

**Zulum  
Distributes 447  
Houses, Food  
tems To  
IDPs In Dalori**

**Story on Page 3**

**Hardship: Stop Intimidating  
Labour Over Planned Protest,  
Federal Workers Tell DSS**

**P.4**

\*Says position of DSS insulting sensitivity of Nigerian people

\*Insists federal government secretariats nationwide would be totally shut down

**Uba Sani, CDS, Buratai,  
Nimrod, Others Expected  
As ILAD Holds Kaduna  
Conference 2024**

**P.2**

**65 CSOs Pull Out Of NLC,  
TUC Planned Strike To  
Avoid Anarchy**

**P.3**

\*Wants labour unions to do more of dialogue with FG

\*Accuse NLC President, Joe Ajaero of pursuing political agenda

## We Are Homeless, Sleeping Outside, Victims Of Demolished Ugwuoba Cattle Market Enugu Cry Out



Stranded victims of demolished Ugwuoba Garki Cattle Market Enugu

- Northerners worst hit
- Say women, children, drenched by rains, scorched by sun

By: JACOB ONJEWU  
DICKSON

Days after the Enugu State Government completed the demolishing of Ugwuoba Garki Cattle Market, traders are lamenting untold hardship, with women and children stranded, sleeping outside. Secretary of Ugwuoba Garki Tailoring Association, Lawal Musa disclosed this, in an exclusive interview with our correspondent yesterday.

According to him, more than 10,000 people lost their houses and shops as the state government in spite of pleas from several quarters, demolished Ugwuoba Garki Cattle Market after a one-week notice issued expired.

"The place we have been living more than 28 years according to the government was targeted for demolishing after they alleged that there are suspected criminals, citing security purposes.

"They came the first time and searched everywhere,

Continued on Page 4

**Don't Escalate Tensions In Nigeria With Nationwide  
Protest - Afenifere Leader Fazoranti**

**P.11**

\*Says "Let us engage in constructive dialogue, contribute positively"

**Governor Inuwa Yahaya Secures AfDB Partnership For  
Gombe's Agro-Allied Development, Livelihood Projects**

\*AfDB DG lauds governor's visionary development agenda

**P.10**

**Hardship: Adopt Argentina's  
Javier Milei Approach To  
Reforms, Atiku Tells Tinubu**

\*Asks President to stop blame game

**NDLEA Intercepts UK Bound  
Cocaine Concealed In Shoes,  
Headgear, Apprehends 26  
suspects In Lagos, Kano, Others**

**P.8**

# Uba Sani, CDS, Buratai, Nimrod, Others Expected As ILAD Holds Kaduna Conference 2024

By: ISAAC ODEH, Kaduna

In its quest at building role models for Nigerian youth in the private and public sector, the Institute of Leadership Assessment and Development of Nigeria (ILAD), will be holding its annual conference and conferment of Doctoral Fellow/Fellow of ILAD in Kaduna on March 16, 2024.

This was contained in a statement signed by ILAD's Director General, Dr. Baba R. Adamu, made available to newsmen in Kaduna on Sunday February 25, 2024.

According to the statement, the theme of the Kaduna Conference 2024, "Empowering Excellence: Vision and Impact in Leadership" emphasizes cultivating a visionary mindset among leaders, enabling them to inspire and guide their teams towards achieving excellence.

"This theme underscores the importance of strategic vision, effective communication, and the positive impact leaders can have on individuals and organizations by fostering a culture of empowerment and continuous improvement." He said.

The Director General informed that the Chief Host of the event billed for Kaduna State University (KASU) Auditorium on March 16, 2024 by 10am, is the Executive Governor of Kaduna State, His Excellency, Senator Uba Sani.

The statement informed that the Keynote address would be delivered by the Chief of Defence Staff and President the Chiefs of Defence Staff West Africa, General Christopher G. Musa, while speakers include, Managing Director, Time-line Consult Ltd, Lagos, Dr. Shuaibu Abubakar Idris (Mikati), Vice President Institute of Leadership Assessment and Development of Nigeria, Professor Silas Lenos Lamela and Former Chief of Army Staff (COAS), Lieutenant General Tukur Yusuf Buratai (rtd).

Also expected to be present at the event, is President Nigeria Volleyball Federation



(NVBF), Engineer Musa Nimrod, who would be one of the recipients of the prestigious Doctoral Fellow of ILAD.

"Commandant Nigeria Defence Academy (NDA), Maj Gen J.O. Ochai, Senator Sunday Marshall Katung, National Assembly, Alh Bashir Idris (Lifidin Jama)" and Registrar/CEO Nigeria community Health practitioners Registration Board of Nigeria are also expected to attend," he added.

He explained that the institute, is globally recognized and is a professional body in Nigeria.

"ILAD is established and well positioned to deliver best in leadership, corporate governance and business ethics practices in Nigeria, Africa and the world.

"The institute was formed by a team of

corporate practitioners, professionals, academics, policy makers, with background in corporate governance, finance, banking, insurance, law, economics, management, political science, economics, public administration, engineering, science and technology.

"ILAD is registered under the CAM Act CAP 59 of 1990 of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to among other things, promote global best corporate governance standards and practices both in the public and private sectors, through research, knowledge sharing and related activities.

"In achieving this objective, our approach is inter-disciplinary. ILAD the is the melting pot for professionals, government functionaries, academics, investors, market players, policy makers, regulators,

lending institutions and the general public," he said.

According to him, the Institute of Leadership Assessment and Development is a globally recognized and is a professional body in Nigeria. ILAD is established and well positioned to deliver best in leadership, corporate governance and business ethics and practices in Nigeria, Africa and the world,

"ILAD was established under the Companies and Allied Matters (CAM) Act CAP 59 of 1990 of Federal Republic of Nigeria and approved by Federal Ministry of Justice (FMJ), Nigeria, Federal Ministry of Education. (FME), Nigeria, with Corporate Affairs Commission, (CAC), Nigeria. RC No 1751017

## Hardship: Adopt Argentina's Javier Milei Approach To Reforms, Atiku Tells Tinubu \*Asks President to stop blame game

By: ISAAC ODEH, Kaduna

Former Vice President Atiku Abubakar, has asked President Bola Tinubu to adopt President Javier Milei of Argentina approach to reforms and stop blaming opposition political parties and his predecessor.

In a statement titled, 'Argentina's Javier Milei approach to reforms should serve as a lesson for Tinubu', the 2023 presidential candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party

(PDP) said both President Milei and Tinubu took over in 2023 and inherited a disoriented economy, but both applied different measures to recovery.

According to the statement he personally signed on Sunday, Atiku Abubakar said what President Javier Milei did to return his country to a place where investors are 'starting to believe' should serve as a lesson to Nigeria's Bola Tinubu.

The former VP said unless, and until there are clear-cut policies

and pathway to economic rejuvenation predicated on a leadership led sacrifice, there will be discontentment, especially among the youths, which may find expression in protests and for which it will be silly to continue to blame the opposition for.

"I read a recent report in the Reuters titled: Argentina's market double down on Milei as investors 'start to believe'.

"I took a keen interest in reading the report because I know quite

well that Argentina and Nigeria closed the last quarter of the year 2023 on a similar path of economic downturn.

"In the case of Nigeria, a new government was installed at or about the middle of 2023, for Argentina, the new government came on board in December.

"Both leaders inherited a disoriented economy, but both applied different measures to recovery.

"President Javier Milei of Argentina was sworn into office

on 10 December 2023. He inherited a worse condition than Nigeria's.

"Nigeria is where we are today simply because of what Tinubu has done or did not do.

"His shifting the blame on the opposition and, even ridiculously, his predecessor is needless and myopic. Market forces don't play politics. They respond to your actions and inactions.

"President Milei's major campaign promise was to re-

## Zulum Distributes 447 Houses, Food Items To IDPs In Dalori

*\*Flags off closure of all informal IDP camps*

By: **SADIQ ABUBAKAR, Maiduguri**

**B**orno State Governor, Babagana Umara Zulum yesterday, distributed 447 resettlement housing, food items and other basic necessities to Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) at Dalori community in Konduga Local Government Area.

The Borno State Government constructed the houses to resettle families dislodged by the Boko Haram insurgency.

The newly resettled community have been provided with a hospital, school and water facilities. The resettled IDPs were drawn from two locations: 197 households from Kawar Maila camp and 250 families from Dalori town.

Each of the 447 households, comprising about 2,500 family members received food items, mats, blankets and clothing materials.

Speaking during the distribution, Zulum said the Borno State Government has provided essential humanitarian support to the returnees to enable them start life afresh.

The governor added that his administration will also provide agricultural kits and entrepreneurship support for the returnees to have sustainable livelihood sources.

Since 2019, the Zulum-led administration has resettled over one million

IDPs and constructed over 10,000 resettlement houses across 20 locations.

Governor Zulum also hinted at a plan for the reconstruction and resettlement of Dalwa and Sandiya communities, among other locations, which were dislodged and destroyed by the Boko Haram insurgents in Konduga Local Government Area.

Meanwhile, Governor Zulum also flagged off the closure of all informal IDP camps in Maiduguri, the Borno State capital, on Sunday.

"It is no longer sustainable to keep people at the IDP camps, and we want the people to be responsible members in their various communities by contributing to the development of the state," Zulum stated.

He added, "Therefore, we will return them to their ancestral homes so that they can start fending for themselves."

The governor noted that all official IDP camps in Maiduguri Metropolitan Council and its environs had been closed since last year.

He said his administration will ensure that all informal IDP camps in Maiduguri are closed before May 29, 2024.

"Today, we have commenced the closure of all informal IDP camps in Maiduguri, and we will Insha'Allah close all informal IDP camps in the metropolis before May 29th 2024," Zulum said.

## 65 CSOs Pull Out Of NLC, TUC Planned Strike To Avoid Anarchy

*\*Wants labour unions to do more of dialogue with FG*

*\*Accuse NLC President, Joe Ajaero of pursuing political agenda*

By: **JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON**

**A**head of the commencement of planned nationwide strike by Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) and the Trade Union Congress, (TUC), 65 Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) have pulled out with considerations that the strike might stir up anarchy and cause more hardship on citizens.

The Civil Society Organisations under aegis of Coalition of Civil Society Organisations Forum, also warned against going the Sudan's way.

"Any attempt to embark on a nationwide strike during these critical periods of hunger and harsh economy, could be hijacked by hoodlums and criminal elements, who have been waiting for the slightest opportunity to

unleash terror; disrupt public peace, loot business premises and markets.

On February 16, the NLC had announced a nationwide protest scheduled for February 27 and 28, over the failure to implement the agreements reached on October 2, following the removal of the fuel subsidy.

This decision followed the conclusion of a 14-day ultimatum issued to the federal government regarding the widespread hardship.

The coalition of the CSOs which disclosed this in a statement jointly signed by Comrade Buba Ibrahim Mohammed and Comrade George Phillips, the Coordinator and Secretary, insisted that the strike action will only stir up civil unrest and further worsen the already bad security situation as well as damage the fragile economy.

According the coalition, the views gathered from some of their members and citizens across the country are that the labour unions are trying to undermine the current Tinubu-led administration and create a process for breakdown of law and order to score cheap political points.

"As Civil Society Organisations, we do understand the depth of economic challenges facing the ordinary citizens, especially the workers, but we cannot fold our arms and support a move that will further damage and threaten our peaceful coexistence".

While stating that it's not unaware that the labour unions had the constitutional right to make demands and embark on strike to drive home their demands, it maintained that NLC and TUC should know that Nigeria is already sitting

on keg of gun powder that must not be allowed to explode.

"Part of reasons we have refused to join forces with labour unions to create anarchy and cause more hardship for the people. Instead, we are making frantic efforts to meet with federal government to discuss how to amicably resolve the issues at stake.

"We recognise the importance of addressing labour-related concerns and advocating for workers' rights, we kindly urge the labour unions to explore alternative means of dialogue and negotiation with the relevant authorities." It further stated.

The group which accused NLC President, Joe Ajaero of pursuing a political agenda, appealed to NLC and TUC members to give the federal government time to implement the minimum wage issue and



## Buhari Destroyed Nigeria's Economy In 8 Years Tenure, Igboho Alleges

*\*Says Tinubu not responsible for hardships in Nigeria*

By: **BAYOAKAMO, Ibadan**

**T**he Yoruba Nation agitator, Chief Sunday Adeyemo Igboho has accused former President Muhammadu Buhari of allegedly destroying Nigeria's economy during his eight years tenure.

Speaking on Saturday at the burial reception held at Sablak Event Centre,

Sanyo, Ibadan after the funeral ceremony of his late mother, Mrs S.A. Adeyemo, he declared that President Bola Tinubu is not responsible for the present level hardship in Nigeria

Chief Adeyemo alleged that Nigeria's economy was destroyed before Asiwaju Tinubu was elected and sworn in as the President of Nigeria on May 29, 2023.

According to the Yoruba Nation agitator, a bad Nigerian economy was handed over to President Tinubu by the immediate past administration in the country.

Stressing that President Tinubu didn't destroy Nigeria's economy, he said, "my pain with Yorubas is that while Buhari was in power, I was shouting that we should unite and free ourselves from this

suffering. Buhari has nothing to offer us. "Buhari handed over a government he had destroyed to Tinubu. Now some Yorubas are crying that they are hungry, have you seen Igbos crying? They have sent all Fulanis out of their lands and they are farming, doing what they want with their

*Continued on Page 7*

# We Are Homeless, Sleeping Outside, Victims Of Demolished Ugwuoba Cattle Market Enugu Cry Out



- Northerners worst hit
- Say women, children, drenched by rains, scorched by sun

they saw nothing and then the second time, they also came with other security agencies such as the army, police and DSS and they saw nothing.

"After that, we got three days quit notice. We tried to ask what was happening but got no replies and the following day, our local government chairman came to tell us they were coming the following day to demolish Ugwuoba Garki Cattle Market, let everyone pack his things.

"We asked him why, he said there is no alternative, it's from Enugu State Government we had nothing to do and now our wives and children are sleeping outside and crying because rain and sun are beating them, that's

why we're praying and calling on our leaders to do something about this because we're facing a lot of problems.

"Especially if you enter vehicle from Enugu to Onitsha, they insult you and say it is your people who voted President Tinubu please we are sleeping outside because we are all Nigerians.

"Many Igbos are living up North, we are in serious problem especially women and children. They should consider the fact that we have been living here for more than 28 years and now they have demolished everywhere, nothing remains. After all this, nobody said anything," he lamented.

## Hardship: Adopt Argentina's Javier Milei Approach To Reforms, Atiku Tells Tinubu

position the Argentine economy after years of slow growth, high debt levels, triple-digit inflation (160% when he took over the Presidency in December 2023) and 40% poverty rate.

"His first task was to begin implementing measures to achieve greater macroeconomic stability and promote higher global competitiveness.

"He came into the office with a comprehensive stabilization plan, which seeks to implement far-reaching measures within the context of a market-oriented economy.

"He started off cutting government expenditure by cutting the size of government and wastages; blocked stealing of government funds, and attracted Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) through concessions, tax holidays, and improved ease of doing business. "President Milei flies regular

business class for all his travels and does not offer the presidential fleet of Argentina for his son's birthday.

"Likewise, there is no settlement for his hangers-on and political allies through unwieldy and burdensome appointments to public offices.

Argentina's Milei did not build the largest government like Tinubu did at a time when our economy was and still on its knees.

The examples set by President Milei are the requirement of leadership in a time when the economy has begun to fail the expectations of the people.

The reforms so far implemented by the Tinubu administration are ad hoc and hurriedly put together without proper review. Ours is unlike Argentina's Milei, who is sequencing his reforms.

President Milei anticipates the after-reform shocks and admits

that things will be tough for the people. But he is fully prepared for the aftershocks and has in place mitigating pills.

He walks the talk. He makes sacrifices himself by giving up perks of office.

It is not business-as-usual for the presidency while the people are called upon to make sacrifices.

