

# New NIGERIAN

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**Kidnap: Group Frowns At Payment Of Ransom By Ex Minister**

\*Says action encourages banditry

\*Lauds FG efforts so far in tackling security challenges

**Story on Page 6**

## Victims Of Mangu Crisis Decry Neglect From Government **P.4**

\*Applaud JNI Aid Group for supporting them

## Eagles To Extend AFCON Record, No Matter Result Against Bafana **P.22**

## Kano To Partner Canada In Areas Of Health, Education, Agriculture

\*Gov. Yusuf Receives Canadian Ambassador to Nigeria **P.3**

# Fuel Subsidy Removal: Hunger, Depression, Crime Has Taken Over Nigeria - CUPP

■ Says standard of living has significantly gone southwards

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The Coalitions of United Political Parties (CUPP) has said that the hasty removal of fuel subsidy has brought untold hardship on Nigerians.

National Secretary of CUPP, High Chief Peter Ameh expressed this in a statement he personally signed, made available to

our correspondent.

"The unplanned, unprepared and unstructured removal of subsidy is the root cause of all this harsh economic realities and it brought crushing economic misery to the majority of Nigerians.

"The rich are not cutting back on unnecessary government spending, flying private jets

*Continued on Page 2*

## INEC Has Become Extension Of APC - PDP Chieftain **P.2**

\*Accuses INEC of manipulating Ebonyi South Senatorial By-Election

## NNPP Capitalizing On APC Failure To Win 2027 Presidential Election - Ajadi

\*Says party 'll develop Nigeria **P.4**

## 15 Suspected Hoodlums Terrorising Highway Truck Drivers Land In Lagos Taskforce Net **P.3**



Gov Zulum addressing the IDPs from Niger Republic

## Zulum Disburses N100m Cash, 20,000 Wrappers To IDPs, Niger Republic Refugees **P.5**

## Oil Theft: Tantita Security Intercepts Another Vessel With Stolen Crude In Niger Delta **P.2**

# Oil Theft: Tantita Security Intercepts Another Vessel With Stolen Crude In Niger Delta

By: UTEBOR PETER, Asaba

The Operatives of Tantita Security Services Nigeria Limited (TSSL) in collaboration with security personnel from the Nigerian Police and the NSCDC have arrested a Mordovia's vessel, MT Harbor Spirit with IMO No. 8226272, alongside 12 Nigerian crew members perpetrating illegal crude oil bunkering in Bayelsa State.

The Tantita's Executive Director (Operations), Captain Warriedi Enisuoh, while parading the ill-fated 'Harbor Spirit' and its arrested crew members to journalists yesterday, where the vessel is presently anchored at Tantita facility at Oporoza in Gbaramatu Kingdom, near Escravos, noted that the ship was "arrested at about 1.00 am in the early hours of Sunday as it was loitering around Sangana Oil Field in Bayelsa, where it was already anchored into one of the oil platforms there loading crude oil illegally".

According to Warriedi Enisuoh, about 88,000 litres of crude oil had already been siphoned illegally by the vessel's crew as of the time of the arrest "but the objective of the arrest is mainly to prevent oil theft".

"What they took showed their

motive", he stated.

Enisuoh told journalists that Tantita security operatives had been on the trail of the arrested ship "for a while" following security reports.

He explained that the surveillance in collaboration with other security agencies was aimed at "drawing down the sponsors of the ship and those who have been using the ship to perpetrate crime against the country".

"What you see here today is a result of the strict instruction and order by the Chief of Defence Staff on how to deal with the scourge of crude oil theft which was heavily supported by the entire security forces", he said.

Enisuoh while expressing delight over the synergy between Tantita and other security agencies also noted that the crew members of the arrested vessel "had been quite cooperative and did not protest as we apprehended the vessel and moved them here for further investigation to take place".

Fielding questions from journalists, the captain of the arrested vessel who gave his name as Shittu Joseph affirmed that he "was apprehended at the loading point at Sangana by the Tantita and NSCDC operatives".



**The nabbed vessel**

He said, "Personally, we were not happy with the botched operation as we were already making efforts to find our ways out before the security operatives swung on us.

"Three of my crew members even jumped into the water and we are yet to hear from them up till now.

"We are just a crew; we are Nigerians and it is only what we want to eat that we are looking for. That's the reason why we were employed by Joju Oil and

Gas in Lagos and the instruction was that we should go and load from a badge".

The Head of Investigations of the Police Special Task Force on Petroleum and Illegal Bunkering, CSP Omar John Sini told newsmen that "investigation has since began and that further progress and eventual outcome of the investigation will be made public through the office of the Force Public Relations Officer of the Nigeria Police Force".

Sini disclosed that the police

have made breakthroughs severally on earlier arrests insisting that details will soon be made public through the office of the Force Public Relations Officer.

"Be rest assured that in pursuant to the Inspector General of Police directive, robust investigation will be conducted, targeted at tracking or backtracking the actual culprits behind this crime", he stated.

## INEC Has Become Extension Of APC - PDP Chieftain

*\*Accuses INEC of manipulating Ebonyi South Senatorial By-Election*

By: MKPUMAENYINNA, Abakaliki

Following the alleged manipulation and intimidation of opposition parties in the just concluded Ebonyi South Senatorial Election, the People's Democratic Party (PDP) senatorial candidate for the poll, Barr. Silas Onu has alleged that the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has literally become an extension of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in Ebonyi State because of roles and support which led to the alleged manipulation of the senatorial election results in favour of APC.

Barr. Onu while addressing newsmen in Abakaliki, alleged that when PDP congresses were held, the party notified INEC as required by law, but they deliberately and wilfully decided not to monitor the congresses for the election of delegates.

He further said that the REC, working with some unknown elements who claimed to be "intending delegates", instituted an action before the Federal High Court seeking the cancellation of their duly conducted primary election, which was certainly funded by the APC and with the complete collaboration of a Federal High Court Judge.



**Barrister Onu**

Barr. Onu also explained that the case was one that should not survive 10 minutes on any court docket as the law is visible even to a blind person that only an aspirant who physically participates in a primary election can question the outcome of such an election, but the judge pretended not to understand that from the prayer/reliefs sought in the Originating Summons.

He vowed to challenge the outcome the election in a court of competent jurisdiction to ensure that the right thing is done for the sake of justice and fairness.

"Saturday 3rd of February, 2024 was a scheduled date for the by-election to elect a new Senator for Ebonyi South Senatorial District. The build up to this date was eventful and full of amazing experiences, especially with the visible

show of love and acceptance for our great party and my candidature – I am eternally grateful for these.

"In the build up to the election, we also saw how institutions can become obstacle to achieving the mandate given to them by law. We say this as a result of the shameful conduct of INEC, especially the Ebonyi State office that have literally become an extension of the APC in the state.

"When we held our congresses, we notified INEC as required by law and they deliberately and wilfully decided not to monitor our congresses for the election of delegates, citing factions within the PDP – one that only existed in the mind of the Resident Electoral Commissioner. We held our congresses and soon thereafter, the REC, working with some unknown elements who claimed to be "intending delegates", instituted an action before the Federal High Court seeking the cancellation of our duly conducted Primary Election. This was certainly funded by the APC and with the complete collaboration of the Federal High Court Judge.

"The case was one that should not survive

*Continued on Page 6*

# Kano To Partner Canada In Areas Of Health, Education, Agriculture

## \*Gov. Yusuf Receives Canadian Ambassador to Nigeria

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Kano State Government has re-stated its commitment to partnering Canada in the areas of health, education, agriculture, and other spheres of human endeavours for the benefit of the two entities.

Governor Alhaji Abba Kabir Yusuf made this known when he received the Canadian Ambassador to Nigeria, His Excellency, James Christoff who called on him at his office in Government House, Kano today. Alhaji Abba Kabir Yusuf noted with appreciation the cordial relationship existing between Kano and the Canadian government in the sectors of education, agriculture, science and technology among others.

A statement issued by Sanusi Bature Dawakin Tofa, the spokesperson to the governor said, the Bilateral relationship is aimed at mutual benefits and Kano will continue to provide all

necessary enabling environment for the partnership to work.

The governor also sought assistance in the areas of climate change, modern irrigation and reactivation of the scholarship scheme for Kano indigenes that was in existence in the early 80s.

He used the opportunity to enumerate some of the feats achieved by his government in health development that include; free maternal and child health services, provision of medical equipment and rejuvenation of health facilities across the 44 local government areas for effective and efficient services delivery.

Others are, mobile medical outreach to cater for the medical needs of the rural dwellers and prudence in managing Public fund for good governance and socio-economic development of the state.

Earlier, the Canadian Ambassador to Nigeria, His Excellency, James Christoff said he visited the governor to discuss



with him and other stakeholders on issues of development that can consolidate on the facets of collaboration between governments of Canada and that

of Kano. Ambassador James Christoff added that part of his engagements in Kano was to assess Canadian government's

project in the State worth 15.7 million dollars on women empowerment in the agricultural sector.

## 15 Suspected Hoodlums Terrorising Highway Truck Drivers Land In Lagos Taskforce Net

By; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

Operatives of the Lagos State Taskforce have bust a syndicate of notorious gang that specialises in harrassing truck drivers along the highways, arresting 15 members of the gang.

Our correspondent gathered that the

suspects were apprehended in a significant operation led by the chairman of the Agency along the Apapa/ Oshodi and Lagos/Badagry Expressway.

The Director, Press & Public Affairs of the Agency, Gbadeyan Abdurraheem in a statement yesterday, said that the suspects have been identified for their

brazen tactics, coercing truck drivers to part with money under the pretext of working for the defunct Lagos State Parks and Garages Agency.

Accordingly to the release, Jejeloye stated that the gang, operating with impunity, has subjected many drivers to physical harm and acts of bestiality when they resist extortion attempts.

“We have been on the trail of this gang for a while after receiving several complaints from road users who ply this corridor. We even heard of Instances of drivers who refused to comply and later faced violent threats, including the removal of essential truck components such as batteries and mirrors right on the expressway”. Jejeloye stated.

The Chairman expressed disgust at the manner in which these set of miscreants wreak unnecessary havoc on the Highways in the name of Parks and Garages despite the official pronouncement on the ban on the activities of the Agency late last year.

“The guts to perform these acts are quite baffling. They threaten their victims at day time and night with no regard for existing law and

order in the State. Unfortunately we have come to put an end to this jungle justice and they will no longer be allowed to operate anywhere in the State.”

One of the victims, Victor Aiyegbosi, a truck driver with one of the transport companies who was at their mercy recently described them as inhumane in their dealings.

He disclosed that they damage their trucks by ripping off cables and shattering the windows and mirrors just to have their way.

“The Taskforce assisting us here is the best thing that has happened to us this year so far” he stated.

Jejeloye revealed that the 51 apprehended suspects have been charged to court where eight out of them pleaded guilty and were sentenced to 7 months imprisonment with an option of 65,000 Naira fine.

The remaining 43 pleaded not guilty and their hearing adjourned till the 1st of March 2024.

CSP Jejeloye has therefore issued a stern warning to others engaged in acts of impersonation and extortion, urging them to desist forthwith or risk being prosecuted.

He said the Lagos State Government remains committed to ensuring the safety and efficiency of transportation networks within the State as enshrined in the THEMES PLUS agenda of the present



The apprehended suspects

# Fuel Subsidy Removal: Hunger, Depression, Crime Has Taken Over Nigeria - CUPP

■ Says standard of living has significantly gone southwards

globetrotting at the expense of the poor and living luxurious lifestyle while they tell the poor to tighten their belts.

"What the Federal government has done is akin to robbing Peter to pay Paul. Removing the only rare benefit the poor gets from the rich and transferring same to the rich," the statement said.

It explained that ever since the removal, transportation has quadrupled, and the cost of

goods and services have all also quadrupled.

"Our collective economic condition of gnashing our teeth and literally passing through the valley of shadow of death today is a reflection of the consequences of unplanned and unstructured removal of fuel subsidy.

"Our standard of living has significantly gone southwards, hunger and starvation is not only

staring us in our faces, but gnawing our bowels. Most parents cannot send their wards to school anymore. Criminality is on a geometric increase. There are more reports of missing pots of soup than ever before in recent history of our country," the statement said.

High Chief Ameh argued that a better plan would have been to phased it out in a way the poor will not bear the brunt of the

economic consequences, the should have made sure that the public transport system was fixed, what the skyrocketed costs of transportation add to food prices (Food inflation is all time high) and its impact on the economy alone is not what any reasonable Government should have overlooked.

"Make sure that all the refineries are maintained and working properly to put a stop to

whatever cost the country incurs from the importation of finished byproducts of crude oil into the country.

"This plan will also stop the hidden corruption and its attendant effect on our people.

"Turning Nigeria into a working Economy would have really helped to create jobs that enable the poor to breath under such circumstances," the statement said.

## NNPP Capitalizing On APC Failure To Win 2027 Presidential Election - Ajadi

*\*Says party 'll develop Nigeria*

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

New Nigeria People's Party, (NNPP), chieftain, Ambassador Olufemi Ajadi Oguntoyinbo yesterday, declared that NNPP is working very hard and will win the 2027 Presidential

election

Ambassador Ajadi while speaking on NNPP victory in the two State Assembly elections' rerun conducted last Saturday in Kano, said All Progressives Congress (APC) failure to meet the yearnings and aspirations of

Nigerians will open the door for the NNPP in 2027.

The NNPP chieftain said that Nigerians are disappointed with the manner the APC is ruling the country and that an average Nigerian is waiting patiently for 2027 to remove APC from power and that ruling party's failure to develop Nigeria and the high level of corruption being unveiled at the federal level, will boost the chances of NNPP in 2027.

