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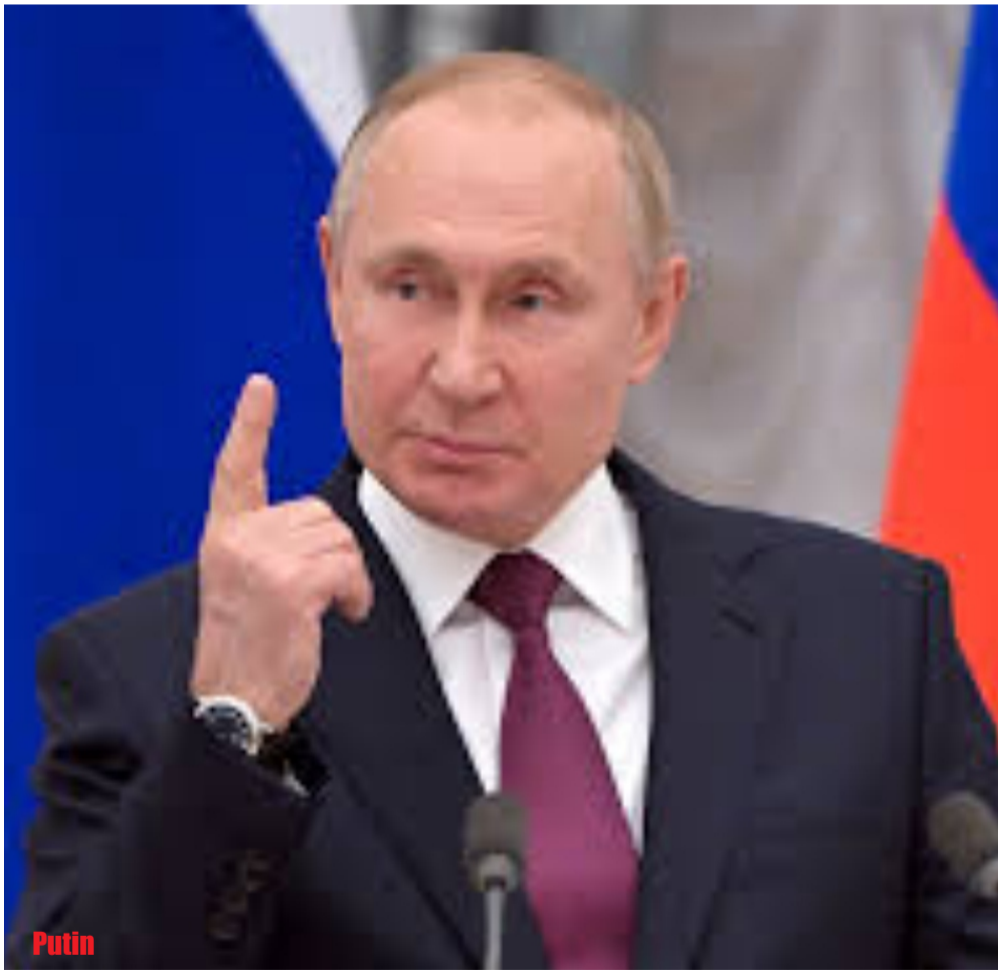
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Anxiety Worldwide As Angry Putin Threatens To End Civilization With Nuclear Weapons



By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON, with agency reports

Russian President, Vladimir Putin has threatened Western countries that they risk provoking a nuclear war if they send troops to fight in Ukraine, warning that Moscow has the weapons to strike targets in the West. Putin who is seeking reelection next month, handed down the warning

yesterday.

He said that the war in Ukraine has triggered the worst crisis in Moscow's relations with the West since the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis. Putin has previously spoken of the dangers of a direct confrontation between NATO and Russia, but his nuclear warning on Thursday was one of his most explicit.

Addressing lawmakers and other members of the

country's elite, Putin, 71, repeated his accusation that the West was bent on weakening Russia, and he suggested Western leaders did not understand how dangerous their meddling could be in what he cast as Russia's own internal affairs.

He prefaced his nuclear warning with a specific reference to an idea, floated by French President Emmanuel Macron on Monday, of

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Bandits Attacks: Residents Of Gonin Gora Barricade Abuja-Kaduna Highway

*Countless motorists stranded

*Govt clears highway, warns against blockade



Residents of Gonin Gora in Chikun LGA, Kaduna State, members of the community occupied and blocked the Abuja-Kaduna highway yesterday.

By; AMOS TAUNA & FUNMI ADERINTO, Kaduna

Following alleged cases of invasion by armed bandits, leading to the abduction of some residents of Gonin Gora in Chikun Local Government Area of Kaduna State, members of the community occupied and blocked the Abuja-Kaduna highway yesterday.

New Nigerian reports that the citizens trooped out in large numbers yesterday, to protest the incessant bandit attacks on the road and their communities, leading to killings and abduction of many people.

The protest yesterday was said to have been due to an invasion that occurred on Wednesday night, February 28, 2024, where numerous community members were kidnapped, with several others injured.

Two people, including a member of the Civilian Joint Task Force, were reportedly killed in the attack by the bandits.

The residents were enraged by the development and took to the streets yesterday morning, thereby, obstructing the plying of vehicles along the ever busy Abuja-Kaduna highway.

As a result, the road experienced significant congestion, leaving countless motorists stranded.

The recent assault on the Gonin Gora community, according to a source, followed a week's elimination of a notorious bandit leader, Boderi Isyaku, and several of his followers by the military in the Chikun Local Government Area.

The bandits reportedly set fire to a military armoured vehicle while the soldiers were trying to repel them.

Meanwhile, in a swift reaction, the Kaduna State Security Council has warned against blockage of public roads and harassment of innocent citizens by persons conducting protests.

A statement from Overseering Commissioner, Ministry of Internal Security and Home Affairs, Kaduna State, Samuel Aruwan on Thursday February 29, 2024, said the members of the Kaduna State Security Council while interacting with community leaders, expressed dissatisfaction with the menace of blocking roads, a situation which infringes on the rights of citizens and travelers using these roads and other public utilities.

This followed the blockage of the Gonin Gora axis of the Kaduna-Abuja Road by some protesters on Thursday morning, in response to reports of a bandit attack in Uguwan Auta of Gonin Gora general area, Chikun LGA, thus denying commuters access through the route.

The members of the Security Council, comprising the Commissioner of Police, Audu Ali, Director of Department of State Services, Abdul Adamu Eneche, Garrison Commander, One Division Nigerian Army, Brigadier General Muhammad Kana, and the Overseering Commissioner, Ministry of Internal Security and Home Affairs, in the company of security forces, dismantled the road blocks erected and subsequently opened up the road for use by motorists.

As of the time of this security update, citizens and motorists were plying the Gonin Gora axis of Kaduna-Abuja Road without obstruction.

Widow Drags Shari'a Judge To Court Over Alleged Criminal Conspiracy

By; SANIALIYU, Zaria

A widow, Rabi Abdullahi has dragged Upper Shari'a Court Judge Ibrahim Inuwa and one other person to Chief Magistrate Court for a Criminal Direct Complain of Conspiracy acting contrary to Law by a public officer and mischief contrary to Section 58,89 and 312 of the Penal Code Laws of Kaduna State.

The complainant who approached the court through her lawyer, Barrister Abdullahi Y. Ladan of Zaitun Chambers Kaduna, seeking justice that the first defendant as a public servant as the judge of Upper Sharia Court III Tudun Wada Zaria, caused the demolition of the house of the complainant in an abuse of power by

making an order contrary to the law during the pending of the complainant motion before the court.

"Vehemently and deliberately failed, neglected and ignored the motions even the response of the 2 Defendant in which the 1st Defendant conspired with the 2nd Defendant caused the demolition of the house of the complainant at Kwarin Gugau Magume, Tudun Wada Zaria, without jurisdiction and by deceiving the complainant's counsel that he will hear the motions on 21st of February 2024.

"But before the date as fixed in the court diary, the defendants, invited thugs and civil defense without notice and without even telling the traditional

rulers in the area, caused the total destruction of the house of the widow and her children (the complainant).

"The complainant was never made to be a party in the case, the case and the owner of the house sought to be demolished was dead and to the notice of the court, the 1st defendant refused to follow the necessary procedure to join the complainant and her children as parties in the case.

"The complainant suffered injuries loss trauma as the entire house ' demolished items were stolen, personal effects lost, in a disgraceful manner,

"While the second defendant committed the mischief to settle long time rivalry with the complainant.

"The 1st defendant is claiming that he was following an order from the "TOP" but even the so called "TOP" expected the 1st Defendant to follow procedure as an experienced judge".

Malama Rabi Abdullahi prayed for the court to bring the defendants to book and answer the charges if found guilty, they should be punished in accordance with the law and order the defendants to build the complainants house as it used to be or pay the construction of the complainants houses and 5,000,000.00 five million Naira damages for loss of the complainants personal effects and the injuries suffered plus the cost of hiring a lawyer and cost of the litigation in the sum of N500,000.00.

Anxiety Worldwide As Angry Putin Threatens To End Civilization With Nuclear Weapons

European NATO members sending ground troops to Ukraine - a suggestion that was quickly rejected by the United States, Germany, Britain and others.

"(Western nations) must realise that we also have weapons that can hit targets on their territory. All this really threatens a conflict with the use of nuclear weapons and the destruction of civilisation. Don't they get that?!" said Putin.

Speaking ahead of a March 15-17 presidential election when he is certain to be re-elected for another six-year term, he lauded what he said was Russia's vastly modernised nuclear

arsenal, the largest in the world.

"Strategic nuclear forces are in a state of full readiness," he said, noting that new-generation hypersonic nuclear weapons he first spoke about in 2018 had either been deployed or were at a stage where development and testing were being completed.

Visibly angry, Putin suggested Western politicians recall the fate of those like Nazi Germany's Adolf Hitler and France's Napoleon Bonaparte who had unsuccessfully invaded Russia in the past.



President Putin

Hunger: Confusion As One Dies, 5 Others In Critical Condition At LAUTECH Over Suspected Food Poison

**Victim reveals cassava peels was consumed*

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

It was confusion galore at Temidire Atoyebi area of Ogbomoso in the Ogbomoso South/Ogo Oluwa Local Government Area of Oyo State on Wednesday, when a family of six ate cassava flakes as Amala for dinner, resulting in the death of a grand daughter.

New Nigerian gathered that trouble started few minutes after the family ate the Amala with the members of the family complaining of serious abdominal complication.

It was learnt that distress call from family at their residence along Ogbomoso-Iwo road drew the attention of the neighbours, who quickly rushed the mother (Mrs Victoria Paul Adewole) and the five children to the nearby hospital.

Sources said the management of the hospital in turn, referred the family members to the LAUTECH Teaching Hospital, Ogbomoso, where the grand daughter was rejected, having been confirmed to have been brought in dead (BID).

However, the mother and four other children were

admitted and have since been under intensive medical treatment,

Sources said the initial report was that the family ate Amala dinner prepared from yam or cassava flour.

"However, one of the children managed to disclose that it was cassava peels that they grinded and made into flour which they prepared as Amala, since they could not afford to buy yam or cassava flour. The complication from the peels which could have been poisoned or contaminated, resulted in the death of the youngest grand daughter, whose immune system might be very low.

As at the time of sending this report, the mother and her other four children are still battling in the hospital. The Chief Medical Director of the hospital, Prof. Olawale Olakulehin

while confirming the incident said "The one that gave up died before getting to LAUTECH Teaching Hospital, Ogbomoso. As at this afternoon, four of the five undergoing treatment are in stable condition. However, one of them is in critical condition. I have just been updated".



Reviving Ajaokuta Steel Company Will Boost Nigeria's Economy - Governor Mutfwang

By; BUHARI B. BELLO, Jos

Plateau State Governor, Barr. Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang has commended President Bola Ahmed Tinubu for his laudable initiative to revive the Ajaokuta Steel Company with the aim of growing the nation's economy.

Governor Mutfwang made this remark in Jos, while hosting the Minister of Steel Development, Abubakar Shuaibu Audu at his residence at the Old Government House,

Rayfield, Jos, Plateau State.

