikobi Alhaji Isiaka Okunrinjeje; Balogun Alanamu Dr. Usman Abubakar Jos; Chairman Parents Teachers Association (PTA) Kwara state chapter and 1st Malama of Ilorin Alhaji Ibrahim Oniye; Baba Isale of Ilorin Alhaji Abdullahi Sidiq Baba-Ile Apa.

Adaramaja, for his part, thanked the Governor for keeping his promise to the debate champions, adding that the pupils will reciprocate by bringing home another trophy in subsequent competitions.

He said the Lucky Six will represent Nigeria at the World School Debate Championship in the Republic of Serbia in Europe later in July this year.

Alhaji Oniye thanked the Governor for his passion and commitment to the educational sector, and for his government's investments in the lives of the victorious students. He said history will be kind to him.

Dr Jato Muhammad Awal, one of the parents who spoke on behalf of others, said: "Your Excellency, you have a broad vision, and we have seen it manifesting. You have outlined the programmes you have in the future to expand the educational sector and further impact the lives of the people.

"We thank you most sincerely for what you are doing, what you have done, and what you are going to do. May Almighty Allah



Relocation Of CBN, FAAN To Lagos: Don't Allow Selfish Individuals Hinder Unity, Growth Of Nigeria - Yoruba Youth

By; AMOS TAUNA, Kaduna

The Association of Arewa Yoruba Youth (AAY), has called on Nigerians to support the President Bola Ahmed Tinubu-led government's decision in relocating the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) and the Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN) to Lagos being the hub of commercial business in Nigeria.

In a statement on Friday, its National President, Lawal Hussein Taiye said that for the country to grow in its commercial activities, relocating the two federal government's agencies to Lagos being the most commercial banks' headquarters are situated as well as FAAN, an agency of Aviation Ministry, to Lagos, where it was located before former Minister of Aviation, Hadi Sirika, moved it to Abuja, would enhance the business and growth of the country's economy.

According to him, the movement of the Department of Banking Supervision of the CBN to Lagos should not trigger any discord within the polity, stressing that the department concerned deals with commercial banks, almost all of which have their headquarters in Lagos.

He lamented that all those pushing the campaign of falsehood and misinformation know they are merely playing politics, which is not good for the unity and the growth of the country but are trying to pit the North against the South for their selfish interests.

He explained, "We as Nigerians must begin to do away with potitics of religion, tribalism and sectionalism, and squarely face the reality of life for the overall interest of all

Nigerians irrespective of where one reside. Our national interest should be the driving force of anything we want to do as a nation so that together we will grow and survive."

He added, "Politics has done a lot of damages to Nigeria by those who used religion and tribe to achieve their selfish interests to the detriment of the general good of Nigerians. We should begin to reason and do things in a way that we will grow as a nation and stop dwelling on issues that are not relevant to our progress."

He explained that during former President Buhari, the headquarters of National Inland Waterways Authority (NIWA) is in Lokoja, while that of the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB), was commissioned by former President Muhammadu Buhari is in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, stressing that all is meant for the interest of Nigerians and where they are best suited.

He pointed out that these decisions are purely administrative that should not be politicized by people of goodwill and those who wish the country well, saying that Nigerians should support the laudable and courageous steps taken by the present administration to ensure a better standard of living through the generation more revenue to the country.

Lawal noted that Nigerians desired nothing but good governance that positively impacts their lives, lamenting that rumour-mongering is what he called "a pernicious disservice to this ultimate expectation of our people" and enjoined Nigerians to thinking beyond such in order to move the country forward.

Oyo Govt Ready To Control, Eradicate Neglected Tropical Diseases - Health Commissioner

*Says untreated NTDs can lead to disability, death

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

Oyo State Commissioner for Health, Dr. Oluwaserimi Ajetunmobi on Friday, disclosed that the state government is ready to control, eliminate and eradicate Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs)

Dr Ajetunmobi who said this in Ibadan while addressing journalists at a press briefing on 2024 World NTD Day held at the Conference Room of the Ministry of Health, Agodi, Ibadan, hinted that NTDs if not properly treated could lead to disability and stigmatization hence, there is need for serious awareness on the diseases from all the critical stakeholders.

According to Dr. Ajetunmobi, Neglected Tropical Diseases are group of diseases that are largely found in tropical areas of the world, particularly in area where access to clean water sanitation and essential medicine is scarce, saying, "NTDs if untreated, could lead to disability and stigmatization.

Onchocerciasis (River Blindness) if not treated could lead to loss of sight, while Schistosomiasis (SCH) and Soil Transmitted Helminthes (STH) can result in anaemia.

"The long-term effects of some NTDs can be catastrophic, which can lead to loss of life. The devastating effects of NTDs on our people cannot be over emphasized, hence the need for all to come together to combat the diseases", she said

Dr Ajetunmobi added, "Our action is to raise the profile of NTDs, the suffering they cause and to gather support towards their control, elimination and eradication, in-line with programmatic targets set out in the World Health Organization (WHO) 2023 NTD road map which includes decreasing the number of people requiring intervention for NTDs by 90 per cent".

The Commissioner stressed that Oyo State Government has embarked on proactive measures through innovation and intensify disease management,

preventive chemotherapy by distributing anthelmintic medicines, mass drug administration of praziquantel to school aged children, vector control through mass spraying of insecticides, veterinary public health, provision of safe water, sanitation and hygiene, among others.

"This year, the world NTD Day theme seeks to continue the momentum from previous years and carry through the thread of taking NTDs out of isolation, identifying opportunities for integrated action on NTDs and the continued call for investment in NTDs. NTDs programmes strengthen health systems by increasing access to hard-to-reach people and training community health workers who provide a first line primary healthcare, everyone has a key role to play by bringing renewed attention to NTDs, building political will and mobilizing resources and putting individuals and communities at the center of the response.

"We can collectively generate the attention and

resources needed to deliver against the elimination of NTDs in Oyo state, that is the reason why Oyo state government also joins the global community to celebrate the 2024 world NTD Day."

Executive Secretary of the state Primary Healthcare Board, Dr. Muideen Babatunde Olatunji while speaking, said the state government has been playing a central role in implementing policies, allocating resources and coordinating efforts to control and eliminate these diseases in the state. According to Dr Olatunji in 2023 alone, Oyo State Government release over N27 million to support NTDs programme activities in the state, including drug distribution, public awareness campaigns among other activities.

"The NTD unit of Oyo state Primary Health Care Board is saddled with the responsibility of carrying out all the control strategies through safe and cost-effective preventive chemotherapy (PCT) in collaboration with the willing NGOs."



Oyo state Commissioner for Health at the Press conference in Ibadan on Friday

PWA Board Member Congratulates Sokoto State Governor On Victory At Supreme Court

By; I M R A N A
ABDULLAHI, Kaduna

A board member of the Sokoto State Pilgrims Welfare Agency (PWA), Alhaji Aliyu Sahabi 'Yar-Abba has congratulated the State Governor, Dr Ahmed Aliyu Sokoto, FCNA, on his victory at the Supreme Court.

Alhaji 'Yar-Abba, who was the immediate past Chairman of the State Chapter of the National Association of Bureau De Change Operators, said that the governor's victory at the apex court is worthy of cheerful celebration.

Yar-Abba, a top notch stalwart of the ruling APC in the state opined that the tripartite victories of the governor at the Tribunal, Appeal and Supreme Courts was a testament to his unwavering commitment to take the state to greater heights

According to him, Dr Ahmed Aliyu Sokoto has in the past six months remained on the trajectory of democratic consolidation and transformation of the Seat of the Caliphate

Alhaji 'Yar-Abba maintained that the governor has now made Sokoto State to be at par with its contemporaries across the country.

He added that the governor has during the period under review transformed the infrastructural landscape of the state to the dismay of all naysayers



'Yar-Abba further noted that Dr Ahmed Aliyu Sokoto has truly justified the tremendous confidence reposed on him by the electorate in the state who massively cast their votes for him and other APC candidates during the 2023 general elections.

He said that Dr Ahmed Aliyu has been committed to the translation of the party's manifesto into action by diligently and logically executing myriad of developmental

projects across the state.

The board member further expressed delight that the Ahmed Aliyu-led administration has not neglected any sector of the economy, including empowerment and other forms of human capital development.