Argentina runs a lean government by reducing the number of ministries, privatizing nearly 40 state-owned enterprises, and reducing wasteful spending.

"Conversely, Tinubu in Nigeria increased the number of ministers and ministries and is spending enormous resources renovating houses for himself, his deputy, and the first lady.

That is nothing short of Nero playing fiddle while Rome is on fire!

"Worse still, Tinubu has refused to roll up his sleeves and do the

work that he signed up for. Instead, he and his team are preoccupied with behaving like Napoleon and Squealer, characters in the satire book Animal Farm, who made it a state policy scapegoating Snowball (the opposition) for their own failures arising from their ill-advised policies."

Atiku said he was attracted to the reforms in Argentina because Javier Milei's stabilization plan bears a similar emblem with his Recover Nigeria Plan.

"It is a plan that I am more than willing to disclose details of its workings with the current government in order to take Nigeria out of the depth of hunger and anger that we find ourselves.

"The plan includes strategic steps we must take to recover the economy and make it stronger, dynamic, resilient, and competitive.

We had outlined plans to relax the fiscal constraints facing us to include:

Improving Spending Efficiency and Blocking Leakages  
Saving money through:

"a. A review of fiscal support for non-performing government enterprises and the privatization of those that can not sustain themselves.

" b. Steps to improve spending efficiency through a gradual reduction in government recurrent expenditures, ensuring that those expenditures reflect higher levels of service delivery. Over the medium term, recurrent expenditures should not exceed 45% of the budget.

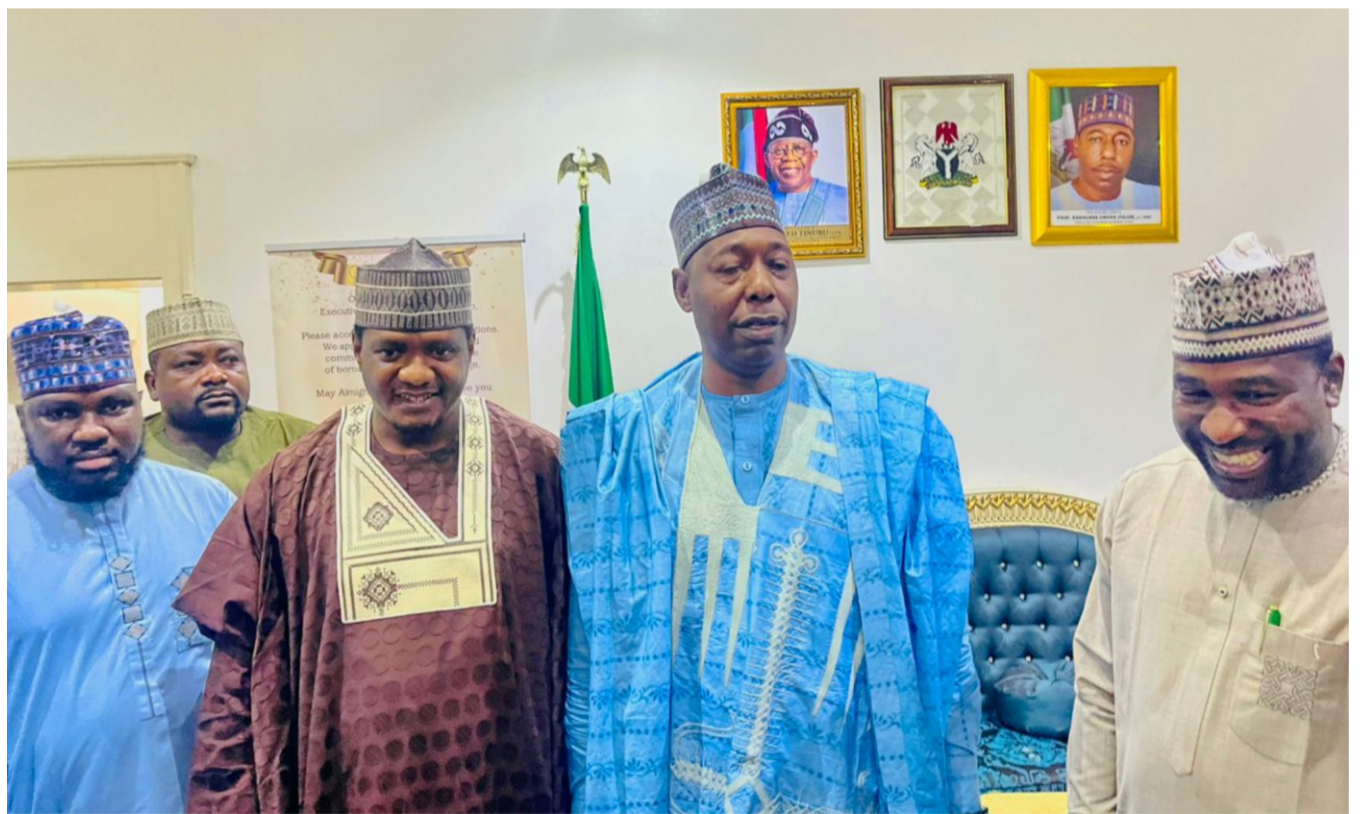
"c. A review of government procurement processes to ensure high levels of transparency, competitiveness, and value-for-money and eliminate all leakages."

# Zulum, Other Dignitaries Grace Wedding Of Former Kaduna Reps Member, Samaila Suleiman

By: AMOS EBUTE MATHEW

Several dignitaries were spotted at the wedding ceremony of Former House of Representatives Member, now Special Adviser (SA) to the Executive Governor of Kaduna State, Senator Uba Sani on Infrastructure, Hon Samaila Suleiman, that took place in Borno State

over the weekend. In attendance, was the Executive Governor of Borno State, Babagana Zulum, Speaker of Kaduna State House of Assembly, Rt. Hon. Yusuf Liman Dahiru, Chief Press Secretary (CPS) to the Executive Governor of Kaduna State, Mohammad Lawal Shehu among other dignitaries.



## Police Arrest Fake Philanthropist, Recover Fraudulently Obtained Bags Of Rice In Enugu

By; **KELVIN OKPARA, Enugu.**

The Enugu state Police Command has apprehended a suspected fake philanthropist and recovered fraudulently obtained bags of rice within Enugu metropolis.

Spokesman for the Command, DSP Daniel Ndukwe, disclosed in a statement yesterday in Enugu, saying the swift response of police operatives serving in the Ogui Police Division led to arrest of one Joseph Nnamani, 45 years old.

Ndukwe noted that if not for police intervention, Nnamani would have successfully defrauded a businessman of 18 bags of rice valued at about N400,000 under the guise of buying and using the rice for charity at a church on February 14, 2024, Valentine's Day.

"On Valentine's Day, Nnamani went to the premises of a church (name withheld) in Ogui, Enugu, from where he called the businessman (names withheld) on the phone, requesting 18 pieces of 25kg bags of rice with the pretense of wanting to use the same for charity to the church.

"The businessman accordingly supplied the rice and unsuspectingly followed Nnamani to the bank to receive his payment through bank

transfer.

"But in the course of effecting the payment, Nnamani secretly left the bank, went back to the church, and made away with the bags of rice to an unknown destination.

"The suspect, however, could not run or hide for so long, as police operatives, upon receiving the report, embarked on an intelligence-driven investigation, which led to his arrest on Feb. 20, 2024, at Enene, Enugu," he said.

The PPRO noted that upon his arrest, eight out of the 18 25kg bags of rice were recovered from him, after he had re-bagged and sold the other bags at Oye Emene Market, Enugu.

Ndukwe said the suspect and his cohorts would definitely have a date with the court of law once investigations are concluded on the matter.

"The citizenry, particularly businessmen and women, are hereby advised to always be security conscious and wary of whom and how they transact businesses in such circumstances, to avoid falling prey to fraudulent suspects like Nnamani.

"Additionally, while the investigation lasts, person(s) who may have suffered a similar act of fraud by the suspect, are encouraged to report to the mentioned police division to volunteer relevant information,"



**Police Arrest Fake Philanthropist, Recover Fraudulently Obtained Bags Of Rice In Enugu**

## Ghanian Monarch, Albino Foundation, Physicians, Others Pay Glowing Tribute To Late Medical, Literally Icon, Prof. Okoro

By; **KELVIN OKPARA, Enugu**

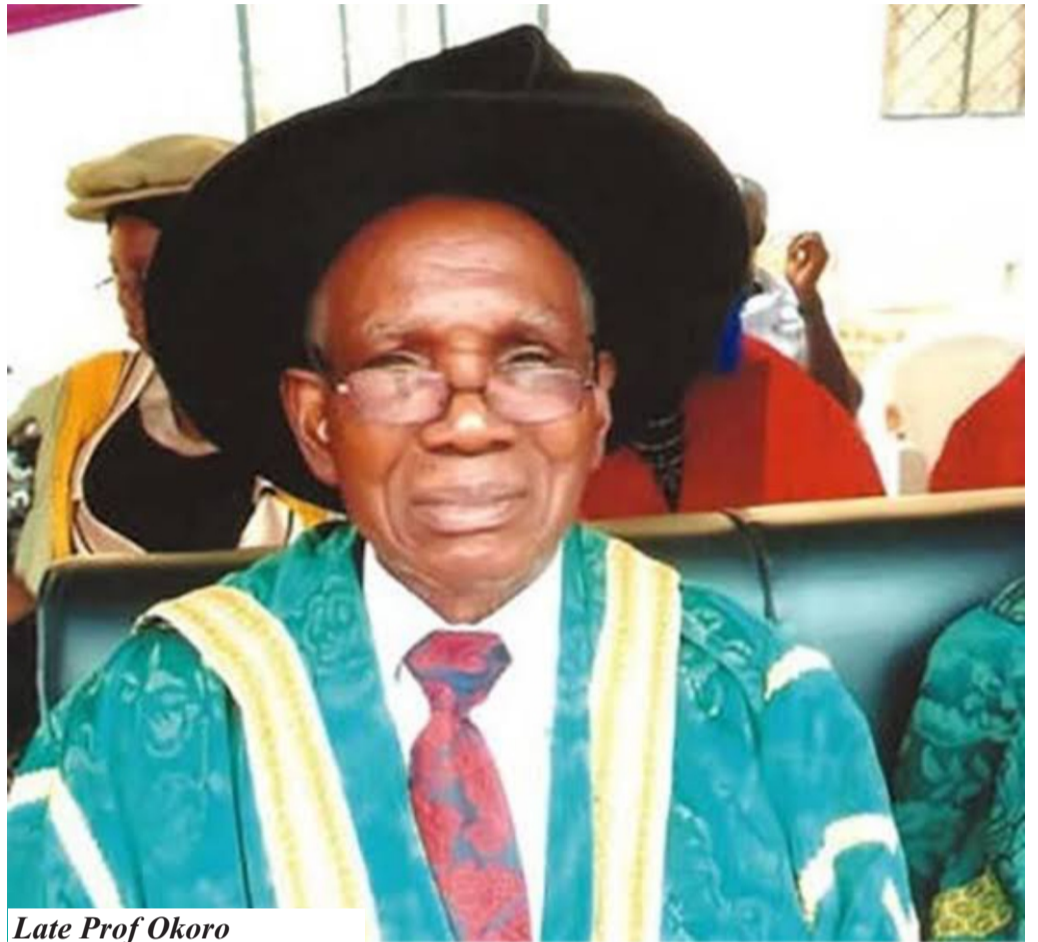
The traditional ruler of Nandom Traditional Area, Upper West Region, Ghana, His Royal Highness, (HRH) Prof. Edmund Nminyem, Albino Association in Nigeria, as well as dignitaries from all walks of life on Tuesday, paid glowing tributes to the late medical icon, Prof. Anezionwu Okoro, the Author of the popular novel, 'Village Headmaster' saying he will not die in the history of Africa.

The Ghana Monarch and close ally of the late renowned Dermatologist, spoke in Enugu on Tuesday, during the Night of Tributes organised in honour of Prof. Okoro who passed on January 20, 2024 at the age of 94 years.

Nminyem, however, described the late medical expert, author and poet who had over eighty books to his credit as the greatest dermatologist in Africa, stressing that he late prof Okoro, was a Pan Africanist per excellence who believed in the unity of African continent.

He said Okoro has done a lot in his literary writing and will not die in the history of Africa, science, politics and in humanities, saying he really touched lives during his time on earth. According to him, "We should immortalize and celebrate him and if we have few people like him, Africa will be a great continent scientifically, politically and otherwise. "He was so humble, very great in scientific world or poetic and each time I wanted to give up, Okoro will encourage me. He will do all he can to help his friends which I benefited immensely,".

In his tribute, Founder of Albino Foundation, Mr Jake Epelle, who spoke on behalf of his members, said that the late Prof. Okoro was



**Late Prof Okoro**

more than a medical doctor to persons with albinism, as those who encountered him were thoroughly treated.

He recalled that the medical guru started treating them as far back as 1954 and continued to treat them until his demise in January this year, saying they will miss him a great deal.

"He was very inspiring, has touched lives and anyone with albinism that he treated, comes with clean and smooth skin. He was the second dermatologist in Africa, a father and a mentor.

On his part, founder of the popular Memphys Neurosurgery hospital Enugu, Prof. Sam Ohaegbulam, also extolled the qualities of the late Prof. Okoro, stating that he was a man with exceptional humility, who never quarreled with anyone.

"Okoro is a unique person who knows how to best resolve disputes. He served in very high positions as a director in the oil industries and nobody ever challenged his transparency and honesty, adding that he was a dedicated and committed teacher.

He said the "Medical field will miss him on the

treatment of skin diseases,".

National President of Old boys Association of Methodist College Uzuakoli, who is also Chairman of Enugu Sports Club, Sir, Victor Atuonwou in his tribute, said late Prof. Okoro who was an alumni of the prestigious college, lived a life worthy of emulation.

The late literally icon, was many persons rolled into one, adding that he impacted lives "and that is why we have come to celebrate the good life late Prof. lived.

Delivering a sermon earlier, Venerable Emeka Ezeji of All Saints Anglican Church, Enugu noted that late Okoro was a devoted member of the church, who lived his life for others, a lovely human being who rendered service to humanity.

The cleric noted that late Okoro wrote more poems than those in the university.

"He is a socialite who loved mingling with others, had his tentacles which were widely spread as he married from Edo and often reaches out to humanity which was the gospel of

Christ.

The Anglican Priest added that "the late professor has touched a lot of lives and I pray that his children will continue the legacies that he left for them," the clergyman said.

Dr. Ogbonnaya Okoro, one of the deceased sons, expressed satisfaction that his father lived a fulfilled life, stating that he should be celebrated as he wrote children and medical books.

"My father is a gentleman. I will miss his gentle nature and his story telling," he said.

The late emeritus professor who served at the University of Ibadan, Oyo State, South West, Nigeria authored several works of fiction, medicine/health, environmental sciences, ecology, and over 200 poems.

Among them were the popular 'One Week One Trouble', 'The Village School' and 'The Village Headmaster'.

The night of tributes and Service of Songs was graced by personalities from different parts of the country, including various groups and professional bodies.

## Hardship: Stop Intimidating Labour Over Planned Protest, Federal Workers Tell DSS

\*Says position of DSS insulting sensitivity of Nigerian people

\*Insists federal government secretariats nationwide would be totally shut down

By; **BAYO AKAMO**  
Ibadan

The National Coordinator, Federal Workers Forum (FWF) Comrade Andrew Emelieze on Thursday urged the Directorate of State Security Service, (DSS) to stop intimidating labour on the planned two days protest by Labour unions in the country from Tuesday.

Comrade Emelieze in a statement made available to journalists, cautioned the DSS to desist from, "undemocratic, unconstitutional and primitive position of always trying to coerce the citizenry."

According to the FWF National Coordinator, "The DSS should note that they are beneficiaries of

tax payers money, protest is natural, constitutional and equally a fundamental human right.

