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"The Greatest Weapon is Truth"

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From left: Osun State Governor, Senator Ademola Adeleke congratulating Director Fire Service, Osun State, Mr. Oyelami Olubunmi and Commissioner for Home Affairs, Alh. Abdulrasheed Aderibigbe @ the official commissioning of the newly procured fire trucks for Osun State Fire Service, held at the State Fire Office, Abere, Osogbo. Photo: AKINOLAARIYO

By; JABIRU A.
HASSAN, Kano

The Board of Trustees (BoT) at its 76th meeting yesterday, thoroughly assessed the state of affairs of the nation which the party described as hopeless, threatening the existence of Nigeria.

This was expressed in a communique issued at the end of its 76th Meeting of the Board of at its national secretariat in Abuja yesterday.

"The BoT is disturbed that the catastrophic economic and security situation in the country have left Nigerians hopeless, despondent, angry and constitute a present and immediate threat to the survival of the country as hardworking young Nigerians, professionals in critical fields as well as major multinational companies are now leaving our nation in droves.

"The BoT is distressed that there are no concrete and

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*Tasks him to make good his promises to Nigerians

Hardship: Rethink Nigeria's Romance With Bretton Woods Institutions, Sack Unproductive Appointees, CNPP Tells Tinubu

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Conference Of Nigeria Political Parties (CNPP) has urged President Bola Ahmed Tinubu "to struggle through the hard path by rethinking Nigeria's relationship with the Bretton Woods Institutions, realistically assessing the performance of his appointees and sacking those constituting a cog in the wheel of the progress of his administration through their clear unproductivity and sabotage."

The CNPP, in a statement signed by its Deputy National Publicity Secretary, Comrade James Ezema, was reacting to the call the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on the federal government to completely phase out petrol and electricity subsidies in the country in its 'Post Financing Assessment (PFA)' report.

The umbrella association of all registered political parties and political associations in

Nigeria, noted in the statement that, "restoring macroeconomic stability in Nigeria should come from homegrown policies and programmes as IMF solutions have never aided Nigeria's economic recovery, rather our economic woes worsened every time Bretton Woods Institutions' advisories were implemented in Africa.

"While removal of subsidy, due to the attendant corruption that bedevilled its payment was desirable, it was akin to shooting down Nigeria's economy by implementing subsidy removal policy without functional refineries for local production of petroleum products.

"The call by IMF for the complete phase out of petrol and electricity subsidies in the country is a suggestion to the Bola Tinubu administration to inflict more hardship on already suffering masses of Nigeria.

"Has the IMF ever advised the USA and European

Failure Of Solid Mineral Operators To Remit Royalties To FG Responsible For Dwindling Revenue - Gov Nwifuru

By: MKPUMA ENYINNA, Abakaliki

The Governor of Ebonyi State, Chief Francis Ogbonna Nwifuru has attributed dwindling revenue accruing to the state from the federation account to failure of solid mineral operators remitting royalties to the Federal Government.

This he said, is one of the indices in Federal allocation formula.

He made his feelings known when he received officials of the Consolidated Lead and Zinc Miners Association in his office.

The governor who lamented that activities of the miners are contrary to Federal Mining Act, warned that the state will no longer tolerate non-remittance of royalties and other levies.

"It is unfortunate that most you are in the habit of not

remitting necessary levies to both the government and host communities and this action is inimical to our progress as a state. Most of you smuggle our minerals out of the State around 2am just to escape payment of necessary levies and that has to stop because no matter at what time, we must intercept you this time around and you will face the full wrath of the law"

The governor directed miners across the state to always close mining pits after exploration to prevent loss of lives.

"You are under obligation to cover your Mining pits after exploration. We have incidences where our people lost their lives. To me it is negligence on the part of the Miners. Recall that our youth Leader lost his life in one of the Mining pits along Ikwo road and it was a painful experience to all of us".



Gov Nwifuru

The governor pledged to provide conducive environment for Mining operations in the state.

Earlier, the leader of the delegation, Mr. Merit Nwachukwu said they were interested in forming synergy with the state government in other to attract investors.

"With the protection and cooperation of the State we are looking forward to making Ebonyi an investment destination. There will be job creation. There are some challenges but with the energy we have seen in you we are courageous to push forward."

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Ash Wednesday: Nigerians Are Hungry, Angry Over Skyrocketing Prices Of Foodstuff, Bishop Tells Tinubu

**Tasks him to make good his promises to Nigerians*

By: BAYOAKAMO, Ibadan

Worried by the situation in the country, the Bishop of Ibadan North Anglican Diocese, Rt Reverend Williams Aladekugbe has charged governments at all levels to address the skyrocketing prices of food stuffs in the Nigeria market.

Rt. Reverend Aladekugbe gave the charge in Ibadan yesterday in his lenten admonition to the people to mark the beginning of the 2024 40 days Christian fast.

Specifically, the Bishop of Ibadan North Anglican Diocese emphasized that Nigerians are hungry and angry and that President Bola Tinubu should make good his promises to the people.

"We strongly appeal to the Federal Government to do something urgent on the skyrocketing prices of food stuff. Nigerians are hungry and angry", he said.

The Bishop added, "What we now experience is not what the government of President Tinubu promised Nigerians.

"He said to us "E lo fokan bake, o ma wale" that we should put our minds to rest that prices will come down.

"Unfortunately, nine months into



Rt Rev Aladekugbe

the government everyone is in pains. We equally call on government to urgently intervene in the constant attacks in some parts of the country". He maintained further, "We call on the government and statutory security agencies to rise to their responsibilities of protecting the lives and property of citizenry. We again encourage Nigerians to endure a little more. The future is bright."

Rt. Reverend Aladekugbe while expressing optimism in President Tinubu and the future of the country, tasked the faithful to seize the opportunity of the lenten period to seek the face of God for the nation and its leaders.

Speaking on the commencement of this year's Christian fast, Rt Reverend Aladekugbe said "The Christian also needs to follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and

retire to the wilderness of solitude for fasting and communion with God to crucify the flesh with its desire and lust". "Another Ash Wednesday, the beginning of the Christians period of 40 days fasting is here. Throughout the Christian year, the Christian is expected to follow the example of our Lord, share in His sufferings and His glory.

"Our message to the Church is to be fervent in prayers, abstain from all forms of sinful acts to attract the grace, mercy, favour and blessings of God. The period should be that of sober reflections, a time to seek the face of God through His word in prayers and good deeds".

He stressed, "It is providential that the Christians period of 40 days fasting is beginning again at a time the country needs to acknowledge God and totally depend on Him for our leaders so that they will take Nigeria out of the woods".

"We are presently going through a lot and from all indications, it is only God who could assist us. Our efforts and human calculations have failed us. Our political actors have disappointed us and inflicted

much pains on us. We need God to step into the situation of our dear country in such a time as this, that there is economic downturn, corruption in addition to insecurity that manifest in form of banditry, kidnapping, etc.

"Ash Wednesday is a solemn reminder of human mortality and the need for reconciliation with God and it marks the beginning of the penitential Lenten season. It is commonly observed with ashes and fasting. It is a period of penitential preparation for Easter.

Ash Wednesday is a holy day of prayer and fasting. It is the first day of Lent and always falls forty-six days before Easter. On Ash Wednesday, Christians abstain from eating. Which-ever way we go about it, our earnest prayers is that may our fast be a testimony and witness of our humble submission to His high majesty.

"The season requires that we trust the Lord to lead and direct us in all our activities as we seek to have His will enthroned in our lives and our nation especially in the days ahead. In this critical time, we should watch and pray."

I Make Average Of N250,000 Per Week From Impounded Truck Owners - Fake LASTMA Official



The fake LASTMA official

By ; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

The long arm of the law has caught up with a fraudster that has serially impersonated official of the Lagos State Traffic Management Authority (LASTMA) to extort owners of impounded vehicles by the agency of huge sum.

Identified as Femi Adegbemi, the suspect who was apprehended yesterday after collecting the sum of N140,000 from owners of vehicles impounded for traffic infractions by the agency, disclosed that he makes an average of N250,000 weekly from the nefarious act.

In a statement obtained by our correspondent, the Director, Public Affairs and Enlightenment Department of LASTMA Mr. Adebayo Taofiq confirmed that the suspect was apprehended by the monitoring and surveillance team of the agency at Oshodi.

Adebayo disclosed that, "The suspect was apprehended after the agency received complaints of extortions from owners of inter-state commercial buses impounded and ticketed for traffic infractions around Moshalasi by Alaka area of Surulere.

"Investigations conducted revealed that the arrested suspect (Femi Adegbemi) has been collecting huge amounts of money from innocent owners of vehicles impounded by LASTMA Officials during enforcement operations.

"The arrested suspect collected N140,000 from owners/drivers by promising to help them get

their impounded vehicles released from the custody of agency.

"It is disheartening getting complaints from road users particularly owners of impounded vehicles on activities of these unscrupulous elements impersonating and extorting money from different owners of impounded vehicles thereby tarnishing the good image of the Agency before the public"

"The General Manager of LASTMA Mr. Bakare-Oki Olalekan warned the general public to be wary of these unscrupulous elements stating that the agency operates a cashless policy as any violators apprehended are charged to court via a 'Referral Notice' issued to them.

"He confirmed that more surveillance/monitoring personnel have been strategically deployed to hunt for these unscrupulous elements duping innocent motoring public across the state.

"The arrested suspect Mr. Femi Adegbemi (56yrs) confessed to have collected N140,000 from owners of these impounded inter-state commercial vehicles.

"Mr. Adegbemi (suspect) who confirmed to be living at No. 9, Anifowose Street, Somolu confessed further to be making average of N250,000 on weekly basis from the illegal deal with his other colleagues.

"He however, promised to turn a new leaf if left off the hook by Government."

Meanwhile, the Director, Legal Department (LASTMA) Barr. Akerele Kehinde disclosed that the suspect would be charged to court immediately to serve as deterrent to others.

Labour Gets 10,000 Bags Of Rice As Kwara Govt Again Reaches Out To Masses

**Gov AbdulRazaq, a responsive leader - NLC Chairman*

By ; BILIQIS ONAOLAPO OLAJUMOKE, Ilorin

Kwara State Government has delivered 10,000 bags of 10kg rice palliatives to the labour unions for onward distribution to their members, another layer of support to the workers in the state as Nigeria battles to beat down the cost of consumer goods.

The palliative followed an engagement Governor AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq had with the leadership of the organised labour unions and other stakeholders during the week.

In their separate remarks, State Chairman of Trade Union Congress (TUC) Comrade Joseph Tunde Meshach and State Chairman of Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) Comrade Saheed Olayinka, commended the Governor for his continuous efforts to provide relief to the people in the state.

Acknowledging that the government has granted 11 of 21 requests, the labour leaders said talks

are proceeding positively with the government on their other demands to improve their condition of service.

"We are here distributing the bags of rice given to us by His Excellency the Governor of Kwara State Mallam AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq. On Tuesday, we had a meeting with him, where he said he would be giving the labour movement in the state 10,000 bags of rice (10kg) as a form of support at this time," Trade Union Congress (TUC) Chairman Comrade Tunde Joseph told reporters on Friday in Ilorin, the capital city.

"It is part of the things to ameliorate the suffering of the people which we truly appreciate. We appreciate the gesture.

"On the ongoing negotiations with the government, we presented about 21 demands. The Governor has graciously approved 11. We are still progressing. We were happy when he said the committee is to be sustained to continuously engage us on other outstanding issues. We

really appreciate this.

"What we are doing presently is the distribution of the 10,000 bags of rice (10kg). All our members from various ministries, departments, and agencies and all the affiliates are coming around. We started the distribution since yesterday. The affiliates came around yesterday to get their allocation. As it is now, the units are also coming to get their own allocation too."

State Chairman, NLC, Kwara State Council, Comrade Saheed Olayinka, noted that Governor AbdulRazaq is a responsive leader, urging him to continue to prioritise the welfare of the workers for the growth and development of the state.

