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Osun State Governor, Senator Ademola Adeleke with National Ameer Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at of Nigeria, Barr. Alatoye Abdulaziz during a courtesy visit of Barr. Alatoye to Osun State Governor @ Government House, Osogbo. Photo: AKINOLAARIYO

By; AMOS EBUTE MATHEW, AMOS TAUNA, MIKE ODEH JAMES, Kaduna & BAYOAKAMO, Ibadan

There was massive jubilation as Governor Uba Sani of Kaduna State broke the news that the 287 Kuriga School children Abducted by terrorists have regained freedom.

Governor Sani made known in the early hours of yesterday, March 24.

It would be recalled that,

the terrorists had early on Thursday morning March 7, stormed LGEA Primary School, Kuriga, Chikun Local Government Area of Kaduna State and kidnapped scores of pupils and teachers at about 8:20 am immediately after the morning assembly.

Uba Sani in a statement, appreciated President Bola Tinubu, NSA Nuhu Ribadu and the Nigeria Army for the release of the Kuriga pupils and students.

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Our Students Have Access To International Data Base For Research Proficiency, Innovation - DUFUHS VC

**Set to reverse medical, education tourism in Nigeria*

By ; M K P U M A ENYINNA, Abakaliki

In a bid to improve healthcare system in Nigeria, the Vice Chancellor of David Umahi Federal University of Health Sciences (DUFUHS), Uburu, Prof. Jesse Uneke has said that the medical Institution is set to reverse both medical and educational tourism in Nigeria, stating that it has enough human and material resources to achieve this in line with global best practices. He also added that in order to improve and inculcate research among students, the University has granted them access to international data bases for research proficiency and innovation.

The Vice Chancellor of David Umahi Federal University of Health Sciences, Uburu, stated this during the matriculation which took place at the University Ceremony Arena and was well attended by students, parents, members of the academia, leaders of religious organizations and people from all walks of life.

During the event, 676 students were admitted into the university, while some staff and students received awards of excellence and productivity during the matriculation.

While presenting his address, the Vice Chancellor, Prof. Jesse Uneke expressed joy and satisfaction over the innovation and breakthrough recorded in the institution within a short period of time, saying that its excellent academic performance has

placed the university on a global map, adding that the institution is set to reverse both medical and educational tourism in Nigeria.

He also appreciated President Bola Ahmed Tinubu and the ministers of works, education and health for the exceptional roles they have played to change the narrative and uphold the best in Nigeria. According to Prof. Uneke, "Our Motto is Excellence, Scholarship, and Productivity. Our aim as a university is not only to achieve reversal of medical tourism but also the reversal of educational tourism. How have we been able to achieve this? Number one is that, we have assembled the best academic staff in Nigeria; majority of the academic staff have Ph.D, while the remaining are close to the completion of their Ph.D programmes. Secondly, we have digitized our academic conferences, our first year examinations on university wide-courses are computer based test. All our financial transactions are online and are digital.

"We have exposed our students to start research very early and have granted them access to international data base. We want them to have a least 300 electronic textbooks in their various disciplines before graduation.

"This is the only university that lectures start by 8:00am and ends at 5:00pm. I am happy to announce that the university has achieved stability in their academic programmes and activities," he said.

CHIRP UK Appoints Nigeria's Capt Caleb Danladi As Ambassador

**As first Nigerian, its landmark for seafarers*

By ; A C H A D U GABRIEL, Kaduna

In a significant development for maritime safety and advocacy, Capt Caleb Danladi has been appointed as a voluntary ambassador for the Confidential and Independent Reporting Programme (CHIRP) UK, pioneering Nigerian representation.

His appointment marks a historic moment as he becomes the first Nigerian to join the esteemed network of ambassadors dedicated to promoting safety and transparency in the maritime industry, according to release he issued Friday.

The CHIRP reporting programme, renowned for its commitment to confidentiality and impartiality, served as a vital platform for seafarers to submit reports on safety concerns and incidents they encounter at sea.

As a voluntary ambassador, Capt Danladi, founder of Caleb Danladi Foundation's (CDF), primary role will be to raise awareness of the CHIRP programme among seafarers and encourage them to actively participate by submitting reports.

Ambassadors like Capt Danladi play a crucial role in fostering a safety-

conscious culture within the maritime community.

"Through their advocacy efforts, they aim to empower seafarers to speak up about safety issues without fear of retribution, ultimately contributing to the overall improvement of maritime safety standards", it stated.

One of the key benefits of serving as a C H I R P

ambassador is the opportunity to build an extensive network of maritime contacts. Ambassadors quickly establish connections with industry professionals, regulatory bodies, and other stakeholders, facilitating collaboration and information sharing to address safety concerns effectively.

Furthermore, serving as an ambassador provides Capt Danladi who hails from Kaduna, with a unique opportunity to gain a deep understanding of safety issues facing seafarers.