"In a visionary move set for 2027, NNPP is gearing up to confront a myriad of challenges, ushering in a new era of progress and transformation. Key focuses include combating corruption, fostering national unity amid ethnic tensions, and addressing infrastructure deficiencies", he said.

The NNPP chieftain added, "The party's comprehensive plan also targets education reform, security concerns, environmental issues, youth unemployment, healthcare, agricultural reforms, and bridging the digital divide.

"NNPP aims to build a resilient and progressive nation by promoting transparency, inclusivity, and sustainable development. NNPP, steadily gaining momentum, is expected to leverage on this opportunity to strengthen its position in the political arena".

Ambassador Ajadi pointed out that, "the party's leadership is going to intensify efforts to attract prominent figures from other political affiliations, capitalizing on the discontent and desire for change"

Tasking APC members to prepare for a paradigm shift towards NNPP, he called for urgency of tackling challenges such as unreliable electricity, inadequate medical facilities, and prevailing hunger.

According to Ambassador Ajadi, the APC's failure to foster development in Nigeria will lead to NNPP securing victory in all northern states during the 2027 general election, adding many Nigerians are now expressing faith in NNPP's manifesto, predicting the NNPP's takeover in the 2027 election

The party's comprehensive plan also targets education reform, security concerns, environmental issues, youth unemployment, healthcare, agricultural reforms, and bridging the digital divide.

## Victims Of Mangu Crisis Decry Neglect From Govt

*\*Applaud JNIAid Group for supporting them*

By; BUHARI B. BELLO, Jos

Victims of the crisis in Mangu Local Government Area of Plateau State, are decrying not having any form of relief from government, two weeks after the unfortunate situation that befalls them. Recall that, on January 23, 2024, crisis broke out in the locality, where a lot of people were killed, others missing, while many houses and worship centers were burnt down, leading to the displacement of thousands.

It is against this backdrop, that as part of its mandate of providing instant relief to the victims of natural and man made disasters, the Nigerian Aide Group

of Jama'atu Nasril Islam (JNI) Plateau State Chapter, quickly swung into action by seeking for assistance from public spirited individuals in cash and kind for immediate conveyance to Mangu, so as to ameliorate plight of the victims.

A delegation of the JNI Aid Group led by the Plateau state director of volunteers Alhaji Danjuma Khalid presented the relief materials on Tuesday 06-02-2024, at the Mangu Central Mosque, where many of the victims live as Internally Displaced Persons.

While presenting the relief items to the JNIAid Group of Mangu Local Government Area, Alhaji Danjuma Khalid lamented

the sorry condition in which they found the IDPs, calling on the concerned authorities to come to their aid.

He also appreciated the public spirited individuals, who heeded their call for assistance to the victims, while seeking for more help considering the number of people in the IDPs.

Receiving the Items, members of the relief distribution committee set up by the JNI Aid Group, Jafar Musa Daskegar and A'isha Muhammad, reacted by saying, from the statistics they have currently, there are more than one thousand victims, many of whom are women and children in the two IDPs camps located within Mangu town.

Appreciating the Plateau State JNI Aid Group for the humanitarian gesture rendered to them, some of the IDPs narrated their situation in emotionally laden voices, saying life has been very difficult to them, due to lack of the necessities of day-to-day life, calling on government at all levels to provide them succour.

Some of the Items presented to the IDPs by the Plateau State JNI Aid Group, include 140 5kg bags of rice, 20 cartoons of cooking oil, three cartoons of cooking seasoning, five cartoons of salt, 20 cartoons of spaghetti, clothing, mosquito nets, baby diapers, sanitary pads among other things.

# Zulum Disburses N100m Cash, 20,000 Wrappers To IDPs, Niger Republic Refugees

By: SADIQ ABUBAKAR, Maiduguri

**B**orno State Governor, Babagana Umara Zulum has disbursed one hundred million Naira cash and 20,000 prices of wrappers to 20,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) women in Gamboru Ngala town to cushion their suffering.

He also blamed the recent improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and landmines explosions on highways in the state to the handiwork of saboteurs and beneficiaries of Boko Haram insurgency, who don't want an end to the crisis.

The governor who stated this yesterday, shortly after the distribution of N100 million cash and 20,000 prices of wrappers to 20,000 women, comprising victims of Boko Haram insurgency who fled some local government areas of Northern Borno to Niger Republic but returned to the state in the aftermath of the Niger Republic coup d tat, as well as thousands of resettled internally displaced persons (IDPs) from communities in Mobbar Local Government Area of Borno State.

He added that he was in Damasak to examine the refugees that returned from Niger Republic after the coup de tat following reports that many of the returnees don't have shelter.

" So we are here to provide palliatives to them and in addition, we decided to extend the gesture to the entire vulnerable women in Damasak. The military coup has affected the border communities especially, Abadam , Kukawa and Guzamala local government areas. These local government areas are seriously affected by the Niger crisis.

" By now, we would have resettled the IDPs from those local government areas to their ancestral homes, but for the ongoing crisis, we have not been able to do so . However, I am optimistic that the crisis will be resolved.

" I am sure that the federal government will create alternative means, so that the Nigerian military will take over border areas linking Niger so that our people can be resettled," Zulum said.

Speaking on the recent landmines and IEDs attacks in some highways in the state,

Governor Zulum blamed the handiwork of saboteurs and beneficiaries of the insurgency who are making fortunes from the crisis on the explosions, adding that the IEDs attacks is a matter of time that will soon be resolved.

" We have a lot of saboteurs in the Boko Haram insurgency, especially on the issue of landmines and IEDs attacks along the highways. We are working with the Nigerian military, the department of security services ( DSS ) to determine the root cause of the recent happenings. But I want to assure the people that very soon we will get rid of the issues of IEDs on the highways.

" It is a major threat to all of us . It has not been happening in the last two years. It is a recent development, and I believe there is sabotage in the system. Many within and outside the state don't want the end of the fight against Boko Haram insurgency. Many are feeding from the insurgency and many are getting wealth from the crisis.

" Look at the recent IEDs attacks , the vandalism of electricity power lines. All these are geared towards deteriorating the security situation in the state. But we are equal to the task, we will not allow such issue to continue, " Governor Zulum added.

Zulum said with the relative peace in Damasak the retarded agriculture in the state will be revitalised, adding that he will identify two petrol stations and subsidise the prices of fuel in Damasak to enable the farmers supply power to their generators for irrigation farming.

One of the female IDPs, Yana Modu expressed gratitude to the governor for providing basic amenities and palliatives to resettled residents of Damasak and prayed for absolute return of peace to the area and the entire state.

It would be recalled that Damasak, headquarters of Mobbar LGA at the border of Niger republic is an agrarian town known for large scale farming of onions, rice , fish and cattle rearing, is one of the local government areas worse hit by the Boko Haram insurgency, but with the relative peace returning there



# Kidnap: Group Frowns At Payment Of Ransom By Ex Minister

\*Says action encourages banditry

\*Lauds FG efforts so far in tackling security challenges



By; ISAAC ODEH, Kaduna

A group under aegis of Coalition for Peace and National Unity has condemned payment of ransom to kidnapers by the immediate past Minister of Communications and Digital Economy, Mal. Isa Pantami.

It would be recalled that on Wednesday January 5, gunmen invaded residence of a family in Bwari Area Council, the Zuma 1 area of Abuja, abducting a father and his six girls with one of them reportedly killed in captivity.

The former minister had made announcement, seeking donation to pay the N60 million ransom via his X social media handle for their rescue.

According to Pantami, a friend of his offered to pay N50 million ransom to the kidnapers to secure the release of the five remaining sisters, who were abducted in Abuja.

"It might appear a good and humanitarian gesture. For us as a group, it will no doubt further encourage kidnapping business in the country," they emphasised.

Reacting to the issue of payment of ransom by the Minister, Coalition for Peace and National Unity in a statement made available to journalists in Kaduna, said, "We have repeatedly advised and kicked against payment of ransom to criminals under any guise, because it is counter-productive to fight against banditry."

While recalling that Nigeria security agencies have also discouraged payment of ransom to kidnapers, the group reminded that, "The Nigerian Senate had in 2022 passed a bill imposing jail terms of at least 15 years for paying a ransom to free someone who has been kidnapped, and made the crime of abduction punishable by death in cases where victims die."

The group in the statement signed by the Secretary General, Dr. Abdullahi Musa Ringim queried Pantami's silence on heightened insecurity challenges under Buhari administration asked, "Where was Pantami's Voice, when under Former President Buhari, when half of Katsina State was under attack by bandits, 80 per cent of Zamfara State

was occupied by terrorists, Kaduna killings were done almost on daily basis in Southern Kaduna with Bandits unleashing terror on innocent citizens in Niger state and at Birnin-Gwari Local Government area of Kaduna State.

"We also ask what happened to his passion to rescue kidnapped victims, When 279 female students of GGSS, Jangebe were kidnapped during a raid by armed bandits on 26 February 2021; when 11 students of FGC, Yauri were kidnapped, when bandits invaded the school on 17th June 2021, Several students of Bethel Baptist School Kaduna, Greenfield University, Kaduna, Students of Federal College of Forestry Mechanisation, Kaduna were kidnapped? As measures to deter other persons from hurried payment of ransom to bandits, the coalition called on security agencies to invite Pantami for investigation for violating the law.

According to the group, hundreds of Nigerians are in kidnapers dens owing because the immediate past government allowed kidnapping to become a thriving enterprise.

However, the group which urged security agencies to adopt proactive measures to fight against all forms of criminalities across the country, especially banditry and Insurgency, posited, "Even though there still insecurity challenges, there are relative and significant improvements on security issues, especially in northern Nigeria.

"At this juncture, and from our comparative analysis as well as records obtained by our research unit, we are left with no option than to commend Federal government for efforts taken so far to tackle prolonged security challenges in country with the last eight months of Tinubu's administration." It stated.

Meanwhile, it advised the president to reaffirm his administration's commitment to eliminating poverty, terrorism and all forms of criminality nationwide and intensify efforts to implement tangible measures that will alleviate the hardship caused by the removal of fuel subsidies and the unification of exchange rates.

# INEC Has Become Extension Of APC - PDP Chieftain

*\*Accuses INEC of manipulating Ebonyi South Senatorial By-Election*

Continued from Page 2

10 minutes on any court docket as the law is visible even to a blind person that only an ASPIRANT who physically participates in a primary election can question the outcome of such an election. The judge pretended not to understand that from the prayer/reliefs sought in the Originating Summons, it is the Primary Election that was being questioned by people referred to as "intending delegates".

"He went on to create legal standing for them and purported to have also cancelled our primary election and ordering that none should even hold – against the clear provisions of law that courts cannot stop the holding of elections. This corrupt judge was cleverly used to interfere with the conduct and outcome of the said election.

"The result of the election interference by the Judge was clear as only 58,075 voters came out to vote from the total registered voters/PVC collection of 484,259 in the five LGAs of Ebonyi South. So many of our voters were told that the PDP was no longer on the ballot as "Court had disqualified Silas Joseph Onu". People gave up on the process, hence the very low turn-out on the election day.

"That was not enough for INEC and the APC, they went further to ensure that election did not take place by deliberately circumventing the BVAS in virtually every polling unit, after some level of accreditation had been done. So, where a particular polling unit had an accreditation of 100 voters, they deliberately and forcefully hijacked the ballot papers and thumbprint without accreditation. Then write a result that indicates they

had won that polling unit with 1,000 votes. This was not done by mistake or due to lack of knowledge – it is the new way that INEC rig election for the government. Follow the drift.

"At the collation centres, INEC Collation Officers openly claimed to have cancelled results from all polling units where there was over-voting without completing the Form EC40G. Then proposed to share the accredited votes between political parties.

"When we refused to partake in the heist, they simply harvested the valid accreditations from these cancelled polling unit (which were more than 90% of all the polling units across the 5 LGAs) and allotted them to the APC, leaving other political parties with zero votes in the cancelled polling units. Basically, after claiming that they cancelled votes for over-voting, they actually gave APC all the actual accreditation from such polling units, irrespective of where these accredited voters cast their votes. If all the results with over-voting were actually cancelled for all parties, there was no way the total remaining votes will exceed 10, 000 in all the 5 LGAs. So, INEC basically allocated accredited figures in polling units where results were cancelled to APC and that is how they emerged – stolen votes.

"I must commend my co-candidates of APGA and Labour Party, Hon. Ifeanyi Eleje and Hon. Linus Okorie for their resilience and scoring legitimate votes just like me. If you put together our votes, there is no way that APC will win if the cancellations were allowed to be out of the figures calculated."

# Agboarumi Completes Tenure As MD SAHCO PLC, Hands Over To Aboderin

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The Board of the Skyway Aviation Handling Company (SAHCO) PLC, has confirmed the appointment of Adenike Aboderin as Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer with effect from the 1st of February 2024.

This was contained in a statement signed by Head, Corporate Communications, Mrs. Adetola Vanessa Uansohia.

It said that Mrs. Adenike Aboderin who is taking over from Basil Agboarumi due to the completion of his tenure, is a seasoned finance professional with many years of Executive Leadership, Financial and Management experience in both Private and Public Sectors. Her skills include policy/strategy formulation, financial advisory, oil & gas, infrastructural, marine and transport development, business/risk management and public policy.

She has held many Senior Executive Management positions in both the Public and Private sectors and until December 2023, she was the Director Finance and Accounts, Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN) where she managed the finance, accounts, credit control and budget directorate of the organization.