"We are very glad to receive 10,000 bags of rice (10kg) in this exercise. We believe this will go a long way. It is a show of support and empathy and we appreciate it," Comrade Olayinka said.

"This is not our first time of witnessing different administrations of government. However,

this government shows it has sympathy for the public. This is not only about the public service, it also includes the private sector.

"We have started sharing the rice palliative since yesterday, and people were so glad to receive it. It has reduced the tension and burden on us as leaders. They complained to us, and we forwarded the complaints to the government. Without wasting time, the government has come to our aid. We are so glad with what is going on.

"On the ongoing negotiation, the happiest part of it is that His Excellency has maintained the committee set up by him to look into the requests of Kwara State workers. We forwarded about 21 demands. Immediately, 11 have been addressed.

"The remaining 10 is still under consideration, while the committee continues to talk to the labour leaders. We hope that the remaining 10 will equally see the light of the day soon."



Kogi Govt To Axe 17 'Illegal' Tertiary Institutions

By; ADAMA JOHN, Lokoja

No fewer than seventeen illegal institutions of higher learning adulterating academic exercise are to be axed by Kogi State Government.

The Education Commissioner for Science and Technology, Hon. Wemi Jones dropped the hint in Lokoja, during an oversight function of the House of Assembly Standing Committee on Education officiated by Hon. Idris Aliyu Mekudi. The second term commissioner has now seen that 17 illegal tertiary institutions infesting academic exercises in far away Ankpa in East Senatorial District have denied the use of public schools by pupils as they have turned them into their study centres.

He said all unapproved and illegal tertiary institutions will no longer be allowed to operate without providing the basic requirements necessary to do so.

The rebranded commissioner in Ododo's administration was unequivocal in his approach to issues of quality education saying that government has beamed its search light on inspection, monitoring, and supervision of primary

and secondary schools in the state.

This is in addition to the current resolve of the administration to review the operations of private schools in the state.

To him, the enactment of the education law which gives powers to the ministry to look at the operations of private schools will be manifested in ongoing plans by the ministry to go all out to entrench sanity to the falling standard of the education sector.

The commissioner promised to take a cursory look at the appalling standard of both primary and secondary schools that have become the sinequanon of the schools over the years.

He assured that the ministry will ensure the implementation of the education master plan through the suspension of substandard private schools as well as the setting up of task forces to monitor the activities of public schools.

Hon. Jones assured that the present administration is resolved to revamp education at the primary and secondary school levels which he described as the very cradle and foundation for sustainable education which must be given the desired priority.

Economic, Security Situations Threat To Nigeria's Survival, Citizens Angry, Hopeless - PDP

■ BoT confirms Wabara as Chairman, Makarfi, Secretary

■ Party assures Nigerians of working for wellbeing defending their interests

coherent policy, measures and steps by the APC administration to address these existential threats which have put the country in a precarious situation," it said.

The BoT expressed deep concerns over the biting economic hardship, high cost of essential life-enhancing commodities and alarming food scarcity in the country occasioned by the ill-implemented policies of the APC administration and which are already causing restiveness and agitations in various parts of the country.

The BoT further expressed concerns over the worsening insecurity in the country as evident in the rising cases of mass killings, banditry, kidnap for ransom and acts of terrorism by assailants

who are emboldened by the manifest laidback attitude of the All Progressives Congress (APC) administration to issues of security, especially in the last nine months.

"The BoT is appalled by the monumental corruption and unbridled treasury-looting in the APC administration especially the looting of billions of Naira meant for palliatives for poor and vulnerable Nigerians.

"The BoT is seriously worried over the fall of the Naira to an abysmal N1,500 to the Dollar, incessant increase in the pump price of fuel which now sells for over N700 per liter with long queues in various parts of the country.

"These have attendant negative consequences as

evident in the nearly 30% inflation rate, 41% unemployment rate and alarming 46% poverty rate where up to 130 million citizens have sunk deeper into multi-dimensional poverty in the last nine months," the communique said.

The BoT therefore, called on President Bola Ahmed Tinubu to know that the situation in the country has become unbearable.

"Mr. President should immediately address the issues of corruption in his administration, worsening insecurity in the country, continuous fall in the value of the Naira, high fuel price, unbearable food scarcity and unemployment in the country," it said.

The BoT reassured the Nigerian public that despite the challenges, it

remains united, stronger and more determined in its commitment to working for the wellbeing of Nigerians and defending their interest at all times.

"In this regard, the BoT as the conscience of the party charges all organs, leaders, critical stakeholders and members of the PDP across the country to remain united and focused as the Party further repositions for the task ahead," it added.

In the bid to further strengthen itself, the BoT confirmed His Excellency, Senator Adolphus Wabara as its Chairman and His Excellency, Senator Ahmed Mohammed Makarfi as Secretary in line with the provisions of the Constitution of the PDP (as amended in 2017).



Benue APC Crisis Deepens, Omakolo Emerges Acting Chairman

By; ARCHIBONG ESUENE, Makurdi

The silent war rocking the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC), has snowballed into the sudden appointment of the State Welfare Secretary, Benjamin Omakolo as the State Acting Chairman of the party.

New Nigerian Newspapers recalls that the former Chairman of the party, Mr Austin Agada, was suspended by his Ehaje

Ward 1 Exco of the party, which was followed by a court injunction, restraining him from parading himself as the chairman of the party in the state. A statement by the Chief Press Secretary to the Governor of Benue State, Tersoo Kula, said the State Executive Committee members of the party visited Governor Hyacinth Alia at the Government House Makurdi, requesting that the vacant position of the state chairman of

the party be filled, in order to save it from further crisis.

Addressing the gathering, Benue State Governor, Rev Father Hyacinth Alia, implored the APC family in the state to support the party, stressing that it is the only platform that has good plans to change the fortunes of the state and Nigeria as a whole.

The governor said that he had faced pressure from stakeholders of the party in Zone C, who recommended a replacement for

the vacant position in order to keep the party moving.

According to the governor, to reduce the pressure on him, and also stop the party from further pains, he had no choice than to direct the State Welfare Secretary of the party, Hon Benjamin Omakolo to step in as acting chairman of the party in the state, pending the court case instituted against suspended State Chairman, Mr Austin Agada.

While thanking the stakeholders

of the party from Zone C for recommending a capable replacement for the vacant position, the governor admonished party faithful in the state to support the acting chairman as he assumes duty.

Responding, the State Acting Chairman of the All Progressives Congress in the state, Mr Benjamin Omakolo, said he was overwhelmed with the trust the party faithful reposed on him, promising to unite the party.

Research, Collaboration: Greenfield, Top Faith Universities Sign MoU

*Greenfield commissions, names Cyber Security Lab after Dr. Abraham



By; JACOB ONJEWU
DICKSON

In their quest to ensure that tertiary education in Nigeria is further developed and competes favourably with other parts of the world, two fast growing tertiary institutions in Nigeria, Green Field University (GFU), Kaduna and Topfaith University, Mpkatak, Akwa Ibom State have signed and MoU to advance research and other areas of collaboration.

The agreement was signed by representatives of both institutions on Monday, at the City Campus of Greenfield University, Kudenda, Kaduna.

In his welcome address, Founder /Pro Chancellor Of greenfield University, Engineer Simon Ifediora Nwakacha (Onwa of Umueri), said that the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between

Greenfield University and Topfaith University is not just a formal agreement, but a commitment to collaboration, mutual support, and the advancement of education, research, and development.

"This partnership signifies a new chapter in our pursuit of academic excellence and innovation, and I am confident that it will yield fruitful results for both institutions," he said.

Speaking further, he said that in recognition of Dr. Emmanuel Thomas Abraham, the esteemed founder and BoT Chairman of Topfaith University, Mkpatak, Akwa Ibom State, it is a privilege for Greenfield University to announce the naming of their Cyber Security Laboratory after him.

"The laboratory is equipped with 20 modern computers, a high speed internet capable server and

state of the art cyber security software tailored for digital forensic, ethical hacking and network management.

"These tools provide students with hands on experience and practical skills in various aspects of cyber security, expertise, preparing them for real world challenges in the field," he said.

He added that, "As the Pro Chancellor of Greenfield University, I express my deepest gratitude to Dr. Emmanuel Thomas Abraham for his visionary leadership and unwavering dedication to the advancement of education. Your presence here today in our City Campus after the sad incidence at our permanent site is a source of inspiration for all of us and will provide you with the opportunity to support us in our drive to push forward in our quest to actualise the dreams of

setting up our institution and we are truly privileged to have the opportunity to commemorate this moment alongside you.

In his remarks, Top Faith University Mpkatak, Akwa Ibom State, Founder/BOT Chairman Dr. Emmanuel Thomas Abraham commended the Greenfield management for working as a team that is resilient.

"I thank all of you for standing through the tough times and giving hope to humanity. I have seen passion, I have seen determination, ingenuity and functionality.

"Chief what I have seen here today, conforms with the philosophy that 'essence of life is to make life easy for others'. What you have imagined, I can assure you, they will manifest," he said.

He consoled Greenfield University Pro Chancellor that

tough times don't last.

According to him, the MoU signed will not just be an academic exercise, but one that will be beneficial to both universities.

VC Top Faith University, Professor Patrick James on behalf of the institution, extended condolences to Greenfield University over the unfortunate incident at their permanent site.

"From what I have seen in the photographs and from what I have seen today, Greenfield is topnotch," he added.

He described the partnership as a great thing and the way to go in modern private universities development in the country.

"You share ideas, you share resources, we work as a team. Aim at going far, have the institution at heart," he added.



Uba Sani Hails NDA's Role In Securing Lives, Property

By ; F U N M I
ADERINTO, Kaduna

Governor of Kaduna State, Senator Uba Sani on Saturday, appreciated the contributions the Nigerian Defence Academy (NDA) has made and the role it is playing in securing lives and property even in the most trying situations. Governor Uba Sani expressed this when he warmly welcomed President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Nigeria, Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR to Kaduna at the Golden Jubilee Celebration of the Nigerian Defence Academy, Kaduna. Senator Uba Sani joined the President, the Chief of Defence Staff, Gen. Christopher Musa, Service Chiefs, leadership of the National Assembly, top government officials,

royal fathers, military top brass, management, staff and students of NDA and members of the public at the Golden Jubilee Celebration of the Nigerian Defence Academy, Kaduna. According to the governor, the government and people of Kaduna State appreciate the contributions the NDA has made and the role it is playing in securing lives and property even in the most trying situations. Speaking on behalf of the government and people of Kaduna State, he said, "I salute the past and current Commanders-in-Chief, Commandants, faculty, directing and supporting staff, cadets, alumni and veterans on this milestone". "It is my sincere hope and prayer that the NDA will continue to renew and reinvigorate its training



Crime Will Be Reduced To Barest Minimum, New Delta CP Abaniwonda Assures

By ; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

The newly deployed Delta State Commissioner of Police, CP Abaniwonda Olufemi has the governor and residents of the state that crime will be reduced to the barest minimum under his watch.

He also pledged that officers and men of the command would respect the rights of all citizens in the discharge of all assigned duties.

The Commissioner of Police made the pledge on February 12, 2024, when he paid a courtesy visit to the Delta State Executive Governor, His Excellency Rt (Hon) Sheriff Oborevwori at the State Government House, Asaba.

CP Abaniwonda, who was recently posted as the 22nd Commissioner of Police Delta State, accompanied by members of the Command Management Team was warmly received by the State

Governor and members of the State Executive Council.

He applauded the Inspector General of Police Kayode Egbetokun, Ph.D., NPM, who has tasked him with the mandate of ensuring that Deltans, residents and non-residents sleep with their two eyes closed.

This was contained in a release by the Delta State Police Command Spokesperson DSP Bright Edafe made available to journalists on Tuesday.

In addition, CP Abaniwonda expressed gratitude to Governor Sheriff Oborevwori, members of the State executive council, and the entire people of Delta State for their cooperation and partnership in the fight against crime and criminality.

While reiterating that security is everybody's business, the CP assured the Executive Governor and Deltans that crime would be reduced to the

barest minimum during his administration, as he emphasized that officers and men of the Command would respect the rights of all citizens in the discharge of all assigned duties.