He expressed dismay at the neglect of the company by previous governments and insisted that investing in it would enable the country to produce and export steel, thereby earning foreign exchange.

The governor said that his administration has prioritized the completion of abandoned projects in the state, especially those that will boost the state's economy and promote social harmony among the people.

He said that his

administration will work closely with the Federal Ministry of Steel Development and the National Metallurgical Development Centre (NMDC) to conduct quality research that will enhance the sector's performance.

The Minister of Steel Development, Abubakar Shuaibu Audu thanked Governor Mutfwang for the warm reception and assured him of better collaboration to improve the quality of life of the people.

He explained that President Bola Ahmed

Tinubu has given him the directive to revive and revamp the Ajaokuta Steel Company to strengthen Nigeria's economy and well-being.

Prince Audu explained that reviving the Ajaokuta Steel Company would require quality research to ensure adequate production of steel for the nation's development.

He said that the ministry would partner with reputable organizations in the country to optimize the production of essential materials that will benefit the country.



Human Rights Violation: Citizen Drags Inspector General Of Police, Enugu CP, 4 Others To Court

**Seeks N50m damages*

By; **KELVIN OKPARA, Enugu**

A Nigerian citizen, Mr. Cletus Nwebor, has instituted a suit at the Federal High Court Enugu, against the Inspector General of Police, Commissioner of Police Enugu State, the Police Service Commission PSC, Mr. Ekeleme, the officer-in charge (OC) Anti Cult Base, Enugu, over alleged continuous police harassment in respect of a land he instituted at an Enugu State High Court.

Also joined in the matter presided over by Honourable Justice M. Eluke as defendants are, Mr. Chidiebere Ijiomah OC Octopus Squad and Paul Oscar Udoji.

In the suit, tagged: Cletus Nwebor V. Inspector General of Police and 5 Others, with Suit No.FHC/EN/CS/34/2024, the Applicant through his lawyers Barrister Olu Omotayo and Barrister Desmond Kakaan. prayed the Honourable Court for the Following:

"A declaration that the continued threat of the 2nd Respondent, (The Commissioner of Police) to

arrest and send the applicant to jail for writing petitions against him to the 1st and 3rd respondent without the applicant committing any offence known to the law, constitutes a flagrant violation of the applicants' fundamental rights, guaranteed under section 34, & 36, of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 and Article 5 & 7, of the African Charter on Human & Peoples Rights, (Ratification and Enforcement Act) Cap A9, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 and is therefore illegal, unconstitutional, null and void." The lawyers are also seeking an order of perpetual injunction restraining the respondents, whether by themselves, their agents, privies or otherwise howsoever, from further beating, harassing, intimidating, trailing, scaring, arresting or detaining the applicant upon the same facts constituting the complaints enumerated in this application or in any other manner infringing on the applicants' fundamental rights.

"50 million Naira being

exemplary, punitive, aggravated, special and general damages against the respondents for their infringement of the applicants' constitutional and fundamental rights. In the facts in support of the suit Cletus Nwebor had stated thus;

"Since the 2nd February 2024, at the instigation of the 6th respondent, the 3rd respondent (Commissioner of Police) claimed to be acting on the authority of the 1st respondent (Inspector General of Police) stationed a police van and armed policemen from the Anti Cult Base, Enugu, led by the 4th respondent and were protecting the bricklayers illegally extending and erecting fence from 6th respondent, Oscar Udoji, land to cover the land in dispute in suit No E/484/2023.

"The Civil Rights Realisation and Advancement Network (CRRAN), wrote petitions on my behalf to the 3rd respondent (Police Service Commission) and the Presidency over the abuse of office and interference in a land matter pending in the court by the 2nd respondent

(Commissioner of Police). The two petitions are hereby jointly exhibited as "Exhibit A".

That, "the armed Policemen deployed by the 2nd respondent are currently in occupation of the applicants land.

"One of the policemen from the Anti Cult Base who were detailed by the 2nd respondent to arrest me told me on phone in the morning of 8th February 2024, and I verily believed him, that I should run away because the Commissioner of Police said once I am arrested, I will be sent to prison for writing petitions against him.

"The DCO Abakaliki Road Police Station, Mr. Emenike, is also leading the vindictive attack on me. Mr. Emenike, was among the five police officers who extorted Five hundred thousand Naira from me in respect of this same matter, when the money was transferred into his account sometime in August 2023, before the then AIG Zone 13, Mr. Tony Oloju, ordered the refund of the money.

"The petition written on my behalf by the Civil Rights

Realisation and Advancement Network to the 1st respondent in that regard is hereby exhibited as "Exhibit B"

"On the 13th February 2024, my counsel, Olu Omotayo Esq. invited some journalists to visit the place and they went there and confirmed the presence of stern looking policemen giving protection to the bricklayers working on the site. The policemen are still there till date."

The plaintiff disclosed that, "there is a pending suit in respect of the land in dispute before Hon. Justice M. Eluke of the High Court of Enugu."

Nwebor further prayed the honourable court to save him from the Commissioner of Police, "who jettisoned all the laws and rules guiding police activities in this country" and dabbled into a court matter pending before a court of competent jurisdiction and connived with his opponent in the court case to send him to jail on a trumped up charges.

Benue Gov Sets Up Judiciary Commissions To Probe Ortom

By; **ARCHIBONG ESUENE, Makurdi**

Benue State Governor, Rev Fr. Hyacinth Alia, has inaugurated two Judicial Commissions of Inquiries, to probe the administration of state's resources and assets during the tenure of his predecessor, Dr Samuel Ortom.

The two commissions of inquiries inaugurated by the governor, include Judicial Commission of Inquiry into the Income and Expenditure of Benue State Government (from May 29, 2015, to May 28, 2023). Also inaugurated, was the Judicial Commission of inquiry into the Sale/lease of government assets, Companies and Markets (both State and Local Government owned markets), as well as Moribund Companies (from or before May 28, 2015 to May 28th, 2023).

Speaking during the inauguration in Makurdi,

Governor Alia said the two commissions of inquiries were set up in response to the desire of the people of the state, who are the major stakeholders and owners of the resources.

"These commissions are not merely bureaucratic endeavors, they are our response to the earnest desires and hopes of the good people of Benue, who are rightfully critical stakeholders and owners of our dear state and its resources," the governor explained.

He noted that the future of Benue as a State depends largely on the prudent management of its resources, pointing out that his administration will ensure that all monies expended, serve the collective purpose of vast majority.

"The responsible stewardship of government resources bears a direct correlation to the well-being of our people. Adequate allocation to vital sectors such as the economy, agriculture,

education, security, healthcare, and infrastructure uplifts the standard of living, while any mismanagement jeopardizes our collective progress,"

While expressing his belief in the integrity and track record of the members of the commission to discharge their duties with utmost dedication and in accordance with the noble principles of public service, the governor urged them to work according to his administration's commitment to the principles of accountability, transparency.

He reiterated his government's unwavering commitment to effective resources management, citing the timely payment of salaries, pensions and gratuities, to the execution of critical infrastructure projects, as contained in his administration's blueprint, "A Strategic Development Plan for a Greater Benue."

Responding, Chairman of the Judicial Commission of Inquiry

into the Income and Expenditure of the Benue State Government 2015-2023, Justice Taiwo Taiwo (rtd), and Chairman of the Sale/Lease of Government Assets, Companies and Markets, Justice Apollos Idi (rtd), appreciated the Governor for finding them worthy to serve and expressed their readiness to work in line with the terms of reference given them.

They equally promised to do their best to come up with recommendations that will help the government to move the state forward.

The Commission of Inquiry on the Income and Expenditure of Government Funds from May 2015- May 2023, has Hon. Justice Taiwo Taiwo (Rtd) as the Chairman, with Chief John Ochoga, Henry Tor, Tom Ujah, Ode Igbade Nick, Iorpenda Tarnguhar and Terfa Gbande, as members while Barr. Ajinge Sar, Dr. Abraham Gberindyer serve as Government Counsel and Secretary, respectively.

The Commission of Inquiry on

the Sale of Assets, Companies and Markets from (2015-2023), has Hon. Justice Apollos Paul Idi (rtd) as the Chairman, with Clement Nenge Beetse, John Ogah, Dr. Terungwa Adzende and Hon. Abraham Atotse as members while Victor Nyamtamen (Esq.) and John Edigbo serve as Government Council and Secretary, respectively.

The Commissions have been separately tasked to amongst other things, look into how the bailout and Paris Club refunds were expended, look into the loans procured by the state during the period in question and report on how such loans were used, as well as identify the companies owned by the state government (both active and inactive) and proffer solutions on how the inactive ones can be revived, amongst others.

They have been given six months to complete their assignment and submit their report to the government.

Hardship: Kaduna Reps Member Urges Constituents To Exercise Patience

By: EMMANUEL AGBO, Kaduna

Member representing Chikun/Kajuru Federal Constituency, Hon. Ekene Abubakar Adams has appealed to his constituents and Nigerians to be patient with the current economic hardship ravaging the nation.

Ekene made the appeal while addressing his constituents in Kaduna yesterday, where he said himself alongside other lawmakers understand the plight of the people and are doing everything humanly possible to ease the situation.

Lamenting the number of phone calls and texts messages he receives on daily basis from vulnerable Nigerians for assistance, Ekene expressed that the burden is too much for him to bear on personal project, explaining that he is yet to receive constituency budget project for the year 2024.

Ekene who is also the House Committee Chairman on Sports, House of Representatives, added that he feels the pain of the people and will continue to reach out to whatever need that he is capable of handling

pending when the situation gets better.

"Without doubt, there is hunger in the land. I feel your pain deep in my heart seeing your calls and text messages to ask me for alms with tears that the country is hard. Some of you complained that you are looking for what to eat, while some are looking for means to take their loved ones to hospital for medical care.

"I feel the pains but the truth is I cannot help the situation because it is not that easy. We only work on constituency projects which have their budget and these budgets are timely. We are yet to receive this budget for the year 2024.

"Please do understand that I and many more members are doing everything possible to reach out to the people, soon. I agree that there is hunger in the land and the situation is very pathetic. God will take control." He stressed.

He said that thousands of constituents have benefitted from his empowerment programmes, saying that he remains committed to impacting the lives of people in the constituency for selfreliance.

Our Priority Is Protection Of Nigerian Depositors, Says NDIC



BY: AMOS EBUTE MATHEW, Kaduna

The Managing Director and Chief Executive of the Nigeria Deposit Insurance Corporation (NDIC), Bello Hassan has said that, the main priority of the corporation is the protection of Nigerian depositors.

He went further to say that, the corporation has introduced the Single Customer View (SCV) framework to expedite payment to depositors of closed banks.

The corporation boss made it known at special day at the ongoing 45th Kaduna International Trade Fair, that the Corporation has also enhanced collaboration with the judiciary for speedy prosecution of failed insured institutions.

Ably represented by the NDIC Deputy Director Communications and Public Affairs Department, Hajiya Hawwau Gambo, the Managing Director said the 45th edition of the Kaduna International Trade Fair with the theme, "Sustaining Economic Recovery through Deepening Local Content Value Chain", falls in line with the Corporation's mandate and public policy objective of ensuring the

stability of the financial system in order to provide the necessary support to economic recovery efforts of governments, business entities and concerns.

"Indeed, our priority at NDIC is the protection of Nigerian depositors. We are dedicated to safeguarding depositors' funds from the adverse effects of bank failure and complementing the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) in effectively supervising insured deposit-taking financial institutions and formulating sound banking policies. This commitment is encapsulated in our strapline: "...Protecting your bank deposits", ensuring financial stability and inclusion by assuring Nigerians that their money is safe and accessible when needed".

He announced to depositors in licensed banks that the NDIC has significantly improved its processes to ensure swift payment of insured sums to depositors in the event of or in the course of bank failure, addressing depositors' concerns and effect payment, which he further said aligns with the corporation commitment to deliver on mandate with renewed passion and greater vigour.