'Yar-Abba, while extolling the resilience and doggedness of Dr Ahmed Aliyu Sokoto, commended the indefatigable APC leader in the state, Sen. Aliyu Magatakarda Wamakko for relentlessly being

guiding light for the administration..

He added that Sen. Wamakko, a former Governor of state has been a vailling the administration of his abundant wealth of experience and ceaseless

Iconic wise counsel. 'Yar-Abba, therefore, appealed to the peace loving people of the state to sustain their tempo of support to the APC-led administration, saying that the developments so far recorded were just a tip of the iceberg.

Troops Clear ESN, IPOB Camps In Imo, Neutralise Kidnappers

By; KELVIN OKPARA,
Enugu

Joint troops have cleared several camps of the proscribed Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) and it's militia arm, Eastern Security Network (ESN) along Umulolo-Umukele-Amousu and Agbobu in Okigwe Local Government Area of Imo State.

The security operatives are made-up of troops of the 82 Division of the Nigerian Army, Navy and Air Force in conjunction with the Nigerian Police and Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC).

Acting Deputy Director, 82 Division Army Public Relations, Lt.-Col. Jonah Unuakhalu, disclosed this in a statement on Friday, saying the troops stormed and destroyed hideouts of the terrorists despite encountering several Improvised Explosive Devices (IED).

He said the troops also cordoned-off and searched several buildings used by the terrorist group.

According to him, during the search, signs of the terrorist's activities, occultic and acts of cannibalism by the group were discovered.

"The troops also destroyed the IED making factory of the terrorists, adding that the troops recovered rank badges of two policemen that were kidnapped along Enugu-Port Harcourt Road.

"Other items discovered include Biafran currencies, fake US Dollar bills, Biafran Liberation Army T-shirts, Military kit bags, cables used for IED detonation and axes.

"Two suspects were arrested and also burnt policemen corpses were discovered for proper burial."

In another development in Owerri metropolis in Imo, troops on night patrol thwarted a kidnapping attempt by some suspected IPOB/ESN terrorists.

The 82 Division spokesman said that the

troops engaged the criminals in a gun duel forcing them to abandon the victim.

He stated that troops recovered one AK 47 rifle and magazine, a G-3 rifle with mounted magazines and the vehicle used by terrorists.

Unuakhalu said, "Furthermore, in a bid to strengthen cordial civil-military relations and create a peaceful society, the General Officer Commanding (GOC) 82 Division of Nigerian Army, Maj.-Gen. Hassan Dada, visited Isiuzo-Amufu community in Enugu State on January 24, 2024.

"The GOC, who addressed the people of Isiuzo-Amufu community at their village square, advised the community on the need to cooperate and assist the military to put an end to the insecurity of the community and the region at large.

"He assured the people of his commitment to end the herders and farmers clash and youth restiveness within the region.

The GOC he said, met with other security agencies in the council area and enjoined them not to relent on the ongoing collaborative efforts and synergy of information gathering and sharing with the military for improved security within the community and South-East."

Unuakhalu said that the GOC appreciated the incredible cooperation of other security agencies for the success achieved so far.

"The GOC wishes to enjoin the good people of the South-East to support and continually provide timely, reliable and credible information through the Emergency Line '193' by pressing 2.

"The Nigerian Army will continue to protect lives and property of the good people of the South-East as it carries out its constitutional roles within the ambit of the law," he added.

PDP Remains Most Democratic Party In Nigeria - BoT Chairman

By; BAYO AKAMO,
Ibadan

Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) Board of Trustees (BoT) Chairman and former Senate President, Senator Adolphus Wabara has declared that the party remains the most democratic in Nigeria

The PDP BoT Chairman made this known in Ibadan on Thursday, while addressing the South West meeting of the party held at Presidential Lodge, Oyo State Government House.

Senator Wabara emphasized that PDP till date remains the party that

is not owned by anybody, hence the need for members of the party to rally round and unite by putting all their differences behind them.

According to the PDP BoT Chairman, Gov Seyi Makinde and Gov Ademola Adeleke are providing the needed leadership for the party in the South-West

" Now, we are here together as a family. If we are suffering, we are all suffering as a family. PDP remains the party that is not owned by anybody. It remains the most democratic party in

Nigeria", he said.

The PDP BoT Chairman added, "So, I will beg all of us here to sheath our swords. It is on one or two people that will fill up vacancies and it is only God that knows best. Once these vacancies are filled through consensus or whatever, I beg of you to please accept it in good faith."

Speaking further, Senator Wabara pointed out that South West the region stands as the citadel of politics in Nigeria and all PDP members must rally round and unite by putting all their differences behind

them.

"I want to thank the governor and our brother from Osun State on this occasion. I rise to speak on behalf of the Board of Trustees and I am happy that we are coincidentally here with you.

"The South-West is the citadel of politics in Nigeria in terms of education, development and exposure. But unfortunately, the PDP produced only two governors and I am sure the reason why that happened cannot be far-fetched.

Ibadan Explosion: Don't Abandon Victims Halfway, Bishop tasks FG, Oyo Govt

**Calls for thorough investigations*

By: **BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan**

The Bishop, Ibadan North Anglican Diocese, Rt. Revd Williams Aladekugbe has tasked the Federal Government and the Oyo state government not to abandon victims of the old Bodija, Ibadan explosion in the middle of the way.

In a statement at the weekend to sympathize with Gov Seyi Makinde, the people of Oyo State and victims of the explosion, Rt Reverend Aladekugbe called for thorough investigations into explosion.

The Bishop stressed that there is the need for both the federal and state levels should ensure investigation is thorough and timely concluded and that the government should ensure that victims of the explosion are not left stranded in the middle of the way.

Lauding President Bola Tinubu and the Federal Government for providing support to the state with a vow to fishing out those behind the act, the Bishop urged residents within the immediate and external areas of the incident to see it as an opportunity to show love, care, and affection in the spirit of brotherliness and honor to God.

Rt Reverend Aladekugbe while emphasizing that the Church has before and after the incident remained committed to praying for Gov Makinde, and Oyo state, noted that despite the human and material lost,

there is still room for thanking God, adding, despite the magnitude of the blast, the level of casualty is unbelievable low, saying who would have questioned the Almighty if the fatalities had been more.

Commending Gov Makinde for the effort at providing succour to the victims as well as ensuring the impact is minimised, he prayed comfort to the families of the bereaved, speedy recovery to all victims still struggling to survive.

Rt Reverend Aladekugbe assured that the Church will not fail in its duties of praying and pleading the cause of the victims and less privileged, the Diocesan said the Church will be willing to provide the necessary support to the government and victims should the need be.

A personal message sent to the governor shortly after the incident by the Bishop reads in part, "Your Excellency, greetings. This is to sympathise with your Excellency and government of Oyo State on the unfortunate incident of last night. May God comfort the families of the bereaved, grant speedy recovery to all victims still struggling to survive.

"I am particularly happy with the steps your Excellency took and the press release to correct various information flying all around. More strength to your Excellency. A o ni ri ru e mo, sir. Profound regards."

Ibadan Plane Incident: No Fatality, 12 Passengers, 3 Crew Members Onboard – NSIB Director

**Urges media, public to respect privacy of those involved*

By: **BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan**

The Nigerian Safety Investigation Bureau (NSIB) has disclosed that there was no fatality during the skidding off of a private plane at the Ladoke Akintola Airport, Alakia, Ibadan on Friday.

A statement on Saturday by the NSIB Director Public Affairs and Consumer Protection, Hon Oladeji hinted that the Bureau has commenced investigation into incident. The statement stressed that the aircraft, with 12 passengers and three crew members onboard was en-route Ibadan from Abuja and overshoot the

runaway on final approach to landing at Runway 22, Ibadan Airport.

Hon Oladeji noted that the bureau will appreciate that the general public and press respect the privacy of the people involved and should not assume the cause of the serious incident until formal report is released.

"The Nigerian Safety Investigation Bureau (NSIB) has been notified and commenced investigation into a serious incident involving a Challenger 601-3R aircraft with Nationality and Registration Marks N580KR operated by Mattini Air which occurred at about 1055am

(Local Time) on 26th January, 2024", she said.