In his remark, the Governor welcomed the Commissioner of Police and his management team. He stated that the CP should keep to his promise of ensuring that all Deltans sleep with their two eyes closed, and not with fear of the unknown or being attacked.

The Governor stated that in line with his M.O.R.E agenda which clearly states that he will enhance peace and security, promised to partner with the CP and provide all the necessary support the CP and his management team would need.

Oborevwori also commended the outgoing Commissioner of Police, now AIG Wale Abass for all he did for Deltans while serving in Delta State.

The Governor assured the

CP that Deltans will continue to cooperate with the Nigeria Police and other security agencies in the State for the state to have peace which will enhance development.

The Governor also stated that the State has inaugurated the Police trust fund and he promised to support and also encourage other stakeholders to partner with the State to support the trust fund.

On a final note, the Governor while affirming his awareness of the vehicular-related challenges plaguing the Command, promised that some vehicles would be provided to support the work of the Police in the State.

This, he said, is to demonstrate that his administration will continue to strengthen a partnership with the police to curb crime in the state and ensure absolute rural and urban safety.



Herbert Wigwe

Helicopter Crash: Oborevwori mourns Wigwe, Others, Says Deaths Shocking, Devastating

By; UTEBOR PETER, Asaba

Delta State Governor, Rt. Hon. Sheriff Oborevwori has expressed shock and sadness over the death of the Group Chief Executive Officer, CEO of Access Bank, Mr. Herbert Wigwe, his wife, Doreen and son, Chizi in a helicopter crash in the United States of America over the weekend.

In a statement by his Chief Press Secretary, Sir Festus A hon on Monday, Governor Oborevwori described the deaths as awful, heartbreaking, startling, and devastating. He also mourned the demise of the former Group Chairman of Nigerian Exchange Group Plc (NGX Group), Abimbola Ogunbanjo among others, who also lost their lives in the crash. Oborevwori remarked that Wigwe was a visionary leader and a thoroughbred professional who had a huge impact on the banking and business atmosphere, noting that the corporate world in Nigeria would miss him a great deal.

He commiserated with the deceased family, Access Holdings, friends and loved ones, and prayed God to grant them the fortitude to bear the irreparable losses.

Governor Oborevwori said: "I am deeply saddened by the unfortunate news of the death of Mr. Herbert Wigwe, the Group CEO of Access Bank, alongside his wife and son as well as Abimbola Ogunbanjo, a former Group Chairman of Nigerian Exchange Group, and others in a helicopter crash in the United States of America.

"Wigwe was a visionary leader who had a big influence on Nigeria's banking industry. His passing is undoubtedly a devastating loss for the finance sector.

"My sincere condolences to his family, colleagues at Access Holdings, friends, and loved ones in this difficult time. May God grant them the fortitude to bear this irreparable loss and may the souls of the departed find eternal rest in the bosom of our Lord".



Delta State Governor H.E. Oborevwori presenting souvenir to the Police Commissioner

Governor Inuwa Appoints Ibrahim Isa DG Gombe State Media Corporation

**Elevates Dr. Ishiyaku Babayo from SSA to Special Adviser on Development Partners Coordination*

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Governor Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya, CON, has approved the appointment of Ibrahim Isa of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) as the Director-General of the Gombe State Media Corporation (GMC).

This was made known in a statement signed by the Director-General (Press Affairs)

Government House Gombe, Ismaila Uba Misilli, issued on Monday February 12, 2024.

The Secretary to the State Government, Professor Ibrahim Abubakar Njodi, who conveyed the Governor's approval, said Ibrahim Isa's appointment, which takes immediate effect, was based on his outstanding personal qualities and extensive experience in the field.

Isa brings over two decades of journalism expertise to his new role, having excelled as a reporter, producer, newsreader, TV host and media manager. With his track record, Ibrahim Isa is expected to bring a fresh perspective and innovative ideas to the Gombe State Media Corporation to foster a dynamic and vibrant media environment.

Governor Inuwa Yahaya expressed confidence that Ibrahim Isa's leadership will contribute to GMC's growth and its

ability to serve the public better with accurate and timely information.

Also, Governor Inuwa Yahaya has approved, with immediate effect, the elevation of Dr. Ishiyaku Babayo Mohammed from the position of Senior Special Assistant (SSA) on Development Partners Coordination to Special Adviser on the same portfolio.

The decision, conveyed by the SSG, was grounded in Dr. Mohammed's outstanding achievements, exceptional commitment and effectiveness



demonstrated within the short period since he was first appointed SSA.

Governor Inuwa Yahaya expressed confidence that his elevation to the position of Special Adviser will further

enhance the state's partnership drive and bolster its efforts in attracting resources and support from various development entities to contribute to the overall progress and well-being of Gombe State.

APC-IGG Commends Tinubu Over Release Of Foodstuff To Nigerians



By: JABIRU A. HASSAN, Kano

The National President, APC Initiative For Good Governance (APC-IGG) Ambassador Musa Mohammed Tsoken has commended President Bola Ahmed Tinubu for intervening to ease the hardship affecting Nigerians. In a message he issued to newsmen in Abuja on Saturday, Ambassador Tsoken described President Tinubu as a leader with listening ears by giving marching order for the release of different food items to ease hardship to the people of Nigeria which is a good initiative.

"APC-IGG has recognised what Mr. President has done in

order to ease the hardship affecting the people on food price hike which is a very good foresight from our leader, we therefore thank all those who have a helping hands on the implementation of the process to release the food items from the federal government reserves across the country for their well-deserve thought". The statement added.

Ambassador Musa Mohammed Tsoken reassured the people of Nigeria that APC Initiative For Good Governance would continue to work selflessly in order to ensure that Nigeria is progressive under the present democratic dispensation without bias.

NDIC Building Depositors' Confidence In Nigeria Banking System, CIBN Tells Senators

By; JABIRU A. HASSAN, Kano

The President/Chairman of Council of the Chartered Institute of Bankers of Nigeria (CIBN), Ken Opara, has called on Nigerian leaders to acknowledge the notable contributions of Nigeria Deposit Insurance Corporation (NDIC) as a deposit insurer over the years, by promoting depositors' confidence in the Nigerian banking industry.

The CIBN boss recently gave this charge while delivering a goodwill message at a retreat, which was a joint initiative of the Senate Committee and the corporation.

He noted that, in furtherance to boost the confidence of bank customers, the board of NDIC is now empowered to vary upward the maximum amount which a depositor can receive from the corporation in the event of a failed insured institution, in line with prevailing economic realities.

According to him, the Introduction of public policy objectives is in line with International Association of Deposit Insurers (IADI) core principles.

Furthermore, Opara noted that the Nigeria Deposit Insurance Corporation (NDIC) has continued to uphold unwavering commitment to the highest ethical standards and compliance with anti-corruption laws and regulations, as it proudly secures the top position in the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other



Opara

Related Offences Commission (ICPC) 2023 Ethics and Integrity Compliance Scorecard (EICS).

He said this astonishing achievement marks the second time that NDIC has achieved the prestigious first place, previously having been ranked first in the 2021 EICS. In his word:

The NDIC was also a recipient of the "Platinum Level Award for Outstanding Performance in Corporate Governance and Service Delivery" by the Bureau of Public Service Reform on September 7, 2022.

Such remarkable accomplishments, he said, underscore NDIC's steadfast dedication to upholding integrity, transparency, and accountability in all facets

of its operations.

As part of efforts to bridge the knowledge gap, build capacity and create more awareness about deposit insurance scheme, it worthy to note that NDIC and CIBN have forged a collaboration to jointly develop and run a Deposit Insurance Scheme Certification Programme.

The CIBN boss used opportunity to announced the certification programme, which is targeted at industry practitioners, the Academia (lecturers and students) as well as the general public.

It would be noted that this will be debuting in October this year, imploring all practitioners and all stakeholders to embrace this program in view of the inherent benefits.

Opara however, congratulated the Senate Committee on Banking, Insurance and Other Financial Institutions ably led by Distinguished Senator Adetokunbo Abiru, FCA, FCIB, for putting together this retreat, to deepen the understanding of the principles and practice of deposit insurance so as to facilitate the effective discharge of legislative oversight over the deposit insurance function in Nigeria.

He stated that the proactive steps taken by this Committee to comprehensively review the extant laws within the financial services sector, aimed at fostering economic sustainability and growth, are indeed commendable.

He finally advocated for NDIC to continue to engage robust mechanisms to monitor the financial health and stability of insured financial institutions.

Regular examinations, stress testing, risk assessments and preventive steps that can help identify potential vulnerabilities and prevent banks from going down.

Reassuring the distinguished Senators and the management of NDIC of the resolve of the Institute to continue to work closely with all stakeholders in the industry not only to ensure the continued success of the deposit insurance scheme in Nigeria but also to continue to guarantee the safety and stability of the Nigerian banking sector.

Reps Member Presents Fresh Bill For Three New States Creation In South West

*Seeks Oke-Ogun, Ijebu and Ife-Ijesa states

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

The Chairman, House of Representatives

Committee on Judiciary and the lawmaker representing Obokun/Oriade Federal Constituency, Osun State, Hon Oluwole Oke has proposed a law seeking the creation of Oke-Ogun, Ijebu and Ife-Ijesa states. Hon Oke is proposing creation of the the new states in a letter dated February 6, 2024, and addressed to the Clerk of the House, titled, "A Bill for an Act to amend the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (as amended)".

In the letter, Hon Oke stressed, "I wish to forward the above mentioned bill to your office for further necessary legislative action to enable me to move same in our great Green Chamber, sir."

The legislation is seeking an amendment to the First Schedule, Part I of the Constitution to read, "The First Schedule, Part I of the Constitution is amended by introducing new states and reducing the number of local government areas."

According to the draft bill, Oke-Ogun State with Iseyin as the proposed capital city would be made up of 12 local government areas, including Olorunsogo, Irepo, Oorelope, Ogbomosho

North, Ogbomosho South, Saki-East, Saki-West, Atisbo, Itesiwaju, Iwajowa, Kajola and Iseyin.

In the draft bill, Oke-Ogun State with Iseyin as the proposed capital city would be made up of 12 local government areas, including Olorunsogo, Irepo, Oorelope, Ogbomosho North, Ogbomosho South, Saki-East, Saki-West, Atisbo, Itesiwaju, Iwajowa, Kajola and Iseyin.

Ijebu State would comprise of Ijebu East, Ijebu North-East, Ijebu Ode, Ikenne, Odogbolu, Ogun Waterside, Remo North and Sagamu LGAs with the proposed capital as Ijebu Ode while Ife Ijesa State is to be made of 11 LGAs made up of Atakunmosa East, Atakunmosa West, Boluwaduro, Ife Central, Ife East, Ife North, Ife South, Ilesa East, Ilesa West, Oboku and Oriade.

New Nigerian recalls that Section 9 (1) of the Constitution states that the National Assembly can only pass an Act to amend the Constitution when its proposal is supported by two-thirds majority of all the members of each chamber (72 senators and 240 House of Representatives members) and approved by the resolution of at least two-thirds of the state Houses of Assembly (24 states).

Only 4% Of Nation's Forest Covered - DG NCF

By; AMOSTAUNA, Kaduna

The Director-General of the Nigerian Conservation Foundation, (NCF), Foundation, Dr Joseph Onoja, has said that only four per cent of the nation's forest is covered.

The Director General spoke in Calabar on Saturday, during a sensitisation programme on the adverse effect of unsustainable forest activities in Cross River on the theme: "The Crisis of Forest

Loss and Threats to Rural Economy in Cross River."

Onoja, who was represented by Alhaji Mohammed Boye, Coordinator of the Northern Zone in NCF, explained that it has become expedient to sensitise forest holding communities in Cross River on sustainable ways of interacting with the forest to prevent deforestation.

The Director General said that in 2024, the foundation plans to

train farmers on sustainable farming, a kind of farming that will not impact the environment negatively.