"In doing so, the corporation has introduced the Single Customer View (SCV) framework to expedite payment to depositors of closed banks. This concerted effort has resulted in resolving long-drawn cases of closed banks such as Fortune and Triumph Banks in liquidation. Moreover, we have utilised Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanisms and out-of-court settlements, revitalising our liquidation activities.

"These efforts have significantly improved our debt recovery rate, enabling us to declare 100 per cent liquidation dividends to uninsured depositors of more than 20 deposit money banks in liquidation. We continually strengthen our systems, processes, and procedures to enhance transparency and accountability across our operations".

The Managing Director also disclosed that the corporation achieved remarkable success in reimbursing depositors during the recent closure of 179 Microfinance Banks (MFBs) and 4 Primary Mortgage Banks (PMBs), ensuring timely payment of insured sums.

"We also deployed digital remote payment strategies to facilitate electronic funds transfers to verified depositors' alternate bank accounts. It is essential to emphasise that payments are ongoing, with depositors holding funds exceeding the insured limit set to receive liquidation dividends following debt recovery and asset sales.

"To address apathy among depositors with small balances, we launched the "Deposit Tracer" initiative in partnership with a Mobile Money Operator 2 (MMO), enabling depositors to access their unpaid balances through mobile accounts. Furthermore, we have deployed a mobile application and updated our website for online claims processing, offering depositors the option of virtual verification during payout exercises.

"I urge depositors of banks in liquidation to utilize these initiatives to claim their funds trapped in closed banks. Rest assured, NDIC remains committed to protecting Nigerian depositors and striving to be one of the best deposit insurers globally" he stated.



Hon. Ekene Abubakar Adams

Health: Kaduna Govt Committed To Partnering UNICEF - Dep Gov

By: FUNMIADERINTO, Kaduna

The Deputy Governor of Kaduna State, Dr. Hadiza Sabuwa Balarabe on Wednesday, said that the state is committed to partnering United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) Nigeria for healthy society.

On behalf of Governor Uba Sani, Deputy Governor Dr. Hadiza Sabuwa Balarabe welcomed a team from the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) Nigeria to Sir Kashim Ibrahim House in Kaduna.

The Deputy Governor who welcomed (UNICEF) to Kashim Ibrahim House in Kaduna, extended the goodwill of Governor Uba Sani, who is attending to some other issues outside Kaduna, assuring them that whatever decision taken, the state will carry out.

While speaking on Kaduna State's readiness to continue to partner with UNICEF, hence the state will achieve a lot, she expressed gratitude for UNICEF's ongoing support to the state in

various sectors.

She also shared the proactive plans of the Kaduna State Government to combat malnutrition, including the establishment of nutrition centers in all under-five clinics and the integration of nutrition programmes into primary healthcare outreaches.

The meeting highlighted the shared commitment of UNICEF and the Kaduna State Government to improve the health and well-being of children in the state, with particular focus on fighting malnutrition. Both parties reaffirmed their dedication to working together towards this goal.

The deputy governor commended UNICEF over nutrition in Kaduna State, for always keeping them on their toes so that they can make a difference in the lives of their children

"However, they are a lot of things to do when we talk about the indices for malnutrition in the state to change the narratives, by establishing nutrition corners in all our facilities within

Kaduna," she said.

Dr. Balarabe noted that immediately after the last dose of immunisation, children don't come back again for checks within the facilities, because they don't have under-five facilities.

She said that has been one thing that has been on their minds, to have such centres and to strengthen the community nutrition centre that they have, to enable the women understand what it means to be able to detect and start early management for malnutrition.

The Deputy Governor disclosed that they have so many cases of myopic children being identified, hence there is a drug in the incident of those being admitted.

"I want to see a situation where our outreach programmes are really strengthened so that we can have a kind of integration, not just going out to provide immunisation services, but also to have nutrition services being provided during those outreach programmes and then they will be able to detect all these children.

"What we are trying to do now is to do a

mapping of all food sources within our communities that our health educators, our social mobilisation officers, our nutrition officers can use to provide health education to parents or guardians on the available food resources within communities for adequate diet.

"We are focussing too much on treatment, when we have something that we can do to prevent it.

"I hope that working with UNICEF, we will be able to achieve more, also all that our plans in the state will be better within the shortest possible time, hence 2024 and beyond, will even be better for Kaduna State", she prayed.

In attendance was the Secretary to the State Government, Dr Abdulkadir Meyere, Chief of Staff to the Governor, Sani Liman Kila, Head of Service, Habiba Shekarau, Commissioners of Planning and Budget Commission, Business Innovation and Technology and Human Services and Social Development, as well as other government officials from different MDAs.



Increasing Food Prices: Oyo Govt Will Subsidize Land Clearing, Suspend Revenue Collection On Produce For Six Months - Gov Makinde

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

Oyo State Governor, Engr Seyi Makinde has disclosed that the state government is to be subsidizing land clearing for farmers across the state.

The governor who said this on Wednesday, at a meeting with stakeholders in the agriculture sector, held at the Fasola Agribusiness Industrial Hub, Oyo town also announced immediate suspension of revenue collection on agric produce marketed within the state for the next six months.

Governor Makinde pointed out that these were part of the measures by his administration towards addressing the rising cost of food in the state by providing tractors and haulage trucks for farmers, among other measures.

He maintained that in the land clearing for

farmers across the state with an initial sum of N600 million, farmers are now expected to pay N15,000 instead of N30,000 for land clearing, while the government will pay the balance.

"I have noted some few things from the points you all raised and there are few decisions we are going to take. The first one is the issue of revenue, because those in charge are compounding the problem of increment in prices of food stuff. For the next six months, nobody should collect any revenue and all the people involved should know that this takes effect immediately", he said.

Gov Makinde added, "We will set up a special line you can call when you have issues with recalcitrant revenue collectors who are not ready to abide by this pronouncement."

The governor said his government will

continue to do everything necessary to make life easy for residents of the state, adding that "agricultural produce taken out of the borders of Oyo State will attract necessary revenues".

He also declared that Oyo state has disbursed N1 billion to smallholder farmers through the Sustainable Action for Economic recovery (SAfER), also declared that the Agriculture Credit Corporation of Oyo State (ACCOS) loan support to farmers will no longer require a civil servant as guarantor, stating that farm associations will now guarantee their members to have access to the loan.

The governor noted further that since the removal of fuel subsidy, his administration has been doing everything possible to make life easier for residents of Oyo State, including

spending N77 million monthly to subsidise public transportation for 20,000 residents of the state on a daily basis, among other measures and that it would do everything possible to stem the tide of rising food cost.

"In Oyo State, we have been getting data on what we have been producing, which suggests that our production is on the increase but the prices of food stuffs are also increasing. As a government, we have also done quite a bit to stimulate and support the process of food security. It is either what we are doing is not enough or they are not being channeled to the right sources.

"So, our meeting here is not a talk-shop but to brainstorm on some issues and bring up solutions. I expect you to open up so we can tackle the problem we have on the ground".

Ebonyi Govt Demolishes Over 30 Illegal Structures

By; MKPUMA ENYINNA, Abakaliki

In order to make Ebonyi State one of the cleanest state in Nigeria inline with its master plan, the state government has demolished over 30 Illegal Structures in Abakaliki, the capital.

Addressing Journalists during the demolition exercise at Central Park axis, Ochudo Centenary City, the Commissioner for Capital City Development, Chief Sunday Inyima said that the owners of the illegal structures were properly notified before the action was taken.

The commissioner explained further that the demolished structures were built on a place designated as service lane and built without any approval from the ministry, hence the need to remove them.

Inyima said, "this place you're seeing is a service lane and people started building shops here and we feel it's not normal. Opposite here, you can see the international market where people can do their business, so this is not acceptable to government and that's why government frowns at and that, why we have come to ensure that all these structures are removed.

"From our records, the owners did not secure any approval from the Ministry of Capital City.

"In August 2023, we issued them 'stop work and removal' notice but as you can see, they couldn't remove it and that is why we are here to help remove it, bearing the cost of the removal.

"Well in the interim, we want to sanitize the city. The capital City ministry of course, is bearing the cost of the removal, but we further go into it and know who pays the final cost," he said.

On whether the owners of the property are known to government, here's what the Commissioner said.

"The owners are known and some of them are not known. I don't know all the owners, but some people called when we wrote this thing and we actually told them that this is not proper that they should remove it, but to our greatest shock and chagrin, the structures are still here that's why we're here today, after a warning and notice we gave in August 2023."

He however, called on intending developers to ensure they get approval from the ministry before erecting structures to avoid being demolished. Similarly, containers were removed at water works axis of Abakaliki metropolis after repeated notice and warnings to that effect from government to the owners fell on deaf ears.



Governor Makinde at the meeting

Economic Hardship: Niger Delta Youth Kick Against Protest, Commend Rivers Police Commissioner

By; AMOS EBUTE MATHEW;
Kaduna

Niger Delta Youth have called on people of Rivers State not to get involved in any protest in the name of economic hardship, saying mass demonstration not the solution to current economic challenges experienced across the country.

The youth In a statement under the umbrella of Niger Delta Youth Council of Nigeria (NDYCN) carpeted individuals and organizations calling for mass protests, stating that mutual and effective engagements would serve the interest of the masses better. The statement signed by the President comrade Ufuoma Victor Erharhine

maintained that mass protest would be hijacked by unscrupulous elements to unleash mayhem on unsuspecting members of the public.

Erharhine commended the Police Commissioner, CP Olatunji Disu of Rivers State for doing a good job since assumption of duty.

Comrade Erharhine, went further to say that, since the coming of the Commissioner of Police to the state there's a lot of improvement in terms crime rate in the River State.

"CP Dusi has always indulged in engaging the youth in the state by advising them that crime does not pay, rather they should stay away from criminal activities.

"It is our collective submission that

our youth in the entire Niger Delta should not engage in any form of protest in the face of the current challenges.

"Protest will only add to our travails in Rivers State and make the good job of ensuring peace by the state governor and other security agencies especially the commissioner of police difficult.

"We enjoin our youth to engage the authorities in the state and beyond to finding ways of ameliorating the suffering of the people," the statement urged.



Rivers Governor

All Wanted Criminals Will Be Fished Out, Brought To Justice, IGP Egbetokun Boasts

By; RAYMOND
TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

The Inspector General of Police Kayode Egbetokun has assured that all the criminals that have committed crimes and are hiding will be arrested in the fullness of time.

He emphasised that that no form of major incident of kidnapping or major crime that has taken place that the police has not responded to appropriately.

Speaking while fielding questions from journalists at the opening ceremony of a three-day Criminal Investigative Workshop organised by the Force Criminal Investigation Department (FCID), annex Alagbon Lagos, the police boss stressed that the police is not sparing any effort in tracking the wanted criminals and bringing them to justice."

His words, " If you've been following the trends, there is no major incident of kidnapping or major crime that has taken place in Nigeria that the Nigerian police have not responded to appropriately.

" Even those who have not been arrested and have committed crimes and are hiding, we're still going to get them. We're not sparing any effort in tracking them down and bringing them to justice."

Speaking further, Egbetokun

said the Force, in partnership with other agencies, are working to put an end to kidnapping across the country.

The Police boss said collaborations to end the influx of illegal arms used in perpetrating crimes in the country were also ongoing.

According to him, "we are working to stop the flow of arms. We are focusing on the routes where these arms originate. We are collaborating with other agencies like the Nigeria Customs Service, the Nigeria Immigration Service, the Military and Department of State Service, DSS. We assure you that we are committed to solving the problem of kidnapping.

The Inspector General of police Egbetokun explained that the workshop, themed: 'Advancing Professionalism in Criminal Investigation for Enhanced Criminal Justice Delivery in Nigeria,' held at the Black Diamond Hotel, Victoria Island, was aimed, among other benefits, to equip officers on investigative reporting.

IGP Egbetokun say the activities are just a part of what we do generally in Nigeria. We're starting with Force CID here in Lagos. From here, we're heading to Kaduna for another one. After Kaduna, we'll proceed to Enugu. Our goal is to build our detectives into professionals,



IGP Kayode Egbetokun flanked by the Oniru of Iru Kingdom Oba Gbolahan Lawal and other guests at the event held at Black Diamond Hotel, Lagos.

ensuring positive changes in how our officers conduct investigations. This training aims to elevate confidence and impact ethics, sparking an ethical revolution in the CID.