She added, "The aircraft, with 12 passengers and three crew members onboard was en-route Ibadan from Abuja. The aircraft, on final approach to landing Runway 22, Ibadan Airport overshoot the runway.

"There was no fatality, as all passengers and crew were safely evacuated. The NSIB has deployed a Go Team to investigate the incident. As the investigating agency, NSIB needs and hereby solicits for your assistance"

The NSIB Director Public Affairs and Consumer Protection, stated further, "

We want the public to know that we would be amenable to receiving any video clip, relevant evidence, or information any members of the public may have of the serious incident; that can assist us with this investigation."

According to Hon Oladeji, "The Bureau will appreciate that the general public and press respect the privacy of the people involved and NOT assume the cause of the serious incident until formal report is released" and that the Bureau will release the preliminary report as soon as possible.



Wumi Oladeji (right)



EEDC Explains Reason For South East Drop In Electricity Supply

By: **KELVIN OKPARA, Enugu**

The Enugu Electricity Distribution Company (EEDC) has hinted that current drop in electricity supply availability to its network in South-East is due to low power generation caused by gas constraint to the thermal generating companies.

Head of Communication of the organization, Mr Emeka Ezech, said in a statement in Enugu on Saturday, that the development has resulted to low generation.

According to him, the low generation has led to reduction in the quantum of daily megawatt hour (MWH) of energy allocated to distribution companies nationwide.

He disclosed that consequently, the Transmission Company of Nigeria (TCN), which is the company's primary source of power supply, is constrained, as they only transmit what is generated and have resorted to System Load-shedding to forestall possible system collapse.

"This situation has equally impacted on

the quality of service to our customers, as we are contending with very low energy allocation wheeled to us by the TCN for distribution to our customers.

*A situation that has left us load-shedding available power to ensure it goes round.

*We seek the understanding of our esteemed customers on the fact that we can only distribute what is allocated to us, and that this situation is beyond us and that it is not peculiar to EEDC," he said.

The EEDC spokesman said that the company hopes that the situation would

be addressed soon so that normal distribution would return.

"EEDC is committed to providing improved services to her esteemed customers," Ezech assured.

CHANGE OF NAME

DUNDU - I, formerly known and addressed as Miss Victoria Titilayo Dundu. Now wish to be known and addressed as **Mrs. VICTORIA TITILAYO OLUSOLA**. All former documents remain valid. All relevant authorities concerned should please take note.

All Hands Must Be On Deck On Insecurity, Land Grabbing, Illegal Mining In Oke-Ogun Axis - Gov Makinde

*Presents instrument of office to six traditional rulers

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

Governor Seyi Makinde at the weekend, said all hands must be on deck relating to insecurity, land grabbing and illegal mining in the in Oke-Ogun axis of the state.

The governor stated this at the presentation of staff of office to six traditional rulers in Oke-Ogun axis of the state.

Represented by the Commissioner for Local Government and Chieftaincy Matters, Hon. Olusegun Olayiwola, Gov Makinde said security of lives and property is a collective responsibility, adding, "all hands must be on deck, when you see something, say something".

He maintained that the Oyo State Government is taking the bull by the horn, on matters relating to insecurity, land grabbing and illegal mining in the axis and that the traditional rulers should be accommodative, tolerant and diligent in their day-to-day administration of their domains.

"It is a great pleasure to present the instrument of office to the newly installed traditional rulers and to address this august gathering briefly on the occasion. By the death of former holders of the various chieftaincy titles at various times of the calendar years, the various royal stools of Baale Oke-Oro of Saki, Baale Iya of Saki, Apeerin of Saki and Lasigbon of Saki which are recognised chieftaincy under the chiefs law called for the nomination and



Some of the traditional rulers

appointment of candidates from their various royal families to fill the vacant position", he said.

Gov Makinde added, "I urge you to work together as one indivisible entity for the progress and development of your various town and also, the security and well-being of the people living in these various communities must be paramount because without the people, the community can not stand.

"I want to make it known that this administration accords traditional institution a pride of place in the scheme of things. Our traditional rulers are held in high esteem and their welfare and well-being are being accorded priority also."

Tasking the subjects to

rally round the new traditional rulers, he also charged the new traditional rulers to work with their subjects for the development of Oke-Ogun.

The new traditional rulers are, Chief Oyelowo Joseph Oyetunde, Apeerin of Saki; Prince James Okanlawon Adigun, Lasigbon-Kinnikinni of Saki; Alhaji Jimoh Adeola Ayiki, Baale Oke-Oro and Alhaji Raimi Aiki Boorepo, Baale-Iya of Saki, Oba Abiodun Oyerinde Owolabi (Oyekuleyin I), Onibise of Ibise-Otu; and Chief Thomas Opoola Olaore (Ariina III), Baale of Komu.

The Chairmen of Saki West Local Government Area, Engr. Sarafadeen

Ahmed Omirinde and Itesiwaju Local Government Area Chairman, Hon. Ojo Bolaji Akintola lauded Gov Seyi Makinde for putting their local government areas into consideration by approving installation of the traditional rulers.

They tasked the traditional rulers to join hands with the state and local government areas to eradicate the menace of banditry, kidnapping and cattle rustling ravaging the communities in recent times, saying, "It is pertinent to be at peace with other surrounding communities in order to achieve success in the area of security and better development."

Police Battles Criminals In Akwa Ibom, Arrest 79

By; PATRICK TITUS, Uyo

The Akwa Ibom State Police Command has said that it is narrowing down the activities of men of the underworld in the state, saying, 79 suspects have been arrested within a month.

Police Commissioner, CP Olatoye Durusinmi who disclosed this while parading them at the command headquarters, Uyo on Friday, said criminal elements in the state have not shown repentance.

"As we strive daily to keep the state safe, criminal elements too have continued to try to penetrate their nefarious acts.

"This January alone, 79 criminal elements have been arrested for various crimes.

"The greatest achievement within the last one month is the arrest of 10 confessed kidnappers, who were planning to unleash mayhem on the state and recovery of four AK Rifles.

"On Jan. 16, 2024 about 3:45pm, operatives of Ibiono Ibom Division, relying on credible intelligence stormed Ibiaku Ikot Oku community forest, where over 15 heavily armed suspects were camping and engaged them in gun

duel.

"Some of the suspects absconded with bullet wounds while four of them were arrested and one AK 47 rifle recovered.

"Swift follow up of operation by the Anti-Robbery Unit of the command led to further arrest of six suspects and the recovery of three more AK 47 rifles," Durosinmi said.

According to CP Durosinmi, the suspects were arrested for various crimes ranging from murder, kidnapping, armed robbery and cultism.

He said the suspects who came from neighbouring states to cause havoc in Akwa Ibom, have confessed that they were planning and monitoring to kidnap an expatriate involved in the construction work along Calabar-Itu Highway.

The Police Commissioner concluded that the suspects would be charged to court as soon as investigations were concluded.

He thanked the people of Akwa Ibom and solicited for cooperation and information to ensure criminal elements were arrested.

The commissioner commended other security agencies for cooperation, collaboration and support to keep Akwa Ibom safe.

NCAA Suspends Mattini Airline Services

By; AMOSTAUNA, Kaduna

The licence of Mattini Airline Services Limited, the private jet operator whose aircraft overshot the runway on Friday at Ibadan Airport, has been suspended by the Nigeria Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA).

The private jet overshot the runway with 10 persons onboard, while firefighters and rescue officials from the Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN) were immediately deployed to the scene.

In a statement, the NCAA declared that the licence suspension was with

immediate effect, pending the outcome of investigations into the incident.

Before the incident at 11am, the Challenger CL 601 aircraft, registered as N580KR and operated by Mattini Airline Services Limited, departed from Abuja to Samuel Ladoke Akintola Airport in Ibadan.

While emphasising its commitment to ensuring the highest standards in the aviation sector, the regulatory body announced its intention to conduct a comprehensive safety and economic audit of all private jet operations in Nigeria.

Michael Achimugu, the Director, Public Affairs and Consumer Protection, NCAA, issued a statement saying it enlisted the Nigerian Safety Investigation Bureau to conduct a thorough investigation into the Ibadan Airport incident.

The NCAA has initiated an economic inquiry into the aircraft's operation, specifically concerning the terms and conditions of the PNCF as detailed in its documents, while the NSIB is conducting the safety investigation.