In the Public sector, she worked as the Special Adviser to the Executive Governor of Ogun State on Trade and Investments, and also oversaw the state's Economic Planning Department between 2011 and 2014. Mrs. Aboderin has huge interests in Manufacturing, Transportation,



**Adenike Aboderin**

Investments and Social Development. In 2015, she had the responsibility of being the Chairman Sub - Committee on Social issues of the Presidential Transition Committee. Prior to her public service engagements, she held different senior management position at Skye Bank Plc (now Polaris Bank Limited), Citibank Nigeria, Premium Securities Limited and Commerce Bank, in a banking career that spanned over 20 years. In Banking and Financial Advisory, she led various teams and groups in the following sectors of the economy - Trading, Investment, Manufacturing, Commodities, Marine, Oil & Gas, Transport and Steel. She was also a Consulting Partner at Novateur Consulting Limited, a financial advisory firm and has held positions on various

boards.

Mrs. Aboderin holds a Bachelor's degree in Finance and a Master's Degree in Banking and Finance from the University of Lagos. She is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Bankers of Nigeria (FCIB); Fellow, Association of National Accountants of Nigeria (FCNA) and an AMPAP Certified International Airport Professional (IAP).

She has attended postgraduate courses in Global Strategic Management (GSM) at the Harvard Business School, an Advanced Management Programme (AMP) at the Lagos Business School, and several other courses covering Trade, investment, Energy and Infrastructure Financing, Credit, Risk, Treasury, Transaction Banking, Operations, Sales and Marketing. She is

presently pursuing another Master's degree in Sustainable Development from the University of Sussex, UK.

She is a motivator with high proficiency in business and transportation, marine, energy management, policy formulation and strategic thinking. She is passionate about industrialization and job creation, and continuously strives to proffer solutions to the Nigeria's development, social and unemployment issues.

SAHCO is an Aviation Ground Handling company, offering services in Passenger Handling, Ramp Handling, Cargo Handling and Warehousing, Aviation security, Baggage Reconciliation, Crew Bus and Executive Lounge services and other related Ground Handling

# Kogi Poly Rector Warns Students Against Social Vices

By; ADAMA JOHN, Lokoja

The Rector of Kogi State Polytechnic, Lokoja, Dr. Salisu Usman Ogbo has warned students to steer clear of cultism and other related vices that have dented the image of the Polytechnic. The Rector gave the warning, while speaking at the matriculation ceremony of 2023/2024 session held at the main campus of the institution in Lokoja, recently.

To the Rector, the warning became important as the polytechnic has zero tolerance for all forms of social vices that have become the norms of the students against their studies.

Such social vices include cultism, gun-running, examination malpractice, drug abuse, alcoholic addiction, unhealthy social gathering, cybercrimes, incitement to violence, gangsterism, destruction of public property, stealing and indecent dressing among others.

The Rector in a construed language stressed that the only option left for the students to escape the dangling debacle is for them to eschew participation in the the aforementioned social vices that have done untold dent to the image of the polytechnic.

"My simple warning is for you to stay away from these vices to avoid running afoul of the law. Any breach will attract the appropriate penalty, including outright expulsion and prosecution" he said.

He advised the students to take advantage of Information Handbook that will be distributed to them their various departments and digest the contents tyou through your respective departIgnorance of the law has no place in the institution and will not be

condoned.

It may interest you to know that we have specifically put in place all visible and invisible security architectures in strategic places to deal with cultists, their sympathisers and sponsors.

He also advised to report any move intended to intimidate and lure you into or enlist you into cultism.

"We encourage you to be sterling examples of what moral discipline is. You are advised to dress modestly and in accordance with the acceptable standards. Undue exposure of body parts is considered provocative to the sensibilities of others, and will be severely dealt with.

You can always access further information on how to dress on this campus on our posters, billboards and handballs."

He disclosed that a total of 4,349 students were admitted to run for both National Diploma and Higher National Diploma programmes of the Polytechnic.

According to the Rector, the National Diploma Programme has 3,124 matriculating students while the Higher National Diploma Programme has 1,225 matriculating students spread across Schools and Departments of the Polytechnic.

Students were admitted into departments in the Schools of Agricultural Technology, Applied Sciences, Art Design and Printing, Engineering, Environmental Technology and Management Studies.

He urged the matriculating students to see their admission into the institution as a rare opportunity which they must endeavour to make judicious use of and congratulated them for the favour bestowed upon them.

# Imported Ghana Loud Linked To Wanted Drug Baron Intercepted In Lagos

By ; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

Eagle-eyed operatives of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) have intercepted over 14.5 kilograms consignments of Ghanaian Loud, a strong strain of cannabis sativa, smuggled into Lagos from Ghana.

The Director of Media and Advocacy of the NDLEA, Femi Babafemi made the disclosure in a statement made available to journalists on Sunday.

According to him, the consignment was loaded in two trucks and a J5 bus with a total weight of 14,524.8 kilograms.

He added that the three vehicles conveying jumbo bags of the psychoactive substance were trailed and intercepted at Ojuelegba area of Lagos in the early hours of Sunday, January 28, 2024.

The NDLEA spokesperson explained that in the process of blocking the vehicles, two of the drivers jumped off on motion while the third driver, 66-year-old Nasiru Ojumu, who works with wanted Akala, Mushin based drug baron, Suleiman Jimoh (alias Olowo Idi Ogede, also known as Temo) was arrested.

According to him, NDLEA operatives have seized several shipments of same psychoactive substance worth billions of naira linked to Temo in the last three years.

Babafemi added that the wanted drug lord has since gone into hiding while the Agency continues manhunt for him.

In same vein, NDLEA operatives on routine patrol around a warehouse sealed at Church Street, Idumota, Lagos by the Agency over an ongoing



investigation on Thursday 1st of February arrested three suspects: Joseph Joshua; Muhammed

Adamu and Balarabe Musa who burgled the store and loaded 546,700 pills of tramadol and

other opioids into a waiting yellow bus marked BDG 447 XD and an unregistered Suzuki

## Rights Group Petitions Tinubu, PSC Chairman Over Continuous Human Rights Abuses By Enugu Police Command

### *\*Seeks urgent investigation*

By; KELVIN OKPARA, Enugu

A human rights organization, Civil Rights Realisation and Advancement Network (CRRAN), has petitioned president Ahmed Bola Tinubu over alleged grave continuous human rights violations by the Enugu State Police Command under the watch of CP, Anayo Uzuegbu.

It therefore, appealed to the president to as a matter of urgency, direct the Dr. Solomon Arase led Police Service Commission (PSC) to as a matter of urgency, carry out thorough investigation on the allegation.

The organization in the petition signed by its president, Barrister Olu Omotayo, and made available to newsmen on Sunday in Enugu, channeled the complaint via office of the Chief of Staff to President Tinubu, Hon. Femi Gbajabiamila.

According to the petition, which was also copied to Chairman of the PSC, Dr. Arase, the investigation is very important because the nation's constitution forbids such act.

The document read thus, "We write to you in respect of the continuous rights violations by the Police in Enugu State under Commissioner of Police, Kanayo Uzuegbu. We shall refer your Excellency to two recent grave rights violation within one month.

"Re: Detention of a 16-year old innocent child at the State CID, Police Headquarters Enugu for 3 months on a trump up charge of

rape. It took the intervention of the media and the Governor of Enugu State to secure the release of the 16 year old after over three months unlawful detention at the Police Headquarters Enugu, just because the parents of the child are poor and could not pay the N1.2 million Naira, demanded for bribe.

"The letter from the Office of the Governor of Enugu State informing our organization of the efforts made by His Excellency Peter Mbah Esq. the Governor of Enugu State in securing the release of the child from unlawful detention is attached herewith.

"The child an SS2 student in one of the secondary schools in the state, was unlawfully detained for over three months at the Police Headquarters Enugu from October 9 2023, to January 22, 2024. Since the release of the child from detention the parents have been taking him to hospital because of the deteriorating condition of his health."

It added: "The teenager who was looking pale, narrated to us how he was tortured while in detention by a policeman named Ifeanyi who used police baton to beat him all over his body joints in order to make him confess to what he did not do.

"The little Eze said his torture was supervised by the Officer in Charge (OC) D 18, State CID Enugu."

The organization equally recalled, "Abuse of Police Powers, Unlawful Arrest and detention of innocent citizens in respect of a case earlier

Investigated by AIG Zone 13, Anambra State and the defendant charged to court.

"The Commissioner of Police ordered arrest of innocent citizens in respect of a land matter that had been investigated at the Zonal Level and the defendant charged to court.

"The same complainant not satisfied that the Hon. Attorney General of Enugu State took over the prosecution of the case, made fresh petition to the Commissioner of Police against the same defendant, but only added the name of two of his friends and the former Commissioner for Lands in Enugu State, Mr. Solomon Onah (popularly known as Jack Solo), as co-suspect.

"The question is when has it become the duty of the Commissioner of Police to determine ownership of land and also acted on petition to arrest the former Commissioner for Lands who signed the Allocation paper of Mr. Nwebor? This is a grave misuse of power of his office.

"It should be noted that Cletus Nwebor was earlier arrested in respect of land matter by the officers of Zone 13, Anambra.

"The arrest was instigated by Chief Oscar Paul Udoji who wanted to forcefully take over Cletus fathers' land. It would equally be recalled that after the arrest and extortion, we embarked on human rights advocacy and with the support of the media the money extorted from him by the Police, the sum of N500 thousand Naira was refunded back

to him based on the directive of AIG Tony Olofu.

"Cletus was later arraigned before an Magistrate Court on a six count Charge of conspiracy, threat to life of Chief Paul Udoji, malicious damage and Forcible entry upon land in Charge No. CME/701/2023, on the 11th October 2023. The Charge Sheet is attached herewith.

"But based on our Letter to Appeal for Justice to the Office of the Attorney General, a lawyer from the Chambers of the Hon. Attorney General Enugu State appeared in the matter and informed the court that the Hon Attorney General had written to the Police to forward the case file to him for review and necessary action.

"The matter is still pending in court awaiting the opinion of the Honorable Attorney General; in fact the matter came up in court on the 30th January 2024, and adjourned to February 21st 2024.

"Chief Udoji realized that the incorruptible Attorney General and his able Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) will maintain justice, hence he ran again to the Police at the Anti Cult Unit Enugu, and made same complaint of conspiracy, threat to life of Chief Paul Udoji, malicious damage and forcible entering upon land against Cletus, the former Commissioner for Lands, Mr. Solomon Onah and two of his friends who have been arrested in the morning of February 2, 2024 and detained at the Police

Anti cult base.

"The two Cletus friend detained are: Engr Emeka Nwokoye and Mr. Ifeanyi Nzekwe (the CSO of GRA Neighborhood Watch)

"We submit without equivocation that: the torture and Unlawful detention of the child, who committed no offence, for over three months at the Police Headquarters Enugu, is a grave assault on the UN Convention on the Rights of the child (UNCRC) and the Child Rights Act 2003, which is a National law.

"The action of the Commissioner of Police in commencing fresh investigation into a matter that emanated from Enugu State command to the Police Zonal headquarters Zone 13, Anambra, and the defendant charged to Court on the orders of the AIG Zone 13, amounts to grave abuse of office.

"The prosecution of same matter which has since been taken over by the Chambers of the Hon. Attorney General of Enugu state, therefore the action of the Commissioner of Police is a deliberate act to undermine the Constitutional powers of the Hon. Attorney to take over and continue any such criminal proceedings that may have been instituted by any other authority or person; and prosecution of any criminal trial in the state as provided under section 211, of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (As Amended).

"This matter raises a very important



Fire incident at Abule Egba Plank market in Lagos. Photos: AKINOLA ARIYO



# Governor Inuwa Yahaya Pays Condolence Visit To Yobe State Over Demise Of Ex- Governor Bukar Ibrahim

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Gombe State Governor and Chairman of Northern States Governors' Forum, Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya, CON, on Tuesday February 6, 2024, led a delegation on a condolence visit to the government and people of Yobe State over the demise of the first civilian Governor of the State, Sen. Bukar Abba Ibrahim. Sen. Ibrahim died last Saturday in Saudi Arabia after a brief illness. Governor Inuwa Yahaya, had earlier in a statement, on behalf of the 19 Northern

Governors, extended his heartfelt condolences to Governor Mai Mala Buni, Government and people of Yobe State, as well as the family and associates of the late elder statesman.

Received at the Government House, Damaturu by Governor Mai Mala Buni during the visit, Governor Inuwa Yahaya expressed his deepest sympathy over the huge loss of the man he described as a father to entire Yobe community.