He said, "The way people are harvesting resources in our forests including trees is something that we need to sit down, strategise and find a way for these activities to be done sustainably."

While he recognised that the forest is a source of livelihood for many, he said that they must also

understand that it plays a very significant role in protecting the world against climate change.

He lamented that a lot of resources had been invested by NCF and its partners in the fight to save the forests, saying that the situation had not changed much, asq NCF was still determined to educate and change the orientation of people.

The Chairman of Cross River Forestry Commission, Dr

George Oben-Etchi, stated that the present administration in Cross River was highly committed to afforestation.

He explained that the last time trees were consciously planted in the state as a government policy to revive the forests was in 2003 adding that in collaboration with some Non Governmental Organisations, (NGOs), the state planned to plant five million trees annually.

CUPP Writes Senate, Frowns At Hijacking Of LGAs By Governors

***Seeks constitutional amendment granting full financial, electoral autonomy to LG system**

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The Coalition of United Political Party (CUPP) has written an open letter to the Senate over concerns about the status and happenings within the local government system in Nigeria.

According to the letter signed by the Secretary General CUPP, High Chief Peter Ameh, made available to our correspondent yesterday, State governors were accused of hijacking local government councils in the country.

"We believe that it has been hijacked by the Nigerian Governors and we will want to state emphatically that we totally support any collaborative efforts in the direction of working with National Assembly (10th Assembly) to carry out constitutional amendment that will lead to the granting of full financial and Electoral autonomy to the Local Government System and Administration in Nigeria, because we can say this without mincing words, the presumed failure or the inability of the Local council's effort to drive and bring about development in Nigeria to a glaring point that could have positive impact on the lives of ordinary Nigerians can easily be attributed to the total lack of Local government Elections in Nigeria because without corresponding efforts at the Local Government level, all will amount to little or no impact in the lives of rural Nigeria people," the letter said.

It explained that these governors have continued to act with reckless impunity against elected local government chairmen. "I wonder how these governors will feel if they get suspended illegally by the federal government? The current law as regards the administration of our local government system no longer serves the interest of the Nigerian people and must be urgently reviewed to save and promote effective local council system as expected in every democratic presidential system. One of the major functions of duly elected councilors is to make bye laws for the good governance and development of all local government areas across Nigeria but as we write this letter, that assigned function has been greatly eroded by the excessive interference and impunity of our Governors.

"CUPP must say without mincing words that the state Independent electoral Commission is the greatest democratic fraud foisted on our electoral democracy and that is the major reason we feel it is important that the conduct of Local Government elections becomes the responsibilities of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), because from the attitude of State Governors and conduct of state elections by all States Independent Electoral Commission (SIEC's) it is impossible to get a free, fair and credible election under the current arrangement.

"The current system encourages massive rigging because SIEC's are under the wings and caprices of the State Government which belongs to the Political Party in power across Nigeria. As we have seen over the years, Parties that control the state will

stop at nothing to tailor the results in their favour.

"You will also discover that all Local Government election conducted in States are won by the Party in power in each respective states under review with 100% return rate; the opposition Party in the state is always left with nothing.

"If Local authorities becomes autonomous and the tenure elected officials are guaranteed, it will be easy for the people to hold them accountable and this will in turn bring development closer to the people and thus encourage the growth and development of local communities which by extension lead to a robust robust and prosperous democracy.

"What is going on at the Local Government level in Nigeria is a mockery of democracy because there is urgent need for all stakeholders to work together purposefully to establish the needed environment for good governance to grow and save our people from bad leadership," the letter said.

Read the full letter below:
OPEN LETTER TO THE SENATE PRESIDENT AND SPEAKER OF THE FEDERAL HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA
NEXUS BETWEEN LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND THE FAILURE OF GOVERNANCE IN NIGERIA

We are concerned that section 197 (1) Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria provides that 'there shall be established for each state of the Federation the following bodies, namely State Independent Electoral Commission (SIEC), has not been allowed free hand to perform their constitutional functions as captured in Third Schedule, Part II, State Executive Bodies B(4) the state Independent Commission shall have power to Organize, undertake and supervise all elections to Local Government Councils within the State.

We are disturbed that the failure of State Independent Electoral Commissions to perform her functions has contravened section 7(1) of 1999 Constitution (as amended) which says "The system of Local Government by democratically elected Local Government Councils is under this constitution guaranteed" has led to State Government appointing Caretaker/Interim Management Committees Members in the 768 Local Government Councils since May, 2002 to date.

We further worried that several Supreme Court judgments voiding the powers of State Governments to dissolve democratically elected Local Government Councils (Chairman and Councilors) – ABIA STATE GOVERNMENT vs 17 LGAs of ABIA STATE (2017) and EKITI STATE GOVERNMENT vs 16 LGAs OF EKITI STATE (2019), have been observed in breach thereby threatening the continued survival of our democratic exercise now in its 25 years anniversary.

We are also concerned that not minding the Supreme Court judgment in A.G. Federation vs A.G ABIA STATE & 350RS

(2002), which held that Federal Capital Territory (FCT) is not a State in Section 3(1), nor the Six (6) Area Councils of FCT are not Local Government areas in a state as in Section 3(6) of 1999 Constitution (as amended), still yet the state Governors till date have vehemently refused to obey the judgement of the Supreme Court which is the highest court of the land and has continue to treat it with disdain, from the SERAP request to all state governors and the FCT, we can all clearly see how state governors have mismanaged and converted funds meant for the development of the Local Government Areas in Nigeria amounting to over 40 trillion Naira since 1999.

The Coalition of United Political Party (CUPP) is concerned about the status and happenings within the Local Government System in Nigeria, we believe that it has been hijacked by the Nigerian Governors and we will want to state emphatically that we totally support any collaborative efforts in the direction of working with National assembly (10th Assembly) to carry out constitutional amendment that will lead to the granting of full financial and Electoral autonomy to the Local Government System and Administration in Nigeria, because we can say this without mincing words, the presumed failure or the inability of the Local council's effort to drive and bring about development in Nigeria to a glaring point that could have positive impact on the lives of ordinary Nigerians can easily be attributed to the total lack of Local government Elections in Nigeria because without corresponding efforts at the Local Government level, all will amount to little or no impact in the lives of rural Nigeria people.

These Governors have continued to act with reckless impunity against elected Local Government Chairmen, I wonder how these governors will feel if they get suspended illegally by the federal government? The current law as regards the administration of our Local Government System no longer serves the interest of the Nigerian people and must be urgently reviewed to save and promote effective Local Council System as expected in every democratic presidential system. One of the major functions of duly elected councilors is to make bye laws for the good governance and development of all Local Government areas across Nigeria but as we write this letter, that assigned function has been greatly eroded by the excessive interference and impunity of our Governors.

CUPP must say without mincing words that the state Independent electoral Commission is the greatest democratic fraud foisted on our electoral democracy and that is the major reason we feel it is important that the conduct of Local Government elections becomes the responsibilities of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), because from the attitude of State Governors and conduct of state elections by all States Independent Electoral Commission (SIEC's) it is impossible to get a free, fair and credible

election under the current arrangement. The current system encourages massive rigging because SIEC's are under the wings and caprices of the State Government which belongs to the Political Party in power across Nigeria. As we have seen over the years, Parties that control the state will stop at nothing to tailor the results in their favour. You will also discover that all Local Government election conducted in States are won by the Party in power in each respective states under review with 100% return rate; the opposition Party in the state is always left with nothing. If Local authorities becomes autonomous and the tenure elected officials are guaranteed, it will be easy for the people to hold them accountable and this will in turn bring development closer to the people and thus encourage the growth and development of local communities which by extension lead to a robust robust and prosperous democracy.

What is going on at the Local Government level in Nigeria is a mockery of democracy because there is urgent need for all stakeholders to work together purposefully to establish the needed environment for good governance to grow and save our people from bad leadership.

The State Independent Electoral Commission (SIEC's) is the greatest electoral abracadabra (the more you see, the less you understand) imposed on our electoral democracy and if by your commitment to rescue our people from this electoral rascality any governor feels aggrieved or seems to be more interested in Funds meant for the local government councils, let him resign and contest as LOCAL government Chairman and he or she should be assured of our support.

The bottom-line of our request is a call for National Electoral Reform conference.

Recommendations:

STATES INDEPENDENT ELECTORAL COMMISSION

Section 7 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended) relating to the place of Local Governments as the third tier of government should be amended to specifically guarantee the existence, establishment, structure, composition, finance, functions and tenure of Local Governments under the Constitution.

Section 153, 197 and The third Schedule to the Constitution should be amended to provide for the following re- designation and re-ordering of States Independent Electoral Commission:

JOINT STATE/LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACCOUNT

Section 162(5)-(7) of the Constitution should be amended to abolish the Joint State/Local Government Account.

Section 162(5)-(7) of the Constitution should be further amended to provide that any amount standing to the credit of the Local Government Councils in the Federation Account should be paid directly to the various Local Governments.

High Chief Peter Ameh

Secretary General

Coalition of United Political Party (CUPP)

Pilgrimage To Jordan More Intellectually Enriching, Spiritually Fulfilling For Christians - Prophet Olabode

**Set to Lead UfitFly's Pilgrims To Jordan*

By; BAYO AKAMO
Ibadan

The General Overseer of Angel of Christ Church, Prophet Samuel Samiye Olabode has disclosed that it is more intellectually enriching and spiritually fulfilling for Christians to perform pilgrimage to the Kingdom of Jordan.

Prophet Olabode who made this known at the weekend while featuring on a talk show, said this is because it covers both the Old and New biblical Testaments.

According to Prophet Olabode, "Jordan is a distinct destination for cultural and religious enrichment with many holy places spread across Jordan"

"I as a Prophet visited Jordan and it is clear I saw the hand of God, and Holy Ghost power flowed over me. If you are spiritually inclined, you will

experience God's touch in all the places we went to. I experienced victory that has surpassed my knowledge and understanding", he said.

Prophet Olabode added, "Hence, I want to implore all Christians that could afford pilgrimage to register with UfitFly for our next trip scheduled for 3rd to 10th of July 2024 where we are going to have revivals at important strategic points, especially the point where Prophet Elijah was taken up by chariot of fire which is in 1 king 2 verses 1-18.

"We shall also offer prayers at Mount Nebo where Moses stood to view the Promised Land. (Deut 32 vs 48-52), place where Moses raised his staff to save the children of Israel from snake bite (Num 21vs9), Gadara where Jesus commanded the unclean spirits out of the two mad men to enter



Prophet Olabode

swine, River Jordan, the original place of Jesus baptismal site and the place where John was ordered to be beheaded". He stressed further, "Pilgrimage to Israel is a new testament Pilgrimage exercise, while Pilgrimage to Kingdom of Jordan

covers both old and new testament Pilgrimage and for a Christian to fully perform holy Christian Pilgrimage exercise, such Christian must visit Jordan on holy Pilgrimage exercise".

UNN Prof Proffers Solution To Medical Tourism, Brain Drain

By; KELVIN OKPARA,
Enugu

A neurosurgeon at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka (UNN), Prof. Enoch Ogbonnaya Uche, has declared that medical tourism brain drain can stop in Nigeria if government begins to equip the hospitals with the necessary medical equipment to enhance the performance of medical doctors and other healthcare workers.

He also suggested that a durable welfare scheme for medical personnel should be in place to quench the appetite of medical personnel traveling overseas for greener pasture.

Presenting the 198th inaugural lecture of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka at the Enugu-campus of the university at the weekend, titled - brain surgery in the global age, navigating the barriers of care to habituate survival in the final frontiers, footmarks of a neurosurgeon, the erudite scholar said that the competence of Nigerian doctors globally was not in doubt, stressing that their challenge in Nigeria had been lack of equipment to perform their duty and almost zero motivation.

Prof. Enoch Uche however, commended the management of the University of Nigeria Teaching hospital, UNTH Enugu for putting in place the State-of-the-art equipment in the neurosurgery theatre, which had made surgery at the hospital a routine.