Earlier in his opening remark, Assistant Inspector General of Police, FCID Annex, Alagbon Lagos, AIG Idowu Owohunwa said, " prioritization of training

and human capacity development is a strategic pathway to entrenching professionalism, engendering ethical regeneration, and enhancing public trust. This remains a necessity rather than an option."

According to him, " The choice of the theme of this engagement was carefully crafted to reflect

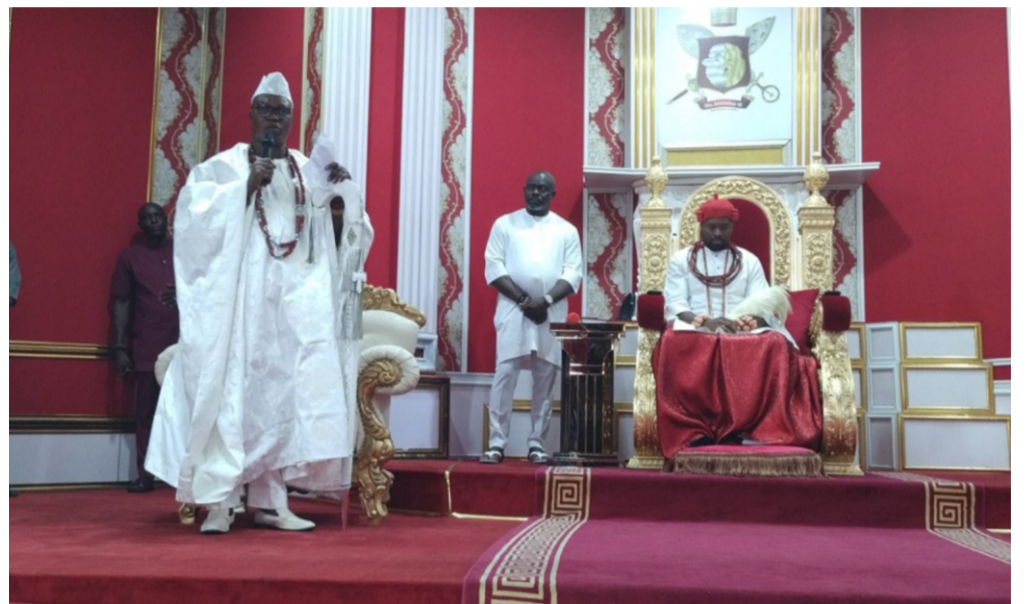
the reform agenda of the IGP in restoring police investigative excellence by exposing detectives of the department to specialized training and re-orientation programs that are directed at bridging their investigative knowledge gap and aligning their professional activities with the realities of crime dynamics in Nigeria."

Top VIP's from Energy sector across the globe at the opening ceremony of the ongoing Nigeria International Energy Summit 2024, organised by Brevity Anderson in Abuja. **Photo: BASHIR BELLO DOLLARS**



Itsekiris, Yorubas Are One - Gani Adams

*Visits Delta, pays courtesy call on Olu of Warri



By: **UTEBOR PETER, Asaba**

Yoruba War Lord, Aare Onakakanfo of Yoruba Land, Iba Gani Adams, has said that over 250 million Oodua descendants across the world are behind the Olu of Warri Kingdom and the entire Itsekiri's in Iwereland, adding that all enemies of the Itsekiri will perish.

The Yoruba War Lord 'Aare Onakakanfo' disclosed this during a courtesy visit to the Olu of Warri Kingdom.

He also prayed for the Itsekiris, while addressing a gathering at the palace hall of the Olu of Warri Kingdom, Warri South Local Government Area of Delta State.

After a rich cultural display from the Okere Itsekiri Dance Troupe, the Yoruba Generalissimo decreed that all enemies of the Itsekiri people will perish.

Gani Adams seek that, "the Itsekiri should be proud of their ancestry, saying that they should not downplay the ancestral affinity between Yoruba and Itsekiri.

He said, "God Almighty gave Itsekiri a gifted king. An orator of the highest order, very intelligent that his profile is highly intimidating. He's a king who classes himself. He's highly resourceful and has his people and the entire kingdom at heart.

"We see Itsekiris as one of the sons of Oodua. Your MC has been trying to play down the Yorubanness of Itsekiri. You need us; we need you. You can't toy with about

250 million people across the globe. One of the most intelligent black nations of the world.

"I love the way you cherish your identity and culture. We need ourselves. God will bless Itsekiri people. All your enemies will perish.

"We need ourselves. Yoruba cannot do without Itsekiri and Itsekiri cannot do without Yoruba.

"All the enemies of Itsekiri will perish. I assure you Yoruba land is with you. AareOnakakanfo is with you from today. Let the whole world know that we're ready to stand with the Itsekiri people.

"We have the foundation and the antecedents. Chief Obafemi Awolowo stood with Itsekiri. Late Alfred Rewane was with Chief MKO Abiola till the end.

"Nobody can drive you out of your property. You must unite. You have a king that will do that for you. Use his influence to network with people to come and assist you," he admonished.

He described the stool of the Olu of Warri as so significant, that former President Olusegun Obasanjo had to prostrate before it.

"The Olu stool is very important. Obasanjo, one of our great sons of Africa, prostrated before the throne. For Obasanjo, a former president and pan Africanist to have done that, he's a proud person. So prostrating to the throne means something.

"So I began to ask questions why Chief Obasanjo would prostrate to the Olu. Then I realised that 28 per cent of oil wells in Nigeria is in Warri kingdom. Warri is a blessed city. God will bless you more.

"You've invoked your ancestors to this place through your cultural displays. I know all the spirits of Itsekiri will stand by you. Traditionally I have the right to defend Oodua descendants anywhere they are in the world.

"When you respect your king, everything will work for you. Your ancestors will fight for Itsekiri. There'll be no war in Itsekiri land.

"Your ancestors will swallow up all your enemies," the Akoko-born leader of the Oodua People's Congress (OPC), prayed. On his part, while responding to the remarks of Iba Gani Adams, the spokesperson of the Olu of Warri, Chief Brown Mene, acknowledged the largely Yoruba ancestry of the Itsekiri people.

He said that the two ethnic nationalities are inseparable and have a lot to benefit from each other if they unite.

"Itsekiri language is Yorubanoid. We know who we are. You cannot speak of Itsekiri without Yoruba. We're part and parcel together.

"We shall not sink. We shall swim together. The calabash can never go under. From this visit, it shows we're from the same heritage. Your coming is for a reason. God will fulfil it," Chief Mene

prayed.

The courtesy visit of the AareOnakakanfo coincided with the Aghofen watch at the palace for three months by the Okere Itsekiri community, which started December 16, 2023 and will end March 16.

The occasion witnessed intermittent interludes of cultural performances by troupes from the Okere Itsekiri and Yoruba settlers in Warri kingdom who also, in their numbers, welcomed and accompanied the AareOnakakanfo to the palace.

According to the Yoruba War Lord, "this is my second time of visiting this kingdom and I did so with an entourage of nine, including Chief Gani Balogun, the Osi AareOnakakanfo of Yoruba land, Professor Kolawole Raheem, Parakoyi AareOnakakanfo of Yoruba land, Hon. Akeem Ademola Ige, Baameto AareOnakakanfo of Yoruba land, Chief Dauda Asikolaye, Bareejiro AareOnakakanfo of Yoruba land and the Delta State coordinator of OPC, Chief Olawale Akeem, among others.

At the palace with the Olu of Warri to welcome the AareOnakakanfo and his entourage, were the Ologbotsere of Warri Kingdom, Chief Oma Eyewuoma, Chief Gabriel Awala, Chief Dr Rowland Oritsejafor, Chief Francis Omatseye, Chief Brown Mene, Chief Dr Ikomi and Chief Esther Okotiebor, among others.

Why Funmilayo -Waheed Adekojo Is Ideal Candidate For Governance In Ondo State

By: ADEBOYE ADO, Akure

Engr. Dr. Funmilayo Ayinke-Waheed Adekojo stands out as a visionary leader whose remarkable attributes make her the prime candidate for the esteemed role of Governor of Ondo State. Here are compelling reasons why Engr. Dr. Funmilayo Ayinke-Waheed Adekojo is the right choice to lead Sunshine State:

1. Exceptional Leadership Skills: With a thriving career as a female engineer, Engr. Dr. Funmilayo Ayinke-Waheed Adekojo exhibits the essential leadership qualities needed for effective governance. Her strategic acumen, decisive decision-making, and forward-thinking approach position her as an ideal leader to guide Ondo State towards a prosperous future.

2. Empowering Future Generations: Engr. Dr. Funmilayo Ayinke-Waheed Adekojo's dedication to mentoring and inspiring individuals across generations underscores her commitment to empowerment. As a role model for aspiring engineers and professionals, she has opened doors for countless individuals to realize their potential and contribute meaningfully to society.

3. Passion for Community Development: Engr. Dr. Funmilayo Ayinke-Waheed Adekojo's fervor for community development is evident in her initiatives

aimed at enhancing livelihoods. Her focus on social welfare, infrastructure development, and sustainable growth resonates with the aspirations of the people of Ondo State.

4. Innovative Problem-Solving Skills: Leveraging her engineering background, Engr. Dr. Funmilayo Ayinke-Waheed Adekojo brings a fresh perspective to governance, characterized by innovative problem-solving and a pragmatic approach to challenges. Her ability to analyze situations critically and implement creative solutions distinguishes her as a capable and forward-looking leader.

5. Commitment to Inclusivity and Diversity: Engr. Dr. Funmilayo Ayinke-Waheed Adekojo's unwavering dedication to inclusivity ensures that all voices are heard and represented in decision-making processes. Her inclusive approach fosters unity, cohesion, and equality within the community, fostering an environment where everyone can thrive.

In summary, Funmilayo -Waheed Adekojo embodies the qualities of a



Engr. Dr. Funmilayo Ayinke-Waheed Adekojo

transformational leader poised to elevate Sunshine State to new heights of progress and prosperity through her

remarkable achievements and empowerment initiatives.

Ebonyi Bye-Election: Onu Drags Senator Ani To Tribunal Over Alleged Certificate Forgery

By: MKPUMA ENYINNA, Abakaliki

The candidate of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) in the Ebonyi South Senatorial bye-election, Silas Onu has taken the All Progressives Congress (APC) Candidate, Senator Anthony Ani to court seeking his disqualification on grounds of certificate forgery and ineligibility to stand for the polls. Mr Onu in the petition is also contending that the declaration of Mr Ani as winner of the election by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) is invalid by reasons of non-compliance to the electoral act. Mr Onu is the first petitioner,

while his party, PDP is the second.

INEC, Mr Ani and his party, APC are the first, second and third respondents respectively.

Former Governor David Umahi who won the 2023 election to represent the zone resigned his position as senator upon his appointment as Minister by President Bola Tinubu.

This prompted the National Assembly to declare the seat vacant and INEC conducting a bye-election on February 3, 2024 to fill the vacant seat.

The commission thereafter, declared and returned Mr Ani as winner of the election with 46, 270 votes.

The commission declared Anthony Eleje candidate of the

All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA) as the first runner-up, while Mr Onu was declared as the second runner-up.

INEC then proceeded to issue Mr Ani Certificate of Return as the Senator-elect after which he was sworn in as Senator.

But Onu rejected the result, vowing to challenge it at the tribunal.

Onu, in the petition to the tribunal, is urging it to disqualify Ani on grounds of forgery and inability to resign his position as a public servant before the said election.

He alleged that Mr Ani who is the second respondent presented forged birth certificate to the first respondent (INEC) contrary to section 66 of the Constitution.

He also alleged that Mr Ani did not resign as a Lecturer at the Federal University of Technology Owerri (FUTO) before the election as required for public servants.

According to him, while Mr Ani in documents submitted to INEC claimed to have resigned on 20th December, 2023, he however, continued to receive salaries after the said date of resignation. "The Petitioners contend that the requirement for public servants who wishes to contest election into the Nigerian Senate to resign in-line with section 6 (1)(f) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (as amended) is sacrosanct and cannot be waived or ignored", the petitioners argued.