"Farmers all over Europe are protesting, there have been pockets of citizenry protest against hardship nationwide, the case of labour in Nigeria cannot be different. The DSS should stop intimidating labour, the position of the DSS is insulting the sensitivity of the Nigerian people", he said.

Comrade Emelieze added "Enough of this hypocrisy, the DSS is called upon to face the living condition crisis challenge confronting its rank and file. The DSS should be a people's security outfit and we expect to see civility emanating from the DSS." "The DSS is called upon to

stop expressing bitterness and hate towards labour and the Nigerian people. The era of intimidation has gone, our people are more aware and the Nigerian people can even call for the liquidation of the DSS as done by the #EndSars movement, so stop this unnecessary and unwarranted attack on labour.

"The nascent call for protest is popular, constitutional and legal.

What we expect from the DSS is to ensure that the protest in peaceful rather than trying to blackmail labour. Our people are suffering, the DSS is not in a position to stop our people from crying out".

The FWF then advised the NLC and TUC to settle their differences and speak

with one voice, saying it will be wrong for the TUC President Tommy Etim Okon to speak on behalf of workers, saying "his address against the planned two days protest is illegitimate and a sabotage against the working people of Nigeria.

According to Comrade Emelieze, "The Nigerian workers are fully ready for the two days protest. On our part as federal workers, we shall ensure that all federal government secretariat nationwide are totally shut down.

"Etim cannot speak on behalf of workers. His address against the planned two days protest is illegitimate and a sabotage against the working people of Nigeria. Etim is talking to himself, he is on his own," he said.



Gov Dauda Lawal

## Zamfara Gov't Denies Banning Bread Production, Says It Only Blocked Supply Chain To Bandits

By; **IMRANA ABDULLAHI**, Kaduna

Governor Dauda Lawal clarified that the Zamfara State Government did not ban bread production in any part of the state.

The Bakers Association in Zamfara State ordered a halt to bread production due to the government's alleged ban on motorcycles delivering bread to bandit enclaves.

In a statement issued on Wednesday in Gusau, the spokesperson of the Zamfara Governor, Sulaiman Bala Idris, revealed that the government's decision only targets the supply chain to bandits across the state.

According to the statement, the ban on bread and fuel supply to volatile areas was implemented to disrupt the operations of bandits terrorising the state.

The statement read in parts: "The Zamfara State Government would like to clarify the news that has been circulating, claiming that bakers have been banned from producing bread in the state.

"The government wants to state categorically that this is not true and that the rumours have been

causing confusion and concern among residents and business owners.

"The Zamfara State Government has no intention of interfering with the production or sale of bread, a staple food item in many households.

"Furthermore, we want to stress that our government is dedicated to supporting local businesses and ensuring all citizens can access essential food. We recognise the vital role that small businesses play in our state's economy, and we are committed to creating an enabling environment for them to thrive.

"We devised a plan to counter the bandits' attacks, creating chaos in certain parts of the state.

"This strategy involves prohibiting the supply of bread and fuel to unstable areas to disrupt the bandits' activities since they rely on these essential items to carry out their criminal acts.

"The Zamfara State Government hopes that by implementing this ban, they can restore peace and security to the affected areas and safeguard the lives and properties of the people. This ban is part of a broader strategy to achieve these goals."

## Use Professionals To Implement Developmental Policies - APC-IGG President

By; **JABIRU A. HASSAN**, Kano

The national president, APC Initiative For Good Governance (APC-IGG) Ambassador Musa Mohammed Tsoken has called on the executive to appoint professionals for the successful implementation of all government policies.

He stated this on Tuesday during an interview with journalists in Abuja, where he reacted that using professionals would facilitate successful implementation of all programmes that are initiated at local, states and federal governments level respectively.

Ambassador Musa Tsoken announced that the Bola

Tinubu administration is making good efforts to appoint competent managers that are trying their best to ensure the success of the government, giving an example with the appointment of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF) Senator George Akume who is serving professionally.

"Tinubu is trying to appoint professionals in his government, and we have seen how the SGF is making excellent efforts to ensure that government's policies are being carefully implemented, therefore, we are also advising the states and local government areas to also appoint professionals



Ambassador Tsoken

to deliver successfully, especially in the area of democratic dividends". He emphasized.

Ambassador Tsoken called on the citizens of Nigeria to offer more prayers for our fatherland

and for our leaders to be more steadfast on the control of the present predicament that resulted in the inflation and high price of food items which is a great challenge that is facing the globe.

## Buhari Destroyed Nigeria's Economy In 8 Years Tenure, Igboho Alleges

lands", he said.

The Yoruba Nation agitator added, "Why can't Yorubas unite and liberate the South West from Fulanis so that our fathers and mothers can return to their farmland?"

Meanwhile, Leader and Founder of Ilana Omo Oodua Worldwide, Emeritus Professor Banjo Akintoye expressed his intention to return to Nigeria with the arrival of Sunday Igboho last Friday.

Speaking through Chief Gani

Alagbala, Prof Akintoye who has been in self exile since the incarceration of the Yoruba Nation agitator in Benin Republic, disclosed that he was highly fulfilled as a Yoruba, to witness the eventual return of Chief Adeyemo to Nigeria, after long battle with the authorities. The Emeritus Professor of History speaking through Chief Alagbala from the United States of America reaffirmed that the Yoruba Nation would soon be realised

New Nigerian recalls that Chief Adeyemo was arrested alongside his wife in Cotonou, Benin Republic by security operatives on July 19 after fleeing Nigeria to evade arrest by Nigeria's secret police.

The Department of State Services (DSS) had declared Igboho wanted after its operatives carried out a bloody midnight raid on his residence in the Soka area of Ibadan, Oyo State.

# NDLEA Intercepts UK Bound Cocaine Concealed In Shoes, Headgear, Apprehends 26 suspects In Lagos, Kano, Others

By ; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

At least, 540 grammes of cocaine concealed in canvas shoes and 225mg tramadol hidden in ladies headgear heading to the United Kingdom have been intercepted by operatives of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA).

Similarly, 26 suspects have been apprehended by the agency in Lagos, Kano, Borno, Kebbi and Edo States in connection with their involvement in trafficking of assorted illicit drugs.

While three out of the suspects were linked to some imported drugs and arms uncovered at the Lagos Port in January, 12 others were said to have been arrested in Kano with different quantities of opioids and other illicit drugs were recovered from them.

The Director, Media and Advocacy of the Agency Mr. Femi Babafemi made the disclosure in a statement yesterday.

While giving a breakdown on the those arrested in connection with the arms and drugs at the Lagos Port, Babafemi identified those already arrested as members of the syndicate as a clearing and notify party of the two containers, Falowo Samuel Kayode; a dock worker, Anjorin Idowu and Uzairu Ahmed Iguda, who is in charge of the Five Star terminal at the port.

He added that another dock worker at the terminal, Mohammed Muktar Sule (alias organizer) who is equally linked to the syndicate is currently at large.

"The agency swung into action following the operations of the organized criminal network behind the importation of two containers laden with illicit drugs, assorted arms and ammunition from Durban, South Africa to the Tincan Seaport in Lagos.

"Based on credible intelligence, the Agency had requested for a 100 percent joint examination of two containers marked MSCU 4581770 and TRHU 7968071 from South Africa. As a result, the exercise was conducted with other stakeholders on 18th and 19th of January, 2024 during which 56.39kg cocaine and 795kg Colorado, a synthetic strong strain of cannabis among other illegal items were recovered from the containers.

"Following a tasking order by the Chairman/Chief Executive Officer of NDLEA, Brig Gen Mohamed Buba Marwa (Retd) to a combined team of specialized units of the agency to unravel those behind the importation of the large consignments of the illicit drugs, ongoing investigations have led to the



Suspects arrested by NDLEA in Kano

discovery of more bags of Colorado weighing 192.7kg, a pistol, and rounds of ammunition removed from the container, MSCU 4581770 and hidden in an empty container before the 100 percent joint examination at the Five Star terminal."

"Consequently, two suspects; Uzairu Ahmed Iguda who is in charge of the terminal's container positioning and stacking, and Anjorin Idowu who is a dock worker in the terminal have been arrested.

"Another suspect, Mohammed Muktar Sule (alias organizer) now at large, is also a dock worker in the terminal.

According to the statement, investigations revealed that the three suspects conspired with the agent and notify party, Falowo Samuel Kayode to remove the 192.7kg Colorado, pistol and rounds of ammunition from the container to an empty container in the terminal.

The latest seizure brings the total recovered from the two containers to 56.39kg of cocaine and 987.9kg of Colorado with a combined weight of 1,044.29kg.

Similarly, it added that investigations revealed that three kingpins based in South Africa are connected with the importation of the containers. The kingpins; Odeyemi Taiwo Emmanuel, Akinyemi Olayinka and Adebayo Adewole Emmanuel are now on the Agency's wanted list.

The statement stated further that "At least 540 grams of cocaine

concealed in canvas shoes heading to the UK were intercepted at a courier firm in Lagos on Friday 23rd Feb by NDLEA operatives of the Directorate of Operation and General Investigation, DOGI. Equally, a consignment of tramadol 225mg hidden in ladies headgear going to the UK was also seized same day at the courier house, while another parcel containing ecstasy concealed in body cream container meant for Cyprus was also intercepted."

It also mentioned that different quantities of opioids and other illicit drugs were recovered from at least 12 young men arrested in parts of Kano between Monday 19th and Friday 23rd February.

According to the agency, the suspects are; Yusuf Abdullahi, 20; Usman Muh'd, 18; Sadiq Jibrin, 20; Ibrahim Lawan, 25; Ukasha Usaini, 19; Sahabi Lamini, 15.

Others are Isiyaka Mohd, 28; Bashir Ayuba, 36; Ahmad Idris, 18; Abubakar Sani, 29; Bashir Mohd, 21 and Udochukwu Ezekiel, 35.

In a related development, Operatives of Edo NDLEA raided a drug joint under powerline off Etete road, GRA Benin City on Tuesday, February 20 and they nabbed a 24-year-old sales girl, Jessica Destiny. As a result, they recovered assorted illicit drugs.

A follow up operation the following day led to the arrest of the owner of the joint, 36-year-

old Ibrahim Sani who is the Commander, Arewa Association Vigilantes in the area.

Similarly, a consignment of 179kg cannabis was recovered by operatives at Badagry Waterside, Lagos on Wednesday, February 21 – and a 67-year-old grandpa, Rafiu Ogunro was arrested on Thursday, February 22 at Magbon, Ogun State with 57kg cannabis, 2,700 pills of tramadol, and 231 bottles of Codeine syrup, weighing 2.31 litres.

Elsewhere in Borno, a 25-year-old lady, Zara Mele was apprehended with quantities of cocaine and heroin at Baga check point on Tuesday, February 20; while 26-year-old, Usman Shuaibu and 22-year-old, Mohammed Lawan were also arrested with quantities of the same class A drug at Meri and Babban Layi areas of Maiduguri the same day respectively.

The agency said that no less than 44,820 pills of opioids being taken to Zamfara State by Tasiu Mohammed, 25, and Abubakar Tanko, 54, were intercepted along Jega-Sokoto road by NDLEA officers in Kebbi State, while a farmer Ali Abdulhamid, 35, was arrested in his farm where he grows tomatoes and some stems of cannabis sativa weighing 73 kilograms at Bakin Kasuwa village, Birnin Yero area of Igabi LGA, Kaduna State.

In addition, two suspects; Shuaibu Ahmed, 38, and Tanimu

Abdullahi, 29, travelling in a commercial bus from Lagos to Kano with 99 blocks of cannabis weighing 37kg were intercepted by NDLEA officers along Kwali-Gwagwalada express road, Abuja on Monday, February 19; while one Michael Okefi was arrested at Upper Iweka area of Onitsha, Anambra State with 483 bottles of codeine-based cough syrup concealed in two 50-litre kegs. A follow up operation led to the arrest of the actual owner, Osinachi Jasper.

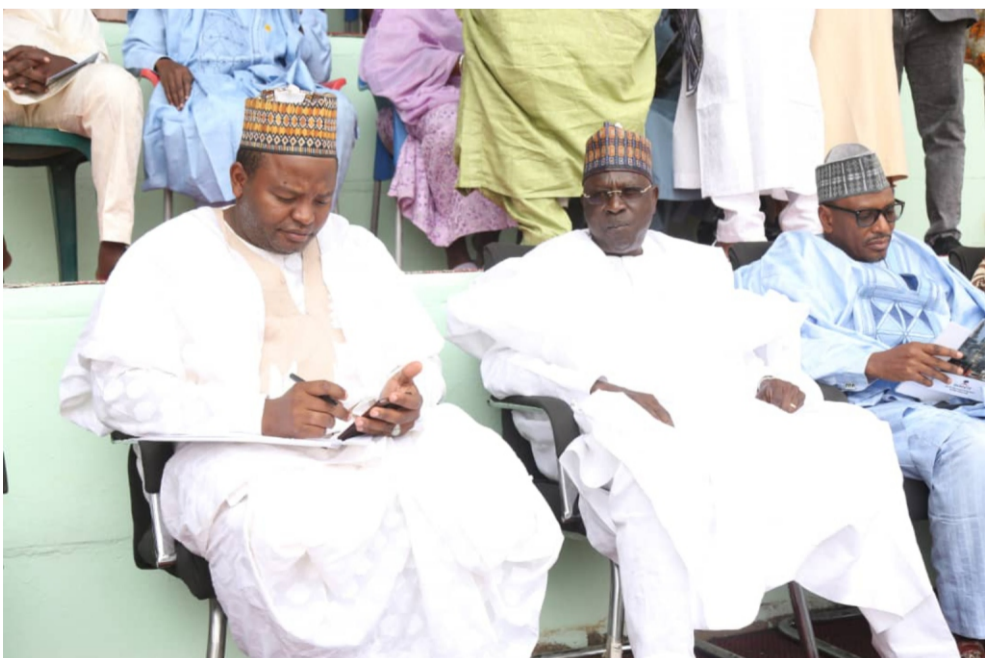
NDLEA further stated that its commands across the country have intensified their War Against Drug Abuse (WADA) advocacy lectures which include; Sensitisation lectures for students of Fatahur Rahman Academy, Gumel, Jigawa State; students of Boys High School, Nawfia, Anambra State; students of Government Senior and Junior College, Victoria Island, Lagos.

Meanwhile, Chairman/Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of NDLEA, Brig. Gen. Mohamed Buba Marwa (Retd) has commended the officers of Tincan, Lagos, Edo, Ogun, Kaduna, Kano, Anambra, Kebbi, Borno and FCT Commands for a job well done.

Gen. Marwa also lauded their counterparts across the country for intensifying their WADA advocacy lectures, thereby creating parity between their drug supply reduction and drug demand reduction activities.



Deputy Chairman, House Committee on Commerce, Rt. Hon. Ambassador, James Shuaibu Barka, representing the Speaker House of Representatives, Rt. Hon. Abbas Tajudeen during the opening ceremony of the 45th Kaduna International Trade Fair the event was colourful with President of Kaduna Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines, and Agriculture (KADCCIMA), Esv. Ishaya Idi and others top ViP's in attendance in Kaduna. **Photo: BASHIR BELLO DOLLARS.**



# Governor Inuwa Yahaya Secures AfDB Partnership For Gombe's Agro-Allied Development, Livelihood Projects

*\*AfDB DG lauds governor's visionary development agenda*



By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The Africa Development Bank (AfDB) has assured Gombe State Government of its strong commitment to support the State's development drive especially as it affects the Special Agro Processing Zone (SAPZ) and the Inclusive Service Delivery and Livelihood Empowerment Integrated Project (ISDLEIP).

A statement signed by the Director-General (Press Affairs) Government House Gombe, Ismaila Uba Misilli, made available yesterday, said the Director General of the AfDB, Nigeria Country Department, Mr Lamin Barrow made this commitment when he received Governor Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya at the AfDB office in Abuja.