"As you can see, this is Gombe State government delegation led by my humble self to identify with you on this sad

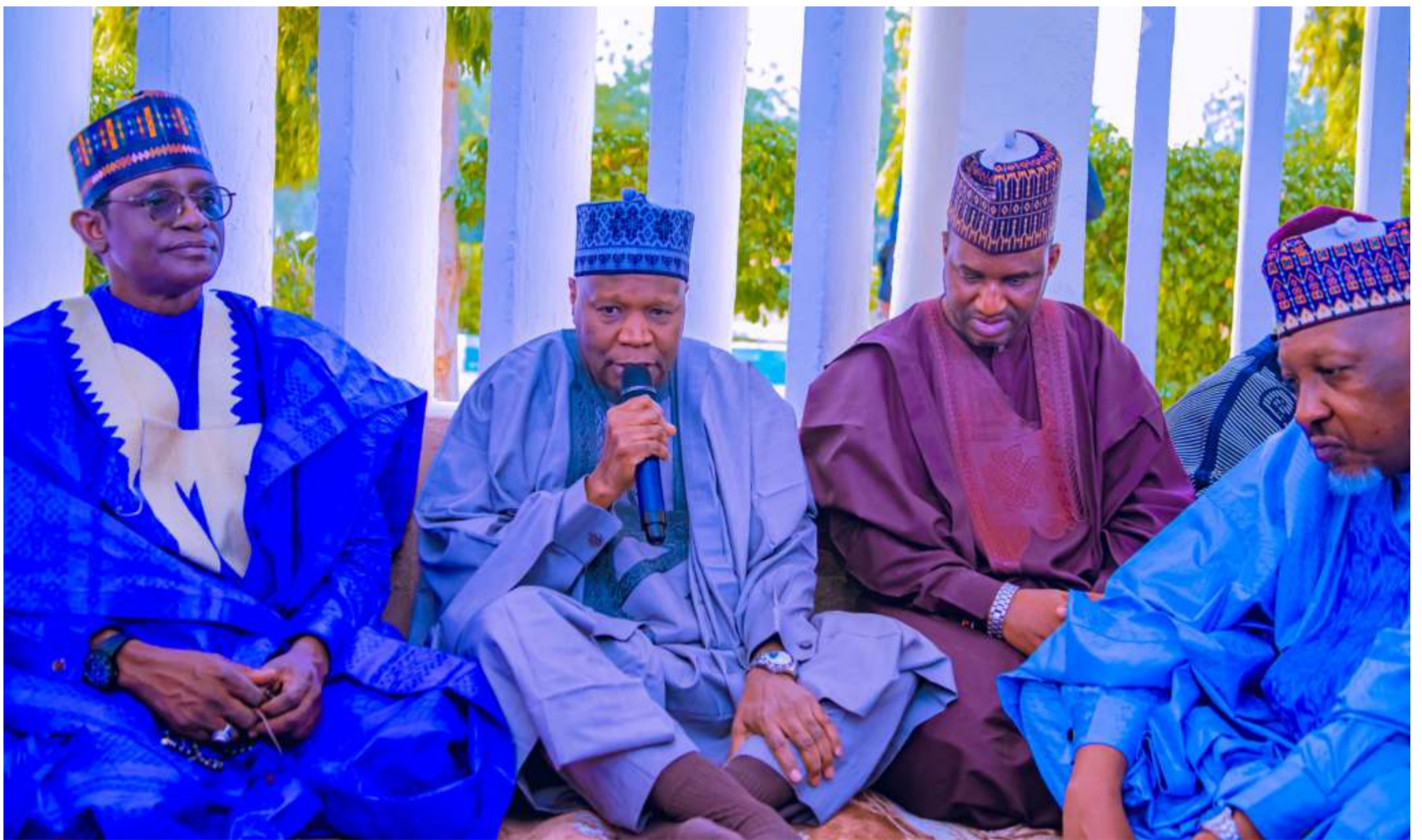
moment of mourning a statesman who devoted his entire life serving the people and humanity,

He said, "the news of the demise of Senator Bukar Abba Ibrahim came as a profound shock and a great loss to the us. His legacy of service and contributions will endure in the hearts of not only the people of Yobe State, but Nigerians as a whole.

"We share in the grief of his family and associates as well as government and people of Yobe State during this difficult time".

Governor Inuwa prayed Almighty Allah in his infinite mercy to forgive the shortcomings of the deceased and reward his good deeds with Aljannat Firdaus.

The Governor was accompanied by Speaker, Gombe State House of Assembly, Hon. Abubakar Mohammed Luggerewo, Deputy Speaker, Hon. Saddam Bello, Chief of Staff Government House Abubakar Inuwa Kari, Attorney-General and Commissioners for Justice, Zubair Muhammad Umar,



# Kogi Govt Knocks EFCC For Accusing Yahaya Bello Of Diverting Funds Months Before Assuming Office

*\*Says "criminals masquerading as politicians" to tarnish image of immediate past governor*

By: ADEBOYE ADO, Akure

The Kogi State Government has raised the alarm over what it described as a desperate attempt by "criminals masquerading as politicians" to tarnish the image of the immediate past Governor of Kogi State, His Excellency, Yahaya Bello, for selfish reasons, through the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC)

The state government said, in its desperation, "which would leave Nigerians wondering who exactly is afraid of Yahaya Bello", the EFCC has, in an amended charge, accused the former Governor of diverting Kogi State Government funds in September 2015, four months before he assumed the position of a governor.

It said this was not only laughable, but portrays the EFCC as an agency infested with persons whose intents disagree with the noble intention of Mr. President to defeat corruption in Nigeria.

A statement signed by the Commissioner for Information in Kogi State, Kingsley Fanwo, said, "The fact that the EFCC, in charge No. FHC/ABJ/CR/550/2022: FRN V. 1. Ali Bello 2. Dauda Suleiman, currently pending before Honorable Justice J.K. Omotosho of the Federal High Court, Abuja Division further amended the 'Amended Charge' to include in the count, the name of H.E Yahaya Bello, describing him as being "at large", is ridiculous, laughable and portrays the EFCC as an agency infested with persons whose intents disagree with the noble intention of Mr. President to defeat corruption in Nigeria.

"Being 'at large' of course means that a person is evading arrest or is on the run and cannot be found after an attempt to arrest.

"For the sake of clarity, the original charge is against Ali Bello and Dauda Suleiman, Ali's associate. The offence which H.E Yahaya Bello is alleged to have committed upon which he has been named in the count is conspiracy to convert the total sum of N80,246,470,089.88 (Eighty Billion, Two Hundred and Forty Six Million, Four Hundred and Seventy Thousand, Eighty Nine Naira, Eighty Eight Kobo) which offence is said to have occurred on or about September 2015 in Abuja. His co-conspirators according to the Count are Abdulsalami Hudu (Kogi State Government House Cashier) described as being 'at large' too, Ali Bello and Dauda Suleiman.

"In the EFCC's desperation to nail H.E Yahaya Bello, they forgot their thinking hammer at home.

"The Count of the offence is most laughable as the election that produced H.E Yahaya Bello, CON, as Governor of Kogi was only conducted in November 2015. Indeed, H.E. Captain Idris Wada of the PDP held sway as Governor of Kogi State at the material time until he handed over to H.E Yahaya Bello on the 27th day of January 2016.

"H.E Yahaya Bello could therefore not have as of September 2015 conspired with anyone, including Abdulsalami Hudu, a



Kogi Government House Cashier to convert any money belonging to the Kogi State Government. It is to be noted that H.E Yahaya Bello before becoming the Governor of Kogi State had no financial dealings with the Kogi State Government which could have permitted him to convert monies belonging to the Kogi State Government, hence, one's dismay at the allegation."

The state government warned political actors to steer clear of Kogi State affairs and desist from their campaign of calumny "as the state government has not said its money is missing, and has been adjudged, both locally and internationally, as top in the area of transparency and accountability."

The state government asked: "Why should Nigerians trust the leadership of the agency that made such a ridiculous, shameless and indefensible allegation? The Chairman of the Commission should tender unreserved apologies to the Nigerian people for making us a laughing stock in the comity of nations."

It called on the President to step in to save the integrity of the EFCC from those "pushing the Commission into a fight that should be left to politicians."

"The Kogi State Government under the leadership of His Excellency Alh. Ahmed Usman Ododo will continue to support the Renewed Hope Agenda of Mr President. We will also continue to promote probity, accountability and transparency and open our books to agencies and institutions constitutionally empowered to look into them. We will continue to win awards in transparency and accountability," the state government added.

The journey did not begin today, according to Fanwo.

He said, "In 2021, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission in a desperate bid to embarrass the Government of Kogi State then under the leadership of His Excellency Alh. Yahaya Bello, came out with a false claim that it had uncovered over N20 billion Naira of the state's bail out fund in a Fixed Deposit Account in Sterling Bank. Emboldened by its innocence, the Kogi State Government wrote a letter to Sterling

Bank for clarifications.

"The bank came out clean that the State Government had no such account with it, rubbishing the blatant falsehood of the EFCC in a manner that was so embarrassing to the people and Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

"But rather than apologize to the Government of Kogi State and the general public, the EFCC chose to harass the officials of Sterling Bank, coercing them to do everything possible to achieve the aim of roping tue Kogi State Government into their ignominy ring. It ended with a conspiratorial exchange between the EFCC and the CBN. Today, Nigerians are not confused about the personae of Bawa and Emefiele.

"The sack of Bawa and the startling revelations that followed threw Nigerians into jubilation. Their hope was that EFCC will birth a new era of separating political vendetta from the actual fight against corruption. But recent happenings have shown that it isn't war against corruption anymore but a clear manifestation of hired gun approach to hack down political opponents by certain elements within and outside the anti graft agency.

"This betrays the determination of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR to retool the agency and make it more vibrant in preventing and fighting corruption in a genuine and objective manner within the ambit of the rule of law."

According to him, the current leadership of the EFCC has now continued to tow the path of the leadership of Abdulsheed Bawa who woke up one day in August 2021, decided in his mind that the Kogi State Government had Twenty Billion Naira in an account, secured ex-parte, an Order of the Federal High Court, Lagos empowering him to direct the Manager of Sterling Bank Plc to freeze Account No. 0073572696 with the name Kogi State Salary Bail Out Account pending the conclusion of investigation or possible prosecution.

"They went on even when Sterling Bank through a letter addressed to the Kogi State Government dated 1st September, 2021 confirmed that 'the Kogi State

Government does not currently operate or maintain a Fixed Deposit Account with Sterling Bank'

'There is no mandate letter from the Kogi State Government to open account number 0073572696 with Sterling' and that 'Sterling Bank account 0073572696' is an internal (mirror) account operated by the Bank for purposes of managing the Kogi State salary bailout facility," he said.

The state government added, "While the EFCC's suit was withdrawn and the Order of Court vacated upon a challenge by the Kogi State Government, the EFCC continued to issue press statements on all its social media platforms, attaching the pictures of H.E Yahaya Bello to those statements and insisting that the factual basis of their claim was genuine. To cover up the falsehood and their shame, the EFCC under Bawa compelled Sterling Bank

Plc and the CBN under its embattled Governor Emefiele, to write letters confirming the return of funds belonging to the Kogi State Government to the CBN, when no such funds existed.

"The EFCC has since refused to answer to the suit filed against it since 2021 by the Kogi State Government and its officials challenging the falsehood on the issue of bailout funds. The EFCC has continued to maintain frivolous appeals even when the Court of Appeal had confirmed that the trial Court had the jurisdiction to entertain the suit.

"A similar modus operandi was employed by the EFCC with respect to the former first lady of Kogi State, Rashida Bello. She was named in the counts of offence and described as being at large in Charge No: FHC/ABJ/573/2022: FRN V. (1) ALI BELLO (2) ABBA ADAUDU (3) YAKUBU SIYAKA ADABENEKE (4) IYADI SADAT and was alleged to have conspired to criminally misappropriate over Three Billion Naira, funds allegedly belonging to some Local Government Areas of Kogi State. It is noteworthy that she was never invited by the EFCC or arrested before branding her as being 'at large'.

"As usual, the EFCC employed rogue 'news' platforms who sensationalized the issue, claiming that the then First Lady has been charged to Court and was running from justice!"

The Kogi Government said the current leadership of the EFCC seemed to have picked up the gauntlet from where Bawa left it.

"They have started using their media cronies and other faceless blogs and rogue media handles to spread lies about H.E Yahaya Bello. The purpose of the current amendment of Charge No. 550/2022 is no doubt to allow their irresponsible bloggers gleefully but erroneously claim that Yahaya Bello has been charged to Court for the conversion of over 80 Billion of Kogi money, an offence which was allegedly committed when he was not yet a governor.

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# Kogi Govt Knocks EFCC For Accusing Yahaya Bello Of Diverting Funds Months Before Assuming Office

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of the Kogi State Government and also the image of the immediate past Governor, His Excellency Alh Yahaya Bello, has left much to be desired.

"It is in our character to fight in defence of the integrity of the Government and over 5 million Kogites whose common patrimony the Government allocates on their behalf. We are prepared to use the instrumentality of law to defend the integrity of the State Government.

"We urge the people of Kogi State to remain calm and law abiding in the face of relentless provocation by EFCC who is insisting that the money we used to build infrastructure in the state is missing. We will never lose a just battle."

Signed: Kingsley Femi Fanwo

Hon. Commissioner for Information and Communications

6th February, 2024. MONTHS BEFORE HE ASSUMED OFFICE - KOGI GOVT

.SAYS ROGUES POLITICIANS CONNIVING WITH COMMISSION TO TARNISH COUNTRY'S ANTI-CORRUPTION IMAGE

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"The unprecedented extent to which the EFCC is ready to go to tarnish the image of the Kogi State Government and also the image of the immediate past Governor, His Excellency Alh Yahaya Bello, has left much to be desired.

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"We urge the people of Kogi State to remain calm and law abiding in the face of relentless provocation by EFCC who is insisting that the money we used to build infrastructure in the state is missing. We will

# Nigerian Hunters DCG Extols Borgu Monarch, President Tinubu, Commandant

By: BASHIR BELLO DOLLARS, Abuja

The Deputy Commander General of the Nigerian Hunters and Forestry Security Service (NHFSS) in charge of Technical Service, Ambassador John Metchie has commended the Emir of Borgu Kingdom in Niger State, Barrister Muhammed Sani Haliru Dantoro for his patriotic support to the Nigerian Hunters and Forestry Security Service, NHFSS.

The DCG made this commendation, when the management team of the NHFSS, led by its Commander General, Amb. Dr. Osatimehin Joshua Wole, paid him a courtesy visit in his Abuja residence.

Ambassador John Metchie said the Emir's late father, Haliru Dantoro Kitoro II was a visionary leader who many years ago, saw the role the then Senator Bola Tinubu would play in the future for the country and honoured him with the title-Jagaban which he said translates to Commander of the Warriors.