By actively engaging with reports submitted to CHIRP, he will develop



Captain Danladi

insights into common safety challenges and emerging trends, enabling him to advocate for targeted interventions and preventive measures.

Capt Danladi's appointment underscores CHIRP's commitment to diversity and inclusivity within its ambassador network. By welcoming representatives from diverse backgrounds and nationalities, CHIRP ensures that a wide range of perspectives and experiences are represented in its advocacy efforts.

In accepting this role, Capt Danladi expressed enthusiasm for the

opportunity to contribute to the promotion of maritime safety and transparency on a global scale. He emphasized the importance of empowering seafarers to speak up about safety concerns and pledged to work tirelessly to support CHIRP's mission.

As Capt Caleb Danladi embarks on his journey as a CHIRP ambassador, he stands poised to make a significant impact on the maritime industry, pioneering Nigerian representation in the voluntary ambassadors network and championing safety at sea for all seafarers.



Jubilation As 287 Kuriga School Children Abducted In Kaduna By Terrorists Regain Freedom

- CAN thanks govt, appeals for release of other victims
- Nigeria needs National Crime Prevention Commission to address disturbing trend of youth violence - University Don
- Rescue Movement condemns killing of soldiers, emphasizes need for military to stay off civil matters

The statement reads as follows:-
 "In the name of Allah the Beneficent, the Most Merciful, I wish to announce that our Kuriga school children have been released.

"Our special appreciation goes to our dear President, Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR for prioritizing the safety and security of Nigerians and particularly ensuring that the abducted Kuriga school children are released unharmed.

"While the school children were in captivity, I spoke with Mr. President several times. He shared our pains, comforted us and worked round the clock with us to ensure the safe return of the children.

"Special mention must also be made of our dear brother, the National Security Adviser, Mal. Nuhu Ribadu for his exemplary leadership. I spent sleepless nights with Mal. Ribadu fine tuning strategies and coordinating the operations of the security agencies, which eventually resulted in this successful outcome.

"The Nigerian Army also deserves special commendation for showing that with courage, determination and commitment, criminal elements can be degraded and security restored in our communities.

"We also thank all Nigerians who prayed fervently for the safe return of the school children. This is indeed a day of joy. We give Almighty Allah all the glory."

*CAN thanks govt, appeals for release of other victims

Meanwhile, the immediate past Kaduna State Chairman of Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), Rev. John Joseph Hayab, has expressed delight over the open and humane approach shown by government to finding solution in regaining the freedom of abducted Kuriga students and teachers from their abductors.

He said, "It is really a thing of joy to learn that all the children were released unharmed and specifically want to thank all those involved in ensuring that the victims will be reunited back to their families."



Prof Hammed

Speaking to New Nigerian, Hayab added, "The news about the release of children kidnapped from Kuriga school is a cheering news and further shows that we only need genuine commitment from those in government to overcome the challenge of insecurity.

"I commend our governor for his open and humane approach to finding a solution which is a departure from the rigid posture of previous leaders that did not give us this type of good news. I wish to remind Governor Uba Sani to stand firm and keep up the good work till total victory is achieved to others who are in captivity."

According to him, "Our appreciation goes to President Tinubu, Malam Ribadu, the National Security Adviser, the Chief of Defense Staff and other serving chiefs. The secret to putting to an end the insecurity problem we are having is synergy between governments, security agencies and the general public."

He appealed that similar synergy and strategy should also be deployed to rescue the 87 people kidnapped in Kajuru, Gonin Gora and other places in the state.

***Nigeria needs National Crime Prevention Commission to address disturbing trend of youth violence - University Don**

- Delivers UI 546th inaugural lecture

In a related development, a Professor of Counselling Psychology and Peace Studies and

former acting Director of Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies (CEPACS), University of Ibadan, Prof. Ayobami Hammed has called for the creation of a National Crime Prevention Commission.

Presenting the 546th edition of the University of Ibadan inaugural lecture series Titled "We Die Here Today! Youth Violence, Social Dysfunction, and a Counselling Psychologist's Pathway to Peace", the University Don said this will go a long way in addressing the disturbing trend of youth violence across the country.

Prof Hammed maintained that the proposed agency would be saddled with the responsibility of designing, implementing and monitoring a national policy on peace education that is specifically tailored towards equipping the youth with such skills that will help them stay away from tendencies to get involved in violent acts.

According to the University Don, "Peace education can help prevent youth violence and radicalism by teaching youth about the advantages of peace and conflict transformation skills".



Martins Ugwu

"Government could partner with private organizations and strengthen early warning systems to curb youth violence. Parents, teachers, guardians, and siblings should also be educated on identifying red flags indicating a child is joining a cult or being bullied", he said.

Prof Hammed added, The aim of this lecture has been to shine light on a problem or a series of problems that seem perennial and to argue for why it is important that we chart a path to an enduring solution".

"The pursuit of that solution has been my preoccupation for the better part of the last twenty-eight years of my life as an academic on this campus."