The university Don, revealed that recently a patient who had concluded arrangement to travel abroad for a neurosurgery case had to cancel his plans to come to the UNTH on hearing the wonders performed by neurosurgeons there.

The Abia State born surgeon advised Nigerians who have had headache for about a month to seek medical attention because prolonged headache is one

of the symptoms of brain tumor. Prof. Uche re-emphasized the need for the spread of the national health insurance scheme to enable more Nigerians have access to healthcare.

He praised the role of such great neurosurgeons as Prof. E. Latunde Odeku who pioneered the foundation of neurosurgery in Nigeria and Africa at the University College hospital Ibadan in 1962.

He was closely joined by Prof. Adelola Adeyemi in 1967 and in 1968 a second neurosurgery unit was established at the Lagos University Teaching Hospital by Dr. Da Silva and Dr. Nosiru Ojikutu as well as that of the University of Nigeria Teaching Hospital, UNTH, Enugu, established in 1974 by Prof. Sam Ohaegbulam. Prof. Enoch Uche joined UNN in 2009 as lecturer I and rose rapidly to the highest academic status of professor in 2019.

Earlier, in his speech, Vice chancellor of the University of Nigeria, Prof. Charles Igwe, represented by DVC academic, Prof. Johnson Urama, re-affirmed the commitment of the institution to invest in research and described the inaugural lecture series founded in 1976, as a harvest of intellectual prowess, adding that the lecture had stimulated research among the academic staff of the University.

The lecture was attended by the cream of the academia from within and outside the country including the Governor of Abia State, Chief Alex Oti, who was represented by two members of the Executive council, former Vice Chancellor, UNN, Prof. Chukwuma Ozumba, famous politician, Chief Chekwes Okorie, former Chief medical director Modibbo Adamu University, Yola, Prof. Auwal Abubakar as well as the 199 inaugural lecturer, Prof. Emmanuel Uduji.

NGF Chair Mourns Access-Holdings' Chief Herbert Wigwe,

Ogunbanjo

By; BILIQIS
ONAOLOPO
OLAJUMOKE,
Ilorin

Kwara State Governor/Chairman of the Nigeria Governors' Forum, AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq joins the rest of the country to mourn the tragic death of top banker Mr. Herbert Wigwe and some members of his family in an air crash in the United States.

The Governor similarly sends his heartfelt condolences to the family of Mr. Abimbola

Ogunbanjo, former Group Chairman of the Nigerian Exchange Group Plc, who died in the same crash.

Governor AbdulRazaq said the incident was a huge loss to not just the Nigerian business community but to the entire country and its people who would miss the immense impacts of the two businessmen.

The Governor asks God Almighty to repose their souls and give comfort to their families and to the rest of the country at this difficult moment.



IMF Anticipates Challenging Period In 2024 To 2025 For Nigeria

By; AMOS TAUNA, Kaduna

The International Monetary Fund (IMF), has anticipated a challenging period through 2024 to 2025 for Nigeria's financial account.

The IMF exacerbation is based on an absence of new Euro bond issuances, significant repayments of existing funds and Eurobonds totalling \$3.5 billion, and continued portfolio outflows.

According to the IMF, Nigeria is currently facing significant challenges with foreign exchange illiquidity, impacting the country's ability to clear its forex backlog and further depreciating the country's currency's value.

The international financial institution's projections stated that as of February 8, 2024, data from the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) put the country's foreign reserves at \$33.12 billion, indicating a

substantial drop is on the horizon.

According to IMF, the first half of 2023 witnessed a surplus in the current account, yet there was a notable decline in reserves, saying that the downturn has been attributed to a decrease in hydrocarbon exports, largely due to rampant theft and a lack of investment in essential upstream infrastructure.

Additionally, it further explained that the profit repatriation from the oil sector has seen a downturn, albeit slightly offsetting the adverse effects on the current account, reiterating that the Nigeria's financial account likely to deteriorate 2024-25.

Despite projecting a current account surplus, the IMF said that the officially reported reserves are expected to diminish to \$24 billion in 2024, with a hopeful recovery to \$38 billion by 2028 as portfolio inflows are forecast to pick up once again.

Hardship: Rethink Nigeria's Romance With Bretton Woods Institutions, Sack Unproductive Appointees, CNPP Tells Tinubu

"It's on record that in Europe in 2019, €38.2 billion was spent on direct payments to farmers and €13.8 billion on rural development, with a further €2.4 billion supported the market for agricultural products. Has the IMF ever spoken about energy and agricultural subsidies in the USA and the European countries?"

"We therefore, urge President Bola Tinubu to focus on homegrown solutions to Nigeria's economic crisis and

jettison policy advisories from the IMF and other Bretton Woods Institutions.

"We equally call on Mr. President to sack all unproductive appointees and identify those who are engaging in economic sabotage, especially as regards revenue generation in the oil and gas sector, and relieve them of their duties to increase foreign exchange earnings", the CNPP counselled.

Kaduna LG Chair Rewards DPO With N1m For Rejecting Kidnapper's Bribe

By; ISRAEL BULUS, Kaduna

The Executive Chairman of Kagarko Local Government Area of Kaduna State, Hon. Nasara Rabo, has rewarded a Divisional Police Officer, Idris Ibrahim, with the sum of N1 million for rejecting an amount of money offered by a suspected kidnapper to help truncate his investigation.

Ibrahim serves as the DPO of Tafa in Kagarko Local Government Area of Kaduna State.

Rabo who stated this in a

letter of recommendation issued on Monday, disclosed that the DPO made an arrest of a kidnapper on January 22, 2024, who attempted to bribe him with huge amounts so that the investigation could be truncated or distorted the investigation process, but the police officer rejected the bribe and vow to allow the law to take its full course due to his patriotic principle and firm steadfast for justice.

"This singular effort you made has not only made the Nigeria Police Force proud but it had also made

the good people of Kagarko Local Government Area, the good people of Kaduna State, and Nigeria at large, adding this is a testimony that with the calibre of officers like you in service insecurity and other criminality that bedeviled our society today will become history.

"Under the foregoing, my Council and the management staff of Kagarko LGA hereby serve you with a formal letter of commendation and also present you with a token gift of one million naira as a morale booster

to make you put more patriotic effort in dealing with criminality in the LGA and the country at large," the chairman added.

Nasara urged all police personnel in the state to always uphold the ethics of the professional by refusing to be compromised in the discharge of their duties.

He further prayed to Almighty God to continue to encourage him to put in his best in the protection of the lives and properties of the good people of Nigeria



GPFN Commemorates World Interfaith Harmony Week In Kaduna

*Says conflict entrepreneurs frustrating peace building efforts in Nigeria

By; ISAAC ODEH, Kaduna

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

defend them, they will be patriotic.

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

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

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

Kaduna Govt Earmarks N1bn For Fertilizer Subsidy - Commissioner

***Deliberate agriculture intervention best option for Nigeria - ALGON Chair**

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The Kaduna State Government has planned to spend N1 billion out of the N22 billion budgetary provision for the agricultural sector to boost food production in 2024, Commissioner, Planning and Budget Commission (PBC), Muhktar Ahmed Monrovia has said. Monrovia who stated this while chairing the 18th and 1st Economic Planning Board meeting for the year 2024 at the commission's conference room in Kaduna on Monday, added that the fertiliser subsidy became necessary as a deliberate effort to develop the rural economy of the state. The statutory board meeting was captured in the PBC law as Economy Planning Board (EPB) comprises of all local government chairmen and some head of agencies of government such as Kaduna Agricultural Development Agency (KADA), Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Agency (RUWASSA), Primary Health Care Development Board, Kaduna State Universal Basic Education Board (KADSUBEB).

According to the commissioner, "we intend to raise money to finance this year's community development-oriented budget. We have already set a target of ambitious N120 billion internally generated revenue and we cannot raise such money without the collaboration and contribution of the local government chairmen.

"Again, it is important to note that in the year 2024 budget, we have voted N22 billion for agriculture to drive agricultural activities in the state. This is the biggest ever in the last seven years.

"Part of this amount is N1 billion fertiliser subsidy because the governor has seen the need to invest in farms in rural areas. So the modality on the utilisation of the N1 billion is going to be handled by the commissioner of agriculture and executive secretary of KADA to see the best way the real farmers can get this subsidy.

"For example, if the cost of the fertiliser is going to cost N30,000 per bag (50kg), the government may decide to subsidise it by 50 or 40 per cent depending on the modifications we are going to adopt.

"In all these, the citizens' participation is key. So, I want to encourage all of us in the state to support and collaborate with the government. We know the economic situation is frightening and the only way is to let us be patient and allow the government to continue its programmes.

"For the first time in a long time, we are having a governor whose interest is in the rural area. Let's continue to be patient and collaborate with the government while our farmers are up and doing to ensure we have food security in the state", he added.

On his part, the Chairman of Kudan Local Government Area who doubles as Chairman of Association of Local Governments of Nigeria (ALGON), Kaduna State Chapter, Shuaibu Bawa Jaja noted that the need for cooperation and collaboration of the state and local government for even development cannot be overemphasised.

"The current government under the leadership of able Governor Uba Sani is committed to develop rural areas due to the role of the local economy in the overall development of the state and Nigeria as a whole.

"Part of the support local government administration is providing is to follow his directive that 60 percent of our balance should be spent on capital projects which will accelerate development in terms of provision of rural infrastructure, electricity, motorise boreholes, drainages, box culverts, solar lights among others.

"The economic development in agriculture is important because agriculture is the biggest employer of labour. For example, 75 percent of the teeming population of Kaduna state are in the rural area where agriculture thrives well.

"So, the only option for the state and the country, for now, is to give topnotch priority to the agricultural value chain and that is where our contribution comes in handy because we are closer to the grassroots", he said.



1,500 Kaduna Civil Servants Sit For Promotion Exam

By ; AUSTINE EMMANUEL, Kaduna

Over one thousand five hundred, (1500) civil servants in Kaduna State on Monday, have sat for promotion exam for the next phase of their career. The 2023 Civil Service Computer Based Test Examination, was conducted by the Office of the Head of Service, Kaduna state in collaboration with BIDBEST Consult at the Kaduna State University, ICT center, main campus. Speaking with newsmen shortly after the exam, the Head of Service, Kaduna State, Hajiya Habiba Shekarau said the exercise cuts across the three zones of Kaduna state, aimed to facilitate the promotion of newly recruited workers in the state. She said that the examination is a mandatory exercise for the new workers, even as they stand to lose a lot of privileges when they are stagnated. Hajiya Habiba equally noted that the need to

promote workers cannot be over emphasized even as she reiterated that no worker would want to be stagnated in the office. "The examination is mandatory for all the newly recruited workers in the state, cutting across the three zones of Kaduna state. "It is aimed to facilitate their promotion because they stand to lose a lot in terms of privileges when they are stagnated. "This underscores the need for each and every worker in the state to present themselves for future opportunities through promotion. No worker would want to be stagnant in his or her career so we decided to come up with this, prioritizing their welfare. She also disclosed that they had put up adequate preparation to enhance their performance, Meanwhile those who are unable to pass the exams can still reposition themselves as they can always come back to rewrite it.



A'ibom New CP, Ayilara Assumes Duty, Spits Fire On Criminals

By; PATRICK TITUS, Uyo

The newly posted Commissioner of Police to Akwa Ibom State, CP Waheed Ayilara has stated that he would not compromise his primary goal of fostering a safe and secure environment for every resident, warning that no criminals would have freedom to perpetuate crime anywhere in the state.

CP Ayilara stated this on Monday, in his maiden address at the command's headquarters Ikot Akpan Abia on assumption of duty in the state.

He emphasized that the command under his watch would ensure visibility policing, periodic Intelligence led raids of blackspots/criminal hideouts, just as discreet and prompt investigation/prosecution of culprits would also be ensured.

"To the criminals and their collaborators in the State, I am using this medium to prevail on you all to pack your luggage and relocate from the State. It is not going to be business as usual. We shall take the battle to your hideouts and deny you freedom of action anywhere in the State.