Mr. Barrow restated AfDB's resolve to support Governor Inuwa's drive to improve the quality of life of the people of Gombe State by increasing access of the poor and vulnerable

segments of the populations to basic social services in water, sanitation, hygiene, health and education, as well as restoring livelihoods and strengthening food security and safety nets of the citizens in line with the IBSDLEIP objectives.

On Special Agro Processing Zone, Mr. Barrow observed that Gombe State has the potential of transforming the agriculture sector into a viable business enterprise that will not only satisfy local needs but international market as well.

He therefore assured of AfDB's commitment to supporting Gombe's endeavour to promote increased productivity, value addition, market access and private sector investment in agricultural value chain commodities like soybeans, maize, cotton, and sesame seeds among others.

"Our focus on the SAPZ is on the promotion of commodities that have a high potential to boost export revenues or import substitution. The programme is designed to enhance

complementarity with existing or completed projects financed by the AfDB including those in the power, transport, water and agriculture sectors".

He said with its three dams, strategic location, peaceful environment and visionary leadership of the Governor, Gombe State is destined for greatness.

The Director General of AfDB in Nigeria paid tribute to Governor Inuwa Yahaya for investing in critical sectors that will eventually bring great economic fortunes for Gombe State and its people, pledging strong support for him.

He described the Governor as a development-centric leader with passion and visionary disposition to transform his state. Speaking earlier, Governor Inuwa Yahaya stressed the importance of collaboration between his government and institutions like AfDB in his administration's drive to transforming agriculture into a viable enterprise for local and international markets.

He told the AfDB executive that Gombe is home to Balanga, Dadinkowa, and Cham Dams. But lamented that Balanga Dam faces underutilization due to a lack of investment.

He also highlighted the state's vast arable land and its potential to be a foreign earner with proper harnessing.

Governor Inuwa said his administration put up a 1000-hectare Industrial Park Buhari Industrial Park with 400 hectares already developed with necessary infrastructure, signaling a move towards creating a sustainable economic landscape.

Despite challenges, the governor expressed determination to make the industrial park a hub, noting the progress with signed Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) for rice and tomato processing mills. He however mentioned the need to connect the hydro power plant to the substation for effective use.

"As at today, what remains is only for us to fix our sub station to the main transmission unit of

the hydro power plant and during the last investment summit we held in October 2022, we were able to sign MoU with six companies two of them have already started a rice mill and a tomato processing mills."

The Governor also took time to explain the content of the Gombe State Development Agenda known as DEVAGOM which he said is in line with key Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), focusing on infrastructure, environmental remediation, security, and education.

The Governor was accompanied by the Commissioners of Water, Environment and Forest Resources, Mohammed Saidu Fawu; Finance and Economic Development, Muhammad Gambo Magaji; Trade, Industry and Tourism, Nasiru Mohammed Aliyu mni as well as Special Adviser on Development Partners Coordination, Dr. Ishiyaku Babayo; Gombe State IBSDLEIP Project Coordinator, Engr Abdulrahib Saidu and Basic Education Sector lead, Auwal Jibrin.



# Don't Escalate Tensions In Nigeria With Nationwide Protest - Afenifere Leader Fasoranti

\*Says "Let us engage in constructive dialogue, contribute positively"

By: **BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan**

The Pan Yoruba socio political and cultural organization Afenifere on Sunday urged Nigerians not to escalate the tensions in the country with the planned nationwide protest.

National Leader of Afenifere, and leader of the Yoruba, Pa Reuben Fasoranti in a statement called on Nigerians to rather exercise patience and refrain from engaging in protests or actions that may escalate tensions.

The Afenifere leader emphasized that "while acknowledging the hardships faced by our people, it is important to recognise that these economic measures, although difficult, are part of a larger strategy aimed at fostering long-term economic stability".

Pa Fasoranti maintained that the government's commitment to

implementing these measures "is a testament to its dedication to addressing the root causes of our economic challenges, inherited from the ills of the previous years".

He stressed "As the National Leader of Afenifere, and leader of the Yoruba, I address all and sundry today with a deep understanding of the challenges facing our dear country at this critical time".

"The outcry over the hardship, hunger, and price hikes is not unexpected, yet we must come to terms with the realities of our national challenges which the present administration of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu is striving to resolve. While acknowledging the hardships faced by our people, it is important to recognise that these economic measures, although difficult, are part of a larger strategy aimed at fostering long-

term economic stability", he said Pa Fasoranti added, "The government's commitment to implementing these measures is a testament to its dedication to addressing the root causes of our economic challenges, inherited from the ills of the previous years. As a responsible leader, I appeal to every Yoruba man and woman, young and old, and our fellow citizens across the nationalities, to exercise patience and refrain from engaging in protests or actions that may escalate tensions,".

"Understandably, the immediate impact of these economic reforms is challenging to everyone, but it is crucial to allow the government the necessary time to realise the intended benefits. It is important to note that the removal of fuel subsidies and the floating of the Naira was not undertaken lightly, as we all know the great damage

done to our national prosperity through the nefarious activities of the agents of darkness within the oil and financial sectors'.

The Afenifere leader noted that these measures by the Federal Government, though painful in the short term, are designed to create a more sustainable economic environment that will benefit us all, saying, "in the long run. It requires collective understanding and resilience from every citizen as we navigate through these challenging times".

Pa Fasoranti declared further, "We cannot afford a preference for the euthanasic approach of painless death of our nation, where we are propped up with loans and subsidies until a total collapse into a failed nation, while we have the opportunity of painful healing through treatment with multiple surgeries that will guarantee not

just our survival, but restored health, vigour and thriving life.

"We must endure today's hardship for tomorrow's prosperity. I implore you to trust in the government's commitment to the welfare of our nation. Let us engage in constructive dialogue and contribute positively to the ongoing economic reforms. Join me in appealing for unity and understanding among our people. Together, we can weather this storm and emerge stronger as a nation. I want to assure you as the Leader of Afenifere, that we are actively engaging with the government to address the concerns of our people. Let us remain steadfast, patient, and united in the face of these challenges, confident that our collective resilience will pave the way for a more prosperous future."

## Delta Police Apprehends Woman With 175 Live Cartridges, As CP Abaniwonda Reels Out Achievements

By: **RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos**

The Commissioner of Police Delta State Command, CP Abaniwonda Olufemi has reeled out the plethora of achievements recorded within two weeks of assumption of office, with the arrest of a 54-yr old woman in possession of 175 rounds of live cartridges topping the list.

He said that the suspect, identified as one Efe David, 54yrs of Orija Abraka Ethiope East LGA, Delta State, was arrested with the exhibit on February 17, 2024 at about 2: 20pm by operatives of Eagle-Net special Squad while on routine patrol along Asaba/Ibusa road in a commercial Sienna vehicle coming from Onitsha.

Abaniwonda, who made the disclosure at his maiden press briefing on Wednesday, listed the achievements to include arrest of suspected notorious armed robbers, suspected cultists, drug dealers, recovery of assorted firearms, ammunition, cartridges amongst others.

His words, "ARREST OF A 54YRS OLD WOMAN IN POSSESSION OF ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-FIVE ROUNDS OF LIVE CARTRIDGES: On the 17/2/2024 at about 1420hrs, operatives of Eagle-Net special Squad while on routine patrol along Asaba/Ibusa road, flagged down a commercial Sienna vehicle coming from Onitsha, during search of the vehicle and passengers one Efe David 'f' 54yrs of Orija Abraka Ethiope East LGA, Delta State was arrested with one hundred and seventy five (175) live cartridges. Suspect is in custody and investigation is ongoing.

"ARREST OF SUSPECTED NOTORIOUS ARMED ROBBERS: On 31/01/2024 at about 2200hrs, while acting

on a tip off from a distress tricycle rider (name withheld) that three young boys hired him for from Effurun Junction to Ugholo community and diverted to a lonely road, stabbed him on his head and hands dispossessed him of his tricycle with registration number AS 8851 and fourteen thousand naira.

"On the receipt of complaint, DPO Oropoke detailed a team of detective who swung into action. Consequently, on 17/02/2024 at about 2200hrs, the team arrested one Okechukwu Gabriel aged 26 years 'm' of no. 23 Warri/Sapele road Effurun who specializes in snatching tricycle from it owners was arrested. The victim has identified the suspect as one of those who robbed him. Investigation is ongoing.

"ARREST OF A SUSPECT IN POSSESSION OF ONE LOCALLY FABRICATED BERETTA PISTOL: On 13/2/2024, at about 2055 hours, while operatives of Safe Delta were on visibility patrol along Utagbanor road, at Ukwani LGA, they sighted a black Toyota Camry with registration number KUJ 282CN, carrying three occupants, upon search of the occupants and the vehicle, one locally fabricated Beretta Pistol loaded with seven rounds of ammunition, weeds suspected to be Indian hemp were recovered from one of the occupants Chionyenedue Macdoff. Upon further investigation, the suspect confessed that he purchased the arm from one Timothy who is resident in Kaduna.

"ARREST OF SUSPECTED CULTIST, RECOVERY OF LOCALLY MADE CUT-SIZE-GUN: On the 12/2/2024, at about 2100hours, one Eze Emeruwa 'm' age 28yrs was arrested for assaulting his

girlfriend in Abraka Ethiope East LGA. During the course of investigation, suspect premises was searched and a locally made cut-to-size double barrel pistol, and seven rounds of live cartridges were recovered. Suspect also confessed to be a member of Eiye confraternity cult group. Suspect is in custody and investigation is ongoing.

"ARREST OF A SUSPECTED ARMED ROBBER, RECOVERY OF ONE FABRICATED REVOLVER PISTOL AND THREE ROUNDS OF LIVE AMMUNITION: On 15/2/2024, at about 0700 hours, Policemen attached to Eagle-Net special squad received a distress call that two young men jumped into a compound at Dublin Road, GRA, Asaba, the Police swiftly responded and moved to the scene, on sighting the policemen, the suspects fled, but one of them Isaac Victor 'm' age 31yrs was arrested and one fabricated revolver pistol was recovered from him. Investigation is ongoing.

"ARREST OF SUSPECTED CULTIST/ARMED ROBBERS: On 18/2/2024, the DPO Bomadi division received a distress call that some suspected robbers were on rampage terrorizing his area of responsibility, attacking and dispossessing shop owners of their belongings with cutlasses and other dangerous weapons. The DPO swiftly led men alongside vigilante and embark on aggressive patrol which led to the arrest of seven suspects.

"The suspects confessed to be members of BOBOS, Greenlander, and Icelanders confraternity and the following items were recovered, four cutlasses, two daggers, and one axe. Suspects are in custody and effort to arrest other members

of the gang is ongoing.

"ARREST OF A SUSPECTED CULTIST, RECOVERY OF ONE SINGLE BARREL CUT-SIZE-GUN: On the 09/02/2024 at about 0330hrs while working on credible intelligence, operatives of State Anti-Cult unit (SACU) arrested one Okolgbo Prince Onyeka, a 25yrs old native of Obiaruku in Ukwani LGA, Delta State, and known member of Arrow Bagger confraternity. Upon search, one locally Cut-to-Size Single Barrel Gun with two live cartridges, and a dagger were recovered from the suspect. Investigation is ongoing.

"ARREST A SUSPECTED ILLICIT DRUG DEALER, RECOVERY OF TWO HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-FOUR BOTTLES OF CSC CODEINE: On 16/2/2024, at about 1745 hours, acting on credible information one Ugornna Nnanye 'f' aged 32yrs of Obinnecu street was arrested along Mariam Babangida way. She was arrested based on information receive that she deals in controlled illicit drugs. Upon her arrest, Two Hundred and Eighty-Four bottles containing substance suspected to be codeine were recovered from her. Suspect is in custody and will be charged to court upon completion of investigation.

"ARREST OF A SUSPECTED ARMED ROBBER, RECOVERY OF ONE LOCALLY MADE GUN: On 05/02/2024 at about 0800hours, while men of Dragon Patrol were conducting stop and search along Kwale - Ogwashi-Uku Expressway, they intercepted a commercial Sienna Bus conveying passengers from Ughelli to Asaba. The team subjected the passengers to a random search, during which one (01) locally

# Reps Speaker Abbas Unveils Policy On Lawmakers, Staff Capacity Development

By: BAYOAKAMO, Ibadan

Speaker of the House of Representatives, Rt. Hon. Abbas Tajudeen has disclosed that the policy document on training, retraining and capacity building of members of the 10th House contained results of the assessment study conducted by the House with the support of the UNDP and other partners.

The Speaker said this at the unveiling of a policy document on training, retraining and capacity building of members of the 10th House, legislative aides and support staff for better performance and output.

Represented by the Deputy Speaker of the House, Rt. Hon. Benjamin Okezie Kalu, the Speaker stressed that the document, titled, 'Parliamentary Development Programme for 10th House of Representatives, National Assembly, 2023-2027', was prepared by the Office of the Speaker in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme.

Speaker Abbas maintained that the document contained the results of the assessment study conducted by the House with the support of the UNDP and other partners.

"The results are presented today in a document titled Parliamentary Development Programme. This is in line with our Legislative Agenda, which identifies the strengthening of the internal capacity of the legislature as a critical factor towards achieving all our other legislative objectives", he said.

"As a result, the document before us today reflects our current capabilities and the urgent requirements needed to elevate the standards of our legislative functions," he said.

He stressed that the need for continuous capacity



Representative of Speaker House of Representatives at the unveiling of the policy document.

strengthening in the legislature was well known to all, adding that the high turnover rates at the National Assembly posed a significant challenge to maintaining continuity and building on the institutional knowledge crucial for effective governance.

"In this 10th Assembly, over 80 per cent of the members are new to the legislature. This phenomenon, combined with the growing expectations of our citizens for transparency, accountability, and efficiency, underscores the urgent need for a robust framework for capacity

building within the legislature.

"As evidenced by the level of engagement, especially on social media, our constituents are becoming increasingly aware and involved in the governance process, demanding greater accountability and better service delivery from their representatives. This heightened expectation requires us to be at the forefront of legislative knowledge and practices. Also, the intricate landscape of modern governance demands a higher level of expertise, analytical skills, and adaptability among our members and supporting

staff."

Speaker Abbas added that the UNDP's Capacity and Institutional Needs Assessment Study had "laid bare the gaps in our current system," stressing that it had highlighted areas where the House needed to strengthen its capabilities to meet the demands of contemporary governance.

The Speaker stated "These include but are not limited to strengthening our law-making functions, enhancing our legislative drafting capabilities, improving our research and analysis functions, bolstering our oversight mechanisms, and advancing our engagement with

the citizens we serve.

"In view of these challenges, we must embrace a culture of continuous learning and capacity development. We must invest in human capital development, ensuring that members, staff and legislative aides are equipped with the knowledge and tools necessary to navigate the complexities of modern legislative work.

"This involves not only formal training programmes but also fostering an environment that encourages innovation, critical thinking, and a deep understanding of the issues facing Nigeria."

## Delta Police Apprehends Woman With 175 Live Cartridges, As CP Abaniwonda Reels Out Achievements

fabricated Pistol and two (02) live cartridges were recovered from one Fedelis Akpos 'm' aged 23 years, a resident of Ewhu Community Ughelli South L.G.A. The suspect concealed the gun and cartridges inside a polythene bag containing smoked fish to serve as a decoy, but the professionally trained Policemen uncovered the exhibit despite his antics. Suspect is in custody and investigation is ongoing.

"ARREST OF SUSPECTED DRUG DEALERS AND RECOVERY OF ILLICIT DRUG: on 7/2/2024 at about 1100hours, operatives of Rapid Response Squad (RRS) while conducting stop and search at Head-Bridge Asaba, flagged down a Toyota Hiace bus for a routine check. During the search, three cartons containing One Hundred bottles of substance suspected to be CSC Codeine and four hundred sachets of

250mg of Tramadol, and some other suspected hard drugs were recovered from the trio of Lucky Emmanuel 'm' of Ughelli aged 40yrs, and Enunwuone Snu 'm' aged 46yrs, and Jacob Efedeye 'm' aged 32yrs. Suspects are in custody and investigation is ongoing."