According to Metchie who is also the African Director, International Association of World Peace Advocates (IAWPA), being the Commander-In-Chief of the Nigerian Armed Forces, has naturally conferred the title of Jagaban of Nigeria to Tinubu, as envisioned by the late Emir many years ago.

He commended President Tinubu on his visionary steps to develop the country with his Renewed Hope Agenda and expressed confidence that as Jagaban of Nigeria, President Tinubu would solve the

insecurity challenges facing the nation and pledged the readiness of NHFSS to play key role in achieving that.

Finally he commended the Commander General, Amb. Dr. Osatimehin Joshua Wole for his patriotic zeal to turn the NHFSS into one of the most vibrant security services in the country and his resilience amidst various challenges.

The Emir, Muhammed Sani Haliru Dantoro, commended officers and men of the Nigerian Hunters and Forest Security Service, (NHFSS), for their immeasurable contributions to the security of lives and properties of the citizens of Nigeria.

The Emir who regretted that the natural roles of traditional rulers have been taken away from them through the constitutional amendment, stated that most of them are aware of the exploits of NHFSS in their local communities in crime control and therefore, are most suited to advice government on how best to tackle community related crimes, especially those committed in forests and farms.

He said, "As traditional rulers, we are the direct custodians of the people. But things have changed. We should and ought to be allowed to play our natural roles from God. If we are allowed to play our roles, insecurity would not have been to this level. We know our people and the ability of the hunters. For the security of our domains, hunters are very critical. This is because they know how to go about their

duties in their localities and achieve results."

He assured the NHFSS management team of his support, saying that President Bola Tinubu, whom he described as a listening leader that always listens to the voice of the people, would sign the Bill once his attention is drawn to it.

Speaking earlier, the Commander General of the NHFSS, Dr. Osatimehin Joshua Wole, said they visited the Emir to draw inspiration from his wealth of wisdom and to intimate him of the efforts of officers and men of the Service in tackling crimes in the country.

He told the Emir that the NHFSS has been in existence for over ten years and has command structures in the 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory as well as 774 local government areas.

He informed the monarch that the Bill to establish the NHFSS has been passed by the two chambers of the National Assembly, waiting for the assent of the President.

Ambassador Osatimehin said that to underscore the efforts of the Service, many state governments have recognised them and are currently working with them in tackling insecurity and mentioned some of the states to include Bauchi, Kebbi, Adamawa, Kogi, Borno and Imo, among others.

He said that thousands of personnel of the Service have undergone various forms of trainings at facilities owned by Police, DSS, Army, NDLEA, Immigration and

others, aimed at preparing them for professional service.

He also narrated the achievements recorded by NHFSS in the areas like gathering and sharing of intelligence with security agencies, rescue of kidnap victims as well as apprehension of kidnappers, bandits, cattle rustlers and other.

"I therefore, want to use this opportunity to call on Mr. President, to sign the Nigeria Hunters and Forest Security Service Bill into law, as a way of tackling security challenges in the country, in line with the Renewed Hope Agenda of his administration which has ending insecurity as one of its cardinal points."

Emir Muhammed Sani Haliru Dantoro, thanked the NHFSS management for finding time to pay him a visit and assured them of his support as according to him, the Service, if recognised as a government agency, would be of great importance to the country.

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

Other top officers who made up the team during the visit include, ACGs and Commanders from various departments of the organization.



# Counterfeit Coco Samba Not From Our Stable - Bullion Go-Neat Global

*\*Says it alerted NAFDAC Earlier*

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

**B**ullion Go-Neat Global Ltd, manufacturers of Coco Samba Herbal Mixture on Monday, declared that falsified Coco Samba Herbal Mixture products are not from its stable. Managing Director of the Company, Ambassador Olufemi Ajadi Oguntoyinbo expressed this in a statement made available to journalists. He stated that earlier in 2022, Bullion Go-Neat Global Ltd, lodged a formal complaint with the Director of the Investigation & Enforcement Directorate at the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) in Apapa, Lagos, regarding the counterfeiting of their product, Cocosamba Milk and Chocolate Flavored

with Herbal Extract, bearing NAFDAC registration number A8-9149L. Ambassador Ajadi pointed out that it is crucial to note that before the registration of Cocosamba Milk and Chocolate Flavored with Herbal Extract, the company had been producing Cocosamba Bitters Alcoholic drinks with NAFDAC No A8-4418L. According to Ambassador Ajadi, "however, due to low market demand, the production of Cocosamba Bitters Alcoholic Drink was discontinued, and the product has not been in production since the expiry date of the license. "Bullion Go-Neat Global Limited, in response to the recent news, expressed its unwavering commitment to maintaining high standards in its manufacturing processes", he said.

The Managing Director added, " The company commended NAFDAC for its role in ensuring that manufacturers comply with statutory laws related to standardization. The General Manager of the company, Oguntade Samuel Oluseyi highlighted this commitment during the company's end-of-year gathering". Ambassador Ajadi noted that himself and the entire management team of Bullion Go-Neat Global Limited expressed shock at the circulating news and assured stakeholders that all necessary actions would be taken to address the issue promptly. Displaying copy of the letter previously submitted to NAFDAC, outlining the company's concerns and seeking intervention to Journalists, Ambassador Ajadi said Bullion Go-

Neat Global Ltd encourages the public to await the outcome of the ongoing investigation and appreciates the continued support and understanding of its customers, importers, distributors, and healthcare providers. "The management and staff of the company have initiated efforts to identify individuals responsible for counterfeit products. They have pledged to collaborate with the Investigation and Enforcement Directorate at the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) in reporting and taking action against anyone found guilty of this illegal offense". He said the company will be ready to provide further information or inquiries, when and where such is demanded.

# Insecurity: Ohanaeze Youth Laud Defence Minister, Matawalle's Efforts



Mazi Okwu Nnabuike,

By; ISAAC ODEH, Kaduna

**A**pex Igbo socio-cultural organisation, Ohanaeze Ndigbo Youth Council Worldwide, has lauded the ongoing efforts by the Defence Minister, Dr Bello Matawalle to restore sanity in the country.

The group spoke through a statement issued by its National President, Mazi Okwu Nnabuike, where he singled out Matawalle for praise in what he called, "dogged efforts to free the country from the grip of criminals." Okwu said the Ohanaeze youth took note of Matawalle's recent efforts, including his recent speech during a meeting of Defence Ministers in Saudi Arabia, where rallied joint support to make the world a better place. He said that at the meeting, Nigeria's Defence Minister, Matawalle presented real life experience of Nigeria to the audience, with the hope of finding a lasting solution to Nigeria's security challenges. He quoted Matawalle as saying during the meeting that, "The threat of terrorism continues to evolve, becoming more complex and widespread. It is imperative that we, as a coalition, stand side by side, combining our resources and expertise to protect our nations and maintain global security. "Pertinently, it is worthy to reinforce Nigeria's

commitment and the need for a deeper level of partnership in the areas of intelligence sharing, technical support and training to enhance regional and national security."

Okwu stated that Matawalle's speech showed that he knows the dynamics of the security issues plaguing the West African sub-region and Africa and the world as a whole.

"The Minister understands that there is a global threat to make the world restless. "He understands the rudiments of the security crisis we are facing as a nation, which can only be solved with collaboration with our neighbours and other countries of the world.

"We appreciate his efforts and commitment towards ensuring that every part of the country enjoys serenity.

"More importantly is the coordination of the security architecture by the defence minister, hence we have not seen cases of inter-agency rivalry.

"We, Ohanaeze youths, pass a confidence vote on him and urge him to continue the good work he is doing. He is one of the best brains President Bola Ahmed Tinubu assembled to deliver on his 'Renewed Hope Agenda'.

"Our firm belief is that in no distant time, all his efforts will pay off and the citizens will enjoy a peaceful nation," the Ohanaeze youths president said.



## Terrorism In Nigeria: Shariah Council Wants EFCC To Name Religious Body Sponsoring

\*Accuses Gov Mutfwang of insensitivity, exclusion

By: ISAAC ODEH, Kaduna

Supreme Council for Shariah in Nigeria (SCSN), has asked the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) to make public, identity of the religious body allegedly sponsoring terrorism/insurgency with ₦7 billion out of ₦13 billion traced to its account.

This was as the council accused the Plateau State Governor, Caleb Mutfwang of insensitivity for secluding the Muslim community in the constitution of the state security committee in response to the persistent crises that have claimed numerous lives and property in the state.

The council in a statement jointly signed by its President and Secretary General, Sheikh Abdur Rashid Hadiyatullah and Nafi'u Baba Ahmed, said the revelation by the EFCC of a religious body sponsoring terrorism, sent shockwaves across the nation and raised concerns about potential fund misuse for activities threatening Nigeria's peace and security.

It argued that, the gravity of the situation calls for immediate public clarification of the group and decisive action to address the disturbing nexus between religious groups and insurgency.

According to SCSN, "regarding the recent disclosure by the Chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) about religious groups sponsoring insurgency in Nigeria, the Council demands the Commission to disclose the identity of the religious body allegedly sponsoring terrorism/insurgency with ₦7 billion out of ₦13 billion traced to its account.

"This revelation has sent shockwaves across the nation, raising concerns about potential fund misuse for activities threatening Nigeria's peace and security. The



Plateau Governor

gravity of the situation calls for immediate public clarification of the group and decisive action to address the disturbing nexus between religious groups and insurgency.

"Accordingly, we urgently call upon the EFCC to publish the list of all sponsors involved in criminal activities. The alleged disclosure of ₦7 billion linked to a religious group's account is a matter of grave concern, and citizens demand proper legal action against sponsors and those found complicit in financing activities undermining the nation's security.

"We further call on the EFCC to expedite the release of the list of sponsors and collaborate with relevant authorities to ensure prompt legal actions are taken," the council said.

On the alleged exclusion of the Muslim community from the Plateau State Security Committee, the Shariah Council called on Governor Mutfwang to as a matter of urgency reevaluate the committee's composition to ensure true representation of the entire population.

It said, the current imbalance, does not not only undermines the principles of justice but also hinders the

development of a united front against the challenges faced by the state.

"In light of the recent letter released by the Secretary to the Government of Plateau State on January 29th, 2024, addressing the ongoing crises that have claimed numerous lives and caused extensive property damage in the state, we express our deep outrage at the gross insensitivity over the constitution of the security committee by the state governor.

"The composition of the committee has raised serious questions about fairness and inclusivity, since the entire members of committee are Christians, expected to superintend over a lingering religious crisis. This is a textbook antithesis of the principles of equality and transparency.

"The situation in Plateau State demands a comprehensive and impartial approach. The total exclusion of Muslims representation in the security committee not only disregards the diverse fabric of the state (with at least 40% Muslims) but also jeopardizes the effectiveness of the committee in addressing the root causes of the

ongoing conflicts.

"We urgently call for a reevaluation of the committee's composition to ensure that it is truly representative of the entire population. The current imbalance not only undermines the principles of justice but also hinders the development of a united front against the challenges faced by the state.

"We therefore, demand, as a right and in the interest of equity, the Governor to heed this call for justice and equitable representation, as his action is sending a disturbing message to the world and creating a recipe for compounding the crisis.

"Failure to reconstitute the committee will be interpreted as a reflection of the State's disregard for its Muslim citizens, despite their significant population. This would be a stark contradiction to the values of equality and non-discrimination that Nigeria, as a diverse and democratic nation, upholds.

"The governor should learn from other northern states with Christian minority, their sense of fairness and responsibility in similar situation," SCSN said.

## S'Court Judgment: Flintiri Dedicates Victory To Adamawa People, Promises Better Service

By: TINAPHINEAS, Yola

Following the Supreme Court judgment that affirmed his victory at the 2023 polls, Governor Ahmadu Umaru Fintiri of Adamawa State has dedicated his victory to the citizens of the state, with a promise to serve them better.

The governor who stated this in a state-wide broadcast on Monday, said that the judgment is a tonic that will bring out the best in his administration.

"We are forever indebted to the people for choosing yourself and the future of our dear state in this journey. This judgment is a tonic to spur Professor

Farauta and I, to do more for you and our dear state", he said.

He assured that his administration will continue to serve the people well through people oriented policies and projects such as free education, provision of healthcare, urban and rural infrastructure, women and youths empowerment among others.

"As a government, we are humbled by the fact that the best way to pay back is to serve you well

"By serving you well, I mean a renewed dedication to our ongoing policy of free education through functional public school

system and payment of WAEC and NECO for our children; provision of healthcare and health insurance that makes it easier for the vulnerable to access quality service with

ease: continuity in the provision of urban and rural infrastructure", he stated.

Fintiri maintained that, it will be "continuity of policies that empower our women and youths; continuity of justice and fair play; continuity of peace and a security architecture that makes your life a better priority; continuous onslaught against the nefarious urban miscreants known as the Shila Boys; continuity in a system that confers on you pride, dignity and self-respect as brethren of Adamawa State and indeed more reinforcement that would forever bury election bandits into a pit beyond resurrection".

The Fresh Air governor, also appreciated the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), for standing firm as an unbiased electoral umpire in this election even when its Resident Electoral Commissioner (REC), acted irresponsibly and unlawfully.

He maintained that he Supreme Court verdict of Wednesday January 31, 2024, has officially closed all the noise on the 2023 election in Adamawa State.

"The days of lying and deceits are over. The moments of false propaganda and cheap talks are gone

"Adamawa state is a state for the Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP) as affirmed both at the polls and in the courts, the people have spoken loud and clear", he stressed.