"Visibility Policing,

Periodic Intelligence led raids of blackspots/criminal hideouts, Rejuvenation of the Commands' Tactical Operations Units, discreet and prompt investigation/prosecution of culprits." CP Ayilara declared.

He also announced other strategies the command will use to contain criminal activities in the state to include effective traffic control and management, establishment of a robust result oriented synergy with communal and other non-state actors and mobilization of the mass media as watchdog of the society.

The new Police Boss on the other hand, cautioned the officers and men of the command against unprofessional conduct but to always show professionalism in the discharge of their duties in the state in order to earn respect and integrity to the police command as well public trust.

"I promise that under my watch, I will be hard on deviants within the fold of the State Command who continually bring us into disrepute and pitch us against the citizens we are paid to serve and protect. Such elements are encouraged to embrace the



New Akwa Ibom CP

tenets of self-discipline in the common good or be ready to face the consequences. An undisciplined officer is a threat not only to the policing family but to the community and the State he serves. He declared collaboration and cooperation with the military and other law enforcement Agencies, stressing, "Our joint efforts will not only enhance the security landscape but also build resilient network capable of addressing the diverse challenges we may encounter."

To the citizens and

residents of the state, CP Ayilara declared, "I am here to assure you that my commitment to the security and safety of the people of Akwa Ibom State is unwavering. Together, we will build on the lessons learned and the successes achieved, fostering a policing approach that is both effective and community-driven. The challenges we may face will be met with resilience, innovation, and a shared dedication to upholding the ideals of justice and security

Katsina Commences TSA Implementation Tomorrow

By; SULAIMAN AHMED MISAU, Katsina

All necessary arrangements have been concluded for the commencement of the implementation of Single Treasury Account (TSA) in the Katsina State Civil Service, Chairman of the implementation Committee, Alhaji Isyaku Muhammed has said.

Alhaji Muhammed who is also the Executive Chairman of Katsina state Board of Internal Revenue

told Journalists in Katsina that, the implementation would start from February 15, 2024 after a test trial.

Consequently, he said all funds meant for the state would be paid directly channels into the TSA. stressing that, a leading

Bank in the country has been selected to take charge of the TSA host account.

Alhaji Isyaku Muhammed explained that, the Committee has been using the media to adequately sensitize members of the public on the advantages of the TSA.

According to him the Committee has equally visited Kano and Kaduna states to examine how they are operating the TSA and the problems encountered, so as to come up with the best TSA system in Katsina.

He reiterated that, the delay to implement TSA in Katsina last month was as a result of the careful procedure adopted to ensure salaries and other businesses of the governance are not tempered with.

Herbert Wigwe - Gone Too Soon

By NASIREL-RUFAI

I was devastated to learn early on Saturday, February 10th of the tragic death of Herbert Wigwe along with this wife, son and friends in a helicopter crash in the USA. I was sad, very sad and had to sedate to sleep yesternight.

Herbert's untimely death is a loss not only to his family and friends like us, but to Access Holdings, the financial services sector, the Nigerian economy, our nation and the Black Race at large.

Brilliant, visionary in thinking and focused at execution, of his strategies as CEO of Access, yet Herbert was humble, responsive, respectful and imbued with limitless generosity of spirit that one can easily mistake him as an officer in his management team.

My particular condolences to his brothers and mine from different mothers - Aig Imuokhede, HRH Sanusi Lamido Sanusi, Aliko Dangote, Kashim Ibrahim Imam, and Abubakar Suleiman,

plus countless others like Hadiza Ambursa of Access, and Khalifa Naziru Abdullahi of KK Kingdom - whose lives were touched positively by Herbert's life, affection, decisions and actions. Please take heart.

On behalf of the Kaduna State State Government which I had the privilege to lead between 2015 and 2023, I thank Herbert for spearheading and financing the design, construction, furnishing and equipping of a mega-basic education school at Fifth Chukker, Mararraban Jos for thousands of out-of-school children in Igabi Local Government to support the human capital development policies of our administration.

May God reward him immensely for this and his many other acts of altruistic and philanthropic goodness all over the world.

May the gentle souls of Herbert Wigwe, his wife Chizoba, son and others that died with him rest in perfect peace.

Herbert is gone too son, but Access Holdings, Wigwe University and his many known and unknown endeavors including being the main enabler for the financing of the Dangote Refinery and Petrochemicals complex remain indelible in our nation's history.

Rest in Peace, Herbert, till we all join you. From God we all came and to Him we shall all return. Every one of us has his time. Yours came too soon, but Almighty Allah Knows best. Adieu.

el-Rufai, immediate past governor of Kaduna State wrote this tribute on February 11, 2024



Herbert Wigwe

Uba Sani Bags ROSV 2023 Distinguished Inclusive Leadership Excellence Award

By: USMAN NASIDI, Kaduna

Considering his style of leadership and role well played in ensuring a positive outcome in respect to the development of the people and the nation, especially in the aspect of leadership inclusiveness of both youth and the old, Kaduna State Governor, Malam Uba Sani has received an award of being the most distinguished Inclusive Leadership Excellence Award for the Year 2023.

While presenting the award to his Excellency, Governor Uba Sani at the Sir Kashim Ibrahim House on Monday in Kaduna, the Chief Executive Officer, Riders Option Standard Vision (ROSV), Dr. Grema Kyari explained that, Gov Uba Sani has played a major role in ensuring all inclusiveness in terms of running the affairs of his administration.

Dr. Grema added that, the reason for the award presented was by virtue of him being inclusive in his administration by providing an opportunity for both the youth and old to participate in his Government because youth by virtue of their youthfulness, they can be active players in his Government, while youths are the future and the future is Artificial Intelligence.

According to him, the Riders Option Standard Vision is a nongovernmental organization that focus more on the Artificial Intelligence (AI) projects in the country especially in the Northern region to create an inclusive environment where youth, professionals, and decision-makers can connect and collaborate towards a common vision.

Dr. Grema said, "the just concluded 1st Northwest Conference at Katsina State on 7th and 8th February, 2024 marks the third installment in a series of regional conferences organized by the Rider Option Standard Vision with the previous conferences successfully held in Minna, Niger State and Maiduguri, Borno State in December 2023.

"The sole aim of the conference is to bring together all Northern Stakeholders, Regulators, Policy Makers, Fintech, Mobile Payment Systems, Governments, Innovators, Technology Solution Providers, Social Impact Enterprises, Banks, Telecommunications Firms, Researchers, Development Finance Institutions, Non-Governmental Organisations, Entrepreneurs, Start-ups, and Philanthropists etc, seeking to promote deep knowledge on Artificial

Intelligence.

"However, the event was a platform for knowledge sharing, networking, and the formation of an AI community, fostering collaboration and advancements in the field within the conflux of professionals, innovators, and experts to ensures a holistic and comprehensive dialogue on the future of AI in the region.

The Northern base NGO, in Collaboration with other Digital Transformation Partners is expected to bring in a new era of technological and economic transformation over the next two decades. Grema added that, Artificial intelligence is evolving at an unprecedented stage, sweeping through every corner of the world with a certain prediction of automating fifty percent of global jobs by 2030 and it is necessary for us to be part of the digital transformation strategies by re-skilling and up-skilling of our people particularly women and girls.

He said, "Our mission aligns closely with the goals and vision of your most generous and impactful charitable cause, and we are excited by the transformative work that you have undertaken over the years across the country and beyond."

While receiving the award on behalf of the

Kaduna State Governor, the Special Adviser on Information, Communication and Technology (ICT), Dr. Engr. Bashir Garba Ibrahim thanked the organization for re-awarding his Excellency Governor Uba Sani, because he has received so many awards in ICT, Empowerment with so many other things.

He said, "we're so happy to receive this award and we like already told you, this partnership is not going to end hence it's going to be continues, while Kaduna state is open to further partnership with you people not only in this part but also in all other parts that I mentioned to the CEO so that you will key in as you walk out to bring development to our state."

Engr. Bashir Garba Ibrahim, thanked all members of the organization, and the federal government for given them the opportunity to come and display their knowledge with people and even organising the conference.

"It's not an easy task to do such things most especially at this time of the day because you must have the willingness and the heart of trying to salvage this country to go to the dream land and we appreciate it." According to him



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ADVERT RATE

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

TERMS OF ADVERT PLACEMENT

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

TECHNICAL DATA

6 COLUMNS			
Depth	38.1 (CM)	Depth -	15 (Inches)
Width	25.4 (CM)	Width -	10 (Inches)

POLITICAL RATE

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

LOOSE INSERTS

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

CLASSIFIEDS

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

Special Position

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

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

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

Gbenga Olawepo-Hashim: His Politics And Nigeria's Future

By: ABDULLAH D. MOHAMED

The Nigerian political space is dominated by all manners of politicians jostling for power and the privileges that are associated with it. From progressives on the left to extremists on the right, from genuine democrats to opportunists, from charlatans to ethnic bigots and from conservatives to the liberals. The political scene has been dynamic.

Over time, Nigeria's politics has been reduced to a crude struggle for power rather than the articulation of developmental agenda based on ideology and practical programmes for the development of the nation.

Ethnic jingoism, religious bigotry, rotation, primordial sentiments and other anti democratic considerations have come to be the defining factors of Nigerian politics. Under such a dispensation, only very few have resisted the temptation to cast aside the burden of politics of liberation to join the fray so as to "make hay while the sun shines."

One person of note who has weathered the storm and has continued to navigate the stormy political waters, is undoubtedly, Mr Gbenga Olawepo-Hashim, an astute politician whose aspiration is guided by the desire to serve rather than any personal consideration, haven built a successful business empire over the past decades.

He was the Gubernatorial candidate in Kwara State on the platform of the defunct Democratic People's Party (DPP), the Party I had the opportunity of serving as its longest serving National Secretary. In 2019, Olawepo-Hashim was the Presidential candidate of the Peoples Trust (PT) and he was a Presidential aspirant on the Platform of the ruling All Progressive Congress (APC) on 2023.

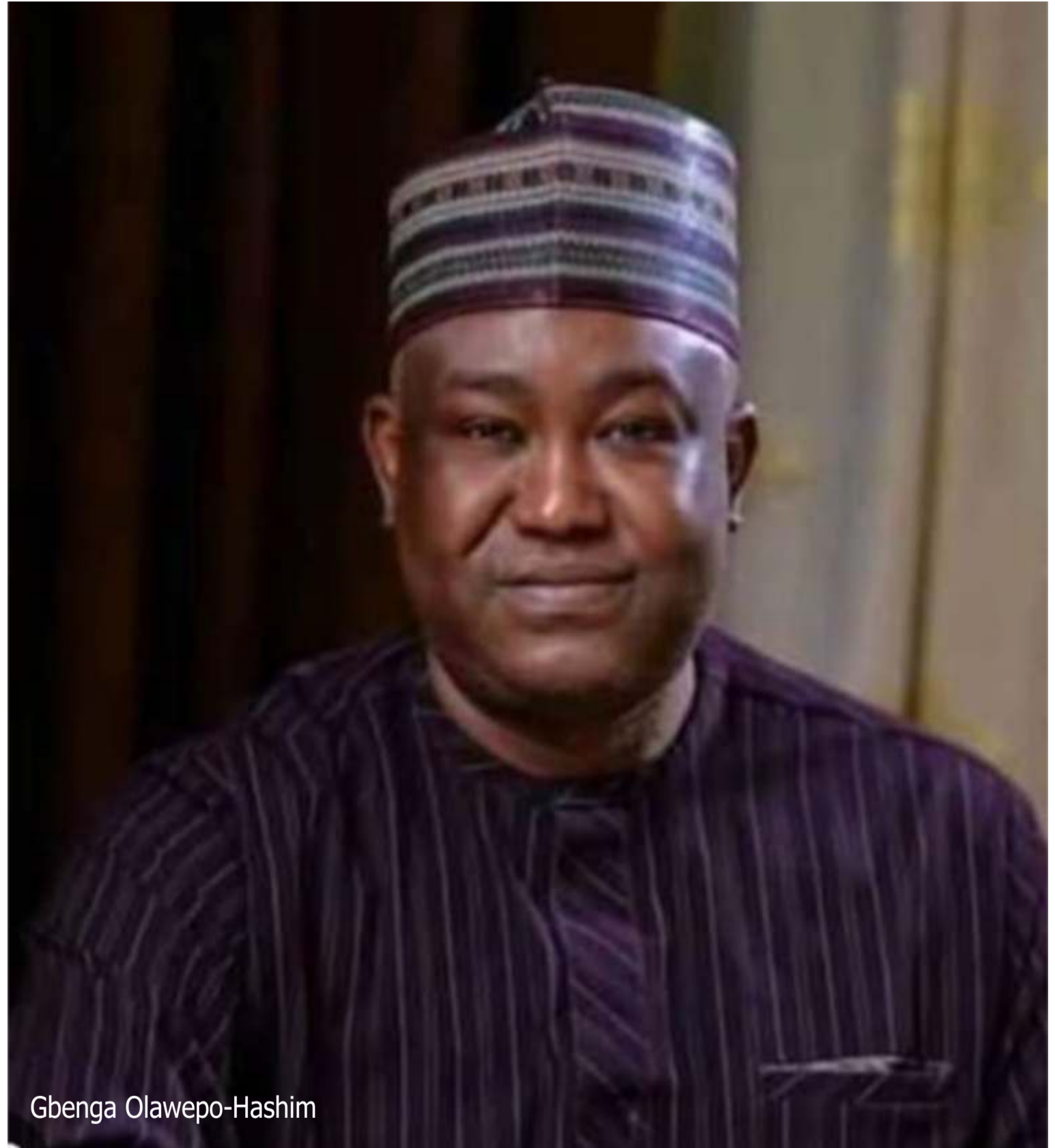
Hashim decided to withdraw his aspiration before the APC convention and together with other chieftains of the party, supported the successful completion of the exercise.