Meanwhile, CP Abaniwonda has directed all DPOs to sustain raids of identified black spots, and drug dealers in their area of responsibility, embark on

visibility patrol/stop and search duty, and ensure that crime and criminality does not thrive in their Area.

While assuring Delta residents of adequate security, he solicited for their continuous understanding, support and cooperation with the State Government and Police authorities in the fight against crime and criminality.

CP Abaniwonda also informed that the Command has

established a complaint response Unit at the Command headquarters, adding that it is in line with the directive of the Inspector General of Police mission to have a transparent policing system in Nigeria.

"For any infraction with any of our personnel, kindly reach out to CRU office or call the following dedicated phone numbers.

09155570008 | 09011112311 | 09064308018 | 09066575187", he implored.

# FCID Arrests 4 Over Alleged Police Character Certificate Forgery

By ; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

Detectives of the Force Criminal Investigations Department (FCID Annex), Alagbon Lagos have smashed a syndicate that specialises in the forgery of Police Character Certificate, arresting at least four suspects.

The arrest of the suspects was consequent upon a complaint by one Mrs Mojisola who was issued a forged police character certificate, with some amount of money obtained from her under false pretence.

Investigation has also revealed that the suspects were involved in a criminal racket involving issuance of the fake police character certificate that led to the 10-years ban of one Mrs

Shonekan upon the presentation of the fake Police Character Certificate at the UK Embassy.

The Spokesperson FCID Annex, Alagbon Lagos, ASP Mayegun Aminat who made the disclosure in a statement obtained by our correspondent, identified the suspects as Osinowo Olujimi Obafemi, 35, Sebastine Olamide, 21, Shittu Babatunde, 25 and Bilal Yekeen, 25.

According to the release, a plethora of fraudulent documents which include fake police character certificates, seven medical report issued from LASUTH belonging to several individuals, sixty-five fake international driving permits were uncovered when a search was conducted on their premises located at No. 267

Igbosere Road, off Obalende Area Lagos Island the detectives. Other exhibits recovered from the premises include 18 international driving license permit forms with different pictures belonging to different persons, one pack of both booklet of the traffic foreign vehicle regulation license among others.

The release reads, " Upon receiving a complaint from Mrs Shonekan Rukayat Mojisola bothering on falsification of police character certificate, obtaining money under false pretence, impersonation, forgery of signatures and official stamp. FCID Annex operative attached to X-Squad took swift action. This led to the arrest of Osinowo Olujimi Obafemi "M"

35 years, Sebastine Olamide "M" 21 years, Shittu Babatunde "M" 25 years and Bilal Yekeen "M" 25 years.

" The investigating team conducted a search on the premises at NO 267 Igboosere Road, off Obalende Area Lagos Island, Lagos state, uncovering a plethora of fraudulent documents, including fake police character certificates, seven medical report issued from LASUTH belonging to several individuals, sixty-five fake international driving permits, eighteen international driving license permit forms with different pictures and belonging to different persons, one pack of both booklet of the traffic foreign vehicle regulation license among others.

" Further investigation confirmed suspects' involvement in a criminal racket involving issuance of the fake police character certificate that led to the 10-years ban of Mrs Shonekan upon the presentation of the fake Police Character Certificate at the UK Embassy. They also admitted to issuing forged document to several individuals.

"The AIG FCID Annex Lagos AIG Idowu Owohunwa for the umpteenth time emphasizes the importance of Nigerians reporting criminal activities; offender will face the full wrath of the Law and urge them to seek information from the appropriate authorities."



## Issues In Nigeria Beyond Payment Of Wage Award - Oyo NLC Chairman

By; BAYOAKAMO, Ibadan.

The Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) Chairman in Oyo State, Comrade Kayode Martins has declared that the present issues in the Nigeria are beyond payment of wage award.

Comrade Martins said this on Tuesday, during a chat with journalists in Ibadan on the extension of wage award payment for six months in Oyo State by Governor Seyi Makinde.

Appreciating Governor Makinde for the extension, the NLC Chairman stressed that the situation on ground in the country has surpassed the extension of wage award payment.

"The economic situation in the country is dire, and it is having a devastating impact on workers and their families. We are committed to working with the government to find solutions, but we will not back down until we

see real progress", he said. Comrade Martins added, "The issue of wage award is just the tip of the iceberg. The root causes of the economic hardship faced by workers are much deeper and require serious attention from the government."

"We need to see a comprehensive and coherent economic plan from the government that will address the underlying causes of the economic hardship in the country"

Speaking further, Comrade

Martins said the two-day nationwide protest by the labour unions will be, peaceful to signal to authorities that the current conditions are unfavorable for the masses.

"We are calling on the government to engage in genuine consultation with the workers and their representatives, and to take into consideration their views and concerns. Workers must be at the heart of any economic plan."

"The willingness of workers in Oyo State to join the nationwide protest is a testament to the gravity of the situation and the frustration of the people. The economic hardship has become a national issue, and workers across the country are feeling the impact. By joining the protest, workers in Oyo State are sending a strong message to the government that they are not willing to accept the status."

# Gov Sule Lauds Tinubu's Initiatives Towards Economic Revival

By; SAMSONYAKI, Lafia

Governor Abdullahi Sule of Nasarawa State has lauded President Tinubu's initiatives towards reviving the economy of the country, saying that if there is any person that has the capacity to fix the economy of the country, that person is President Ahmed Bola Tinubu.

Governor Sule stated this when he hosted a delegation from the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), Nasarawa State chapter, who were at the Government House on a solidarity visit.

According to the Governor, President Tinubu has comparative advantage in the area of economy because that is his area of expertise.

"I always say it privately and openly. If there is anything I believe this president has a comparative advantage, it's in the area of the economy. I am always hopeful even with the hardships that if there is anything that this President shall get right first, it should be the economy," he stated.

Governor Sule pointed out that if Tinubu does not get the economy right then Nigeria is in trouble because nobody then could be able to fix the country's economy.

"If this President does not get the economy fixed, then I don't know who else is going to get it right. Honestly speaking, that I believe is his area of expertise. It is the area he has done well in the past. And it's the area we are hoping he will fix," he added.

The governor explained that his conviction is further strengthened whenever he had the opportunity to sit one on one with President Tinubu.

"Whenever I had the opportunity to sit with him, I saw the conviction in him that he was working on fixing the economy. It gives me comfort," he said.

He noted that since the removal of the fuel subsidy, the 36 states of the federation have received improved revenue because the money that would have gone in paying subsidy is now coming to the states and local governments. "Our money has improved. I am very transparent about this. It has improved from the over four billion that we used to receive to now six or seven billion since the removal of subsidy," he said.

Governor Sule said his administration is using the money to build needed infrastructure.

"The bulk of our money is going into infrastructure. Everywhere we are building infrastructure,

we pay between forty to fifty percent upfront. Because the cost of material are going up daily. But I am not doing that to the point of leaving the people hungry," he added.

The governor said his administration has distributed food items as palliative across the state twice and is already stocking up more food items to be distributed again across the state.

This is just as he called on the Christian leaders to go back and use the church to unite the people.

Governor Sule lamented that the 2023 general election has torn Nigerians across religious lines, with election further dividing the people of the state along ethnic lines.

"I want you to use the opportunity to call on you as leaders to use the church and go back to unite the people. The question of Muslim/Muslim ticket is over. For whatever reason, God said they are the winners. They won. They are there. We have no other option than to pray for them to succeed," he said.

He emphasized that the time of opposition is over and that it's time to support governments at the federal and state levels in order to succeed.

"We must continue to pray for the government. My message to you, is to use the church to unite the state because Nasarawa State is bigger than one individual, no matter who that individual is. Before I came here, there were three governors there were elected and served. There were two other governors who were military. All of them have left. Another time A. A Sule will be gone and somebody else will come. And they will continue. I am mature enough to know that. I am faithful enough to understand that. I believe that is what is going to happen," he said.

Governor Sule reiterated his resolve to put in his best and not to pay attention to any form of criticism.

"My business is that God has put me in a place to provide leadership, and leadership is what I will provide," he stated.

He also spoke on the issues regarding the protesting PDP women that were arrested and later released, as well as the controversy surrounding the alleged Fulani vigilante group.

Governor Sule said even when the women abused him and said all manner of things about him, he refused to respond, while



Gov Abdullahi Sule

awaiting the outcome of the litigation challenging his election into office for a second term.

"Every day, there was a programme at the PDP secretariat where some women were exercising their freedom. Part of the exercise of their freedom was to abuse the Governor. I had never responded. I felt it was not time for me to respond. And the only day that God now says it's done, it's finished, A. A Sule is the winner, on that day, we knew it was over," he said.

He added that the women were only arrested when they took to the streets after the Supreme Court judgment and in the process, infringed on the freedom of other people when they blocked the roads.

He said his administration later reviewed the bail conditions to enable the women secure their release from detention.

On the issue of the Fulani vigilante group, the Governor said he came to Nasarawa State with two major dreams, with the first being to bring industrialization to the state so that people can gain employment with a view to reducing over dependence on politics.

"Security is key to the state. I have come from a background of entrepreneurship, the background of businesses, the background of building empires. That is the background where I came from. For me, I believe in industrialization. I believe in the independence of people. I know definitely if in Nasarawa State we have places where lots of people can work and become independent, many people would pay less attention to politics.

"A lot of people pay attention to politics because of not knowing what to do. As long as the government is moving smoothly, government is doing what it is supposed to do, providing what it should provide, and people are doing their work and feeding their families, they care less about what is happening or who becomes what. And that is the dream I came with into Nasarawa State," he stated.

The governor said that informed the policy thrust of his administration to provide vocational and technical education to afford the people opportunity to set up their small scale businesses.

He assured that his administration is making every

efforts to ensure that the people are safe and comfortable and they are not afraid of anybody attacking them.

"We have never engaged the nomadic vigilante to go on any assignment anywhere. To form a group that we are establishing to be state funded vigilante, we have never done that. And they never said we did that either. And I have no intention of doing that. I want you to be at peace," he told the Christian leaders.

In an opening remark, Reverend Sunday Emmah, Chairman CAN, Nasarawa State chapter, said they were at the Government House on behalf of the entire Christians in the state to congratulate Governor Sule over his recent victory at the polls and also at the supreme court.

Reverend Amah used the opportunity of the visit to speak on the prevailing economic hardship being experienced by the people, urging the Governor to intervene by bringing succour to the people.

He equally commented on the controversy surrounding the alleged Fulani vigilante group, calling on Governor Sule to take further steps to investigate the group led by Bodejo of Miyetti Allah.

## Enugu CP Warns Officers Against Corruption, Unprofessionalism, Moral Debasement

By; KELVIN OKPARA, Enugu

The Enugu State Commissioner of Police, CP Anayo Uzuegbu has cautioned officers and men of the Command to shun corruption and ill-conduct capable of tarnishing the image of the force and their own image.

He charged them to be professional, firm, upright and diligent in their duties in order to be able to fight crime and criminality in the state.

"I caution the Officers and Men of Enugu State Command to shun acts of corruption, unprofessionalism and moral debasements, which bring with them severe disciplinary consequences. They must remain professional, firm, upright and diligent in the performance of their duties," he admonished.

The Enugu State Police boss gave the charge last Tuesday at the Police Headquarters, Enugu, while briefing newsmen on the performance of the command between January and February, 2024.

He warned criminals to steer clear from the state because Enugu is no longer their haven and equally called on rumour mongers, rabble-rousers, peddlers of fake,



IGP Egbetokun

misinformative news to desist forthwith or face dire consequences.

"I want to warn unrepentant criminals to turn over a new leaf, as we shall more than ever, turn up the heat and make Enugu State more uncomfortable for them and their activities. And if they fail to repent, then we shall stop at nothing to ruthlessly deal with them.

"I also want to strongly caution rumourmongers, rabble-rousers and peddlers of fake, misinformative and disinformative news in Enugu State to desist forthwith, as the Police would not hesitate to deal decisively with anyone found wanting, in accordance with extant laws, particularly the

Cybercrime Act," he warned.

According to the commissioner, "there is no doubt that the task of tackling the increasing security challenges in our society is daily becoming daunting. Nonetheless, the assurance I bring the way of the good people of Enugu State is that we will remain focused and unflinching in our commitment to enthrone a crime-free and peaceful environment for all and sundry to thrive in their legitimate enterprises."

He however, urged the citizenry to remain law-abiding, security conscious and continue to support the Police, through the provision of credible and

actionable security information; while also reporting suspected criminals and their activities to the nearest Parading suspects for various crime such as abduction, armed robbery, vandalism, defilement among others during the briefing, the commissioner hinted that a total number of suspects arrested under the period under review include, 83; abducted or kidnapped victims rescued, 20; firearms of different calibres.

Others are, recovered, 46;ammunition of different calibres recovered, 125; motor vehicles recovered, 35; tricycles recovered, 6; while motorcycles recovered were 15.

## Adeshola Lamidi An Asset For AMCON

By; ISAAC ODEH, Kaduna

Adeshola Lamidi is a highly experienced finance expert, boasting a remarkable 25-year career in Investment Banking and Risk Management.

His extensive professional journey features key roles at renowned global financial institutions, including JP Morgan Chase in New York, Prudential Securities New York, and KPMG LLP Washington, specializing in Asset-backed Structured Finance and Investment Banking.

Adeshola's academic foundation was laid at the esteemed Government College Ibadan in Nigeria. He then advanced to the University of Westminster in the United Kingdom, graduating with a bachelor's degree in Mathematical Science. His pursuit of knowledge led him to the prestigious

Ivy League school at Columbia University in New York, where he achieved a Master's degree in Applied Statistics with a focus on Finance.

Further academic accomplishments include a second Master's degree in Financial Risk Management from the University of Reading in the UK.

In recent years, Adeshola has been a key figure at the Asset Management Corporation of Nigeria (AMCON), making substantial contributions to the Risk Management and Enforcement directorates.

Holding an assistant Vice president position, he plays a crucial role within the organization's Senior Management.

On 22nd of February 2024 President Bola Tinubu approves his appointment as executive director in AMCON.

## Most Nigerians Finding It Difficult To Access Medicine Due To Poor Policies - Cardiologist

By; SANIALIYU, Zaria

Cardiologist Consultant with the Department of Medicine, Ahmadu Bello University Teaching Hospital (ABUTH) Zaria, Dr. Muhammad M. Yakubu has said that, most Nigerians are finding it difficult to access medicine due to poor policies.

Yakubu stated this while delivering a lecture at the Annual General Meeting and Training Workshop of Islamic Medical Association of Nigeria (IMAN) held at the Red/Black Seat Lecture Theater of ABUTH, Shika Zaria.

He said, access to essential medicine is a right in every nation for all its citizens at all levels.

The cardiologist noted with concern, the government's failure to give intervention in the pharmaceutical industries, which he said, there is remarkable consequence in healthcare delivery, including access to medicine.

Also in her presentation, Pharm. B.P. Idris, Deputy

Director, Department of Pharmaceutical Services ABUTH, said that lack of pricing and price regulations is affecting the access to right medicine. She said a functional system is needed to ensure quality, safety, efficiency of products, as well as managing the problems of substandard and counterfeit medicines in the community.

In his remarks, the chairman of the occasion, Alh. Abdulraheem Sallau, Director of Administration ABUTH, commended the IMAN executive members for sustaining the association's visions.

Sallau urged members to maintain their commitment and support towards actualizing the dreams of the association.

Earlier in his welcome address, the Ameer IMAN ABUTH/ABU Professor Abdulaziz Hassan said the 3rd AGM is holding with the support of the elders and relevant stakeholders, which unified the Ummah under one leadership for the purpose of all IMAN activities to be centrally coordinated.