"The days of lying and deceits are over. The moments of false propaganda and cheap talks are gone

"Adamawa state is a state for the Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP) as affirmed both at the polls and in the courts, the people have spoken loud and clear", he stressed.

"The days of lying and deceits are over. The moments of false propaganda and cheap talks are gone



Gov Fintiri

# Unveiling Concerns: Tinubu's 2024 Presidency And Allegations Of Neocolonial Intrigue

By Amb ALIYU BINABBAS

As 2024 unfolds, Bola Ahmed Tinubu assumes the presidency of Nigeria, but dissenting voices are surfacing, casting doubts on the authenticity of his leadership. A growing narrative suggests that Tinubu's presidency may conceal a covert agenda, orchestrating Nigeria's return to colonial powers, chiefly France. At the center of this alleged scheme are the Lebanese Shaguri brothers, Donald and Ronald - founders of the Lagos EKO Atlantic project and also President Tinubu's long time business associates and friends, who have established strong links with France.

This dissenting perspective contends that beneath the façade of domestic governance lies a complex web of neocolonial maneuvers, reminiscent of the Shaguri brothers' historical involvement during the Sani Abacha era. It posits that Tinubu's presidency could serve as a conduit for the resumption of neocolonial ties, positioning France as the primary beneficiary.

Critics point to early indicators within Tinubu's presidency that raise legitimate concerns. The alleged neocolonial agenda, if substantiated, poses a significant threat to Nigeria's sovereignty and the potential exploitation of its resources and autonomy. Drawing parallels between the Shaguri brothers' historical activities such as being named as the main money launderers for Sani Abacha and their current role in Tinubu's administration deepens suspicions surrounding the legitimacy of his presidency.

Additionally, dissenters highlight persistent challenges such as inflation, growing insecurity, and allegations of graft involving figures like Betta Edu. They argue that these issues may be symptomatic of a leadership more concerned with serving external interests than addressing the immediate needs of the Nigerian populace.

Adding to the narrative is the fact that President Tinubu frequents France, even for non-official visits, raising questions about the nature of these engagements and their potential impact on Nigeria's foreign policy. The ties established by the Shaguri brothers with France further fuel concerns about the influence of external actors on the nation's leadership.

Furthermore, dissenting voices contend



*President Tinubu*

that the spiraling devaluation of the Naira is not a mere coincidence. Rather, they allege that this economic turmoil is under the direct instruction of colonial powers, creating an environment where Nigeria's assets can be acquired at a fraction of their true value.

The call to action within this dissenting narrative intensifies, urging citizens, especially the youth, to scrutinize the motives behind political decisions and actively organize against potential neocolonial influences. It emphasizes fostering a vigilant populace that

questions the trajectory of the nation and participates in shaping its destiny, guarding against any compromise of national autonomy.

While acknowledging the need for change, dissenting voices stress the importance of ensuring that change emanates from the will of the Nigerian people, rather than being orchestrated by external forces. The call is for citizens to remain critical, united, and resolute in demanding transparency, accountability, and a government that prioritizes the welfare of its citizens

over hidden agendas.

The dissenting narrative surrounding Bola Ahmed Tinubu's presidency in 2024 raises vital concerns about a potential neocolonial agenda. As the nation navigates this period, it is imperative for citizens to remain vigilant, engaged, and committed to ensuring that the future of Nigeria is determined by the genuine aspirations of its people.

**Amb Aliyu Bin Abbas is the President National Youth Alliance.**



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

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

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3	Per 1000 Copies (Magazine)	50,000.00	3,750.00	53,750.00	
4	Per 1000 Copies (Magazine)	80,000.00	6,000.00	86,000.00	

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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
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D O U B L E S P R E A D (B L A C K & W H I T E)	590,000.00	44,250.00	634,250.00
FR ONT PA GE (10" X 6)	3,250,000.00	243,750.00	3,493,750.00
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

# Askarawan Zamfara: Gov Lawal, Taking A Bull By The Horns In Tackling Banditry

By: NUHU SALIHU ANKA

Zamfara State which was in the past known as peaceful and the food basket of Nigeria has lost that position due to banditry activities affecting the entire 14 local government areas of the state.

Previous administrations have made frantic efforts of ending the menace but unfortunately, it defied solution.

Banditry reared its ugly face in the state in 2011 under the administration of former Governor Abdul Aziz Yari Abubakar. He applied several measures to bring the situation under control but he did not succeed.

One of the measures he adopted in tackling the insecurity problem was the introduction of peace process with the bandits.

During that period, the bandits had agreed to lay down their arms and embrace the peace process of former Governor Yari for almost one year but suddenly the peace process collapsed and the notorious criminals returned to their heinous crimes. Yari was left with no option but to suspend the peace process and declare total war with the bandits. He was not able to completely eradicate the menace up to the time he finished his tenure and handed over the state to his successor, Alhaji Bello Mohammed Matawalle.

Former Governor Bello Mattawalle had also adopted several measures to tackle the insecurity situation in the state where he also introduced the peace process with the bandits but unfortunately, it did not work.

When Governor Dauda Lawal took over the mantle of leadership of the state from his predecessor Bello Mattawalle, he came out openly and told the world that, he would not reconcile with the marauding bandits because it would still failed as it did in the past.

There were hues and cries all over the country, calling on Governor Dauda to rescind his decision and embrace peace accord with the bandits, but he did not heed to their calls as he believes that, things would still be the same.

Based on his determination to rid the state of banditry activities, Governor Dauda quickly formed community protection guards known as 'ASKARAWAN ZAMFARA' who were carefully selected from their various localities to assist the security personnel in the fight against banditry.

After vigorous training, the 2,646 Community Protection Guards (CPGs) were last Wednesday inaugurated by Dr Dauda Lawal in a colourful ceremony and have since been dispatched to their various local government areas to assist the security agencies to fight the terrorists who have been unleashing terror on



Gov Dauda Lawal

innocent citizens in the state.

The event which took place at the Gusau Trade Fair Complex, had in attendance the Governors of the North-West states of Katsina, Kano, Sokoto, Kebbi, Jigawa, and Deputy Governor of Kaduna.

Also in attendance were former Governors of Sokoto and Zamfara States and a former National security Adviser to former President Goodluck Jonathan, General Ali Gusau among other dignitaries.

In his remark, Governor Lawal said he believed that with the inauguration of the Community Protection Guards (CPGs), otherwise known as ASKARAWAN Zamfara, the fight against banditry will be enhanced, and peace will be restored in Zamfara State.

He called on the people of the state to continue to pray for peace to reign in the state and also give their maximum support and encouragement to the inaugurated ASKARAWAN Zamfara.

Governor Lawal reiterated his administration's position not to negotiate with the terrorists, but wanted the security forces to continue to prosecute the war against them until they are flushed out of the state and peace is restored to the people.

The Chairman of the Northwest Governors' Forum and Katsina State Governor, Dr Umar Dikko Radda, maintained that they would not negotiate with the terrorists but wage war against them and bring back peace in the region. General Aliyu Gusau, who was the

chairman of the occasion, called for the cooperation of security agencies with the Community Protection Guards by sharing credible intelligence that will enable them to collectively stamp out banditry and other forms of crime.

With this development, one will say without fear of contradiction that, the fight against banditry has never been so serious in the past than now and by the grace of God, the people of the state particularly farmers will return to their normal businesses and the state will regain its status as the food basket of the nation.

*Nuhu Salihu Anka* Director General Media and Communications, Government House, Gusau

# Governor Fintiri's Significant Efforts In Reforming Education In Adamawa State

By; AHMED BABALE MIRCHAULUM

This my opinion highlights Governor Ahmadu Umaru Fintiri's significant efforts in reforming the education sector in Adamawa State, Nigeria.

Prior to Governor Fintiri's administration, Adamawa State education system faced numerous challenges, including lack of funding, inadequate infrastructure, and high out-of-school children rates. Recognizing education's crucial role in development, Governor Fintiri made it a top priority, implementing various initiatives with remarkable success.

A product of the public education system himself, Governor Fintiri understands its value firsthand. He holds degrees in History and Policy & Strategic Studies, demonstrating his commitment to knowledge and strategic thinking. No wonder, being educated, intelligent, vibrant and a grassroots politician who passed through the four walls of a university, he knows and appreciates the value of education in the socioeconomic development of the society.

He therefore, not only identified education sector as a top priority of his administration as second to security, but also made education the centre-piece of his administration's policies and programs; hence his decision to invest massively in the education sector in order to make Adamawa work again.

Key Initiatives and Achievements:

**Free Education:** Eliminating financial barriers, the administration implemented free basic education across the state, significantly increasing enrollment.

**School Feeding Program:** Reintroduced school feeding for boarding students, ensuring better nutrition and improved learning outcomes.

**Teacher Support:** Recruited 2,000 teachers, provided training, and increased the retirement age for science teachers, promoting teacher quality and retention.

**Infrastructure Development:** Launched construction of model nursery, primary, and junior secondary schools across all 21 local government areas, and comprehensive "mega" secondary schools in each senatorial district. This initiative addresses infrastructure needs and expands access to quality education.

**Examinations and Scholarships:** Covered WAEC/NECO fees for final year students and provided scholarships to tertiary students, easing financial burdens and promoting higher education attainment.

**\*Technology Integration:** Procured science equipment and mobile laboratories, enhancing STEM education and critical thinking skills.

**University Development:** Constructed lecture halls at Adamawa State University and approved the conversion of College of Legal Studies to a Faculty of Law, expanding facilities and academic offerings.



**Ahmed Babale Mirchaulum**

These initiatives have yielded impressive results:

- √Improved educational quality
- √Enhanced STEM education
- √Increased access to education
- √Promotion of equity and inclusion
- √Infrastructure development
- √Human capital development

Governor Fintiri's 2024 budget prioritizes spreading development across Adamawa. He is committed to allocating over a billion Naira for projects in each of the 21 local government areas, including the construction of model and mega schools. This move reflects his dedication to fulfilling campaign promises and fostering a sense of inclusion beyond the state capital.

However, some argue for prioritizing the rehabilitation of existing schools and skill

vocational centers. While acknowledging this concern, it's important to highlight that the Governor has already implemented well-designed approaches for these areas. The new projects aim to further expand access to quality education and equip young people with essential skills, ultimately contributing to Adamawa State long-term development. It can be observed that Governor Fintiri's approach focuses on a dual track: maintaining existing school infrastructure while concurrently constructing new ones based on needs and distribution. This ensures immediate improvements while expanding capacity for the future. Additionally, the state actively recruits new teachers and provides ongoing training for existing ones, aiming to enhance their quality, and welfare, and

ultimately increase student enrollment and tackle the issue of out-of-school children.

Governor Fintiri's work has garnered national recognition, including the "Best Governor on Educational Development" award from Business Day Newspaper.

This comprehensive approach to education reform is transforming Adamawa State's educational landscape. By investing in infrastructure, teachers, technology, and accessibility, Governor Fintiri is laying the foundation for a brighter future for the state's children and its overall development.

*Babale writes this Opinion from Guyuk, Guyuk LGA, Adamawa State. He can be reached via; 08037125670, babalejp@gmail.com*

# Thou Shall Not Steal, Especially If You Are Methodist

By Owei Lakemfa

I GREW up amongst Methodists and was taught by some of their best like Reverend J. Obaba. Methodist Presbyterian Samuel Adeoye Osinulu who was Principal of the Methodist Boys High School (MBHS), Lagos from 1955 to 1966, influenced generations of youths. These included the founding Governor of Lagos State, Brigadier General Mobolaji Johnson; his successor, Naval Admiral Adekunle Shamusideen Lawal; former Ogun State Governor, Segun Osoba; ex-Chief of Air Staff, Air Vice Marshal Nuraini Yusuf; and former National Planning Minister, Chief Rasheed Gbadamosi who actually lived in his house as a boarder.

In the last dozen years, this is the Third Missionary Journey of the MBHS Old Boys after receiving SOS calls from the school, to 'Come over to Macedonia' and rescue it from the Church cabal. The battles to save the school lands have been waged each time a Prelate of the MCN is leaving or a new one comes into office.

The MBHS had also produced the founding President of Nigeria, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe and his fellow nationalist, Chief Hezekiah Oladipo Davis.

Indeed, the Methodists in Nigeria are some of the best Christians on earth. However, the main problem is that for decades, a land-grabbing syndicate which prices earthly things far above heavenly gains, has entrenched itself in the Methodist Church Nigeria (MCN). This cartel, has an incredibly insatiable appetite for church and school property. In Lagos alone, they have swallowed the lands of the Methodist Primary School, Yaba. They fell on the lands of the Methodist Girls High School, Yaba, Lagos. Only the resistance of the Old Girls has saved the school's sports field. The cabal has also run the Wesley University, Ondo, aground.

After the Tinubu administration in Lagos returned schools to the missions and former private proprietors, the cartel immediately seized the old MBHS school premises on 11, Broad Street, Lagos and swallowed it.

It was while digesting this, the cabal in 2012 first invaded the MBHS school lands at its new site on 11, Sinari Daranijo Street, Victoria Island wanting to build high-rise private luxury flats for sale to the public.

In the last dozen years, this is the Third Missionary Journey of the MBHS Old Boys after receiving SOS calls from the

school, to 'Come over to Macedonia' and rescue it from the Church cabal. The battles to save the school lands have been waged each time a Prelate of the MCN is leaving or a new one comes into office.

Let me give a background. Methodist missionaries established the MBHS in 1878. I was privileged to be a student and Prefect when the school marked its centenary.

The first battles were in 2012 when Prelate Sunday Ola Makinde was about departing. The church administration, saying it wanted to raise funds, moved into the school premises to build private flats.