The statement said, "In the meantime, and in accordance with Sec 32 (4) of the Civil

Aviation Act 2022, the NCAA has also suspended the PNCF of Mattini Airline Services Limited with immediate effect."

NCAA said it would subsist until a determination is made that the conditions of the PNCF have been adhered to, saying that NCAA has further initiated a safety and economic audit of all private jet operations in Nigeria.

NCAA, however, assured the traveling public of its utmost commitment to safety and the entrenchment of global best practices.

Alleged Cyberstalking: Court Grants Bayelsa News Blogger, Saint Mienpamo Bail

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Justice Emeka Nwite of the Federal High Court, Abuja, has granted bail to the Bayelsa based news blogger and owner of the Naija Live TV, Mr. Saint Mienpamo Onitsha.

Mr. Saint Mienpamo Onitsha, was charged to the Federal High Court, Abuja on alleged charges of Cyber stalking in suit number FJC/ABJ/CR/492/2023 and between the Inspector-General of Police as Complainant and Mienpamo Onitsha Saint as defendant.

He was later remanded in Kuje Correctional Centre, following his arraignment.

At the hearing on bail application, the Prosecuting Counsel, Victor Okoye Esq,

who apposed the bail application being sought, however raised doubt on the area of jumping of bail. The Defence Counsel, Benjamin A. Ogbara Esq, argued that despite the opposition put forward by the prosecution, which to him is unfounded, the court has the discretionary powers to admit bail.

The presiding Judge, Justice Nwite, after listening to the submissions of the prosecuting counsel, Victor Okoye Esq and the Defence Counsel, Benjamin S.Ogbara Esq, admitted bail to Saint Mienpamo Onitsha, pending the determination of the trial.

Justice Emeka while granting the the bail application however, stated that the defendant has shown that he is willing to defend the case against him and ready to cooperate with the court by not jumping bail.

Justice Emeka Nwite also stated that despite the argument put forward by the prosecution counsel on the possibility of the defendant to jump bail, "there is no concrete evidence before the court to buttress the assertion.



And I am granting the defendant bail in the interest of justice."

Among the conditions of bail include the payment of N10 million and two sureties and that one of the sureties shall possess a landed property within the jurisdiction and the document to the landed property must be verified by the Deputy Registrar of the court.

"Also, the second sureties must be a responsible citizen of this country and that both counsel together with the sureties must each deposit two copies of their recent photographs with the Deputy Chief Registrar of the court"

"That the residence of the sureties must be verified and confirmed by the registrar of the court."

Justice Emeka Nwite however, adjourned the case to March 19, 2024 for trial.

It would be recalled that a Federal High Court sitting in Abuja had on November 2, 2023, ordered that the Bayelsa news blogger, Mr Mienpamo Onitsha Saint, be remanded at the Kuje Custodial Centre, over alleged defamation and cyber stalking against the Interim Administrator of

the Presidential Amnesty Programme (PAP), Major General Barry Ndiomu (Rtd).

The defendant was also accused and is standing trial on a three-count charge bordering on alleged willful libel, threat, causing danger and insult against the PAP Interim Administrator.

According to reports, when the charges were read to him at the commencement of the hearing, the accused person however, pleaded not guilty.

The charges read in part, "That you Mienpamo Onitsha Saint of Imingi Road, Yenagoa, sometime in September 2023, within the jurisdiction of this honourable court did knowingly and intentionally sent a message/post by means of computer system network via your Facebook page 'Mienpamo Onitsha Saint' that vote of no confidence on Ndiomu as Amnesty Delegate strangled to death by Ndiomu Boys in Abuja which you know to be false, for the purpose of causing annoyance, inconvenience, danger, insult, injury, criminal intimidation, ill will and

needless anxiety to one Major General Barry Ndiomu (Rtd) and thereby committing an offence punishable under Section 24 (1) (b) of the cybercrime (Prohibition, Prevention etc) Act 2015.

"That you Mienpamo Onitsha Saint of Imingi Road, Yenagoa sometime in September 2023 within the jurisdiction of this honourable court did knowingly and intentionally transmitted and caused the transmission of a communication through a computer system network via public Facebook page known as Bayelsa Focus Group that vote of no confidence on Ndiomu as Amnesty Delegate strangled to death by Ndiomu Boys in Abuja which is aimed at bullying, threatening and harassing the person of Major General Barry Ndiomu (Rtd) and such communication has caused him fear of death, violence, bodily harm and you thereby committed an offence punishable under section 24 (2) (a) of the cybercrime (Prohibition, Prevention etc) Act, 2015".

Widow Cries For Help, Accuses Late Husband's Siblings of Victimisation

By; MKPUMA ENYINNA, Abakaliki

A 37-year-old widow, Mrs Chinenye

Okonkwo has appealed to the Anambra State Government and human rights organisations to assist her in recovering her late husband's property from his siblings.

Chinenye during a news conference on Saturday, alleged that her late husband's siblings encroached into their land, carried the blocks for their proposed building and sent her and her five children on exile.

She said that the Umuodilogu village kindred and the widows' organisation under Sir Emeka Offor Foundation tried to settle the matter but to no avail.

"My Late husband, Linus Okonkwo showed me the boundary of his land before his death in 2017 at age of 45. He also molded blocks for a four bedroom flat.

"But his siblings, Boniface and CY Okonkwo are trouble makers. They sent me away asking me to go remarry and they will consider my children when they are grown.

"They even threatened to kill me if they see me in the family compound. I'm currently living in a rented apartment with my kids. I'm struggling to pay both house rent and children's school fees.

"I'm appealing to the state government and well-meaning Nigerians to help me recovering my late husband's property from his siblings.

Also speaking, Mrs Ogechi Izuka, Leader of the widows' organisation said they reported the matter to the International Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA), Awka, and the culprits had been served papers.

"Unfortunately, our NGO, does not have the right to interfere in family affairs. There is a limit we can go. We can only resort to protest or demonstration if the matter is life threatening.

"We want both the government and members of the public to intervene to serve as deterrent to others who may be planning similar actions on other widows. We want this to be the last," she said.

In his remarks, Mr Francis Okafor, Chairman, Umuodilogu kindred, said they frown at and strongly condemn actions of the widow's brother-in-law.

"We have been trying to amicably resolve the matter in-house, but it escalated when Boniface and his team resorted to violence, the first of its kind in our kindred.

"They even threatened to kill one of our kinsman for defending the widow," he said.



Customers, Distributors Hail Dangote For His Support, Encouragement At Awards Night

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Customers and distributors of Dangote Cement Plc have hailed the magnanimity of the Founder and Chairman of the company and Africa's largest conglomerate, Aliko Dangote.

The customers described Dangote's humaneness and philanthropy as unrivalled among his peers in the business community in Nigeria and Africa.

Speaking on the sidelines of the 2023 Dangote Cement Customers Award and Gala Night held in Lagos at the weekend, the customers who came from various regions across the country, described their business relationship with Dangote Cement Plc as the 'best alliance' with a partner who provides great opportunities for the growth of its partners.

At the glittery event, the distributors carted away handsome rewards for keeping faith with Dangote Cement and patronising its products.

While both Kizz Daniel and Tuface Idibia were on standby to thrill and entertain the customers, prominent Nigerians were also in attendance to felicitate with Aliko Dangote and the Cement's customers.

Among top dignitaries in attendance were: Former Governor of Ekiti state, Dr. Kayode Fayemi, Executive Chairman of Geregu Power, Femi Otedola and the Former Minister of Industry, Trade & Investment, Otunba Niyi Adebayo, among many others.

Kazab Heritage Limited won the overall Best Distributor of the Year award, while Gilbert Igweka Global Concept and Nwa Ado Resources Nigeria Limited occupied the second and third positions, nationally respectively. Winners in the regions include Twins Faja Enterprises as overall winner in the Lagos/Ogun region, while Nwa Ado Resources Nigeria Ltd, Abdullahi Fugu, Giwa Dynamics Ventures, and D.C. Okika Nigeria Limited were overall winners in the North Central, North East, North West, and South East regions respectively.

"For the past 20 years that I have been a distributor of Dangote Cement, my business has grown so big beyond our imagination", Mr. Wale Fajana, the Chairman of Twins Faja Nigeria Ltd enthused. He explained that he started business with Dangote Cement way back in Apapa and ever since "Alhaji has ensured that my business with him

grows. I credit him with my success today. Without his support to my business, I would not be where I am today.