Some may think Nigeria is nothing but a geographical expression and have forgotten the history of state formation and peculiarities of history itself. Olawepo-Hashim is a personal, human and physical reflection of the historical processes of a nation building.

Born by a Yoruba mother to a Hausa father of royal background, married to a wife from the South-South region, it can only be concluded that his background which is bonded by blood ties to the nation, makes him an ideal candidate sooner or later for the Presidency.

Olawepo-Hashim's political career can be traced back to his days as a Progressive Student Union activist when students were part and parcel of the struggle for enthronement of democracy and their voice was reckoned with.

He was a student union leader in Lagos and made huge sacrifices to the student movement, not only in Africa, but the



Gbenga Olawepo-Hashim

world at large.

During his days as a student unionist, he and his team never allowed issues of national consideration to be pushed to the background in favour patronage.

When therefore, he decided to throw his hat in the political arena, he was focused on what his mission was: 'Service to the People.' Neither threat to his personal interest nor the fear for the loss of patronage made him deviate from this noble principle.

He has been in the forefront of the Progressive Politics of the Middle Belt just as he has been associated with the Progressive and radical left, whose constituency is rooted in the labour unions and the academia.

So also is he at home with Democrats of all persuasions. Throughout, Olawepo-

Hashim's political career to date, he has never been associated with either the opportunism in which principles are thrown overboard for the sake of patronage, nor is he mentioned publicly or privately as having compromised his principles for personal interests.

Such is the stuff Gbenga Olawepo-Hashim is made of. A lifetime devotion and dedication to public course. Many were those who embodied as well as embraced the very principles guiding Olawepo's political career, but lack his discipline and consistency and had compromised to become referral points of those whose leadership ambitions were a pretence to their opportunism which were exposed by time, justifying the saying that, "with time, each dyed material will revert to its true colours."

Olawepo-Hashim's principles are not dyed, but rather based on an inner conviction in the belief that the ultimate aim in life is to positively impact on society through whatever means one can. With a history of progressive politics, a tolerance of divergent views, a commitment to public service, a life untainted by controversy and a personal background biologically and socially reflecting the national diversity, Gbenga Olawepo-Hashim represents a future in which neither North nor South, East or West, Hausa or Yoruba nor Igbo would matter but Nigeria.

He is one person, Nigerians would afford not to miss on the seat of power.

Abdullah D. Mohamed, a Former Nat Sec (DPP), is the CEO Salasadiscourse Pol. Consult Abuja, Olawepo-Hashim

Kaduna State 2023 Full-Year Budget Report: 61% Performance, A Cause For Concern

By: YUSUF ISHAKU GOJE

Addressing development challenges largely depends on the quality of planning, realistic budget performance and value for money in service delivery.

The Kaduna State full-year 2023 budget performance report recently released by the Planning & Budget Commission showed that out of the final total budget of N376.3 billion, there was actual release of N230.3 billion. This is a 61.2% performance, with a huge balance of N145.9 billion.

The question begging for an answer is, if we cannot achieve at least 85% performance in 2023, what are we going to do differently to achieve satisfactory performance in 2024, with a higher budget of N458.2 billion? The 2023 performance has again validated the 2022 Auditor-General's report, which opined that our revenue estimates are exaggerated and bogus.

This is a cause of concern, considering that the state government in 2024, has increased the targets of some of the non-performing revenue generating MDAs.

The report further shows that recurrent expenditure had 66.7% performance, while capital expenditure had a performance of 57.5%. On the revenue side, government share of FAAC had an impressive 114.3% performance, while the independent revenue of the government had a performance of 69.9%, with a balance of N26.8 billion. Other receipts performed far below expectation, with aid and grants as well as capital development funds (CDF) having a 28.2% and 48.1% performance respectively.

These unimpressive performances were evident especially in key sub-sectors with allocations above N10 billion. Note the public financial management prescribed benchmark for the first, second, third and fourth quarters are 25%, 50%, 75% and 100% performance respectively. Using this bench, the acceptable full-year performance should not be below 85%. A look at some of these key sub-sectors show that the Ministry of Education had 55.0%, Ministry of Health had 58.8%, Ministry of Public Works & Infrastructure had 56.2%, Ministry of Internal Security & Home Affairs had 66.4%, State Assembly had 39.6%, Ministry of Finance had 74.0%, Ministry of Housing & Urban Development had 68.0%, and Metropolitan Authorities had 77.7%. Above you will observe that despite the State government meeting of the benchmark allocations for education



Gov Uba Sani

and health, the performance leaves much to be desired.

A few other MDAs with budget allocations below N10 billion include: Ministry of Human Services & Social Development had 7.1%, Ministry of Agriculture had 71.1% of the meager budget allocation of N1.8 billion, Ministry of Environment & Natural Resources had 40.4%, and Ministry of Sports Development had 26.7%. What is more worrisome is not the budget releases but if there was actual cash-backing as well as whether it was adequate, gotten timely and efficiently utilized by the MDAs.

In view of this, another question

begging for an answer is, how realistic is the 2024 approved budget? For instance, Independent Revenue, which had a 69.9% performance of its N89.2 billion target in 2023, has now been given a target of N120.0 billion in the 2024 budget - an increase of 35.19%. Similarly, the Capital Development Fund (CDF) receipt was raised from 93.8 billion, with a 48.1% performance in 2023, to N151.5 billion in the 2024 approved budget - an increase of 61.23%. Disturbingly, in 2023, about 41 MDAs had less than 50% performance, out of which 23 had a performance of less than 10%.

Evidently, Governor Uba Sani has

impressively hit the ground running in implementing the 2024 approved budget with groundbreaking activities. However, budget implementation is not a sprint race but a marathon. Sustaining the current momentum will be dependent on high revenue performance and quality of utilized releases to strategic priorities down the line. More so, that the State has the burden of debt service to the tune of about N25.4 billion. We look forward to improved budget performance in 2024.

Goje is an active citizen, civil society actor and OGP enthusiast.

A Walk Amongst Writers And Odia, A Living Legend

By Owei Lakemfa

I DROVE to Mamman Vatsa Writers Village, Mpape, Abuja. It is a huge sprawling estate of multiple storey buildings, many under construction. It is easy to get lost in this maze that is the home of the Association of Nigerian Authors (ANA). Somebody from the hilly top pointed at a building in what may well be a valley.

Outside the huge theatre, I found nobody. I was confident there were people inside. But it was like a void. Finally, I found somebody who confirmed a reading by Odia Ofeimum was scheduled for the theatre. But that was still some three hours away. I knew that, but I was also aware a pre-reading session was going on. The task was to locate it.

Odia revealed that one of the greatest challenges he had to confront in life was the prediction that he would be of no use. His mother had believed this childhood prophesy. When he dropped out of school, it seemed to fall in line with this prediction. But he saw this as a challenge and moved to Benin City where his writings got him a job. However, he lost the job following a workers strike from which he refused to back out.

I finally did in the Femi Osofisan National Secretariat of ANA. In the packed hall was the most diverse array of writers I have ever seen in terms of demographic composition. There were nursery and primary school children with an average age of nine; youths, mainly from the University of Abuja and of course; Odia, 73, the Lagos-based political scientist, essayist, poet and writer who has gifted humanity over 43 books.

There was the lively banter whether the man, known nationally from the 1970s simply as Odia Ofeimum, with no titles whatsoever, is a 'living legend' as some called him, or a 'living ancestor' as others prefer to call him.

In a sense, he is an ancestor of ANA. When the writers association was to be registered, it was Odia, as General Secretary, who placed the public notice in the Thursday, October 24, 1985 edition of the Daily Times Newspapers. The advertised Trustees of the writers association were Professor Chinua Achebe, one of the most famous novelists in the universe. He was President. The second Trustee, Professor Wole Soyinka, under who I studied Drama in Ife, of course, needs no introduction. The third Trustee, was Major General Mamman Vatsa who secured the writers village for all writers in the country. Vatsa's story is

the stuff of tragic drama.

He was a well-known writer in a military with an anti-intellectual tradition.

On March 5, 1986, his colleagues in uniform, led by General Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida, his childhood friend, and best-man, tied Vatsa, 46, to the stake, and sent him out of the world in a hail of bullets. His crime was for allegedly harbouring thoughts to overthrow the military regime. To add to the drama, his death was announced on network television, over one hour before he was executed.

This January 27, 2024 pre-reading session was by the Mbari Club, a body funded by intellectual power house, Professor Udenta O. Udenta. When he turned 60 in 2023, Udenta off-loaded 23 books on the public.

ANA President, Dr Usman Oladipo Akanbi, who presided, fashioned out a consensus in the house which was that Odia should be referred to as a 'Living Legend' not ancestor. B. M. Dzukogi, former ANA National Secretary, with at least ten books under his belt, who sat next to me, nodded enthusiastically in agreement.

This visit to the writers' village was for me, a pilgrimage. I met mentors like Professor Nuhu Yaqub, former Vice Chancellor, Universities of Abuja and Sokoto State; veteran journalist, Tunji Ladner Jr; and retired Commissioner of Police and arts promoter, Emmanuel Ojukwu. I also got acquainted with the poet with the rhythmic name, Kabura Zakama, a veterinary doctor whose collection of poems, *The Man Lived*, won the 1999 ANA Poetry Prize.

We then moved to the main theatre for the 'Odia Reading' and literary festival which included performances by various artistes and prizes, especially for high school children who livened up the audience.

He read poem after poem and just as he seemed like an aircraft about to take off, he was reminded that the time was flying and he still had a panel discussion amongst other programmes.

I particularly loved the poem: 'Yes, Na Book We Go Chop!' dedicated to Professor Chima Anyadike. He belted out the lyrics: "Believe it, brotherman, that their death-deal brooks no space for the alphabet to dance, and no yes for the big



drums to echo our long forbearance...you belted indifference, stung by the cynics belching swearwords demanding: Na book we go chop? Damn them! We have seen our world remade by your love of books."

Odia revealed that one of the greatest challenges he had to confront in life was the prediction that he would be of no use. His mother had believed this childhood prophesy. When he dropped out of school, it seemed to fall in line with this prediction. But he saw this as a challenge and moved to Benin City where his writings got him a job. However, he lost the job following a workers strike from which he refused to back out.