However, the Old Boys led by Mr Toyin Amusan, blocked the move. A peace meeting held on July 11, 2012 with a 17-Member MCN delegation led by Prelate Makinde, agreed to leave the school lands which by then, had been reduced by land grabbers from 5.7 to 3.3 hectares.

The second attempt was in 2021 under Prelate Samuel Chukwuemeka Kalu Uche. This attempt was again resisted by the Old Boys. The MCN led by the Prelate and the Old Boys led by Mr Kolapo Sogbetun, held peace meetings on November 2 and 9, 2021 to resolve the stalemate. Prelate Uche ordered the church and its agents never to touch the school lands again. He however, made two requests of the Old Boys. First, that they should refund the N30 million the Church had spent on construction, and secondly, provide an alternative land for the MCN business ventures.

I have also read some opinions online arguing that since the MBHS is in Lagos, the focus should be on the Lagos Diocese not the national MCN. This is an uninformed opinion and an attempt by the Church's National Headquarters to hide behind a finger.

Three days later, the Old Boys formally wrote the church, accepting both requests and also offering to contribute in building the new church business premises. However, the MCN in its November 18, 2021 letter signed by its Secretary, Rt Reverend Michael. O. Akinwale said the Prelate made a mistake in requesting for N30 million and that the actual compensation it



wants the Old Boys to pay it is N390 million. But the Old Boys stuck to the initial agreement.

The on-going third stage battles began in 2023 after Prelate Oliver Ali Aba took over the MCN mantle. Compared to his predecessors, Reverend Aba has been the most tactical, brazen and audacious. When his agents who invaded the school lands were evicted in August 2023, he made a tactical withdrawal and then on Monday, January 29, 2024, the MCN cabal returned in full force complete with over five dozen armed thugs who physically attacked the unarmed Old Boys led by 81-year-old Chief Tunde Fanimokun and 85-year-old Reverend Peter Omole.

When I watched the videos of the attacks, they reminded me of the heartless attacks by armed bandits on the Idoma villages which produced Prelate Aba.

Some have questioned how we knew that the attackers are thugs and not members of the church. My answer is simple: Methodists are not scruffy, cudgel-wielding, stone-throwing, foul-speaking 'Area Boys'. In any case, some Old Boys at the scene identified and called by name, some of the clearly drugged attackers because they are known street thugs in the vicinity.

The truth stands naked; however, the current leaders of the MCN are desperate to robe it in priestly attires. The little veiled aim of the cabal is to relocate the MBHS and take over its entire lands.

I have also read some opinions online arguing that since the MBHS is in Lagos, the focus should be on the Lagos Diocese not the national MCN. This is an uninformed opinion and an attempt

by the Church's National Headquarters to hide behind a finger.

First, the Lagos State Government handed over the school to the national MCN, not the Diocese. Secondly, the body that surreptitiously obtained a second C of O Number 21/21/20112 signed by Governor Raji Fashola on February 6, 2012, was the MCN. This was a vain attempt to override the subsisting C of O in the name of MBHS, signed by Governor Lateef Jakande on October 25, 1983.

Thirdly, it was the Registered Trustees of the MCN which on July 20, 2012 incorporated the J. Wesley Investment Company limited with N10 million shares. The 14 shareholders who are the Trustees themselves, include then Prelate Sunday Makinde with N3.5 million shares, and his predecessor, Dr Sunday Coffie Mbang with N500,000 shares. Then, the same MCN Trustees on November 11, 2016, illegally, sold 8,235.744 square metres of the MBHS school land to their private company for the princely sum of One Naira (N1.)

Fourthly, it is the MCN Trustees and their private J Wesley company that are using the school lands as collateral. Fifthly, it is the twosome that are building commercial flats in violation of the C of O that specifically states that the lands are for educational purposes only.

The truth stands naked; however, the current leaders of the MCN are desperate to robe it in priestly attires. The little veiled aim of the cabal is to relocate the MBHS and take over its entire lands. Conscientious Nigerians, Methodists worldwide and the Lagos State Government need to join the Old Boys in ensuring that not an inch of the MBHS lands is stolen under any guise.

# Eagles To Extend AFCON Record, No Matter Result Against Bafana

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Irrespective of the result of Wednesday's 34th Africa Cup of Nations semi-final clash with the Bafana Bafana of South Africa, Nigeria will extend her record of being the country with the most last-four appearances at the continental fiesta.

Since making her debut at the 1963 finals held in Ghana, where she was ejected in the group phase after 3-6 and 0-4 losses to United Arab Republic (Egypt) and Sudan respectively, Nigeria has been at the last-four of the tournament 15 times, and has never failed to win a medal each time.

The Eagles have gone ahead to win the trophy and gold on three occasions, won silver on four occasions and won the bronze medals eight times. They have never lost a third-place match.

On Wednesday, the three-time champions will make a 16th appearance in the semi-finals, in what is their 20th appearance at the competition. The only times Nigeria failed to make the semi-finals were in 1963, 1982, 2008 and 2021.

1982: As Cup holders, the Eagles led by Felix Owolabi started brightly by beating Ethiopia 3-0 in Benghazi, and led Algeria 1-0 in their second match before capitulating 2-1 to the Fenecs. They were manhandled 3-0 by Zambia in their third match and crashed out.

2008: The squad led by Joseph Yobo lost 0-1 to Cote d'Ivoire in their first match in Sekondi, but drew 0-0 with Mali and then defeated Benin Republic 2-0 to reach the quarter-finals. They led Ghana 1-0 before goals by Michael Essien and Junior Agogo toppled the advantage and sent the Eagles back home.

2021: Named the best team of the group phase, the Eagles led by Ahmed Musa defeated Egypt, Sudan and Guinea Bissau in the group phase in Garoua to earn maximum points, only to lose 0-1 to Tunisia in the Round of 16.

Below is a cursory look at all the 15 previous AFCON semi-final matches that Nigeria have been involved in:

11 March 1976: The 1976 finals in Ethiopia were played on league basis – the only tournament in the competition's history conducted in that format. There was a final round of the



competition involving Nigeria, Guinea, Morocco and Egypt. After a 1-1 draw with Guinea, what could be considered as Nigeria's own semi-final match was against eventual champions Morocco on 11th March 1976. The ever-prolific Baba Otu Mohammed scored for Nigeria in the 57th minute, but the Green Eagles allowed two late goals by Ahmad Faras (elected Africa Player of the Year that year) and Redouane Guezzar. After beating Egypt 3-2 three days later, with goals from Haruna Ilerika (a brace) and Mudashiru Lawal, Nigeria (3 points) finished third in the final classification behind Morocco (5 points) and Guinea (4 points) and were awarded the bronze medals.

14 March 1978: Ahmed Abdulla Nasur put Uganda ahead at the Kumasi Sports Stadium, and Martins Eyo equalized for Nigeria in the 12 minutes into the second half. But Philip Omondi scored for Uganda late on and Nigeria were condemned to the third-place match, where they were awarded a 2-0 win after

Tunisia abandoned the game in the 42nd minute in protest at Nigeria's equalizer by Baba Otu Mohammed.

19 March 1980: Felix Owolabi scored the only goal against Morocco after only nine minutes at the National Stadium, Lagos. Christian Chukwu, Segun Odegbami, Adokiye Amiesimaka and Ifeanyi Onyedika all tried to add to the tally to no avail. The hosts went ahead to win the trophy after beating Algeria 3-0 in the final three days later at the same venue.

14 March 1984: In what was easily the match of the tournament, Egypt Pharaohs, beaten 1-0 by Nigeria four years earlier in a group phase match in Ibadan, raced to a two-goal lead within the half-hour. The Eagles had experienced something similar in their group phase match against Malawi, before Clement Temile restored parity. In Bouake, Stephen Keshi reduced the tally from the penalty spot, following up after the ball crashed against the bar. The captain's inch-perfect cross

in the second half was converted by Bala Ali, whose headed effort saw the ball roll past Thabet El-Batal. Nigeria won 8-7 after a penalty shootout.

23 March 1988: Nigeria went into a first-half lead in Rabat when Sam Okwaraji's miss-cued shot was diverted into the net by Abderrazak Belgherbi. Algeria equalized with only four minutes left when Rachid Maatar headed home from a corner kick. The two teams went into a marathon penalty shootout after extra time failed to produce a winner. Ademola Adeshina and Yisa Sofoluwe missed for Nigeria, and Belgherbi and Maatar also missed for Algeria. A total of 10 players on each side had taken, including goalkeepers Peter Rufai and Nasredine Drid. They started all over again, and after Augustine Eguavoen scored, Rufai saved from Lakhdar Belloumi. Nigeria lost the final by a solitary goal to Cameroon in Casablanca four days later.

12 March 1990: The Super Eagles defeated Zambia 2-0, with excellent goals from Uche Okechukwu and Rashidi Yekini

in Annaba. In the final played four days later in Algiers, Cherif Oudjani's long-range effort sailed past Aloysius Agu for the only goal of the match to give Algeria their first continental title.

23 Jan 1992: Regional rivals Ghana and Nigeria started like a house-on-fire in Dakar, and Mutiu Adipoju headed Thompson Oliha's cross past Edward Ansa in the 11th minute. Abedi Pele restored parity with his own header two minutes before half time, and Ghana won it with a fierce shot into the roof of the net by Prince Polley nine minutes into the second half. Two days later, the Eagles edged Cameroon 2-1 for the bronze medals.

6 April 1994: Michel Bassole headed Cote d'Ivoire in front after 19 minutes, but Benedict Iroha equalized after a mesmerising one-two with Jay Jay Okocha at the Stade El Menzah. Bassole scored again, and Nigeria also scored (through Rashidi Yekini) to make it 2-2 before half time. Both teams threw the kitchen sink at

# AFCON 2023: Victor Osimhen Arrives, Bouake, Cleared To Face Bafana

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Reigning Africa Player of the Year Victor Osimhen has arrived in Bouake, Cote d'Ivoire's second city that will host today's Africa Cup of Nations semi-final match between Nigeria and South Africa.

The lanky forward, who has been key to Nigeria's progress in this championship, with endless running and magnificent passes to wreck the opposition, has only yesterday evening, been cleared to feature in the big game.

He was part of the team's training at the Stade Annexe, Bouake on Tuesday evening.

Team medics performed their final tests and took the decision that he is available for the encounter after the striker arrived at the purpose-built Games Village on Tuesday afternoon. When the rest of the

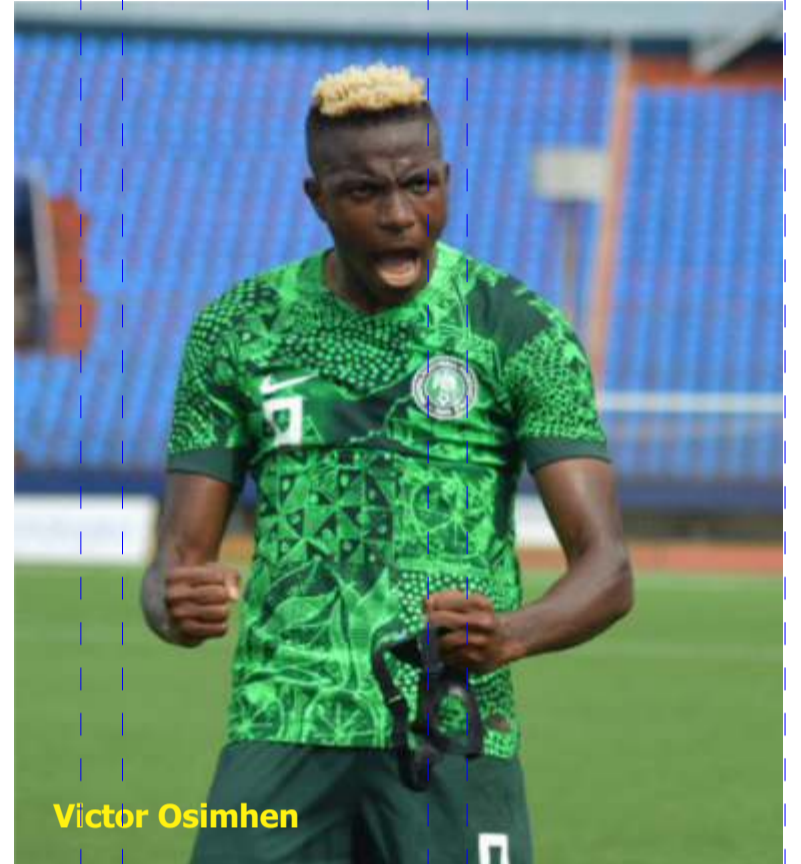
party travelled out of Abidjan on Monday night, Osimhen was left behind at their Pullman Hotel as a result of abdominal discomfort. Gusau receives special award as Eagles set to fly over Bafana President of the Nigeria Football Federation, Alhaji Ibrahim Musa Gusau has been conferred with the AFCON Leadership Excellence Award by Project Fly With Us Africa, during the unveiling of the Africa Sports and Tourism Awards at the Hotel Sofitel, Abidjan at the weekend. The Convener of the Awards, Ambassador Peace Onuiri explained that the NFF President has changed the narrative in Nigeria Football, which is evident in the performance of the Super Eagles so far at the 34th Africa Cup of Nations in Cote d'Ivoire. Three-time champions Nigeria have reached the tournament semi-finals for the 16th time in their 20

appearances.

"The ASTA Awards is to recognize, celebrate and honour the immense contributions of top performers in sports tourism across the African continent," explained Ambassador Onuiri, who is also a Global Ambassador/Commissioner for health and safety for African Tourism Board and the CEO of Project Fly With Us Africa. "The investiture comes with two return flight tickets to the East African Safari."