"He (Dangote) also provides us with financial support in many forms to grow our business relationship with Dangote Cement. On a personal note, Alhaji Dangote has been very close to my family and his humanity second to none as he showers us with gifts to encourage the distributors performance yearly," Fajana said.

Another distributor, Chief Lawrence Onyemelukwe, the Managing Director of Lafanex Nigeria Ltd, described Aliko Dangote and Dangote Cement as "legendary", adding that, "Alhaji has a large heart, and he has taught us how to do big business, with his support which has become a centre of our success story."

Chief Onyemelukwe, who is a leading distributor in Asaba, Delta State, explained that Dangote Cement has introduced different technology and automation into their business model that distributors have now adopted to improve their sales revenue.

He described working with Dangote Cement over the decade as beneficial to him and all his

customers.

Abdullahi Fugu of A.A Fugu & Sons, who is based in North East Nigeria, disclosed that he started in a small way with Dangote Cement, and added that with the personal touch of Dangote and the support of the company management, he has become a top distributor of the product. "Alhaji Dangote has a magic touch and his input has helped grow my business to become very big. Dangote Cement has provided platforms for the distributors to flourish and employ people," Fugu added.

On his part, Chief Akukalia Igwebuike, the CEO of Nwa Ado Multi Biz, a top three cement distributor attributed his business success to the tremendous support of Dangote Cement management and particularly Aliko Dangote. He said Aliko Dangote took a special interest in his business growth and has never stopped looking out for him as he continues to excel in business. "All I have to say is 'Thank you to Alhaji' for his support to my business. I promise to double my effort in 2024 and improve my number three position as a distributor of Dangote Cement", he said.

In her own remarks, Mrs.

Beatrice Chinwe Okika, the CEO of DC Okika Nigeria Ltd, a top distributor in the Southeast region of Nigeria says Dangote Cement is more than a business to her. "Right from when I lost my husband, Alhaji has never left me and my business. He has always shown concern for the family and the business. He has provided financial help in all forms to support the business and the family. I have enjoyed so much support I can't even count."

According to her, "Dangote Cement has continued to provide support to all distributors to ensure that the partnership works. May God bless him and continue guide his steps."

Engr. Festus Abononkhua of Raybale Nigeria Ltd, described Dangote Cement as the best trade partner.

He said even though as an engineer, he was initially ashamed to start out trading in cement, now he is immensely proud to be a distributor of Dangote Cement products.

He added that today, with the support of Dangote Cement, the size of his business has grown tremendously in the South-South region of Nigeria.

Out-of-School Children Crisis:

Father Of Late Sylvester Oromoni Jnr Vows To Continue Fight For Justice, As Son Is Laid To Rest

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

In a poignant ceremony held at the family compound in Ogbe-Ijoh, Warri, Mr. Sylvester Oromoni Snr, father of the late Sylvester Oromoni Jnr, has vowed to continue the fight for justice, particularly on behalf of students facing maltreatment in Nigerian educational institutions.

Two years ago, the 12-year-old Downen College pupil, Sylvester Oromoni Jnr, met a tragic end, allegedly tortured by senior students.

Addressing journalists, Mr. Oromoni expressed the family's determination to ensure justice not only for their son but for all students who have faced assaults within school premises. This decision to bury their son came after confirming that the Lagos State inquiry into the incident was progressing as expected.

Also speaking at the event, renowned lawyer, Chief Femi Falana (SAN) commended the Oromoni family's tenacity in seeking justice and urged parents and school managements to prioritize the welfare and safety of

students. Despite acknowledging the time justice might take, he assured that it would be delivered.

Falana, who is also the family lawyer, noted that the young boy would be remembered for touching the lives of the family, the school, and his colleagues.

"We are here to celebrate a great Nigerian whose life was cut short. His short life was so eventful according to his biography that was just read to us now."

"The short life of Solomon cannot be compared with that of Methuselah," Falana said. "Sylvester touched the lives of his teachers, friends, fellow students, and we should be reminded and ask ourselves what would you be remembered for after this life."

"We must try as much as possible to rededicate our lives to God almighty. I must thank the parents of Sylvester Oromoni Jnr for standing and demanding justice for their son."

During the burial ceremony, Ven. Revd Goodluck Bayagbon of God's Grace Ministry, Warri, delivered a message encouraging Christians to lead exemplary

lives. He celebrated Sylvester Oromoni Jnr as a devout believer who left a positive impact on those around him.

The Oromoni family, clad in somber attire, stood resolute in their quest for justice. The burial became a symbolic event, uniting the community in demanding answers and reforms to ensure the safety of students in educational institutions.

Sylvester, a bright young boy with a passion for engineering and sports, had his promising future cut short by an alleged attack from fellow students. The community, friends, and well-wishers gathered to pay their respects, turning the ceremony into a call for accountability and justice.

Despite the passage of time, the pain of Sylvester's loss remained fresh, and the family's determination echoed beyond their community. The tragedy turned into a rallying point against bullying and violence in schools, prompting a united



demand for reforms.

Sylvester Oromoni Jnr, born on December 4, 2009, tragically passed away on November 30, 2021, allegedly due to torture by senior students at Downen College, Lekki, Lagos State.

The family, dignitaries, and well-wishers gathered on Saturday, January 27, 2024, to bid farewell and mourn the untimely demise of the young scholar

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

TERMS OF ADVERT PLACEMENT

- All adverts are expected to be in cash or bank draft in favour of New Nigerian Newspaper's Limited.
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6 COLUMNS			
Depth	38.1 (CM)	Depth -	15 (Inches)
Width	25.4 (CM)	Width -	10 (Inches)

POLITICAL RATE

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

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

CLASSIFIEDS

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

Special Position

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

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

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

Is Nigeria In Another Round Of Olu Falae's SAP Medicine?

By; MUSAILALLAH

Most, if not all Nigerians are of the firm belief that Finance Minister, Olu Falae's medicine of Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), introduced during the era of military Head of State, General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida in July 1986 is the foundation upon which the present economic crisis of the country was laid.

Undoubtedly, the IMF-World Bank economic policy packages embodied in the structural adjustment programme, SAP provided an overt encouragement to the fostering of an unregulated, dependent capitalist development model, while allowing only a supportive role for the government in a refurbished economic environment of highly reduced government ownership and control of enterprises.

Since SAP came into being, inflation has assumed a doomsday scenario from 5.4% in 1986 to 40.9% in 1989. Nigeria's annual inflation rate in November 2023 was 28.9%.

The principal price of SAP measures Nigerians are paying today, include faulty external debt management strategies, removal of subsidies on petroleum products and fertilizer, privatization and commercialization, trade liberalization, and interest rate deregulation. This SAP-induced inflation has resulted in adverse income redistribution, leading to increased personal insecurity among other evils.

The pressure by IMF and the World Bank first reared its ugly head on the Nigerian government when General Muhammadu Buhari was military head of state way back in 1984.

Considering the evils associated with SAP and its likely consequences on the economy and Nigerians, the then head of state. General Muhammadu Buhari refused to adopt the IMF-World Bank economic medicine to float the Naira and other packages embedded in SAP.

Much later when he was elected in 2015 and sworn into office as Nigeria's civilian President Muhammadu Buhari had expressed skepticism over decision to float the Naira in line with request of IMF and the



World Bank.

In an exclusive interview in 2016 with Al Jazeera TV, Buhari did explain why he was going against the IMF and their call for him to float the Naira. Buhari knew that Nigeria would not survive another SAP.

As President, Buhari while speaking to business leaders, said that he doesn't like the returns he gets from the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) on the pressure to devalue the Naira against the dollar.

"How much benefit can we derive from this ruthless devaluation of the Naira? I'm not an economist neither a business man, I fail to appreciate what is the economic explanation," Buhari quickly added.

Previously, Buhari had consistently refused to abandon an official exchange rate of the Naira to the dollar, arguing that 'to do so would stoke inflation in the country.'

Recalling the might of the Nigerian currency in 1985, former President Buhari said, "Naira was strong until my removal in 1985".