## Explore Rich Soil To Solve Food Crises, Gov Umo Eno Advises Akwa Ibomites

By; PATRICK TITUS, Uyo

The Akwa Ibom State Governor, Pastor Umo Eno has advised the people of the state to engage more in farming in order to produce food to sustain their families, saying, agriculture remains the solution to addressing the current food scarcity.

According to Governor Eno, for anyone to be confrontational with government at any level as a solution, would not solve the harsh economic situation currently plaguing Nigerians.

He spoke on Tuesday, during the official launch of his wife's pet-project, Golden Initiative For All (GIFA) in Uyo, which

coincided with her 57th birthday anniversary celebration.

Eno said that the state government has initiated programmes in agriculture, including bulk buying of foodstuff by government from nearby markets to the state and resell them at a control price in the state.

Governor Eno explained that when everyone takes advantage of the rich soil the state is blessed with to support government programmes, they will produce food to sustain families.

He directed the Ministry of Agriculture to activate machineries towards attaining food sufficiency, in addition to the bulk-buying plan of the State

government.

It would be recalled that the state government has sponsored Executive Bill before the State House of Assembly on the bulk buying plan, which has passed through second reading for possible passage by the Assembly soon.

Commenting on his wife's pet-project, Golden Initiative For All (GIFA), governor Eno poured encomiums on her, lauded her consistent commitment to charitable causes in her local community and church, saying God has only granted her a bigger platform to be a blessing to the larger Akwa Ibom community.

The governor, who

pledged his support to the initiative, described the First Lady's pet-project, GIFA as laudable, that will greatly benefit the people of state, in view of the defined goals and objectives of addressing maternal and child health as well as improving environmental health.

Others are; care for people living with disabilities, gender based violence elimination, women empowerment, fight against diseases and care for elderly as well as enhancing literacy among the populace.

He congratulated the First Lady on her 57th birthday anniversary and prayed for more blessings upon her, family, and indeed Akwa Ibom people.

# Government Panics As Cost Of Living Crisis Deepens

By Jibrin Ibrahim

The tinubu administration is a fanatic believer in economic liberalism and market forces. Based on its belief, it cancelled fuel subsidy and floated the naira so that it can find its true value. The naira played its part and has been rising steadily desperately searching for its true market value, which it turns out, is still very far away. The result is a “misery crisis” as food prices rise beyond the incomes of ordinary citizens whose naira is too small to enable them to purchase food and hunger and anger spreads throughout the land.

Those of us of a certain age were brought up in an era in which the dollar did not circulate as a means of exchange or store of value and we used our currency, the naira. Did our Afrobeat hero Fela Kuti not go to jail for having dollars cash that he wanted to travel out of the country with to perform in a concert?

The president who always tells Nigerians that he understands their pains then offers a solution and orders distribution of free grains from the Strategic Food Reserves. It turned out the civil servants forgot to brief him that the reserves are empty.

Over the past few weeks, hunger and anger have led to street protests all over the country and strike threats. Our politically savvy president, sensing the danger, decides that since the stupid market forces are now threatening his turn to rule in peace, he must find a diversion. If you search, you will find. The Bureau de Change operators, the “Mallams”, are responsible for destroying the capacity of the “market forces” he unleashed to bring down the cost of living. He therefore got the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) to establish a Special Task Force across its commands, to clamp down on individuals “dollarizing” the Nigerian economy.

The gun-trotting operatives of the EFCC have since Monday been raiding Bureau de Change operators and arresting them all over the country. The task force which was inaugurated by the Executive Chairman of the Commission, Ola Olukoyede, was raised: “to protect the economy from abuses, leakages, and distortions exposing it to instability and disruption”, we were told.

Those of us of a certain age were brought up in an era in which the dollar did not circulate as a means of exchange or store of value and we used our currency, the naira. Did our Afrobeat hero Fela Kuti not go to jail for having dollars cash that he wanted to travel out of the country with to perform in a concert? Then, the neoliberals told us it was imperative to allow free purchase and sale of foreign currency. They even encouraged us to open domiciliary accounts in our banks to store foreign currency which government guaranteed will be safe as the ideology of

free markets requires the assurance. The Central Bank of Nigeria licensed thousands of BDCs and asked them to trade in currencies.

The bigger issue is that for a rentier State, safeguarding the source of rent is an existential problem and simple logic should have prevailed and made the state stop the theft. The underlying reality, as we all know however, is that our political leaders and upper echelons of our security forces are beneficiaries of the oil theft. They have taken the decision to eat the goose that lays the golden egg and move to Dubai thereafter as rich refugees.

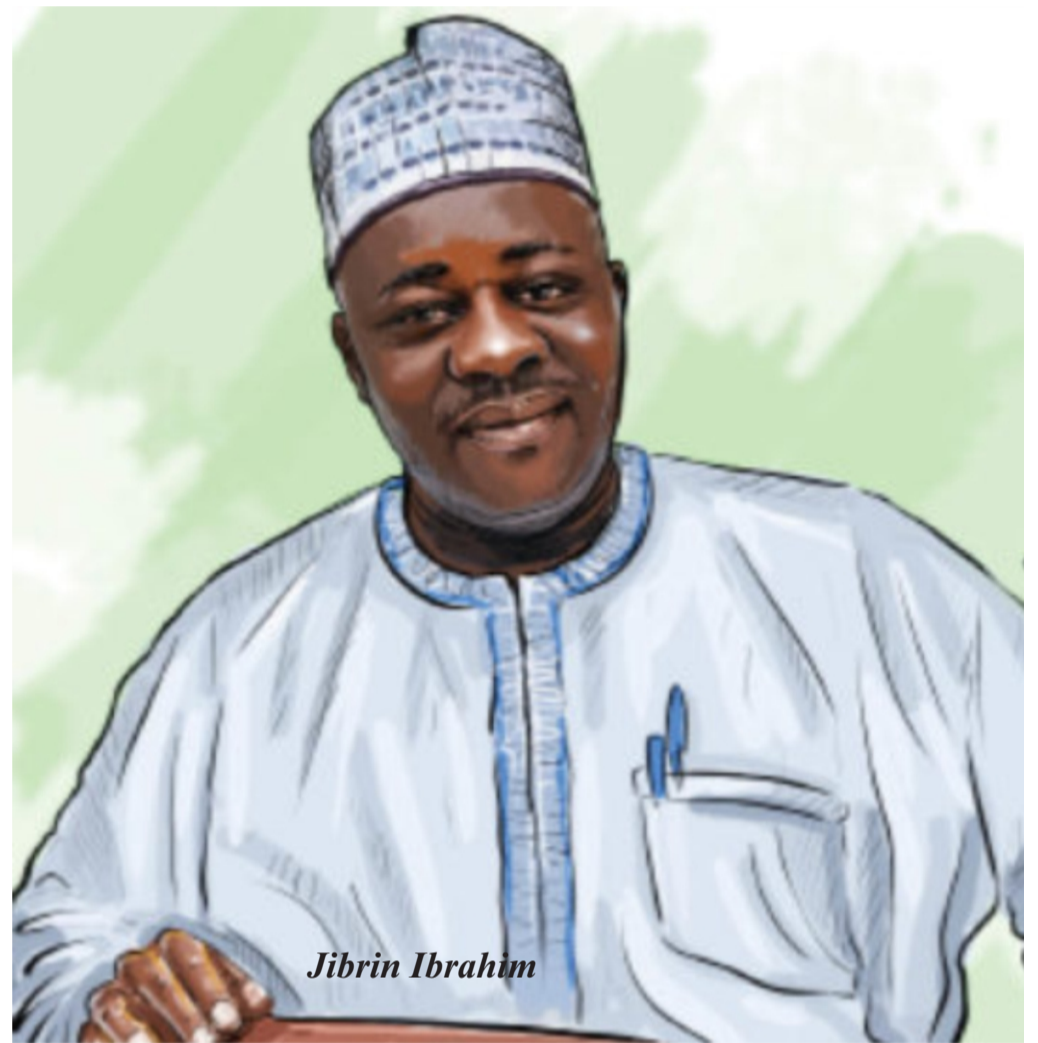
Why the hell are they being arrested today for doing what the law asked them to do? The other panic move is to place the blame on crypto-currency websites for stealing the value of the naira. The issue is that the few people with naira, conscious of its steady and daily loss of value, would seek to protect their asset anyway they can, won't they?

The fact of the matter is that we are simply not earning enough foreign currency to meet our high demands for imported goods. In so doing, for decades, we have relied on petroleum rent as our major source of foreign currency. Then, to our shock, in 2022, the Group Managing Director of NNPC, Mele Kyari, explained to us in a State House media briefing that most of our petroleum was being stolen so the dollars are no longer coming in. Mr. Kyari blamed various sections of the Nigerian society for being complicit in the theft of millions of barrels of crude oil, mentioning even that make-shift pipelines and stolen fuel have been found in churches and mosques.

We were told that between January and July 2022, Africa's biggest oil producer lost an average of 437,000 barrels of oil a day to criminal entities and individuals who illicitly tap pipelines onshore and offshore in the Niger Delta region. The solution to the problem is therefore clear – stop the oil theft and more dollars will come in.

BusinessDay has asked us to open our eyes from now on. We should note the price of dollar one week before FAAC allocation, check back the price after the allocation and you will see clearly the difference. Let's all do that and know that

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Jibrin Ibrahim

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There is still an explanation needed for the astronomic collapse of the naira over the past few weeks. What the hell is going on? The answer, says the research done by BusinessDay, is that we should look at those with a lot of naira – government. Since the removal of fuel subsidy, the federal and state governments have been

receiving massive amounts of naira through the disbursement of money by the Federation Account Allocation Committee (FAAC).

BusinessDay learnt that portions of the funds from FAAC were often changed to dollars by some governments at the parallel market, putting more pressure on the naira. Their analysis shows that from July 2023 to January 2024, the naira depreciated in the black market for the six months immediately after the FAAC shared money to the federal, state and local governments:

“With the removal of fuel subsidy, more volumes of naira are being shared by the federal, state and local governments and some of these monies are changed to dollars at the parallel market.” BusinessDay has asked us to open our eyes from now on. We should note the price of dollar one week before FAAC allocation, check back the price after the allocation and you will see clearly the difference. Let's all do that and know that those who should go to jail are some of our governors and ministers. President Tinubu, please stop panicking, just look around you and you shall see.

*Ibrahim is a professor of Political Science and development consultant/expert, and Senior Fellow of the Centre for Democracy and Development. He is also the Chair of the Editorial Board of Abuja-based online newspaper, PREMIUM TIMES.*





## One Million Naira Minimum Wage And Road To Zimbabwe

By Safiya I. Dantiye

The reality on ground is that economic hardship is getting worse since the removal of fuel subsidy by President Bola Ahmed Tinubu when he announced in his inauguration speech on May 29 last year, whereby queues were formed at petrol stations instantly.

The way things are going, we may eventually arrive at the N1 million minimum wage and that would surely be the road to Zimbabwe where you need a sack of naira notes to buy a basic item like soap.

Then, the depreciation of the naira to the dollar adds to the woes of Nigerians as price of goods is tied to the exchange rate as almost everything we use is imported or its components. Things are now so bad that the price of an item you bought in the morning would increase when you go to buy another one in the afternoon. Yet, the purchasing power of people have not increased as the minimum wage of N30,000 cannot even buy much for a family of six, much less take them for a whole month, not even including rent, school fees and medical care. However, even this inadequate minimum wage is not being paid by all the states.

Now a bag of rice is between N70,000-N80,000 and counting, and the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) is demanding N1 million as the minimum wage, though reports have it that they may shift ground on it.

There is a video of the NLC president, Comrade Joe Ajaero, at a press briefing saying: "Why are we scared when we say pay a worker N1 million, while those in the National Assembly are collecting 16,17,30million...?"

The way things are going, we may eventually arrive at the N1 million minimum wage and that would surely be the road to Zimbabwe where you need a sack of naira notes to buy a basic item like soap.

Now the government says it would release grains from the Strategic Grain Reserve and distribute it free to the poor. But how many kilos could one get, two or three and for how long? What else afterwards? Can government afford to keep this up? Are we turning into a welfare state by making people poor, making them to loss their dignity and queue for a cup of rice, so to speak?

This is more so since as soon as the news filters out that the minimum wage is N1 million naira, the prices of items would rise as it usually happens, making the salary increase not much of a joy since the

traders literally take it away.

I know somebody who was not happy with salary increase in those days because the price of items increased as well.

In any case, though the government has so far tried many ways as palliatives to assuage the devastating impact of fuel subsidy removal, it is apparent that they have not made significant impact. Ironically when states were asked to buy food items and distribute to the people, the prices increased in the markets since the items were mopped up by the government!

Now the government says it would release grains from the Strategic Grain Reserve and distribute it free to the poor. But how many kilos could one get, two or three and for how long? What else afterwards? Can government afford to keep this up? Are we turning into a welfare state by making people poor, making them to loss their dignity and queue for a cup of rice, so to speak?

While the experts and advocates of fuel subsidy removal have gone mute, bereft of ideas, the lay people are saying instead of spending billions of naira on palliatives and the eventual N1 million minimum wage, I may add, why not bring back the fuel subsidy?

The government also said it would restart direct cash transfer to the poorest and most vulnerable people to twelve million households. There are already three million people on the programme. The issue is that the poorest of the poor have increased and this would be like a drop in the ocean.

Amidst all this, news magazines of the mid and late 80s are making rounds in the social media with cover stories of blackout, naira depreciation and hunger among others, mocking our leaders since then of not being able to solve those issues we are still facing today.

Therefore, the defenders of President Tinubu are correct in one sense that the problem did not start with this administration. But since you are elected, you campaigned to be elected as you have the 'solution' to Nigeria's problem, you are expected to wave the magic wand and not offer excuses however tenable.

While the experts and advocates of fuel subsidy removal have gone mute, bereft of ideas, the lay people are saying instead of spending billions of naira on palliatives and the eventual N1 million minimum wage, I may add, why not bring back the fuel subsidy?

Since the government is unlikely to do that, it should not pretend not to expect the rising cost of items to push us on to the road to Zimbabwe.

## Don't Embark On Nationwide Protest, APC Chieftain, Tells Labour Unions Leadership

*\*Says it could set nation on fire*

By: BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

Alhaji Salman Akorede, Chieftain of the All Progressives Congress (APC), yesterday, cautioned the leadership of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) against embarking on the planned nationwide protest,

Alhaji Akorede in a statement made available to journalists, warned that such a protest could result into setting the nation on fire, adding that there is the need for the leadership of the NLC to review the planned protest in the interest of the country.

The frontline aspirant for the office of the Director-General of the Amalgamated APC Support Groups, (AASG) urged the labour leaders to consider the survival of Nigeria as of paramount importance, and opt for other less confrontational actions, adding what was needed at the moment was for all patriotic Nigerians to put the interest of Nigeria first in whatever actions they may wish to take in making demands from the government.

The APC Chieftain maintained that a more subtle approach and negotiation with the government would have yielded better results for everyone, as against embarking on street protests that could be hijacked by hoodlums to cause mayhem and inflict injuries on the already traumatised Nigerians.

The APC leader appealed to labour to exercise maximum restraints in the manner the protests are handled, if they must proceed with their plans, given the very fragile security situation in the country. He advised the NLC to toe the line of further negotiation with the FG.

On the economic hardships in the country, Alhaji Akorede tasked President Bola Tinubu to fashion out a more impactful and result oriented way of ameliorating the pains of the economic reforms on Nigerians as against continued dolling out huge resources to the state governors.

He maintained that one of the most effective ways to reach out to the people with government interventions, was for the government to consider factoring the already existing channels through the support groups for direct delivery of palliatives to the people at the grassroots.

According to him, these support groups delivered victory for the party are in every nook and cranny of the Federation, saying, the APC support groups are found in each of the 176,974 polling units in Nigeria, and the structure could be used to reach out

to every Nigerian at the polling unit levels.

Alhaji Akorede stated further that the Federal Government could employ the use of National Identification Number (NIN) or the Bank Verification Number (BVN) to reach out to all Nigerians for the equitable distribution of these palliatives, especially among the most vulnerable Nigerians.