Mr Onu and his party are also urging the Tribunal to declare the election as conducted in Afikpo local government area invalid due to over voting.

"That it may be determined that all votes cast for the 2nd and 3rd Respondents are wasted votes and therefore, the declaration and return of the 2nd Respondent by the 1st Respondent as the winner of the Ebonyi South Senatorial Bye-Election conducted on Saturday 3rd February, 2024 is unlawful, wrongful, unconstitutional, undue, null and void and of no effect whatsoever"

Mr Onu is also praying the court to declare him as winner of the said election, having secure majority of the lawful votes cast.

Hardship: Zulum Flags Off Distribution Of Food Items To 100,000 Families In Maiduguri, Jere

**Says food will reach another 100,000 households during Ramadan*

By: SADIQABUBAKAR, Maiduguri

Borno State Governor Babagana Umara Zulum has flagged off the distribution of food items to over 100,000 households in Maiduguri Metropolitan Council (MMC) and Jere Local Government Area.

The distribution was aimed at mitigating the hardship triggered by the rising costs of food items and other essential commodities.

Zulum performed the symbolic presentation of the palliatives on Wednesday at the Maiduguri Sports Centre, the venue of the distribution exercise.

Each of the 100,000 households received one bag of 25kg rice and another bag of

25kg maize.

Speaking to journalists after flagging off the distribution, Zulum emphasised the need for continued support to the people with a view to tackling the hardship in the land.

He reiterated his administration's commitment to prioritising the welfare of the people, especially those facing extreme hardship as a result of the Boko Haram insurgency.

Zulum stated: "We are here today to flag off the distribution of food items to 100,000 heads of households from Maiduguri Metropolitan and its environs. Everyone in Nigeria is aware of the hardship people face regarding food shortages.

"All the preceding food distribution exercises we had conducted were carried out in other local government areas. Today, because of the hardship faced by our people, we decided to come and flag off the exercise here for the people of Metropolitan and its environs. These communities have not benefited immensely compared to other places."

According to the governor, the exercise targets the most vulnerable members of the society in order to reduce the burden of the high cost of living in the metropolis.

He noted that the current economic hardship is not only in Borno State, but it is a global crisis.

Governor Zulum announced that the distribution of the palliatives would be

scaled up from 100,000 households to over 200,000 families in order to cover other places, including seven local government areas in Southern Borno.

"We have flagged off the distribution of the palliative for 100,000 today; my intention is not to stop at 100,000 households; we believe before the end of Ramadan, we shall reach up to 200,000 across the state.

"Wherever there is insurgency, they may experience a food crisis because of the limited access to the agricultural land. For this reason, in Borno State, we have started the distribution of palliative since 2011," Zulum said.

He added, "As long as I am the governor of Borno State, the distribution of palliatives



Hardship: Zulum Flags Off Distribution Of Food Items To 100,000 Families In Maiduguri, Jere

**Says food will reach another 100,000 households during Ramadan*

will continue. However, I want to stress that while the palliative distribution continues, we will continue investing in commercial and subsistence agriculture.” The governor urged the people, particularly those who do not have a means of livelihood, to engage in agriculture, while assuring them of all the needed supports, including free buses,

agricultural inputs and cash support. “The FG has also rolled out an agricultural scheme under the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security and in Borno State; we have programmes to boost irrigation and commercial farming. “We have started distributing food palliative care since 2011 and are doing our best. I call on our people to be patient

because the government handles the crisis. What we are doing is enormous, but as a responsive and responsible government, we shall continue to do our best to cushion the effects of the hardship,” Zulum stated. The governor, however, warned that his administration would not condone anyone sabotaging its efforts in peacebuilding.

“Some people are trying to instigate the public to cause disturbances. Let me warn the people of Borno: anybody who decides to take laws into his/her hands and politicise the food crisis we are currently facing will be dealt with ruthlessly,” he cautioned.



Nigerians Demand Laws Against Same-sex Marriage

By; PETER NOSAKHARE, Kaduna

As the country is yet to grasp with the increasing craze by some Nigerians for same-sex relationships, some Nigerians are asking that a legislation be put in place to punish or prohibit the act.

It's a known fact that some states have placed fourteen years jail sentence for the act, which is considered a violation of their fundamental rights by the United Nations.

There have been instances of victimization of people suspected to be homosexuals who were beaten, their houses razed down (burnt), and family witch-hunted, stigmatized

Since the Obama administration in 2010 suggested that people be allowed freedom to choose partners and called global acceptance of gay rights, the Nigerian government has openly come out to place punishment for the act.

It's believed that some states in the country have passed laws prohibiting same-sex relationships with prison sentences of between 14 to 25 years, and according to investigations, of the 36 states

including the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) punitive measures are in place to deal with those in the act. In the Northern parts of the country Sharia laws prohibiting same-sex relationships is in full gear. Last year arrests were made in Gombe state, when over 60 people were severely manhandled, beaten and jailed for 14 years after a Sharia court had sentenced them to stoning to death in to discourage such relationships.

Last year in Delta State, some people were apprehended for holding gay weddings though yet to be ascertained whether they were taken to court or later released, the fact remains that in our societies, the act is seen as abnormal and the practice seriously unacceptable and people engaged in the act are at risk of losing their lives. This is an indication that the government and society are not in support of the act.

On the continent of Africa, of the 54 countries, 32 have placed death penalty as punishment for the act, with the rest placing prison years penalties or waiting to make legislation.

Some states in the Northern parts of Nigeria where Sharia laws

hold sway have come out to place stiff punitive structures in place and have also publicly condemned such relationships.

Despite the fact that the Nigerian government's legislation does not impose the death penalty for homosexuality, there have been people sentenced to death in Sharia courts in predominantly Muslim states in the country's north.

Clerics and religious leaders have used their offices to explain that God himself destroyed cities in time past to demonstrate his hatred for the act.

Developed countries like the United States of America, Great Britain and France have laws that allows same-sex marriages and transgender procedures.

It's a known fact that Grammy Award winner and British singer, Sir. Elton John is a homosexual with a male partner, yet the British monarchs still awarded him with knighthood.

Civil rights groups and Amnesty International's Nigeria office have come out to condemn arrests of Gays (homosexuals) and called for an immediate end to what they describe as witch-hunt, adding that people be given their rights to choices.

It would be recalled that the

organization's Director in Nigeria, Isa Sanusi argued that the country should place more emphasis on fighting corruption and insecurity rather than infringing on the rights of its citizens.

According to him, "In a society where corruption is rampant, this [same-sex] law banning same sex relationships is increasingly being used for harassment, extortion and blackmail of people.

Recently Uganda passed one of the strictest anti-homosexuality laws on the planet, and this has led to homosexuals fleeing the country into neighbouring countries where there's no legislation in place.

In Lagos Nigeria, two men were severely manhandled for claiming to be lovers but for the help of the law enforcement agents.

Nigerians spoken to have continually expressed their displeasure on the issue of homosexuality and transgender procedures.

In Uganda, a transgender had to run to neighbouring Nairobi, Kenya for fear of being lynched to death by his people.

In June 2022, three men arrested in the state of Bauchi were

ordered by a Sharia court stoned to death for engaging in homosexuality.

Sharia court sentences must be approved by a state governor, and it's unclear if the sentence was carried out, but it was learnt that the sentence was commuted to 14 years in prison for the considered offenders.

This is a clear indication that the practice is forbidden in our societies and country.

Rev. Kingsley Edemoir of Catalyst Church Kaduna, believes that what is forbidden by God shouldn't be encouraged by Man, for him countries making laws allowing the practice or transgender procedures are inviting the wrath of God.

"The Almighty God that we serve destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah because of homosexuality why should the so called developed countries allow and encourage the act."

Though the Constitution of the country guarantees freedom from discrimination, homosexuality is criminalized in laws that are broadly supported by the public.

There have been instances where the state Governments placed 14 years jail sentences for the act.

Expert Says 68% Of Children Under 5, 58% Women Of Reproductive Age In Nigeria Anaemic

By; ALEX UANGBAOJE, Abuja

As Nigeria is transiting to the use of Multiple Micronutrient Supplementation (MMS), for pregnant women, a Nutrition expert has said that 68% of children under 5 and 58% of Women of Reproductive age in Nigeria are Anaemic.

The Expert, Chito Nelson, Head of Nutrition Division, Federal Ministry of Budget and Economic Planning, revealed this in Abuja on Wednesday at a 2-day capacity strengthening workshop for Media on improving visibility of anemia reduction through scale-up of MMS in Nigeria, organized by Civil Society Scaling Up Nutrition in Nigeria (CS-SUNN).

The workshop is aimed at improving the understanding of media on the impacts of

Micronutrient deficiencies adolescent girls in Nigeria.

She said because of the effects of anemia in women and children, it is important that measures are taken to avert those consequences and reduce the effects which are dangerous to their health.

Chito, stated that anaemia could adversely affect maternal and fetal well-being of women, increased morbidity and fetal mortality. Could make pregnant women experiences breathing difficulties, fainting, tiredness, palpitation and sleep difficulties. She added that it also increases risk of developing perinatal infection, pre-eclampsia, complication of labour and even death and postpartum cognitive impairment.

According to her, the use of MMS by pregnant women is a solution to some of the micro nutrients disorder in women

during pregnancy because it has 15 vitamins and minerals, including iron and folic acid in recommended dosage.

"Iron plays a wide range of functions in the body like oxygen transport, physical and neurological growth and development, cellular functioning and synthesis of some hormones.

"Over the past 50 years, Iron Folic Acid (IFA) supplementation has been a core component of ANC for pregnant women around the globe, IFA are critical for the pregnant, However, they are not iron and folate are not the only nutrient that pregnant women may need to support their health and health of their child.

"MMS has 20 years of research provided clear evidence that MMS is more effective than IFA supplementation to prevent adverse birth outcomes. The Last

2 years has seen progress in MMS policy development and implementation research in most countries.

"Now is the time to accelerate implementation and address key issues such as ensuring effective and equitable coverage and a sustainable supply of high-quality and affordable supplements." The Nutrition expert explained.

In his welcome remarks, CS-SUNN Executive Secretary (ES), Mr. Sunday Okoronkwo, noted that as a country, Nigeria is standing at the crossroads of an urgent and collective challenge; the reduction of anemia, a hidden hunger that affects millions, particularly women and children, across the nation.

"Anemia's impact on health, cognitive development, and overall productivity is a barrier we must dismantle for the prosperity and well-being of our

communities.

"Recognizing the power of informed advocacy and the critical role that media plays in shaping public discourse, this gathering is not just a meeting but a clarion call. It is an invitation to each of you to join hands in a concerted effort to amplify the message that the fight against anemia is winnable, and the scale-up of MMS is a scientifically proven strategy we must embrace.

"CS-SUNN, through this initiative, aims to empower you, our esteemed media professionals, with the knowledge, tools, and resources to effectively communicate the importance of MMS and nutrition interventions. Your voices will echo in homes, policy chambers, and health institutions, igniting action and fostering accountability," the ES said.

Child-to-child Violence Alarming In Nigeria, Deserves Better Response - UI, TETFUND Researchers

*Conducts stakeholder engagement

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

Researchers funded by the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND) at the University of Ibadan have said that violence against children especially the growing trend of child-to-child violence ongoing in Nigeria deserves evidenced based knowledge to address the phenomenon.

The principal investigator of the project, Professor Adebimpe Adenugba stated this while conducting a stakeholder's

engagement on a study "Understanding violence against children in Nigeria: the Child-to-child dimension".

According to her, while SDG support the right of every child to protection against violence, child protection systems is still weak in Africa and "largely inadequate to protect children against violence". The Gender Specialist and Sociologist at the department of sociology, University of Ibadan, stated that six out of every 10 children have suffered one or more forms of

violence before reaching 18 years while 70 percent have experienced multiple incidents of violence.