Project Fly With Us Africa, a tourism destination company and sports promotion outfit, has been campaigning for Nigerians to support the Super Eagles' quest for a fourth African title at the Africa Cup of Nations finals in Cote d'Ivoire.

The company has also honoured former Nigeria captain Augustine 'JayJay' Okocha.



Victor Osimhen

## SWAN Congratulates Victorious Nigerian Weightlifters, Urges Super Eagles To Push Till AFCON Final

The Sports Writers Association of Nigeria (SWAN) has congratulated Nigeria's Weightlifters - Rafiatu Folashade Lawal and Adijat Adenike Olarinoye for making the country proud at ongoing 2024 Africa Senior Weightlifting Championship in Egypt.

While Rafiatu won three Gold medals in various categories, Adijat clinched available three Silver medals in her weight categories at the competition

which also serves as the 2024 Paris Olympic Qualifier.

Speaking through a press statement by the Association's Secretary-General, Amb. Ikenna Okonkwo, SWAN President, Mr. Isaiah Benjamin, said their sustained victories after similar exploits last year will encourage others competing at the Championship and beyond to put in their best.

He said, "Nigeria has been on the lead in combat sport like Weightlifting and Wrestling in

recent times. Sustaining the gains of the past year is really commendable.

"Efforts should now be channelled to other sporting events in the year particularly at the coming Olympics in Paris. There's need to galvanise all the support to enable the qualification of more Nigerian athletes across the various sports."

Talking about the ongoing 2023 Africa Cup of Nations, the number one Sport Writer in

Nigeria enjoined the Super Eagles to push harder against the Bafana Bafana of South Africa in the semi-final match.

"Good enough, the Nigerian senior men team have shown character and determination so far in the tournament. What remain now is for them to remain resolute and ensure victory till the end.

"We sincerely commend the federal government for giving the team necessary supports which has propelled them so far.

We also appreciate the corporate organisations, individuals and the Bayelsa state government for their encouraging supports.

"We are still confident of victory beyond the semi-final to the final," he said.

The SWAN President also used dedicated Sports Writers to keep on their good before and during the AFCON with an assurance that he keep pushing for improved welfare.

## AFCON: APC National Youth Leader Hosts Match Viewing Party To Support Super Eagles

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

As the excitement builds for the upcoming crucial semi-final clash of the Super Eagles against the Bafana Bafana of South Africa, the National Youth Leader (NYL) of the All Progressives Congress (APC), Hon Dayo Israel, has stepped up to rally the party's young guns and is delighted to announce the hosting of a special APC Youth Match Viewing Party.

The event is scheduled to take place on Wednesday February 7, 2024, starting

from 4:00 PM at the APC National Secretariat in Wuse, Abuja.

The Super Eagles' journey in the tournament has captured the hearts of millions across the nation, and Hon Dayo Israel recognizes the importance of rallying support for the team.

This viewing party aims to bring together APC youth from across the country to celebrate and cheer on the national football team.

"The Super Eagles represent the pride and unity of our nation. As young leaders

within the APC, it's crucial for us to come together and show our unwavering support for our team. This viewing party is not just about football; it's about fostering a sense of camaraderie and national pride among our youth.

"Attendees can expect an electrifying atmosphere filled with camaraderie, cheers, and chants as they watch the Super Eagles take on their opponents. The event will also feature refreshments, entertainment, and opportunities for networking and engagement among APC

youth members.

"All APC youth members, supporters, and football enthusiasts are invited to join Hon Dayo Israel and fellow party members at the APC National Secretariat for an unforgettable evening of football and camaraderie.

"Together, let's roar our support for the Super Eagles and showcase the true spirit of Nigerian unity,"

# SWAN North East Mourns Ex Yobe Governor, Bukar Abba Ibrahim

By; JACOB ONJEWU  
DICKSON

The Vice President Sports Writers Association of Nigeria (SWAN), North East Zone, Comrade Ahmed Kagana Amshi, has expressed deep condolences to the family, friends, and associates of the late Former Governor of Yobe, Senator Bukar Abba Ibrahim, who

represented Yobe East.

A statement personally signed by him, said that the entire members of the association in the zone, join in mourning the loss of this esteemed statesman.

"The passing of Senator Bukar Abba Ibrahim is a great loss not only to Yobe State, but also to the entire North East region and the nation as a whole.

"He was a veteran politician who consistently prioritized the progress and development of the people he served.

"The North East Zone of SWAN (Sports Writers Association of Nigeria) extends heartfelt sympathy and condolences to the family of the late Senator, as well as to the government and people of Yobe State.

We stand in solidarity with them during this difficult time.

"May, Almighty Allah grant the departed statesman eternal rest, and may his family, friends, and associates find the strength to bear this irreparable loss.

"And, may Aljannatul furdasi be his destination, amen thumma ameen," the statement said.



Late Bukar Abba Ibrahim

# Eagles To Extend AFCON Record, No Matter Result Against Bafana

themselves in the second half and during extra time, but there were no more goals and it ended in a penalty shootout. Samson Siasia lost his kick but Bassole and Amani Yao also fluffed for the Elephants. Four days later at the same venue, Nigeria defeated Zambia 2-1 to win the trophy and gold.

10 Feb 2000: Banned from the 1998 finals for their failure to turn up in South Africa in 1996 to defend their title, Nigeria were brimming with vitality as co-hosts with Ghana in 2000. In the semi-finals, Coach Johannes Bonfrere unscrewed the plans of the Bafana Bafana by playing Tijani Babangida from the left side, and he caused them all sorts of problems besides scoring two first-half goals at the National Stadium, Lagos. The Eagles lost the Final to Cameroon three days later after a penalty shootout at the same venue.

7 Feb 2002: At the Stade Modibo Keita, Bouba Diop put Senegal ahead early in the second half. Wilson Oruma failed to convert a penalty kick, but Julius Aghahowa made it 1-1 two minutes from the end. In first-half of extra time, Lassina Diao got the winner for Senegal, and the Eagles were condemned to third place. They defeated hosts Mali 1-0 in the city of Mopti two days later to win the bronze.

11 Feb 2004: The November 7 Stadium in Rades was a cauldron of noise and passion as the Eagles, who had eliminated Cup holders Cameroon in the quarter-finals, took the kick-off against the host nation. Jay Jay Okocha and Nwankwo Kanu made life difficult for the Khaled Badri-led defence but the first half produced no goal. There were 60,000 spectators whose whistling rang out each time more than that of Benin's referee Bonaventure Codjia Coffi. Nigeria went ahead when Okocha scored from the spot after Kanu was double-teamed in the box. Badra levelled from the spot as well eight minutes from time, after Seyi Olofinjana tripped Ziad Jaziri. In the penalty shootout, Peter Odemwingie lost his kick and Nigeria were sent to the third-place match after Karim Haggui beat Vincent Enyeama. The Eagles won the third-place match by beating Mali 2-1 back in Monastir three days later, with goals by Okocha (who would emerge the tournament's Most Valuable Player) and Odemwingie.

7 Feb 2006: Nigeria, who had again eliminated the Cup holders (Tunisia) in the quarter-finals, survived a torrid first half at the Alexandria Stadium. In the second half, Joseph Enarkharire mis-timed his leap from a high

ball and Didier Drogba sneaked in to beat Enyeama from close range. It was the only goal of the game, and the Eagles would beat Senegal by a solitary goal from Garba Lawal in Cairo to pick up the bronze medals.

28 Jan 2010: Asamoah Gyan scored the only goal of the match from a corner kick at the Estadio 11 de Novembro in Luanda. It meant the Eagles had to go back to Benguela, where they prosecuted their group phase matches, for the third-place match against Algeria, which they won with a goal by Obinna Nsofor after a sublime pass by Nwankwo Kanu.

6 Feb 2013: Nigeria had sensationally eliminated in-form Cote d'Ivoire in the quarter-finals, and arrived at the Moses Mabhida Stadium in Durban as clear favourites against Mali. Elderson Echiejile, Brown Ideye and Emmanuel Emenike scored before half time, and Ahmed Musa added a fourth on the hour. The Eagles went ahead to defeat Burkina Faso in the final played four days later at Soccercity, the only goal scored



by Sunday Mba.

14 July 2019: Nigeria had eliminated Cup holders Cameroon in the Round of 16, and then kicked out South Africa (who eliminated hosts Egypt) in the quarter-finals. Five minutes from recess against Algeria at the Cairo International Stadium, William Ekong inadvertently diverted the ball into his own net. Odion Ighalo, who would

emerge tournament top scorer, scored from the spot to level in the second half. But the Fenecs flew into the Final after Riyad Mahrez's vicious shot from a free-kick deep in added time sailed past Daniel Akpeyi. Ighalo scored the only goal of the third-place match against Tunisia three days later to give Nigeria the bronze medals.

Eagles To Extend AFCON Record, No Matter Result Against Bafana

Story on Page 22

## Group Hails Matawalle's Global Partnerships Drive Against Terror, Banditry

By: ISAAC ODEH, Kaduna

The Northern Stakeholders Consultative Forum (NSCF) has commended the Minister of State for Defence, Mohammed Bello Matawalle, for his efforts in forging global partnerships to combat insecurity in Nigeria.

In a statement issued by NSCF's spokesperson, Comrade Danjuma Paul, the group recognized that since assuming office as minister of state for defence, Matawalle has demonstrated a unique approach to tackling the country's security challenges.

One noteworthy achievement highlighted by the NSCF is Matawalle's recent working visit to the United States of America. During this visit, the minister held meetings with members of the United States Congress at the Capitol on December 13th.

The purpose of the tour was to explore innovative technologies that would enhance the Nigerian military's efficiency in addressing contemporary

security threats.

The discussions concluded with an emphasis on the collaboration between the Defence Industries Corporation of Nigeria (DICON) and NEANY of the US. This partnership aims to establish assembly lines for the production of advanced military equipment, contributing to the fight against terrorism and other criminal activities in Nigeria.

The NSCF believes that this collaboration will enable Nigeria to learn from NEANY's expertise in military hardware production.

The NSCF also applauded Matawalle's attendance at the conference of Ministers of Defence from Africa, Europe, and Arab nations in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The conference, which took place from February 2nd, 2024, in Riyadh, saw defence ministers discussing strategies and issues related to securing their respective regions. Matawalle's participation further demonstrates his commitment to President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's

vision of modernizing Nigeria's armed forces to effectively address evolving security threats.

In addition, the NSCF commended Matawalle for his swift action in ordering an investigation into allegations of wrongdoing by a serving Chief of Naval Staff accused of engaging in corrupt practices.

This commitment to ensuring accountability within the military is commendable and indicative of Matawalle's dedication to upholding integrity and transparency.

The NSCF said it believes that Matawalle's global partnerships and proactive approach to security challenges will significantly contribute to the overall improvement of Nigeria's security landscape.

The group called on all stakeholders to support these initiatives and collaborate towards a safer and more secured Nigeria.



Comrade Danjuma Paul

## Flyover: Benue Residents Laud Gov Alia, As Contractor Assures Of Quality Job

By: ARCHIBONG ESUENE, Makurdi

Residents of Makurdi and a cross section of the stakeholders in Benue State have applauded Governor Hyacinth Alia for keeping to his electioneering promises of infrastructural development in the last eight months.

A cross section of the stakeholders were reacting to the commencement of the construction of the first flyover in High Level roundabout, which is in the heart of Makurdi, Benue State capital, awarded to Bauhaus Global by the state government.

Speaking in an interview with journalists in Makurdi, member representing Kwande West State Constituency, Benue State House of Assembly, Pharmacist Dugeri Thomas described the commencement as a turning point in the infrastructural development of the state.

The lawmaker who commended Governor Hyacinth Alia for his visionary

leadership in the last eight months, called on the contractor to ensure that the contract is executed according to the specifications as no sub standard job will be accepted not only by the governor, but the entire state.

Pharmacist Thomas while stating that the Benue State House of Assembly will give the governor all the legal backing as he has embarked on changing the infrastructural narratives of the state for good, wondered what happened in the past, "I think when we see a governor paying salaries, pensions, roads and now flyover all within eight months, we begin to ask questions".

Mr. Humble Thomas Terhemba, a retired Director in the State Civil Service and Douglas Terwase Kachi in their separate remarks, described the Commencement of the project as historical considering the fact that Benue was created over 40 years ago with full potentialities.

While Mr. Terhemba Commended the

governor for paying salaries and pensions promptly, Mr. Kachi described the governor with a good attitude towards governance and appealed to the contractor to give the state quality job so that posterity will be fair to them.

In an interview with newsmen at the site, Engr Charnel Alammur, the Project Manager, Bauhaus Global Nigeria Ltd, promised that his company which has a good records with sound manpower and equipment will deliver the job within a record time.

According to Engr Alammur, Bauhaus Global has been registered in Nigeria for over seven years with company profile of high quality jobs across the country will ensure that the job is done according to specifications knowing how passionate the governor and the people of Benue State are towards the project.

The Bauhaus Global Project Manager also disclosed that the Company have two

ongoing projects in Gboko Local council of the State and as such, "we have come to stay in Benue State as our capacity to deliver very high quality jobs will speak for us and we believe his Excellency and the good people of Benue State will never be disappointed in us because of our sound track records".

In a related development, following the commencement of the construction of the first flyover around High Level Roundabout in the heart of Makurdi, the state Ministry of Works and Housing, has announced major diversion points within High Level.

The State Commissioner of Works and Housing, Mr. Imojime Isaac Tiza in a statement by his Media Assistant, Terhemba Injo Jabi, said traffic from old Otukpo Road from St Theresa have been diverted.