The APC Chieftain said as at the moment, the political functionaries in Nigeria from the Governors to the Honourable Ministers, distinguished Senators, HoR Members, States Houses of Assembly Members have all disappointed Nigerians and Mr. President owing to lack of any effect of all the humongous interventions running into billions, sent through them to their people on a monthly basis since this administration took off in May 2023.



Alhaji Akorede

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

### TECHNICAL DATA

6 COLUMNS			
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Width	25.4 (CM)	Width -	10 (Inches)

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

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PA GE 6 O R 7	325,000.00	24,375.00	349,375.00
FR ONT PA GE M AST HEA D EA R PIECE	242,880.00	18,216.00	261,096.00
FR ONT PA GE S OLUS	312,500.00	23,437.50	335,937.50
FR ONT PA GE S TRIP	375,000.00	28,125.00	403,125.00
BA CK PA GE EA R PIEC E	200,000.00	15,000.00	215,000.00
BA CK PA GE S TRIP	250,000.00	18,750.00	268,750.00
CENT RES PR EA D (C OLO UR )	837,500.00	62,812.50	900,312.50
DO UBLES PR EA D (C OLO UR )	700,000.00	52,500.00	752,500.00
CENT RES PR EA D (BLA CK & WHIT E)	575,000.00	43,125.00	618,125.00
DO UBLES PR EA D (BLA CK & WHIT E)	590,000.00	44,250.00	634,250.00
FR ONT PA GE (10" X 6)	3,250,000.00	243,750.00	3,493,750.00
ROPS TRIP (C OLO UR )	125,000.00	9,375.00	134,375.00
ROPS TRIP (BLA CK & WHIT E)	85,000.00	6,375.00	91,375.00

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

# Re-Bukar Abba Ibrahim: The man Who Touched My Life

By; **HASSAN GIMBA (Readers' reactions)**

**S**alaamu alaykum. I saw your tribute to late Senator Bukar Abba Ibrahim, may Allah (SWT) grant him mercies with jannatul firdaus. I read it today and was touched by your powerful pen. Your late father, Sulaiman Gimba Ahmed, was a humble and quiet person who worked with me in 1979 while I was Commissioner of Agriculture during Governor Muhammadu Goni's administration. He was in charge of the Borno State Water Board under my ministry. (He was acting Perm Sec and at the same time first GM of the state water board). And that is why I asked for your number to call you. May Allah grant him jannatul firdaus.

**HRH Ahmad Tijjani ibn Saleh, Emir of Ngazargamu**

May Allah have mercy on his soul and admit him into Jannah. He was truly a man of reputable character whom the masses always had access to; he had touched the lives of many, he will be remembered for his legacies.

**Abdulraheem Adamu Bappa**

Great piece Dr. Hassan Gimba

**Yusuf Ali**

Allah Ya masa rahama,

**Mohammed Kukuri**

Can the rest emulate him? I wish him aljannah fiddausi. This is indeed a loss to us!! May Allah have mercy on his soul.

**Inuwa Mbaya**

Story after death! They are the ones who did not support our state growing up like other states. My reason is that he was the one who brought more traditional rulers after we had a good traditional ruler in the Emir of Fika. Today everybody is a sarki by force; no respect. To me they should bring all the local sarkis down to Hakimi and leave only the Fika Emirate alone, it will be better for Yobe State.

**Suleman Jibir**

Inna lilLahi wa inna ilaihir rajium! Am constrained to respond to this primitive ethno - centric and tribal jingoist living in post colonial Nigeria. From all indications, Jibir is a person of below average IQ whom we unfortunately have to tolerate.

If he had ever gone through post primary school at all, the education and enlightenment expected to have

gone through him was nil. In these days of Fundamental Human Rights, even the villagers living around the GEJI are more enlightened, sensitive and sensible than him.

My only advice to Jibir, the dark goggled man, is to invite King Charles of England to Nigeria, nay, all Commonwealth Group of Nations and relive the colonisation experience, or in the alternative let him visit the psychiatrists for guidance.

May Allah (SWT) in His infinite Mercies forgive all the deceased's iniquities and confirm Aljannat Firdaus as his final abode. We have lost a rare gem of a State Chief Executive, a primus inter pares amongst Yobe Governors. A man who restored the dignity of the peoples and righted the unforgettable and unforgivable injustice wrecked on Yobeans by colonial Britain. May his gentle soul continue to rest in peace.

**Ali Wakili**

Asking if Adamu Maina Waziri would be a good governor showed his concern for the people and that made him ask, knowing fully well you will answer him truthfully. May Allah continue to grant him eternal rest.

**Aliyu Isah Bakari**

Nobody can doubt what you have written, sir. Bukar was known for his humility. He persuaded a lot of people into his fold by his exceptional political skills. He was a simple, kind and gentle person. I could remember how he politely managed the fierce opposition from his political rival's zone. I was a fan of Adamu Maina Waziri throughout Bukar's tenure, though. Bukar was one of the politicians I hated at that time. But, I finally went to university through his initiatives. In fact I benefited from a lot of his programs. May the soul of Bukar Abba Ibrahim continue to rest in peace. We are patiently waiting for the next volume of the piece. JazakalLahu khairan.

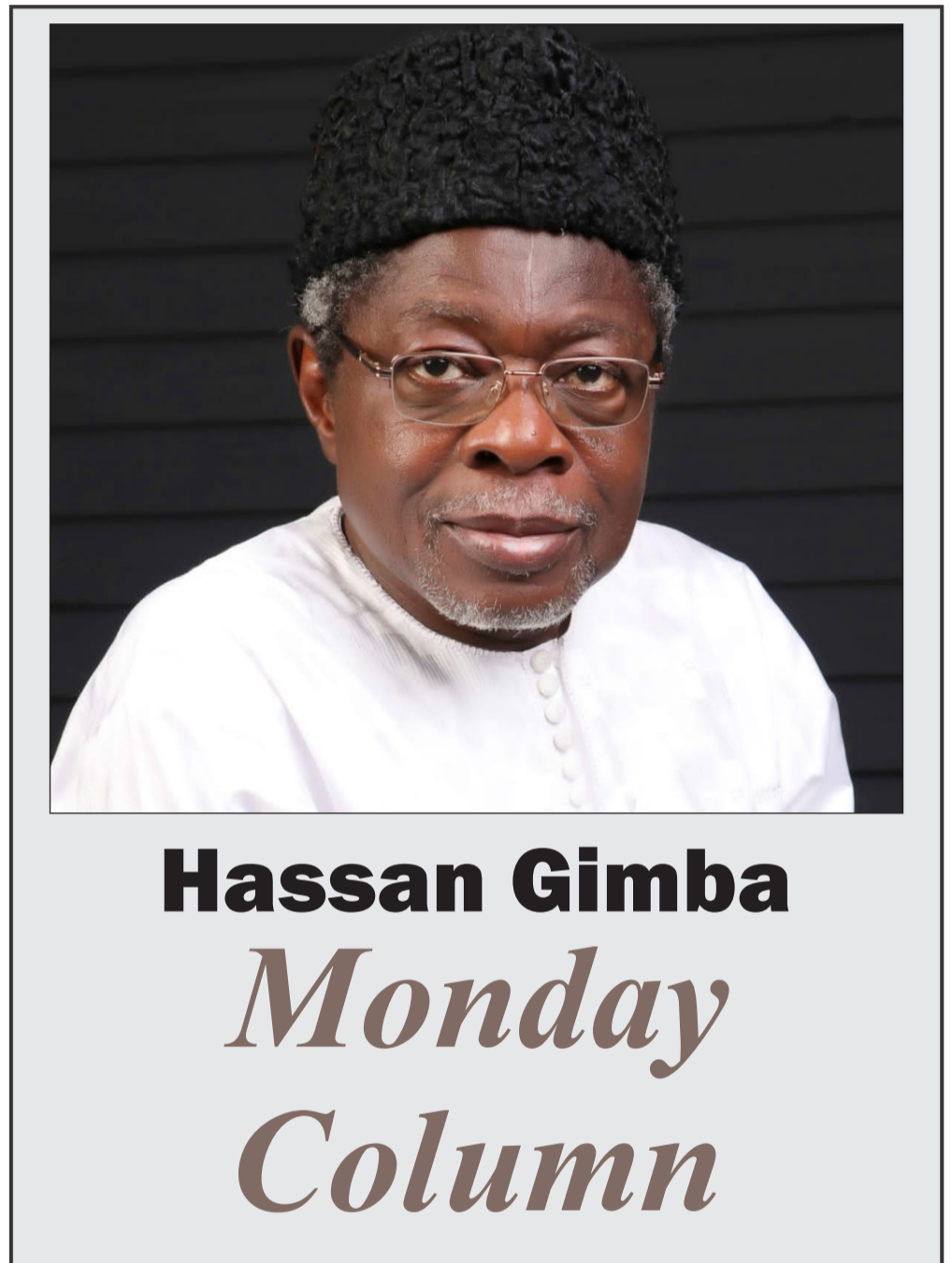
**Mohammed Inga Jajere**

Thanks for the update. Please what was your answer to Bukar Abba Ibrahim FNIQS?

**AbdulRasheed Gidado**

Check the second edition for the answer. – Hassan Gimba

I really enjoyed this article. I also heard so many stories of his humility and humbleness. I am very eager to



read the second part.

**Baba Goni Mustapha**

I too am following.

**Fananmi Mamman**

I first met QS Bukar Abba Ibrahim (Bukar Fulata as he was known in Gombe) when he was working in the Musa Usman Secretariat, Maiduguri, as a civil servant in the Borno State Ministry of Works through my late in-law who was an Electrical Technologist in the same Ministry.

We were in Maiduguri when the then Military Governor, Major Abdumumini Aminu from Katsina State appointed him as Commissioner for Works/Housing during the IBB years.

I did not hear much about him owing to my in-law's demise and my relocation from Yerwa until I learnt in the news that Bukar Abba Ibrahim was elected as the first Civilian Governor of Yobe State during the dual-party NRC/SDP era.

Thereafter, there was another break

with him especially after leaving office until he was in the news again in 1999 as Executive Governor of Yobe for the second time.

Amongst the variables for my admiration of him in later years was his marriage to Khadijah (a very modest lady), who is the daughter of the highly respected late Alhaji Waziri Ibrahim and whom I met several times in Lagos in the late 80s. May Allah admit both Alhaji Waziri Ibrahim and Alhaji Bukar Abba Ibrahim into Aljannat Firdausi.

**Alhaji Ajiya Gombe**

He was indeed considerate and generous too. I had the privilege of meeting him in 2004 while on a study tour as a Major undergoing the senior command and staff course, Jaji. He hosted us very well in Damaturu during the tour. May Allah forgive and grant him Aljannat Firdausi.

Major General (rtd) Mormoni Bashir  
**Hassan Gimba is the Publisher and Editor-in-Chief of Neptune Prime.**

# After The AU Summit, Africa Continues Its Drift

By Owei Lakemfa

If a family meets in a room, members give themselves pecks, exchange polite greetings, make flowery speeches and emerge laughing for group photographs, it is likely they have not been truthful to themselves. That was my impression following the 37th Summit of the African Union (AU), from February 17-18, 2024 in Addis Ababa.

The theme of the 2024 AU Summit: "Educate an African fit for the 21st Century: Building resilient education systems for increased access to inclusive, lifelong, quality and relevant learning in Africa", is quite fine. However, I find the Summit's adoption of the Second 10-year (2024-2033) implementation plan of Agenda 2063, christened the 'Decade of Acceleration', a bit problematic because we do not have the report of the First 10-year plan. It is going the way of the illusive AU 'Silencing the Guns by 2020' Agenda.

After attending a few AU Summits, I have learnt to look beyond the theme, to the recommendations and draft resolutions of the AU Permanent Representatives Committee (PRC). This body of ambassadors or representatives of Member States, sets the agenda and drafts the resolutions which, with a few amendments, are passed to the Summit by the AU Executive Council of Foreign Ministers.

As can be imagined, our Heads of State are quite busy. So, their two-day summits are actually for one day with large chunks of that day taken by goodwill messages from foreign dignitaries and bodies like the United Nations. When we add the speeches of our political leaders, there is virtually no time for discussions and debates at the summits.

This week's Summit was not different, except that it was worse in some aspects. Attendance by 35 countries was quite poor because it means 20 African countries were not at the Summit.

Secondly, the unusual happened: an alleged violation of a President's immunity and rights. Somalia President, Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, claimed that the security services of the host, Ethiopia, tried to stop him from leaving his hotel to attend the meeting. He said he had to join the convoy of Djibouti President, Ismail Omar Guelleh, to be able to leave. The Somalia President added that on arrival at the AU headquarters, armed Ethiopian guards tried to prevent him from entering the building. He claimed that: "A soldier with a gun stood in front of us and denied us access to this facility." He also accused the host of "...annexing part of Somalia to Ethiopia, and changing the borders of Somalia".

The Summit appeared deaf to these

complaints and to the October 2023 statement of Ethiopian Prime Minister, Abiy Ahmed Abiy, that his country's landlocked state is an unacceptable "geographical prison" which has to be changed for peace to reign.

The theme of the 2024 AU Summit: "Educate an African fit for the 21st Century: Building resilient education systems for increased access to inclusive, lifelong, quality and relevant learning in Africa", is quite fine. However, I find the Summit's adoption of the Second 10-year (2024-2033) implementation plan of Agenda 2063, christened the 'Decade of Acceleration', a bit problematic because we do not have the report of the First 10-year plan. It is going the way of the illusive AU 'Silencing the Guns by 2020' Agenda.

However, these and other talks of the AU joining the G20, do not address the immediate and fundamental challenges of the continent which include insecurity, hunger and economic integration. For Africa to be firmly on the road to economic integration, an effective free trade zone, realisable 2063 agenda, peace and development, it has to rebuild its broken regional blocs, and ensure transnational and regional peace.

The Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) in North Africa, made up of Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia, is like a kwashiorkor victim on life support. Its leaders met last on July 3, 2008, that is 16 years ago. While Tunisia is trying to recover, Libya is a failed state and Algeria holds a principled position against Morocco's occupation of Western Sahara by the monarchy in Rabat.

So, the AU Summit did not even scratch the surface of the continent's immediate security and economic challenges. When new AU Chair, Ghazouani, talked about the need to realise Africa's socio-economic development ambitions, build continental stability and ensure that Africa has an assertive presence on the world stage, he should realise that the continent would need to be steered in a proper direction.

In trying to flee the regional bloc, Morocco sought asylum in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) but was denied. It had also sought to join the European Union, but was like an illegal migrant, denied entry.

Ironically, the new AU Chairman, Mohamed Ould Ghazouani, is the



President of Mauritania, a country that broke away from ECOWAS in 2000 while remaining in a comatose AMU.

The East African Community (EAC), comprising the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the republics of Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Uganda and Tanzania, is one of the oldest and most viable. It has even gotten to the level of recognising the identity cards of member-states, as a substitute for international passports. However, it has been bogged down by serious conflicts, especially between war-torn DRC and Rwanda which allegedly supports the brutal M23 rebels. There is also the continuous disagreement between Rwanda and Burundi.

The Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) also suffers from the Rwanda-DRC- Burundi crises. Additionally, ECCAS member, Cameroun, has for years experienced a low intensity civil war in its Anglophone part, as well as a sick, gerontocracy under President Paul Biya.

Gabon is still in the grips of the military which on August 30, 2023 ousted President Ali Bongo Ondimba. Another ECCAS member, Chad, has been virtually under military rule for over three decades.

The Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat, served as Chadian Foreign Minister. After General Mahamat Deby overthrew the Chadian government on April 20, 2021, Faki ensured the regime was not sanctioned by the AU.

The AU needs to call a proper summit dedicated to peacebuilding and economic integration where our leaders can tell themselves the truth, call themselves to order, and carry out joint work. Otherwise, Africa will continue to drift from one summit to another.