Speaking further, Professor Adenugba stated that "prevention and response have focused on adults as perpetrators of violence against children while child perpetrators are most of the times treated as adults in terms of response and prosecution contrary to the requirements of the laws addressing children issues".

In their presentations, Professor Eze Nwokocho

and Muiywa Omobowale stated that the study would be conducted in four geopolitical zones of Nigeria to understand child justice system, factors promoting violence against children, rehabilitative support for child perpetrators of violence among others.

The study, which will capture 2100 in-school children and 1,700 out-of-school children, will be conducted in North Central (Abuja), North West (Kano), Southwest (Lagos) and South South (Port Harcourt)



Oyo NSCDC Arrests 72-yr Old, 6 Others Over Alleged Harmful Traditional Practices, Defilement, Others

National Gender Policy In Agriculture Advises Govt To Invest More On Extension Workers

By; SANIALIYU, Zaria

The Chairperson, National Gender Steering Committee for the Implementation of the National Gender Policy in Agriculture, Mr. Azubuike Nwokoye has advised government to invest more on the extension workers as well to spend more on demonstration plots, where farmers can see it practically.

Nwokoye gave the advise at a retreat programme organized for women, youths and people with disability in Zaria last weekend.

He said, if government

engages extension workers to assist farmers on the new technologies and innovations, it would boost agricultural practices by producing enough food for the country and beyond.

The chairperson who is also the Food and Agriculture Programme Manager, lamented that in the whole of Nigeria, there is less than 30% of extension workers, which he said, is inadequate for Nigerian farmers.

According to him, Action Aid Nigeria has identified that extension workers don't have operational costs, vehicles,

motorcycles that can transport themselves to their target farmers.

Mr. Azubuike Nwokoye also suggested the use of local made fertilizers by Nigerian farmers so that farm products will be safe and free from harmful chemicals.

He said Action Aid Nigeria has identified the solution in the components of the policies in terms of the growth in agriculture in the country, particularly with the current food crisis.

He added that, Nigeria has opportunity as a country and Kaduna State also has opportunities, but much

has to be done in terms of spending in the agricultural sector.

"Spending in agriculture is to be treated as an investment by targeting properly in the agricultural sector all issues of food crisis will have not been in Nigeria".

Participants at the retreat called on the government to attend to all agricultural programmes at the right time to avoid wasting resources.

Also, they added that farm inputs should be given to farmers as early as possible, to enable them prepare in good time for the season.

Zamfara Govt Employs 250 Road Marshals

By; SULAIMAN AHMED MISAU, Katsina

Zamfara State Government has approved the immediate employment of two hundred and fifty (250) youth to serve as Road Marshals with the State Road Traffic Agency (ZAROTA) to help in reducing road congestion and accidents on some major roads across the state.

The employment aimed at reducing unemployment among youths in the state, according to a statement by the Director General (DG) on Media and Communications to the Governor, Alhaji Nuhu Salihu Anka would also help at cushioning the present economic hardship being faced in the state and the country at large.

"This was part of the resolution reached at the state executive council meeting, chaired by Governor Dauda Lawal, held at council chambers, Gusau, Alhaji Salihu Anka said.

DG Anka said the

executive council meeting which was the Sixteenth, also directed the Commissioner for Justice and Attorney General to establish a Tribunal that would be assigned with the responsibility of handling Traffic offences in the state.

Similarly, he said the meeting approved for the provision of two trailer parks in the state in order to reduce roads congestion and other traffic irregularities caused by the drivers of the vehicles.

During the meeting, Nuhu Anka explained, Governor Lawal has received comprehensive reports on the position of various ongoing projects that cover various sectors of the state.

The meeting, he emphasized was attended by the state Deputy Governor, Honourable Mani Malam Mummni, Secretary to the state Government, Alhaji Abubakar Nakwada, Chief of staff, Alhaji Mukhtar Lugga and all members of the state executive council.

Skills Acquisition: Mukaddas Anas Foundation Trains 360 Katsina Girls, Women

By; SULAIMAN AHMED MISAU, Katsina

Mukaddas Anas Foundation has organized a skills acquisition training for 360 young girls and women aged between 18 to 35 in Musawa Local Government area of Katsina State.

The training of the participants who were drawn from ten wards of the local government area, was conducted at Dandattijo Community Secondary School in Musawa Metropolis.

The topics of the training covered: - "Effective Communication Skills, Self Esteem, Personal Effectiveness, How to write Curriculum Vitae (CV) and Professional Cover Letter"

Coordinator of the Programme, Alhaji Aminu Anas Mukaddas said the purpose of the training was

part of the objectives of the Foundation to empower Youths to be self reliance, very productive and useful in the society.

Alhaji Aminu Mukaddas assured that the training would be extended to other local government areas in the state.

At the end of the training, certificates were issued to the participants as Some of the participants interviewed expressed satisfaction with what they learnt and assured judicious use of the knowledge acquired to the purpose meant for.

More so, Alhaji Lawal Yunusa Charanchi who was one of the coordinators of the project expressed gratitude for the successful conduct of the training.

He assured that, the efforts would continue and enjoined the beneficiaries to be more attentive during the conduct of the exercise.

Africa: OCP Champions Soil Health At UN

By: SEBASTIEN SATIGUI

This week in Nairobi, Kenya, the world's preeminent forum on environmental issues – the UN Environment Assembly is holding its sixth biennial meeting to set the global environmental agenda.

Attended by over 4,000 participants from 193 member states, as well as representatives from international organizations, private sector, academia and media, its focus is the triple planetary crisis of climate change, pollution, biodiversity loss and land degradation.

OCP is playing a prominent role at the conference in championing the crucial role of soil health in addressing these challenges at the same time as feeding the world's growing population.

Under the theme of, "Cultivating Soil Health: Africa's Pillar of Resilience in the Triple Planetary Crisis", OCP has co-organized an official side event with the



Embassy of the Kingdom of Morocco to Kenya. Morocco holds the critical role of Chair of the conference, demonstrating the global leadership of Morocco and OCP on these vital issues.

The side event brought together key stakeholders to strategize on effective, inclusive, and sustainable solutions to the world's environmental challenges with a particular focus on agriculture and soil health in Africa. The discussion proved to be an invaluable opportunity for dialogue and collaboration.

Among the distinguished speakers at the event were senior representatives from the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, the UN Environment Programme, and the Kenya Agriculture and Livestock Research Organisation, as well as from OCP itself.

More widely, experts from OCP Group have also been engaging actively in some of the many other events taking place around the main conference, notably through contributions by

OCP's Chief Innovation Officer, Dr. Leonardus Vergutz and Karimi Thurania, OCP Kenya's Country Manager.

OCP is seizing these exceptional opportunities to communicate to the world's policy-makers the key lessons it has learned from its more than 100 years of experience and innovation as the world's leading phosphate miner and soil health and plant nutrition solutions company.

OCP is fostering accelerated action, built on collaborative partnerships between all stakeholders – including, most fundamentally, the smallholder farmers of Africa – to revitalize soil health, rehabilitate degraded lands and ecosystems, combat climate change, boost rural incomes and development, and ensure food security for future generations.

OCP has a compelling story to tell, one that is finding resonance amongst the disparate audiences in Nairobi, offering tried and tested, practical solutions to global challenges.

OCP's messages have particular credibility and authenticity since they are based on its own outstanding

record and ambitious program of sustainability: 100% self-sufficient in renewable water this year, renewable energy by 2027, green ammonia by 2032 and carbon neutral by 2040.

And they draw from its extraordinary investment in research and innovation, in the analysis of 50 million hectares of soils across Africa, the development of over 40 fertilization formulas customized to meet the specific needs of those soils, the training of over 270,000 farmers in sustainable agronomic practices to maximize their yields at the same time as conserving the environment, and facilitating the finance and ecosystems to enable farmers to access essential inputs and get their produce to market.

OCP is making a significant impact on the global stage, leveraging its invaluable experience to build the international partnerships and policies that are necessary to achieve the just agricultural transition in Africa, that will transform it into an agricultural powerhouse, feeding not only itself but the world, while simultaneously combatting climate change and preserving the environment.



The Future Is Doha

By; **CHUBADO BABBI TIJJANI**

The future they say belongs to those who prepare for it. A statement the Qatari's appeared to have taken literally, as evidenced by the country's landmark and unequalled achievements in virtually all ramifications of life. The unparalleled audacity with which Qatar, a city from the sand, launched itself on the global stage is both profound and invigorating. Modern Qatar has proven to the rest of the world that it takes foresight, visionary leadership, political will, and determination to transform societies within a short period. Modern Qatar is a mash-up of mystery and a success story. Its trajectory from a desert land into one of the most stimulating cities, embellished with all the trapping of modernization and civilization is something that has left pundits and observers from East to West in awe. Its leadership has shown the rest of the world that every society is truly governed by its triangles when properly harnessed; its political, economic, and social dimensions. It has taken into account the fact that visionary leadership, not conscripted to finesse or nuances and devoid of mediocrity can produce dividends. Not just within the domestic arena but on a global scale as exhibited time and over again by Qatar. When the world needed humane leadership, it was there to give one.

The mind-boggling question remains, how did Qatar achieve this feat of becoming a contending world power within such a limited period. The answers lie in the coherent domestic and foreign policy of the leadership through a sustained period and with serious-minded individuals driving it; it rests with the pragmatic and people-centered fiscal and corresponding monetary policies combined with a dedicated and disciplined workforce. Culminating in a common vision that puts the interest of the collective first.

This can be seen in the nation's policy direction since 2008 which has been shaped by the 'Qatar National Vision 2030'. A well-thought-out and articulated development model with a blueprint to transform Qatar into the most advanced country in the world by the year 2030. Little wonder Qatar is the world's next investment hub.

Qatar has risen so sporadically and spontaneously and has

become a centripetal force attracting the attention of almost all countries on the global stage. Its commitment to the development of its people and state has remained unwavering so has its strategic vision.

X-raying Qatar's smart city initiative gives us a glimpse into its future. The unparalleled enthusiasm with which the leadership has grappled with the concept of smart cities is unmatched. The presence of cutting-edge technology to streamline services, improve urban living, and deepen sustainability is fascinating. It has leveraged data and connectivity to improve efficiency and has placed itself at the front of the global smart city movement. This makes Doha the world's future hub for technological innovation.

The quantum of world-class infrastructure littered around in Doha spins the mind. The sight of its futuristic skyline gives away Doha's intentions for world-class infrastructure. The very existence of the city of 'Lusail' is a clear indication of Qatar's outstanding world-world-class infrastructure that came from sand and has become one of the world's most charming cities, earning it the name 'city of the future'. Doha is awash with cutting-edge technological infrastructure and state-of-the-art facilities, its national museums, structures like the Aspire Tower, and so on, all showcase Doha's grasp of what 'moving forward with historical architecture should look like.

Doha is well-equipped with top-class hotels and airports, making it a global aviation hub. It has built the most attractive traditional luxury resort with modern state-of-the-art facilities. Its resorts and all of its infrastructural gains have no small measure contributed to the nation's economic growth, leaving her with one of the most envied GDPs in the world.

Doha is one of the foremost cities to initiate the green revolution, long before countries began to converge in Paris to discuss the impact of climate change. The country technically leads the drive towards sustainable urban development through the implementation of ambitious green initiatives such as the Msheireb Downtown Doha Project, which is one of the world's first sustainable downtown regeneration development initiatives.

It has the best eco-friendly transport systems, and reen-

building-friendly practices, and is a pacesetter in embracing the path of sustainable development for improved quality of life.

On its path towards economic diversification and global connectivity, the nation has proved that it can sustain itself through non-oil yields and earnings, contrary to views in some quarters.

A glance at Qatar's Strategic economic plan as contained in its Strategic Vision 2030, will reveal that Doha's vision extends beyond oil and gas as evident in its economic diversification. The vision places a huge emphasis on other non-oil sectors including Tech, health care, finance, and opening up formassive influx of investments. The world view of Doha being a strategic location for a global transit hub has been bolstered by the city's connectivity, world-class airline carriers, advanced logistic infrastructure, and the Qatar Free-Trade Zone. It is unarguable that Doha has integrated into a global economy.