He made his way to Lagos, becoming a labourer, including a petrol attendant and factory worker. In all these, he focused on self-education. He passed the Ordinary and Advanced Level school certificate, and gained admission into the University of Ibadan where he read Political Science. He worked in the Federal Civil Service, as a teacher, and then, as the Private Secretary of Chief Obafemi Awolowo, perhaps Nigeria's most programmatic political leader. Awolowo was known to pick only persons with photographic brains as his Private Secretary.

Odia left the prestigious Guardian Newspapers Editorial Board on a Commonwealth fellowship to Oxford University. He seemed settled in Britain. But I was surprised when in mid-1993 I ran into him in Anthony Village, Lagos. He was coming from the Imaria Street home of pro-Democracy leader, Dr. Beko Ransome-Kuti.

A great polemicist whose writings cover a wide range of human life, including politics, Odia said of the significance of his reading at the Writers Village: "Some

people thought I had stopped writing poetry, but frankly, it is the only thing I have really done."

The June 12 presidential election had been annulled by the military regime, the country was in turmoil and Odia did not see how he could be out of a fight for the soul of the country. So, he took the next available flight to the country. He participated in the street battles and joined the underground press to fight military dictatorship.

This visit to the writers' village was for me, a pilgrimage. I met mentors like Professor Nuhu Yaqub, former Vice Chancellor, Universities of Abuja and Sokoto State; veteran journalist, Tunji Ladner Jr; and retired Commissioner of Police and arts promoter, Emmanuel Ojukwu. I also got acquainted with the poet with the rhythmic name, Kabura Zakama, a veterinary doctor whose collection of poems, *The Man Lived*, won the 1999 ANA Poetry Prize.

To Odia, the reading was a sort of homecoming, having been off ANA activities for some time. He had for six years, been ANA Publicity Secretary and, General Secretary from 1982, and its President for four years from 1993. But he had gotten disillusioned about fights over the lands of the writers village, some of which were lost.

To him, the greatest asset of Nigerian writers is unity which can be further solidified by readings, performances, workshops and culturing the young.

A great polemicist whose writings cover a wide range of human life, including politics, Odia said of the significance of his reading at the Writers Village: "Some people thought I had stopped writing poetry, but frankly, it is the only thing I have really done."

AFCON: Tinubu Hosts Silver Medalists, Super Eagles



AFCON: Oborevori Congratulates Super Eagles

By; UTEBOR PETER, Asaba

Delta State Governor, Rt. Hon. Sheriff Oborevori, has congratulated the Super Eagles of Nigeria on their dogged performance at the 2023 African Cup of Nations in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire.

The Super Eagles, who lost 1-2 to the host nation, Elephants of Cote d'Ivoire in the finals on Sunday, were impressive until the final loss.

Governor Oborevori, in a statement by his Chief Press Secretary, Sir Festus Ahon, urged the Super Eagles of Nigeria not to be deterred by their AFCON final loss, adding that the team played well and wished them better luck in subsequent competitions. While rallying support for the team and the nation, Governor Oborevori remarked that although the nation may not have been fully satisfied with the final match's outcome, it does provide a foundation for a potential more successful return.

"On behalf of my family, the government and people of Delta State, I congratulate the Super Eagles of Nigeria and the entire officials and coaching crew on their superlative performance at the African Cup of Nations in Cote d'Ivoire.

"The Eagles were determined to bring the

trophy home but were defeated by the Elephants who were buoyed to victory by their supportive and overwhelming fans.

"Last night's finals may not have gone the way we anticipated but note that, as a people, we were united by your patriotism and love for the nation.

"Despite the economic hardship and pervasive insecurity bedeviling the nation, Nigerians were united in praying for the Super Eagles to bring the trophy home.

"Football and sports generally, remain a unifying force in our diversity and as administration in Delta State, we will continue to work towards enhancing our leadership in sports nationwide.

"To fellow Nigerians, let's keep showing our squad the unshakeable devotion we are known for. Both wins and losses are part of the road to glory, and every game teaches us resiliency, fortitude and the strength of hope that never fades.

"To our dear Super Eagles, you represent the might and promise of our country more than just a team. Take what you can from this experience, grow from it, and rise above the rest with the same fierceness and elegance.

"In the future, we shall reach even higher heights as a nation." Oborevori stated.

SWAN Condemns Cyber-bullying Tendencies Against Iwobi, Others

*Tasks NFF to build on gains of AFCON 2023

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The Sports Writers Association of Nigeria (SWAN) has condemned in totality any form of cyber-bullying acts against some members of the current Super Eagles following the outcome of the just concluded Africa Cup of Nations.

Shortly after the final of the 34th edition of AFCON, the social media space has been abuzz with sorts of taunts targeted at some members of the Nigeria's senior National team especially on the midfielder Alex Iwobi.

While reacting to the development, President of SWAN, Mr. Isaiah Benjamin, in a statement yesterday through the association's Secretary-General, Amb. Ikenna Okonkwo, said despite losing at the final of the tournament, Super Eagles made Nigerians proud in Cote d'Ivoire.

"As a professional body, we totally condemn this trend of cyberbullying acts with unsavoury comments

targeted at some players or members of the Super Eagles.

"Such approach don't speak well of us. We are aware that we are a football loving nation, but we must act and be seen as those who value each other no matter the situation.

"Generally speaking, the Nigerian team did well at the tournament against the expectation of many of us. So, let us be cautious with our comments.

"Also, let us not forget that football is a team game and there is no need whatsoever singling out any player or official for any form of attacks," he said.

Meanwhile, SWAN has enjoined the leadership of the Nigeria Football Federation (NFF) to work towards improving the capacity of the Super Eagles and other national teams as a way of building on the gains of the just concluded AFCON.

SWAN President who commended NFF hierarchy for its determination in advancing the course of



the Nigerian teams said there is need for a more robust football development approach, particularly from the grassroots.

He said, "Like I had alluded, Nigeria's outing at the 2023 AFCON is an improvement from what happened in recent previous editions. However, efforts should now be channelled towards looking inwards.

"For instance, there has to be a reformed approach in

the handling of the various Nigerian leagues especially at the elite level in a bid to churn out more quality players and coaches with zeal and patriotic inclination.

"With the outcome of the just concluded AFCON and even in recent past, football is longer what it used to be. So, no effort should be spared in ensuring a harmonised value chain in the ecosystem."

Police Officer Loses AK-47 Rifle While Watching AFCON Final In Delta

By; UTEBOR PETER, Asaba

An inspector of police drafted from PMF 51, Oghara attached to the Olu of Warri Palace as guard has lost his Ak-47 rifle with sixty (60) rounds of ammunition while watching the AFCON final match between Nigeria and Ivory Coast in Warri, Delta State.

It was gathered that the Inspector, identified as

Yusuf Samaila, reportedly locked his weapon in his room and left to watch the match within the Olu of Warri Palace premises.

According to sources from the Warri Area Command, "The Inspector has been warned severally against locking his weapon in his room before the unfortunate incident occurred.

"The unit commander attached to the Olu of Warri Palace who came to

incident the case of missing firearm revealed that the Inspector locked his Ak-47 rifle with breach number: 0927, with 60 rounds of ammunition in his room and went to watch the AFCON finals between Nigeria and Ivory Coast within the palace premises.

"But when he came back to his room during half time, he found out that, the house was burgled and the said rifle was taken away.

"He has been defaulted and the case is reported at Warri Area Command while effort to recover arrest the suspects and recover the stolen gun and ammunition is in place." source revealed.

Meanwhile, the State Police Public Relations Officer, DSP Edafe Bright confirmed the incident but said, "It was a mistake, the Ak-47 rifle was seen immediately, that no rifle was lost."



Gov Oborevori

Kaduna Commissioner Commends 'Options' As E4A-Mamaye Project Closes Out

By: ALEX UANGBAOJE, Kaduna

Kaduna State Commissioner of Health, Umma Ahmed, has commended Options' E4A-Mamaye Programme for their commitment in driving grassroots collaboration and accountability in building resilient health systems in Kaduna State.

The Commissioner, who also lauded Kaduna Maternal Accountability Mechanism (KADMAM), community leaders and other health stakeholders in the state, made the commendation yesterday, during the closeout event of E4A-Mamaye Programme in the state.

"Let me express my deepest gratitude to E4A-Mamaye, Options, our dedicated health professionals, community leaders, Civil Society Organizations, and all stakeholders who have been instrumental in this journey. Your commitment has been the driving force behind the success we celebrate today.

"We will shine a spotlight on the commendable Community Maternal and Perinatal Death Surveillance and Response (c-

MPDSR) Model adopted by our dear state.

"This innovative approach, born out of collaborative efforts with E4A-Mamaye and Options, signifies a milestone in our commitment to addressing maternal and perinatal deaths at the community level.

"Our theme today, "Delivering Universal Health Coverage through Localization: Building Resilient Grassroot Collaboration and Accountability Mechanisms for Stronger Health Systems in Nigeria and Africa," encapsulates the essence of our journey and the direction we have charted for the future.

"It reflects the important role of grassroots collaboration and accountability in building resilient health systems, not only within 3.0: Kaduna State but with the broader vision of influencing positive change across the African continent." She said.

From 2022, the E4A-MamaYe Programme has focused on ensuring the sustainability of State Level Accountability Mechanisms (SLAMs) in Kaduna, Lagos, and Yobe states, by empowering these coalitions to take ownership of their

interventions and providing them with the necessary tools and skills in fostering continuity and resilience in Reproductive Maternal, Newborn Child, Adolescent and Health (RMNCAH) advocacy efforts.

In his remarks, Regional Director, West and Central Africa, Options Consultancy Services, Dr. Ufouma Omo Obi, noted that the fact that stakeholders can now speak on issues that are happening in the communities shows commitment that they are ready to end maternal mortality. According to him, "we are very proud of all the efforts we are putting into the health system. The population of Kaduna we had 20 years ago is not the same Kaduna we have now.



"The ability for us to report, track and monitor these desk, we didn't have it year ago, this is a fact that we have grown or matured.

"We are proud to have played a role in nurturing grassroots coalitions and empowering stakeholders to drive positive change. As we move forward, let us remain steadfast in our dedication to building localized resilient health systems that prioritize equity, quality, and sustainability."

On her part, Lucia Laboso,

Project Director, E4A MamaYe, said "As we close this chapter of the E4A MamaYe Programme, we reflect on the transformative impact achieved through sustained advocacy and accountability efforts. The journey towards improving maternal and newborn health has been marked by collaboration, resilience, and a shared commitment to prioritizing the needs of women, children, and communities."

Zulum Approves Cash, Food For CJTF, Vigilante Groups In Borno

By: SADIQABUBAKAR, Maiduguri

Borno State Governor, Babagana Umara Zulum, has approved relief packages comprising cash and food items to volunteers fighting Boko Haram insurgents alongside the military and other security agencies in Bama town.

The governor announced the package when he addressed the leadership and members of the vigilante groups at the palace of the Shehu of Bama, HRH, Umar Ibn Shehu Kyari Ibn Umar El kanemi, on Monday.

He distributed to a total of 810 combined vigilante groups cash donations and food items including rice and maize grain among others.



Gov Zulum

It would be recalled that the governor usually extends such support to the military, paramilitary, police and vigilante groups from the military, Civilian Joint Task Force, hunters and vigilantes whenever he visit to Local Government council headquarters and rural communities.

He however, commended the vigilante groups for their support and sacrifices while assuring them of state government's continuous support in order to provide peace and security.

"We are aware of the enormous efforts you put into

complementing the military in the fight against insurgency and other forms of criminality. We commend you and urge you to continue to be dedicated.

"The Government of Borno State will never relent in extending support to you. Your welfare is of high priority to us, we will not leave you. Be assured that the government will always be with you," Zulum said.

Zulum revealed that his continuous support to the security personnel was to show gratitude to the vigilante groups for their sacrifices in complementing the efforts of the military personnel and other security agencies in the fight against Boko Haram insurgents.