Speaking at a meeting with members of the Council of Retired Federal Permanent Secretaries during his first tenure as President, Buhari told the high level technocrats that he resisted the pressure from the International Monetary Fund and World Bank to devalue the currency and remove fuel subsidy.

He insisted that he was yet to be convinced that the vast majority of ordinary Nigerians would derive any tangible benefit from a devaluation of the naira.

The president said he still held the conviction that motivated his principled resistance to devaluation in his first tenure as military Head of State.

"When I was military Head of State, the IMF and the World Bank wanted us to devalue the

naira and remove petrol subsidy but I stood my grounds for the good of Nigeria.

"The naira remained strong against the dollar and other foreign currencies until I was removed from office in August, 1985 and it was devalued.

"But how many factories were built and how many jobs were created by the devaluation since then".

"That is why I'm still asking to be convinced today on the benefits of devaluation," Mr. Buhari told the retired Permanent Secretaries led by Christopher Tugbobo.

Mr. Buhari welcomed the council's pledge of support for the successful implementation of his administration's change agenda, especially in the priority areas of improving security, curbing corruption and revitalizing the nation's economy.

Regretably, indications are that the PBAT administration has

surrendered the country into the hands of the IMF and the World Bank.

That explains why the Subsidy removal and the floating of the Naira were done before he even had a cabinet or economic team during his searinh in at the Eagle Square in Abuja on May 29 last year. Indeed Nigerians are into SAP phase II.

To say that Nigerians are in for the worst time with inflation, high cost of living, highest cost of fuel among others is an understatement. The lives of Nigerians today are in real danger. Most people hardly afford 2 meals a day and the cost of transportation and prices of food items have increased many folds.

The plain and bitter truth is that Nigeria is in SAP phase II.

MUSA ILALLAH writes from Emeka Anyaoku Street, Abuja and can be reached via; musahk123@yahoo.com

Gender Based Violence A Silent Menace Consuming Women, Children

By: AUSTINE EMMANUEL, Kaduna

It has been said that, "there is no love in violence even as reasoning is weak where violence reigns." The rising cases of Sexual and Gender Based Violence, (SGBV) particularly against women and children have become a thing of serious concern in recent time.

World Health Organization (WHO) defines Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) as any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, or other act directed against a person's sexuality using coercion by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim in any setting.

WHO also refers to sexual and gender based violence as a major public and clinical health problem and a violation of women's human rights that is rooted in and perpetuates gender inequalities. WHO also noted that, globally one in three women experience physical and/or sexual violence in their lifetime, mostly by an intimate partner.

SGBV on the other hand is violence committed against a person because of his or her sex or gender. It is forcing another person to do something against his or her will through violence, coercion, threats, deception, cultural expectations, or economic means. Although the majority of victims and survivors of SGBV are girls and women, boys and men can also be harmed by SGBV, especially male children. (United Nations High Commission for Refugees, UNHCR)

Global index report also reveals a growing trend in SGBV, with rising cases recorded in times of crisis, disasters, banditry and the global 2020 COVID-19 pandemic lockdown. In 2020, approximately 47,000 women and girls were killed worldwide by their intimate partners or other family members; over 1.7 million Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) complaints received in 2021 in Nigeria, and about 401 women lost their lives in 2022 as a result of the endemic.

SGBV can happen in both private and public spheres and it affects women disproportionately, even as it can be sexual, physical, verbal, psychological or socio-economic and it can take many forms, from verbal violence and hate speech on the internet, to rape or to murder.

Experts over the years, have decried the surge in the number of reported cases, particularly in Kaduna state where different measures are believed to be put in place to prevent, curb and punish offenders. Although some experts said the surge in number is as a result of the milestone recorded by different advocacy groups who encourage survivors to speak out rather than dying in silence.

The need to have best practices in the measure of justice to survivors of SGBV particularly against women can never be overemphasized, even as it will help to ensure that the right things are done in other for those who are dependent on the implementation of the relevant laws to get justice adequately through the



implementation of those laws as panacea to discourage perpetrators.

Over the years, many governmental and Non Governmental Organizations have lend their helping hands to see that this menace is addressed to the barest minimum. For instance, in 1996 a feminist organization BAOBA for Women's Human Rights was established to ensure that the rights of women and girls become an integral part of everyday life. We also have the International Federation of Women Lawyers, (FiDA) amongst several organisations championing the course of SGBV in other to uphold the sanctity of women and the girl child as they are more vulnerable to societal attacks.

Also, In 2016, the former Minister of the Federal Capital Territory and two term Governor of Kaduna state, Mallam Nasir el-Rufai established the first Sexual Assaults Referral Centres, (SARC) under the Ministry of Human Services and Social Development (MHSSD) located at Gwamna Awan General Hospital, Kakuri, to provide psycho-social counseling, forensic examination, medical treatment and legal services for victims of sexual assault.

The SARCs is a multi-sectoral with all the MDAs fully represented carrying out different functions. He also signed the Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act, (VAPP Act) into Law in 2018 as ways to proffer lasting solution to such acts.

The Governor in 2019, further spread the SARC Centres to the three senatorial zone of the state, namely Yusuf Dantsoho Memorial Hospital-Tundun Wada, Gambo Sawaba General Hospital-Zaria, and Ibrahim Patrick Yakowa General Hospital-Kafanchan, all in Kaduna State so that survivors would not have to travel long distance to get intervention or services when the need arises.

During a tour to the four assaults referral centres, our news reporter, Austine Emmanuel, learned that the Centers had recorded a total of 6,736 cases of SGBV

since inception in 2016 to December, 31st 2023, with the highest figure from Kafanchan Center, at 3,420.

The Kakuri Centre, established in 2016, said that they had recorded a total of 944, while Tudun Wada and Zaria established in 2019 recorded 1177 and 1195 cases respectively. The Kafanchan Centre was also established in 2019.

Speaking extensively with the Pilot Manager, Salama Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) Kafanchan, Kaduna during a courtesy visit to the Centre, Mrs. Grace Yohanna Abbin, narrated that men are also assaulted but in rare cases compare to the female folks.

In her words, Mrs Grace said, "out of the 3,420 cases recorded, 491 men were abused, while 2,949 women were assaulted by their husbands and boyfriends, out of which 98 adults were victims of rape".

She also stressed that the Kafanchan Centre in collaboration with the Ministry of Justice, Kaduna state have been able to get justice for some survivors, meanwhile the Pilot Manager lamented that some cases could not see the light of the day because they lack evidence as a result of late reporting especially cases that are related to Sexual Assaults.

"The Kafanchan centre has recorded favourable judgement of three life imprisonment, two discharged and acquitted, some years of imprisonment or option of fine of cases for perpetrators, 3 protection orders for their survivors, while some children reunited with their family after being trafficked to other countries, amongst others".

Mrs. Grace also told us a story of one of her survivors, a woman who was invited from Kaduna to Port Harcourt for job opportunity and later trafficked to Burkina Faso for other business but was brought back home with pregnancy through intervention from the Ministry of Justice, Kaduna State and Kafanchan SARC. Another were three minors, 15, 16 and 17 years who were trafficked to

thesame country but were brought back home through same intervention.

The Executive Director, BAOBAB for Women's Human Rights, Bunmi Diposalami, who spoke to this reporter described women as an integral parts of the human society and had experience different types of SGBV both in the past and present.

Salami said that the endemic has a huge negative impacts on the life of women and the girl child as most of them could not get to their full potentials as a result of emotional and psychological trauma, added that going forward, BAOBAB would deepen engagement with the media, expand the Male Allies against Violence against Women and Girls (MAA-VAWG) and the Volunteer Outreach programmes to more states across the six geo-political zones.

"BAOBAB was established in 1996 and it became a legal entity in 1998. It exists to promote, protect, and defend the rights of women and girls in Nigeria.

The organisation believes that through mobilisation, advocacy and provision of access to information, women and girls would become aware of their rights and seek redress whenever those rights are violated.

"Similarly, engagement with relevant stakeholders within communities to advocate the rights of women, capacity enhancement of women and men to improve knowledge and change attitudes that are detrimental to the progress of women, as well as partnering with duty bearers and gatekeepers, including government institutions, traditional and faith leaders are essential for the elimination of discriminatory practices that hinder women and girls from actualising their full potential.