It is also well to note that Doha is not just about its skyscrapers and unmatched infrastructures, it prides itself on its cultural renaissance; it is a place that thrives and promotes its arts and has become a center of attraction through its thriving center for arts and culture.

This is apparent in the significant investment in cultural and religious institutions such as the Qatar National Library and Museum of Islamic Art, which aid in fostering the renaissance of artistic expression.

The famous annual Doha Film Institute and the Qatar International Food Festival all contribute immensely to showcasing the vibrancy of its culture and people. Qatar always seeks to foster harmony while preserving the sanctity of Islamic teachings which are about



Chubado Babbi Tijjani

tolerance, respect for others, and living a life of sanity through modest behavior

This was exemplified in Qatar when the country hosted one of the most successful World Cup events the world has ever seen, as attested to by FIFA and other world-ranking bodies. The event was well attended by people from various walks of life, and diverse cultural and religious backgrounds were hosted by Qatar for a whole month devoid of rancor and civil disobedience.

The World Cup hosted by Qatar, as attested to by FIFA and other world-renowned bodies, had no single record of violence, no single record of theft, no single record of fighting and or bloodletting which is the case where fanatics get drunk and end up fighting after a match is won or lost. The ban on alcohol and other 'social elements' drive youth restiveness in other climes was instrumental to achieving this.

It is also on record that Qatar used this singular event to showcase the beauty of the region and its people to more outsiders than any other

mechanism or instrument has done in the past. Qatar used the occasion to display the beauty of Islam which preaches social cohesion and harmony amongst people of diverse backgrounds. There is no doubt that Qatar is racing towards an exciting phase of development. As opined by Omar Alfardan, Managing Director of a Doha-based Commercial bank, "Qatar is fast becoming an attractive destination for international capital after the domestic investment boom around the World Cup.

The country is positioning itself as a gateway to larger regional markets by establishing trade and investment agreements with neighboring countries. This strategy amplifies Qatar's appeal to international investors". This is a position that has long been corroborated by Bloomberg, the IMF, the World Bank, the Economist, etcetera, that Doha is heading in only one direction and that is, becoming the future!

Babbi writes from Abuja, Nigeria, and can be reached via ; Email : chubadotijjani@gmail.com

A Plea To President Tinubu: Preserve The Nigerian Army University, Biu

By; IBRAHIM DAHIRU DANFULANI

Dear President Tinubu,

I write to you today with a plea that comes from the heart of a concerned citizen. Your recent approval of the Oronsaye report, which includes the merger of the Nigerian Army University, Biu with the Nigerian Defence Academy (NDA) in Kaduna, has sparked a wave of apprehension among many of us who value education and security in our nation.

While I applaud the initiative to streamline government agencies and reduce spending, I urge you to reconsider the decision to merge the Army University, Biu. This institution holds a special place in the hearts of the people of northeast Nigeria, especially in a region that has been grappling with security challenges for over a decade.

The establishment of the Nigerian Army University, Biu was a beacon of hope for the youth in the region, providing them with access to quality education and opportunities for a brighter future. The university has shown remarkable growth and potential, becoming a symbol of resilience and progress in the face of adversity.

In China's national defence research, National University of Defense Technology (NUDT) has always been at the forefront. To meet the demand from strategies to strengthen national defense through science and technology and to build an innovative country, NUDT makes full use of its integrative disciplinary strengths in science, engineering, management, military science, humanities and social sciences, providing strong support for the modernization of the Chinese armed forces, providing talent and technical support to China's national economy and social development, and ultimately contributing to world peace and development.

Over the past 60 years, NUDT has evolved into a comprehensive science, engineering, military science, management, economics, philosophy, literature, education, law, and history university. The university consists of 10 colleges running more than 40 departments, institutes and

laboratories, four key national laboratories and one key laboratory at the level of the Ministry of Education.

In many topics, NUDT plays a leading role, nine of which are key national topics. According to the Ministry of Education's 2002 - 2004 National First - Category Discipline Evaluation, five NUDT disciplines made the 'top five' list and the discipline of computer science and technology ranked first nationwide. NUDT currently has more than 2,000 faculty members, of whom more than 300 are teachers. There are 14,000 full - time students with 8,400 graduates and 5,600 graduates.

Mr. President, I implore you to recognize the importance of preserving the autonomy of the Army University, Biu. By empowering this

institution and allowing it to flourish independently, you will not only support the educational aspirations of the youth in the region but also contribute to the overall development of northern Nigeria and the National Security.

Education and security are not burdens to society; they are investments in our future. Just a decade ago, former President Jonathan took a bold step in establishing 37 new universities to expand access to quality education for our youth. We need more institutions like the Nigerian Army University, Biu, to cater to the growing number of qualified students seeking higher education opportunities.

Your vision for a prosperous and innovative Nigeria, as articulated

during your campaign, requires additional universities to harness the talents and intellect of our youth. As you have rightly said, we have the knowledge and the brainpower to overcome challenges like poverty, ignorance, and homelessness. Investing in education is the key to unlocking this potential.

In conclusion, Mr. President, I urge you to reconsider the merger of the Army University, Biu, with the NDA. Let us continue to support and nurture institutions that are making a difference in the lives of our youth and communities. Together, we can build a stronger, more resilient Nigeria for generations to come.

Ibrahim Dahiru Danfulani is the Publisher/Editor-in-Chief, Gamji Reporters, Kaduna.



NPFL Poor Performance: Heartland Management Places Club's Players On Half Salaries Over Poor Performance

**Says they risk further sanctions*

By: **KELVIN OKPARA, Enugu**

The Headship of Heartland FC of Owerri, Imo State, led by its General Manager, Promise Nwachukwu has disclosed that due to the poor performance of the team in the ongoing 2023/2024 abridged Nigeria Premier Football League which culminated in their disgraceful home loss to Plateau United on Wednesday, the club management has ratified the placing of the players on half salaries until further notice. "It was a disgraceful outing for the Owerri side yesterday, as they were trashed 5-1 at home before their fans at the Akwa stadium, in Anambra were they currently execute their home games," he said.

The management said it was for the first time in the history of the club that such would happen

Nwachukwu who watched the encounter, unhappily said the players should take responsibility for the loss which has tarnished the image and the impressive records of the club in the country and even beyond.

According to him, the players do not have excuses to fail the way they did and has directed non performing players to step up or risk further sanctions as enshrined in the contracts they individually signed that

poor performance would not be tolerated and be met with stiff measures.

He said, "The club management has decided to slash the salaries of the players by half as from now henceforth until the team's performance improves," Nwachukwu told the club's media.

"I was just deeply rooted to one spot after the game yesterday and was the last to leave the stadium because I could not have envisaged the poor performance the players exhibited against Plateau United". He added that, "they played as if nothing was at stake and as if they were bereft of ideas.

"In all my time at the club, I have never seen a time Heartland FC played so poorly" the club's boss insisted.

"This is beyond coaching issue and it is time the players took the blame for the defeat and try to redeem their image with a win against Sunshine Stars on Sunday.

"The task to keep Heartland FC in the topflight is the job of all it is our desire to have players who are proud to play for what the badge represents and its rich history right from Spartans to Iwuanyanwu Nationale and what we are known as now, Heartland FC." he stated.

The club is currently swimming at the relegation zone in the NPFL.



Nigerian Frontline Pastors Tasked On Tuition Free Schools, Interest Free Bank Loans

By: **RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos**

Leaders of frontline Pentecostal churches in Nigeria have been urged to close rank and establish tuition free schools for children of poor Christians.

They were equally implored to establish interest free loan Christian Bank as part of measures to lessen hardship among members. The founder and leader of INRI Evangelical Spiritual Church Primate Ayodele Elijah made the call in Lagos during a chat with newmen. Fielding questions at the church's 21-day annual thanksgivings programme, Primate Ayodele noted that all the schools established by the churches, inclusive of Primary and secondary schools, are beyond the reach of the children of poor members who pay tithes and offerings.

Primate Ayodele, who specifically mentioned Pastors Enoch Adeboye, David Oyedepo, Lazarus Mouka, Olukoya, Kumuyi, amongst others, accused them of using the church to propagate their business empires to the detriment of poor members of the congregation.

In addition, he accused the top flight Christian leaders of causing disunity in the christendom. He therefore tasked them to establish free interest loan Christian Bank and build educational institutions for the poor as part of measure to lessen hardship among members. Primate Ayodele posited that envy and jealousy has beclouded the big men in Christ and can't be united to form a common course. Further, he bemoaned the leadership of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) and the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN)

for allowing the groups to be politicized, describing them as political stooges.

His words, " Yes, all these big church leaders like, Oyedepo, Kumuyi, Adeboye, Olukoya, Oyakilome, Okotie, Lazarus are the ones killing Christianity, they are the ones, who cause contradiction and conflicts. They are the confusionists in Christianity, Adeboye preaching is this way, Oyakilome preaching is the other way, Anglican Church Primate preaches another way, and because of that Christianity Unity will never move forward. We are not moving forward in the Christendom. If you want to hate me, hate me, If you want to like me, like me more.

" See, there is a lot of hatred among the church leaders, jealousy, everybody say I cannot be in this class. All big men in Christ they want to be recognised. The small churches cannot come together with big churches, no unity in Christianity, nothing like Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN). CAN is an empty can of Coke, what do you want to see in christendom.

We have two many teachers, too many ideas, my preaching different from another church, Catholic Church cannot do with Methodist.

" Except the churches do not hate themselves, that is when there will be religion tolerance. Deeper Life will never go with the Muslim, they will say Muslims are devil, Seventh Day Adventist dosent want to do with The Redeemed Christ Church of God, RCCG, RCCG also doesn't want to do with Celestial Church of Christ. So you see that there is big Wahala, I said, big Wahala in Christendom."

While profering solution on the issue, the

renowned prophet with accurate predictions urged the pastors to be united and create employment for members, build schools for the children of the poor and established bank with free interest loan.

" The way out is If the church leaders come together, let's create employment, Oyakilome, Adeboye, Oyedapo, let them bring money together, have Christian Bank with interest free loan, build Christian School, reduce the price. Then let's see how many people will go to Conventant University, Redeemer University if he or she is not a big man child? If Oyedepo, Adeboye, Kumuyi can build University for the poor people, you will see that there will not be strike and interrupted school calendar. Instead, they will begin to deceive us that all is well, nothing is well in the christendom."

While delivery a sermon on Friday, the Oniworo of Iworo kingdom HRM Oba Oladele Kosoko accused most pastors of missing religion with business, saying it does not augur well for the christendom.

Quoting from the scripture of Matthew, the monarch stressed that not all those who call God are true men of God, adding that a lot of people use the name of perpetrate evil acts.

Meanwhile, Primate Elijah Ayodele has commissioned an ultra-modern health care centre and gifted cars to his church members on Friday, 16th of February, 2024 in commemoration of his annual thanksgiving programme tagged '21 days of unlimited praise'.

The event was well attended by prominent members across different sectors including the

CEO of SIFAX Group, Dr. Taiwo Afolabi who unveiled the health care centre, the Vice-chairman of Ikorodu Local government, Aarebirin Honourable Princess Folashade Olabanji-Oba, Lagos commissioner of police, Adegoke Fayoad, amongst others.

Stating the reason behind the health care centre, Primate Ayodele explained that the less privileged have issues accessing health care, adding that it is even unaffordable for an average Nigerians.

To add to his several philanthropic projects, Primate Ayodele revealed plans to begin a free launch programme to the needy later in May and another edition of palliative market in July 2024.

"The average Nigerian is battling with so many things and health care is one of them. People have died because of illnesses that were not attended to because they couldn't access medical assistance. My decision to build a healthcare centre for the people is borne out of the need to address the lack of medical assistance when it is needed. This is my own little way of assisting the government and largely, bringing succor to the people in order to prevent avoidable deaths"

While reacting to this laudable project, Dr. Taiwo Afolabi appreciated Primate Ayodele for always giving back to the society especially the underprivileged.

He acknowledged the several works of Primate Ayodele, while confessing that he is surprised at the prophet's philanthropic activities.