The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) made up of

Somalia, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Eritrea, Uganda, Sudan and South Sudan is one of the most conflict-ridden regions. Somalia has for decades been a failed state, Sudan has experienced a civil war between its military and the Rapid Support Forces since April 2023, and the scars of the civil war in South Sudan are still visible. Ethiopia has been engaged in serious conflicts with its Tigray and Amhara regions, while its Oromo nationality is still restive.

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) has been perhaps the most stable, while nine of the 15 members of ECOWAS are experiencing serious stages of instability. Guinea Bissau does not allow its parliament function; Guinea, Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger are under direct military rule; the Ivorian President, Alassane Ouattara, is in an illegal and unconstitutional third term; Senegalese President, Macky Sall, has blocked the general elections and Sierra Leone claims to have aborted a coup on November 26, 2023, while Nigeria is wracked by terrorism, kidnapping and banditry.

So, the AU Summit did not even scratch the surface of the continent's immediate security and economic challenges. When new AU Chair, Ghazouani, talked about the need to realise Africa's socio-economic development ambitions, build continental stability and ensure that Africa has an assertive presence on the world stage, he should realise that the continent would need to be steered in a proper direction.

The AU needs to call a proper summit dedicated to peacebuilding and economic integration where our leaders can tell themselves the truth, call themselves to order, and carry out joint work. Otherwise, Africa will continue to drift from one summit to another.

# Over 200 Players Participate In 2024 Kaduna Inter-clubs Badminton Championship

*\*SWAN Chairman, others honoured*

By: KATO P. LADAN, Kaduna

It was celebration galore as badminton players, club officials, badminton club chairmen and sports administrators carted prizes and honours at the just concluded 2024 Kaduna State Inter-clubs Badminton Championship. The two-day championship came to a close on Saturday at the Gymnasium Hall of the prestigious Ahmadu Bello Stadium, Kaduna, with over two hundred badminton players within Kaduna competing in different events. In the under 15 boys final, Moses from Arewa Badminton Club beat Walid Kabir from Noble Badminton Club by 2-1, while the Under 49 men's doubles, saw Hayatu and Khalid of Exclusive Badminton Club thrash Daura and Suraj from Arewa Badminton club by 2-0. In the men's doubles Plus 50 category, Dodo and Faisal from Friendship Club also defeated Shehu and Usman Musa by

2-0. ABU Badminton Club got the upper hand against Noble Badminton Club as Baba Mairo and Peace walked over Sawyer and Taye 2-0. The highly explosive encounter that put everything badminton lover on their feet, was the match between Emma Chiroma and Suleiman Usman in the Men's Single's Category, where Chiroma of Unity Badminton Club emerged champion by narrowly beating Usman of Noble 2-1. The Girls Round Robin saw all Arewa Badminton Club players exhibiting their skills as Joy picked the gold, Love (silver) and Victoria at Ummi with the bronze. In a remark, the Honourable Commissioner of Sports Development Kaduna State, Professor Benjamin Kumai Gugong, expressed delight with the honour bestowed on him and promised to reciprocate the gesture

He said, "since assuming office, badminton association is the first to do this by honouring me and I will find time to pay back." Gugong added that what he has witnessed has impressed him and very soon, the ministry will work towards doing same. While the sponsor of the two-day championship, Chairman Kaduna State Badminton Association who doubles as the Vice President Nigeria Badminton Federation, Dr. Mohammed Maina, maintained that he remains grateful to Almighty Allah for seeing a successful tournament. "I'm absolutely happy to witness the end of this competition as it was injury free and everyone is happy with the conduct of players." On whether he got support from corporate bodies or any company, Maina said, "I used the little resources I have to make the players happy and don't forget, we have

moved further to select some good players that will be exposed to the world soon. The competition which was organised to honour the Honourable Commissioner of Sports Development Kaduna State, Professor Benjamin Kumai Gugong, saw dignitaries at the final which included, Hon. Mohammed Dan Asabe Chokali, member Kaduna State House of Assembly, Commissioner of Sports Development, Professor Benjamin Kumai Gugong and SA on Sports to Governor Uba Sani, Saidu Idris Dibis. Others spotted were some directors in the sports ministry, badminton club chairmen. ABCIN chairman and a host of others. High point of the colourful final marked with the presentation of awards to some important dignitaries that included, the Commissioner of Sports, Badminton Club Chairmen and Chairman SWAN Kaduna State Chapter, Shehu Abdullahi, while the players that took part went home with medals, gifts and cash prizes.



# 2024 Police Games: Sports Remains Number One Unifying Factor In Nigeria - Tinubu

## *\*Declares games open*

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

President Bola Tinubu on Saturday, declared that sports has remained the number one unifying factor in Nigeria. Declaring open the 14th Biennial Police Games tagged, "Oluyole 2024" at the Lekan Salami Stadium, Ibadan, the President said the Nigeria Police Games is a great way of discovering sports talents in Nigeria. Represented by Governor Seyi Makinde, President Tinubu in line with this, there is the need for more attention and properly package sports and entertainment sector in

the country.

President Tinubu pointed out that this became imperative as we seek sustainable ways of solving our economic issues, saying, " we must pay attention to, and properly package sports and entertainment sectors so that the international community can come to us to enjoy our home-grown tourism".

" I believe that games like these have the potential to boost our economy. These games also give us an opportunity to see another side of the friendly and competitive side of the Nigerian Police", he said.

President Tinubu added, "

Sports has been a uniting factor for us all. One of the most unifying moments we remember as a nation was the 1996 Atlanta Olympic games, where Nigeria won two gold, one silver and three bronze medals".

" One of Nigeria's gold medals was won by Nigerian Policewoman, Chioma Ajunwa. Today, she still holds the record, adding, "So, this shows how important the games are. It is a great way to discover and project talents to the world. I don't expect anything less from the athletes that are in front of me here".

Tasking participants from each zone and commands to

put in their best, President Tinubu called on the residents of Oyo State to pay more attention to the sports and entertainment sectors so as to attract international communities to the state.

" Let me, once again, welcome everyone to the 14th Biennial Games, Oluyole 2024. The 13th edition was held in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State but, today, it has moved to the South-West. Awalokan!

" It is fitting that Oyo State is hosting this edition in the first year of Omituntun 2.0. As you already know, we are projecting Oyo State as the place to come for experiential tourism"

He stressed, " And what special way are we supposed to experience Oyo State, Nigeria, than through sports? So, on behalf of the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Bola Ahmed Tinubu, I declare this event open."

Inspector-General of Police, Kayode Egbetokun in his remarks disclosed that the 14th Biennial Police Games in Ibadan has the theme "Competing for Peace, Unity, Stability and Development of Nigeria" and that the event is a unique sport competition to celebrate mental health, spirit of sportsmanship and unity in the country.



Gov Seyi Makinde, IGP Kayode Egbetokun at the opening of 2024 Police Games in Ibadan

# Rugby Federation To Announce Final Roster For African Games February 28

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The Nigeria Rugby Football Federation (NRFF) is set to unveil the final squad for the upcoming African Games in Ghana.

The men's and women's teams, known as the Black and Lady Stallions, have been undergoing intensive training in Abuja for the past nine days, led by head coach Steve Lewis and supported by General Manager Azeez Ladipo and technical assistants Uwangue Michael Johnson, AbdulKareem Sulyman Angulu, and Mohammed Salisu. The squad consists mainly of players from the domestic league, with a blend of talent from overseas. They are poised to compete against other African nations with the aim of securing a podium finish.

The initial list is expected to be pruned down to 15 players for male team ( Black stallions ) and 15 for female team ( lady stallions) before jetting out of the country to Ghana

The list of male players includes:

Ladipo Azeez Olaitan  
 Jatto Onoru-Oyiza Jude (Cowrie)  
 Etim Gabriel John (Barewa)  
 Abrakson Jude Peter (Barewa)  
 Peter Jeremiah (Barewa)  
 Christopher Daniel John (Cowrie)  
 Abdulganiyu Sulaimon Olatunde (Cowrie)  
 Sam Esukuloh Prince (Barewa)  
 Iheme Felix Chidera (Jos)  
 Oyebola Sulymon Olawale (Police)  
 Girigi Joseph Junior (Kwara Dynamite)  
 Abubakar Sadam (Police)  
 Oyekanmi David Kazeem (Racing)  
 Malu Williams Tyover (Police)  
 Akande Akinkunmi Habib (Gosar RFC)  
 Ibrahim Mohammed Jamiu (Kwara Dynamite)  
 Yusuf Akeem Olayinka (Cowrie)  
 Omale Isa (Barewa)  
 Aniebonam David KosIsochukwu (UK)  
 Awobowale Olukolade Mobolaji (UK)  
 Henry-Ajudua Chukwuyem Frederick (USA)  
 Odunlami Oluwadara Olufewa (UK)  
 Egodo Anthony (UK)

The list of female players includes:

Maduchem Felix Precious Chinonyerem (South Africa)  
 Akihiero Vera EhiaKhaye (Edo)  
 Mene Augustar Efe (Edo)  
 Nwankpa Chioma Justina (Edo)  
 Imoisi Abouvbo (Edo)  
 Abbah Chinaza Blessing (Edo)  
 Iyoha Success (Edo)  
 Okitikpi Odiri Becky (MVP) (Edo)  
 Akinade Rukayat Temitope (Gosar)  
 Oseni Muinat Akanke (Eco 11)  
 Nwanna Perpetua Mmanna (Eco 11)  
 Uchendu Ola Precious (Abia Buffalos)  
 Nwabudike Obiageli Maria (Delta)  
 John Deborah (Delta)  
 Obi Stephanie Bella (Delta)  
 Umude Blessing Ajirioghene (Delta)  
 Aladeyelu Blessing Funmilayo (Eco 11)  
 Obika Kosisochukwu Anthonia (Eastern Springboks)  
 Omoghan Fedelia (Canada)  
 Ezeude Glory Chinemere (Canada)  
 Okonkwo Ada Jane (Canada)  
 Agada Ojoachele Dorcas (UK)  
 Okpara Roseline Chidinma (USA)

Officials:

Igbuwe Jeremiah (Male)  
 Godwin Emmanuel Chibundu (Male)  
 Ugonwaezeh-Agugo Princess Alban (Female)  
 Eke Sopuruchukwu Innocentia



# New NIGERIAN

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## Adamawa, Taraba Customs Command Seizes Items Worth Over N13m

By; TINA PHINEAS, Yola

The Nigerian Customs Service Adamawa/Taraba Area Command has seized assorted items worth over N13 million. The area Comptroller, Salisu Abdullahi, who made the disclosure at a press briefing in Yola, Adamawa State Capital, said that the command made seizures of 245 jerry cans of 25 litres each on its way to Cameroon and brought them to the office.

He maintained that despite the subsidy removal on PMS, smuggling of the product from Nigeria to some other African countries persists. "This is as a result of high fuel demand and higher prices in neighbouring countries like Cameroon, Togo and the Benin Republic, making illicit exportation of these products into these countries highly profitable for the unpatriotic Nigerians to fill the supply gap," he added.

The Adamawa/Taraba command, in collaboration with NAFDAC, destroyed some expired and unregistered foreign juice and alcoholic bullet drinks that were seized by its operatives last year. Comptroller Abdullahi therefore urged the smugglers to forsake economic sabotage and illicit trade into the command frontiers and embrace legitimate business, warning that the command will not relent

on its oars until it rids all the borders of this illicit act.

New Nigerian reports that the seized items include Premium Motor Spirit packed in 643 Jerry cans of 25 litres and three of 200 litres of drums, twenty bags of foreign rice and a Golf wagon with a big constructed fuel tank. The petrol was auctioned immediately after the press conference and proceed realized will be remitted to the federation account.

## Prof Gwarzo Appoints Dr Mansur West African Director For Global Health, Development At MAAUN

By; IMRANA ABDULLAHI, Kaduna

The Founder/Chairman Governing Council, Maryam Abacha American University of Nigeria (MAAUN), has appointed Dr. Mansur Muhammad Tukur as West African Director for Global Health and Development at Maryam Abacha American University of Nigeria. The notification of appointment was contained in a letter personally signed by the Founder of the

University, Prof. Adamu Abubakar Gwarzo and made available to newsmen in Kano on Friday. "It is with great pleasure that I extend to you this letter of appointment as the West African Director for Global Health and Development in the Institute of African Higher Education Research and Innovation, Maryam Abacha American University of Nigeria," the letter said. According to the letter, the appointment of Dr.

Muhammad Tukur on the position was based on his extensive expertise and dedication to advancing healthcare and development. "Your extensive expertise and dedication to advancing healthcare and development make you an ideal candidate for this pivotal role. While congratulating the new appointee, Prof. Gwarzo expressed hope that his leadership and strategic vision will play a key role in advancing the Institute's

mission to foster innovation and research in African higher education. He also expressed confidence that Dr. Muhammad Tukur's wealth of experience will significantly contribute to the institute's success. "We believe that your wealth of experience will significantly contribute to the Institute's success and we look forward to achieving new heights together," Prof Gwarzo was quoted as saying in the letter.

## Sanctions: ECOWAS Decision Would Facilitate Economic Stability, Unity In West African Region - APC-IGG President

By; JABIRU A. HASSAN, Kano

The recent announcement lifting the economic sanctions mounted to Niger, Mali, and Burkina Faso would restore the glory of the West African states and enhance the economic progress with optimum results. This was contained in a statement signed and issued to newsmen by the national President APC Initiative For Good Governance (APC-IGG) Ambassador Musa Mohammed Tsoken adding that ECOWAS leaders deserve respect in this regard. "On behalf of the national executive officers of our support group, the zonal and states

coordinators, local government and wards leaders as well as the members of the initiative across the country, APC-IGG commends President Bola Ahmed Tinubu and ECOWAS leaders for lifting economic sanctions to Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso which is an excellent process to promoting the economic structure in West Africa," the statement said. Ambassador Tsoken explained that APC-IGG as one of the most formidable support groups to the ruling party and would continue to work selflessly towards the success of the present administration for the actualization of the renewed hope.



Tsoken

## Rugby Federation To Announce Final Roster For African Games February 28

Story on Page 23

## Akwa Ibom Govt Moves To Uplift Education Standard

By; PATRICK TITUS, Uyo

Teachers in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State have been trained in viable ways of school management and curriculum development as a two-day workshop ended at the weekend in Uyo, the state capital.

The two-day event tagged: "Education Skills Upscaling Workshop", which drew principals from public secondary schools in the state as participants, is part of the Akwa Ibom – United Kingdom Educational Exchange Programme.

The Senior Education Advisor of Southwark Council, United Kingdom, David Bromfield as a resource person, during technical sessions, took the principals on Leadership in Education and Curriculum Inspection.

Bromfield introduced viable ways to administer leadership among teaching staff and evolve new methods of curriculum development that will yield positive results in general performance.

He encouraged the principals to imbibe change in policies and administration, while obeying the tenets of authentic and transformational leadership in their respective schools.

New Nigerian Newspapers observed that the principals had first-hand information on how educational administration and curriculum development

are done in parts of the UK, which they considered ways to domesticate the ideas and initiatives.

The State Commissioner for Education, Mrs Idongesit Etiebet, engaged the Mayor of London Borough of Southwark, Michael Situ, with Mr Bromfield in a policy review meeting.

She expressed hope that Gov Umo Eno's vision to improve the standard of education in the state was yielding desired results and will continue as more strategic collaborations are expected.

Some of the principals, when interviewed expressed commended the state governor, Pastor Umo Eno for prioritizing education in his administration's blueprint - ARISE Agenda.

"The two-day sessions have been very rewarding. We have learnt more new things especially in the management of schools and curriculum development. These we hope to domesticate them in our schools system.

"We are also expecting to be engaged in exchange programmes with schools in UK, courtesy of the state government. This, we believe will play out positively in the quality of students graduating from public schools in Akwa Ibom as new things would be introduced in the school curriculum." A participant, Mr. Bassey Edet assured.