"Over the years, BAOBAB's advocacy intervention initiatives have Enabled a better understanding of the rights of women living under Muslim laws in Nigeria, ensured that men take the lead in mobilizing other men against gender-based violence with the Male Allies against Violence against Women and Girls Programme (MAA-VAWG), ensured the breaking the silence at the national level on issues of violence against women particularly on sexual violence, contributed to building an effective and stable but growing volunteer outreach team in many states across the country, improved the capacity of journalists to report cases of violence against women and girls from a gender-aware perspective, amongst other interventions."

"We will sustain the momentum through constant and consistent engagement with community heads and faith leaders and deepen the engagements with state and non-state actors who have mandates that support the protection of women and girls from SGBV to ensure they continue to share best practices and strategize to overcome the challenges they encounter in the course of their intervention activities.

Continued on Monday

Commissioner For Youth, Sports Development, Receives North-Central Coordinator For NPFL U-17 Tournament

**Pledges government's support*

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Nasarawa State Commissioner for Youth and Sports Development, Hon. Jafaru Ango, on Thursday, received the North-Central Coordinator of the Nigeria Premier Football League, NPFL, U-17 Youth League, Barr. Paul Edeh, in his office in Lafia.

A statement signed by the PRO, Nasarawa State Ministry of Youth and Sports Development, Eche Amos, made available yesterday, said that joined by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry, Chief Barr. Isaac Danladi, the Commissioner thanked the Coordinator for the visit, and assured of Government's undiluted support to the Organizers for a successful league.

While thanking the leadership of the Nigeria Football Federation, NFF, and Nigeria Premier Football League, NPFL, for choosing Lafia as one of the venues for the League, Jafaru emphasized that the League would open a vista of opportunities for young and promising talents spread across the State and the North-Central Zone, which is one of the dreams of Governor Abdullahi Sule for Nasarawa State.

Speaking earlier, the Coordinator who doubles as Chairman of the Benue State Football Association, said the essence of the visit was to inform the Commissioner and Ministry about preparations toward the commencement of the League.

He added that the visit was also to convey the appreciation of the Board of the NPFL under the leadership of Gbenga Elegbeleye, to the Government and people of Nasarawa State for approving the Lafia City Stadium as one of the five centres for the League and accepting to make resources available for the success of the Tournament.

Edeh stated that the choice of Lafia was necessitated by its distinct proximity to the affected NPFL Clubs, including Lobi Stars FC of Makurdi in Benue State, Plateau United FC of Jos, Kwara United FC of Ilorin, and Niger Tornadoes of Minna.

The Coordinator disclosed that the idea behind the Youth Tournament was to facilitate a hub of talents that can transit from one point to another in line with the requirements of the NFF and

world football governing body, FIFA, to build a succession programme for clubs and countries.

He applauded the result-yielding platforms created by the Governor Abdullahi Sule-led administration through the State's Ministry of Youth and Sports aimed at nurturing grassroot talents for optimal performance.

Edeh who was accompanied on the visit by the Chairman of the Nasarawa State Football Association, Salisu Galadima (a.k.a. Basira), commended the symbiotic working relationship between the State Government and the Nasarawa State Football Association which he termed as emulatory and capable of producing remarkable outcomes in the nearest future, stressing that both the Ministry and NSFA Board have provided him and his team with warmth and unmatched hospitality since arriving at the State Capital.

Giving the vote of thanks, Permanent Secretary, Nasarawa State Ministry of Youth and Sports Development, Chief Barr. Isaac Danladi, appreciated the Coordinator and NPFL leadership for adorning him and the Commissioner with souvenir kits of the Competition, promising to wear them during the tournament.

He noted that the NPFL U-17 Youth League was started during his era as Chairman of Nasarawa United FC cum NPFL Club Owners' Association and that the initiative falls within the mandate of the Ministry.

Danladi explained that Governor Abdullahi Sule places high premium on sports, particularly grassroots football, hence his approval of a Youth Team for the State-owned Club, Nasarawa United FC.

He urged the Organizers of the Competition to feel at home as the State would provide the needed atmosphere for a successful Tournament.

Highlight of the visit was the presentation of souvenir kits of the League to the Commissioner and Permanent Secretary by the Zonal Coordinator.

The 2023/24 NPFL U-17 Youth League, North Central Zone, which Kick-started on Thursday, 1st February, with two games involving Plateau United versus Niger Tornadoes, and Lobi Stars versus Kwara United, will climax on Saturday, 3rd February, 2024.



AFCON 2023 Quarter Finals: NFSC Begins Fasting For Super Eagles, Holds Road Show

*Suspends Cote d'Ivoire Vice Chairman

By; AYO OJEDOKUN
Lagos

In order to ensure that the Super Eagles enjoy mother luck in their quarter-final game against Angola today, members of Nigeria Football Supporters Club have embarked on fasting and prayers for the national team.

The Super Eagles will today by 6pm Nigerian time at the Stade Felix Houphouët Boigny, Abidjan meet the Parancas Negras (Black Sable Antelopes) in the first quarter-finals match of the tournament.

Speaking on their level of preparation to support the Eagles ahead of the crucial encounter, President General of the club, Dr. Rafiu Ladipo said that the fasting which began Wednesday was followed by a road show yesterday, where they drummed

support for the team among the millions of Nigerians living in the West African country while today, there will be a Juma'at Service for the team.

He further explained that the club has been mobilizing many of their chapters from all over the continent, who will be on ground to cheer the Eagles to victory.

Meanwhile the club announced the indefinite suspension of the Vice Chairman of the Cote d'Ivoire Chapter, Olarotimi Akinloye A.K.A Laro for anti-club activities.

A statement by the club accused the suspended Vice Chairman of hobnobbing with expelled members of the club and some splinter groups which runs against the constitution of the club.



AFCON 2023: Senegalese To Take Charge Of Nigeria, Angola Duel

By; JACOB ONJEWU
DICKSON

Senegalese official, Issa Sy will be the referee when Nigeria take on Angola in Friday's Africa Cup of Nations quarter-final encounter at the Stade Félix Houphouët-Boigny in Abidjan.

Sy will have compatriots Djibril Camara and Nouha Bangoura in tow as assistant referee 1 and assistant referee 2 respectively, alongside Mauritanian official Abdel Aziz Bouh as fourth official.

Modibo Samake from Mali will serve as reserve assistant referee, while Ahmad Nazeer Hossen Bowud from Mauritius

and Ali Mohamed Ahmed from Somalia will be in the roles of commissioner and referee assessor respectively.

The match, which will commence at 5pm Cote d'Ivoire time (6pm Nigeria time) will be another of the rare occasions that Nigeria and Angola tango on the turf, with few clashes between both nations at senior level over the years. Nigeria edged Angola to reach the final round of the qualification series for the 1990 FIFA World Cup finals (2-2 in Luanda and 1-0 in Lagos), but the Angolans stepped on Nigeria to make their single appearance at the FIFA World Cup finals, when they won 1-0 in

Luanda and held the Eagles 1-1 in Kano to edge the head-to-head contest that was the determining factor for the 2006 FIFA World Cup qualification series.

Nigeria goalkeeper Stanley Nwabali is fit to start Friday's encounter, though Coach Jose Peseiro has indicated he may not want to risk the safe hands if he is not fit enough for the tie.

The winner of Friday's encounter will square up with the winner of the clash between Cape Verde's Blue Sharks and South Africa's Bafana Bafana in one of the semi-final matches, at the Stade de la Paix in Bouake.

Athletes Begin Pre-Africa Games Preparation Meet In Abuja Today

By; JACOB ONJEWU
DICKSON

Nigeria's athletes have converged on Abuja to begin pre Africa Games and Olympic Games evaluation competition with over 300 vying for honours at the Moshood Abiola Stadium. A statement signed by the Secretary General of Athletics Federation of Nigeria (AFN), Rita Mosindi, said the evaluation meet has been split into two phases to accommodate the large number of athletes.

The first phase of the meet is scheduled for Friday and Saturday February while

the second phase will hold 16th to 17th February in Abuja.

The statement also approved events for the men's category to include; 100m, 400m, 1,500m, 400mH, High Jump, Long Jump and Javelin while the events for the women's category are; 100m, 400m, 800m, 100mH, Triple Jump, Discus and Race Walk.

Mosindi also stated that prizes will be available for 1st to 6th positions in the men and women's events.