Governor Sule Hosts AFCON Silver-winning Goalkeeper Trainer, Baruwa

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Executive Governor of Nasarawa State, Engr. Abdullahi Sule, on Wednesday, announced an undisclosed amount of money for Africa Cup of Nations, AFCON, Silver-winning Goalkeeper Coach of Nigeria's Super Eagles, Olatunji Baruwa. A statement signed by Media Officer, Nasarawa United FC, Eche Amos, made available yesterday, said that at a brief reception held at the Government House in Lafia, the Governor said he was overjoyed to learn that Osun State-born Baruwa is equally the goalkeeper trainer at the Nasarawa State-owned men's football club, Nasarawa United. According to him, "Recently, the Vice President of Nigeria, His

Excellency, Kashim Shettima, requested me to go with him to the final of the Africa Cup of Nations match between Nigeria and host nation, Ivory Coast, with the hope of bringing the Cup home. "Then during the half-time of the game, we were at the dressing room of the players to address them, then this gentleman (Baruwa) told me that he is from Nasarawa United FC but working with the Super Eagles at AFCON. Instantly, my head got bigger, apparently with joy. "With due respect, one of the best things that happened to Nigeria at the AFCON in Cote d'Ivoire was actually the goalkeeper who kept us in the game up until the final because he was fantastic throughout the Tournament. "So, I was so happy to see that it

was a Coach from our own club here that's the Trainer of the Super Eagles' Goalkeepers. "I have received reports that so many clubs have started showing interest in him, which is normal when you are doing something well because I am from a background that craves for excellence and rewards it. "When you are good, people and organizations will always approach you because they want the best. "However, my prayer is that it will be our Goalkeeper Trainer who will help mould our own Goalkeepers to qualify for the National Teams' invitations to also show the kind of performance displayed by Stanley Nwabali at the AFCON. "By then, you would write your names in gold and have a golden handshake with me.

"Importantly, too, I was informed that from the little you got from the National Team as your personal gift, you still shared it among members of Nasarawa United. "I am very excited to hear this. That's the kind of spirit I look forward to. "On this note, what I wanted to give you initially, I will now double it so that you you will have a little bit of recovery from what you have already expended. This is not for the public to know what I am giving you - it's between you and me, please. "So, thank you for bringing pride and glory to Nasarawa State and Nigeria as a whole and I wish you all the best in your endeavour." The Governor equally extended his financial benevolence to

Nasarawa United's Supporters' Club, charging them to sustain the tempo. He noted that it was his earnest desire to see Nasarawa United back to the Premier League in Nigeria, emphasizing that his administration is doing everything humanly possible for the Club to have full ownership of her players in order to properly invest in them. He congratulated Nasarawa United and the entire staff for their efforts so far in the Nigeria National League, assuring that he would have a more relaxed and rewarding private moment with the team when they are back in the elite league. Overwhelmed by the gesture, Coach Olatunji Baruwa,

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3 Key Commissions Under NOC To Visit The Camping Sites Of Team Nigeria To 13th African Games

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The Nigeria Olympic Committee (NOC) has authorized only three of its Commissions - Athletes, the Medical and the Technical to visit the various camping sites where members of Team Nigeria.

A statement signed by NOC PRO, Tony Neziyana said that

the teams are training towards the 13th African Games officially kicking off on March 8 in Accra, Cape Coast and Kumasi.

This is the first time the Games have been spread in more than one city since the start of the Games in 1965 in the Congo, Brazzaville.

The NOC president noted that the camping sites are spread

across the country, in Abuja, Lagos, Ibadan and Gombe.

The Athletes Commission, the Technical and Medical are to take turns visiting the camps as part of taking note of the welfare conditions of the athletes, without disrupting the training and their living conditions.

In order not to cause logistics problems, the members close

to the camping sites would visit sites close to them.

Engr. Habu Gumel announced that the team would be transported to the Games' venue via arrangements still being worked on. They would be moved in batches.

The Games would end on March 23.

It has been gathered that the

Women in zSports and the NOC women commission have already visited the camps have already visited the Lagos camping site at National Stadium, Lagos and made some donations jointly received by Camp Commander, Femi Ajao and Lagos Liaison Officer, Nkana Mboru.



Governor Sule Hosts AFCON Silver-winning Goalkeeper Trainer, Baruwa

appreciated the Governor for honouring him.

"Your Excellency, Sir, I lack what to say because I am already emotional.

"Nasarawa State has been nice to me. After my family, they are the next family I have.

"When I told my wife about the interests from different angles after the AFCON, she said I should remain where I am being loved, that it's not about money, but about peace.

"I have been with the various National

Teams for some time now, but I must confess, Nasarawa State is different. It's hospitable and the people are nice to me.

"On behalf of my family, I sincerely thank Your Excellency for your generosity, humility, fatherly love and support to me and every member of the team.

"I also thank all those who made it possible for me to be where I am today.

"By the grace of God, we will reward your kindness to us by regaining promotion to the Nigeria Premier League, next season."

Speaking earlier, Chairman, Nasarawa

United FC, Dr. Ibrahim Othman Ahmed, told the Governor that they were at the Government House to congratulate him on his victory at the Supreme Court as the duly elected Governor of Nasarawa State and to formally present Coach Olatunji Baruwa to him following his breathtaking feat with the Super Eagles of Nigeria at the just-concluded AFCON where Nigeria emerged Runners-up.

Other personalities at the ceremony were the Honourable Commissioner for Youth and Sports Development, Hon. Jafaru

Ango; Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Youth and Sports Development, Chief Barr. Isaac Danladi; Permanent Secretary, Government House Protocols, Ismaila Ali Mohammed; Chairman, Nasarawa State Football Association, Salisu Galadima (a.k.a. Basira), Management Members of Nasarawa United, Backroom Staff as well as players and Nasarawa United's Supporters' Club.

Presentation of customised jerseys of the Super Eagles and Nasarawa United FC as well as the AFCON Silver Medal to the

13th African Games: Commercial Sex Workers Promise To Charge Nigerians Moderately

By; JOSEPH ODOEKWU, Accra

Some Nigerian sex workers who are in Accra, Ghana have given assurance that they will be moderate in charges when providing relief services to Nigerians who come for the 13th Africa Games which takes place in Ghana from March 8 to 24, 2024.

A lady who spoke exclusively with this writer on grounds of anonymity, said she is thrilled that such an event will be coming to Accra soon.

"We are really happy that we will have the opportunity to meet some of our Nigerian guys when the game starts"

"We will try to be fair and moderate in our charges, and ensure we also make them very happy when they need our services and am sure they will be glad to have fun" she added.

When probed on why most of them preferred Accra to Nigeria for their work, she said the currency exchange played a vital role.

"When you get money in

Ghana cedis and change to Naira', it becomes a bit heavy and so the currency matters a lot and that's why most of us are here" she responded.

Another lady who spoke to this writer on grounds of anonymity also expressed her delight about the news of the Games and said she hopes that most of the men who will be coming are mature men.

"Usually in situations like this, one can meet someone you know back in Nigeria, but I just hope they will all be mature and get the real fun because that's what am really looking forward to" the busy lady added.

"I love Nigerian men for one thing, when a typical Nigerian man gets high on alcohol, he tries to look out for a way to ease himself with fun, but it's not so with Ghanaian men over here"

Our source further discovered that most of these women pay between 150GHC to 250GHC a week to enable them secure their rooms and fall back on their occupation to take care of the cost.



SWAN Commends Kwara Govt, Charges Members On Registration

By; BILIQIS ONAOLAPO OLAJUMOKE, Ilorin

Kwara state Chapter of the Sports Writers Association of Nigeria (SWAN) has praised the state government for sustaining its sports facility renovation and construction culture in the state.

The commendation was contained in a five-point communique drawn at the end of its State Congress, held at the State Stadium Complex, Ilorin, on Wednesday February 28, 2024, and signed by the trio of Jimoh Bashir, Nicolas Uwerunonye and Olayinka Alaya.

It would be recalled that the state government last week approved the renovation and modernization of the dilapidated Indoor Sports Hall.

"SWAN Congress commended the state government on its numerous sports development interventions, which includes, but not limited to the renovation of facilities, especially the recent approval for the renovation and upgrade of the Indoor Sports Hall of the Kwara

State Stadium Complex, Ilorin", the communique read in part.

The body also called for amicable resolution of the crisis of the national body in line with the provisions of its Statutes, even as the Executives were charged to work hard to make the body stronger, and effective in the state.

The sports wiring body harped on the consideration of entry requirements in admitting new members, in line with the provisions in the Statutes, as it also charged members yet to complete their registration for the current year to do so as and when due.

Part of the resolution was the resolve to sustain the drive towards updating knowledge of members in sports reportage and presentation through seminars and workshops, as it seeks collaboration and partnership in achieving the goal.

SWAN also hinted on plans to stage 2024 SWAN Media Games, as a way of encouraging members to participate in sports, asides just reporting it.



SWAN President, Isaiah Benjamin

Kogi Gov Visits Kwara, Says Gov AbdulRazaq Pan-Nigerian

By; BILIQIS ONAOLA PO LAJUMOKE, Ilorin

Kogi State Governor, Alhaji Ahmed Usman Ododo on Wednesday, visited his Kwara State counterpart and Chairman of the Nigeria Governors' Forum AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq whom he praised for his Pan-African approach to issues of national importance and his legacy projects in the state. Speaking with newsmen at Government House Ilorin, Governor Ododo praised AbdulRazaq for giving appointments to non-Kwara in his quest to promote national unity.

"We were part of Kwara State, and my elder brother here is doing very great. I have met one or two of them whom he has given appointments. That is one

Nigeria. By the special grace of God, I am going to extend my support not only to the people of Kogi State living here in Kwara State but to the entire people of Kwara State because we are one Nigeria," Ododo said. "I want to sincerely appreciate my elder brother His Excellency Governor AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq for the warm reception he has given us today (Wednesday) as his brother and son of the soil. I am here because this is my home too. I have to come and pay homage to my brother to see how well he is doing and learn from the legacies he has laid down in Kwara State."

AbdulRazaq had earlier led his Kogi State counterpart to pay homage to the Emir of Ilorin Alhaji Ibrahim Sulu-Gambari in his palace.



L-R: Special Assistant to the Governor on Project Delivery Hon. Kabir Kokori Abdul; Kogi State APC Chairman Alhaji Abdullahi Bello; Kogi State Governor Alhaji Usman Ahmed Dodo; Kwara State Governor AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq (CON); Hon. Otigi Mamodu; Hon. Sanni Egidi Abdulraheem; and President Ilorin Chapter of Egbara Progressive Association Abdullahi Aliyu; during a courtesy visit by the Kogi State Governor to Government House, in Ilorin, on Wednesday.

NBAIS Committed To Credible Examinations - Registrar

By; SANIALIYU, Zaria

The National Board for Arabic and Islamic Studies (NBAIS) has expressed its commitment towards conducting credible examinations.

Speaking on behalf of the Registrar, Prof. Yahuza Sulaiman Imam, the Ag. Director of Administration and Human Resources Management of the board, Dr. Abdulrashid Salman described the recent directives of the National Universities Commission (NUC) to universities and other tertiary institutions as well as the directives of Community Health Practitioners Registration Board



Prof. Yahuza Sulaiman Imam

of Nigeria to its affiliate institutions to accept Senior Arabic and Islamic Secondary Schools Certificate Examination (SAISSCE) results for admission into their respective institutions as a great achievement and a welcome development.

Dr. Salman explained that NBAIS is an independent examination body under the Federal Ministry of Education, conducting both internal and external examinations for SAISSCE candidates who are preparing for tertiary education. He disclosed the appreciation of the registrar for the strong support being enjoyed from the

Ministry of Education, stakeholders and staff of the board, which undoubtedly strengthens operations and ensures greater efficiency.

The registrar assured the general public that, the board will continue to operate within its mandates.

Speaking on the current staff verification exercise which is jointly conducted by the Office of the Head of the Civil Service of the Federation and the Federal Ministry of Education, Dr. Salman said it is aimed at having an accurate record of the board's personnel for eventual regularization with the apex office.