The 13th edition of the African Games is scheduled for 8th to 13th March in Ghana

Para Badminton International: Nigeria's Eniola Wins 3 Gold Medals

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Eniola Mariam, Nigeria's sensational para badminton player who recently qualified for Paris paralympics coming up later in the year, has again made history by winning three gold medals at the just concluded first Egypt TV Para Badminton International tournament held in Cairo.

Over 28 countries across the World participated at the championship, described as the greatest outing for six Nigerian athletes comprising three male and three female led by the female national para badminton assistant coach, Ngozi Duru Phillip, that participated in the tournament.

Eniola won gold medals in the singles, doubles, and mixed doubles. She beat Adriane Spinetti Avila of Brazil 2-0 (21-5, 21-6) to emerge Champion of the Women's Singles, SL3.

The duo of Eniola Bolaji and Chigozie Jeremiah defeated Jagadesh Dilli (India) and Rosa Efomo De Marco (Italy) 2-0 (21-7, 21-10) in the Mixed Doubles SL3 event. In the Women's Doubles Finals, SL3-SU5, Nigeria's pair of Bolaji Mariam Eniola/Chinyere Okoro won gold against Rosa Efomo De Marco (Italy)/Diana Lizeth Leon (Colombia) 21-19, 16-21, 21-13

In the other events, Nigeria's gold medal men's singles SL4 hopeful, Nnanna Chigozie Jeremiah lost narrowly to Marcel Adam (Germany) after a tough one 21-19, 13-21, 21-15 where Nigeria settled for silver medal.

In Mixed Doubles SL3-SU5 semi final, Eze Chukwuebuka Sunday/Chinyere Oko lost to Jagadesh Dilli (India)/Rosa Efomo De Marco (Italy) 7-21, 5-21 to settle for bronze.

In the Men's Doubles SL3 & SL4, Nigerian pair of Nnanna Chigozie Jeremiah/ Eze Chukwuebuka Sunday lost to Jagadesh Dilli/Subhrajee Maharana (India) 21-17, 16-21, 17-21 while in the Women's singles WH2, Nigeria's Chukwuemeka Gift Ijeoma lost to the Egyptian Shaimaa Samy Abdellatif (Egypt) 17- 21, 12-21 to all settle for bronze medals.

In all Nigeria won three gold, one silver and three bronze medals.

In his reaction to Nigeria's successful outing at the tournament, President, Badminton Federation of Nigeria, Francis Orbih, who was ecstatic, hailed the young athletes whose dedication, resilience and determination to succeed opened the doors to the great achievement.

While thanking the young athletes for a job well done, Orbih also reiterated the resolve of the Federation under his leadership to support the growth of upcoming Athletes with a view to eventually fully regaining Nigeria's lost glory in Badminton on the continent and beyond.



Enough Of Killings In Nigeria - Ooni

*Says Ekiti Obas killings by gunmen absolutely unacceptable

By: **BAYOAKAMO, Ibadan**

Ooni of Ife, Oba Adeyeye Enitan Ogunwusi has declared that the killings of the two Obas in Ekiti State by gunmen is absolutely unacceptable, and that enough is enough of killings in the country. Ooni Ogunwusi in a statement by his Director of Media and Public Affairs; Otunba Moses Olafare, said it is time for government both at states and federal levels, to show practical capacity in the area of security management and operations.

The Ooni who is also the Co-Chairman, National Council Of Traditional Rulers of Nigeria (NCTRN) described the killings of two traditional rulers in Ekiti State by gunmen on Monday as "a pure sacrilege and deliberate display of criminal audacity to undermine the government's

security control capacity.

"We cannot continue like this. Several of our school children are still languishing in the undetected incarceration of these heartless terrorists. A party state chairman in Lagos State was a victim recently. What about the recently abducted school children in Ekiti State? Six sisters in Abuja not too long ago, with one of them killed. Similar cases across the country. Who is safe in this country again? Enough is enough", he declared.

Ooni Ogunwusi added, "The time should not be later than now for Government both at states and Federal levels to show practical capacity in the area of security management and operations".

"The traditional rulers in Nigeria must be motivated with statutory community policing policy

needed to work officially with government as we remain the closest leaders to the people, we know the traditional techniques to get rid of all these unfortunate situation".

Ooni Ogunwusi stressed, "We are no cowards and we are ready to rise to the occasion defend our traditional land. Get us statutorily involved and see that what we inherited from our respective ancestors are still intact and real."

He stressed that there is the need for the federal government to expedite thorough investigations into the killings of Onimojo of Imojo-Ekiti, Oba Olatunde Samuel Olusola and Oba David Babatunde Ogunsakin, Elesun of Esun-Ekiti.

"Assassinating traditional rulers in cold blood! This is absolutely unacceptable to us. If this could

happen to the traditional rulers, what would then become hopes for their common subjects who look up to them for local security interventions? This is a pure sacrilege and it is a deliberate display of criminal audacity to undermine the government's security control capacity.

"This reprehensible act has not only robbed us of noble leaders but has also left a scar on the fabric of our unity and peaceful coexistence as a nation. Government must stop at nothing to ensure the perpetrators are arrested and made to face justice"

Tasking the federal government to prioritize the establishment of community policing across the nation as the recent spate of killings and kidnappings of traditional rulers and school children across the country, the

Ooni stressed that the development highlights the urgent need for a robust, community-oriented security system, saying community policing, with its emphasis on local involvement, will be helpful to enhance intelligence gathering, deter criminal activities, and ensure the safety of Nigerians.

While urging the Gov Oyebanjiled state government and President Tinubu-led Federal government to expedite thorough investigations into this barbaric act and ensure that the perpetrators face the full wrath of the law, Oba Ogunwusi commiserated with families of the deceased Monarchs, the people of Imojo-Ekiti, the people of Esun-Ekiti, the government and Ekiti State council of Obas and Chiefs,

Report Possession Of Illicit Weapons, Coordinator Of Arms Control Agency Northwest Urges Citizens

By: **IBRAHIM ADAMU, Kaduna**

North West Coordinator of the National Centre for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (NCCSALW), under the office of the National Security Adviser, Air Vice Marshall Haruna Umar Mohammed (Rtd), has called on patriotic Nigerians to report anyone who is in possession of illicit small arms and light weapons to the centre located in Kaduna.

He said that the Centre's mandate is to have an illicit arms-free society as well as to prevent and control the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in the six geopolitical zones in the country. To this end, he called on patriotic Nigerians to come forward with any information that will lead to the recovery of illicit small arms and weapons to the nearest security agency.

"If you are in doubt, you can come to our centre. You know the



headquarters of the Northwest office is in Kaduna, he declared. The retired Air Force General made the declaration during a one-day training workshop for Journalists in Kaduna on the proliferation of small arms and light weapons at the secretariat of the Nigeria Union of

Journalists.

According to him, his office will continue to collaborate with journalists in order to educate Nigerians on the dangers of possessing illicit small arms and light weapons.

While, attributing the incessant security challenges to the

proliferation of arms on many individuals and groups, he said, "the effects of small arms and light weapons are too numerous as we are aware today.

Suffice it to say that the availability of illicit small arms and light weapons is a major catalyst for insecurity not only in Nigeria but also globally.

"Illicit small arms and light weapons effectuate the upsurge of armed groups, communal clashes, ethnic and religious violence and militancy.

Haruna Mohammed (rtd), disclosed during the training that the Centre had recovered 30,000 small arms, light weapons and ammunition in Nigeria since its establishment in 2001.

He said, since the establishment of the Center, a lot of recoveries of illicit small arms and light weapons and ammunition have so far been recorded. "Over 10,000 small arms and light

weapons and over 20,000 ammunition of different calibers have so far been recovered."

According to the Coordinator, proliferation of small and light is a major catalyst for insecurity, not only in Nigeria, but globally. "Proliferation of small arms and light weapons effectuate the upsurge of armed groups, communal clashes, cultism, kidnapping, ethnic and religious violence the world over and these results to loss of lives and property and displacement of our people.

"It is against this background that the federal government of Nigeria found it necessary as part of efforts to rejig the security architecture to establish NCCSALW to serve as a security mechanism for the prevention and control of proliferation small arms and light weapons towards peace and security in Nigeria". Mohammed said.