While expressing concern over the growing reported cases of youth involvement in violence and criminal activities across the country, he called for the active involvement of all relevant stakeholders including parents, the academia, private sector, media and all tiers of government.

Prof Hammed maintained that more was the rate at which the incident of violent acts are recorded among the younger generation of the youth population adding that the development poses potent existential threat to the socio-political and economic future of the country.

He also called for quality education, positive role model, economic empowerment, among others as ways through which the society can effectively combat the menace of youth violence.

***Rescue Movement condemns killing of soldiers, emphasizes need for military to stay off civil matters**

- Promises aid to the innocent victims

While reacting to the unfortunate incident in Delta last week, the leadership of Rescue The Vulnerable Initiative Aka Rescue Movement For New Nigeria, has condemned in the strongest terms, the killing of our gallant soldiers and deeply sympathized with the bereaved families.

While speaking to newsmen in Enugu, the Director General of Rescue The Vulnerable Initiative (aka Rescue Movement For New Nigeria), Martins Chiedozie Ugwu, noted that the ugly event that took place in Delta state with our gallant soldiers again opened the conversation on the implication of using Soldiers on civil matters.

"Our hearts and thoughts are with them. And it is criminal for citizens to put laws into their hands to kill military personnel and we ask the community leaders to fish out those who were behind the killings for justice and to serve as deterrent to others on the future.

Akwa Ibom Moves To Tackle 'Japa' Of Medical Graduates, Brain Drain



Hon. Moses Essien, Lawmaker representing Ibiono Ibom State Constituency at the Akwa Ibom State House of Assembly, Chairman of the House Committee on Health Services

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"it has become necessary now more than ever for the authorities concerned to work on minimizing the involvement of Nigeria Army in civil or internal issues". He said.

Comrade Ugwu who is also the Secretary General of Africa Thinkers Union, stated that outside the issue of banditry and activities of extremists, gallant soldiers don't have any reason to go for any arrest or involve themselves in communal disputes.

"This is purely the work of other sister agencies and not the army. The army should be concerned with the territorial integrity of the country.

"Yes, soldiers are very important in maintaining peace and security. There is no doubt about it that the Nigerian Army is well-trained and equipped for internal security operations. But not every here and there, the soldiers are called upon to intervene. We must work together to avoid this temptation. We must work together to ensure this ugly incident does not happen

again.

"There is a clear understanding of the role of the police and that of the military in Nigeria. The Nigerian police maintains law and order while the Nigerian Army protects the national borders from external invasion, quells insurrections, and carries out internal security operations especially those that threaten the existence of the country. The issue between Okoloba and Okuoma people in Delta State is purely a civil matter and soldiers shouldn't be involved.

"We are using this opportunity to call on the Nigerian government not only to strengthen our police, but the Nigerian Police should be well funded and equipped to discharge their legal duties effectively to demilitarize the society. We make bold to state that the Nigerian Army is overstretched, especially on issues they shouldn't get involved in the first place.

"As a people, the peace and security of the country remain our responsibility

and no one should drag our soldiers into things ordinarily they shouldn't get involved. The event in Delta should serve as a warning to the general public especially those in authority to observe caution in involving the military in civil matters. We call on Nigerians to please as a matter of urgency assist the community whose houses have been burnt and livelihood destroyed.

"These people need our assistance in any way possible. We are calling on relevant authorities and agencies to provide these innocent members of the communities with the necessary aid to feed and provide shelter for the displaced members of the community." He stressed. Noting further that as an organization, Rescue The Vulnerable Initiative has not only come to rescue the country from its current state, "but we will do our best to assist both the bereaved families of the slain soldiers and those communities razed.

"Our skilled volunteers and donors will be on hand

to help provide shelter and items for the members of the communities. We will continue to support the government where necessary and work assiduously to deliver a new Nigeria.

"This is an opportunity for all of us the Nigerian masses to join forces with Rescue The Vulnerable Initiative so that we can build the Nigeria of our dreams because we have a new spirit. Thanks to our dedicated team, especially Faduri Oluwadare Joseph, the former Labour Party presidential candidate for being such a great Comrade, especially for his effort to ensure that those communities and the families of the slain soldiers receive help.

"In a working society, the army doesn't have any reason to be in the street talk of intervening in civil matters. This is our vision for the country. A country where our security personnel will not be slaughtered like cows in their own country. This is totally unacceptable and should be condemned by all", he concluded.

By; PATRICK TITUS, Uyo

In Akwa Ibom State, it is not going to be business as usual for medical students enjoying government sponsorship abroad to jettison the contract and find greener pastures in their country of training. This follows the growing number of students absconding after undergoing a training programme facilitated by the state government outside the country.

Member representing Ibiono Ibom State Constituency in Akwa Ibom State House of Assembly, Hon. Moses Essien disclosed this during a chat with journalists in Uyo last weekend.

Hon Essien, who is also the Chairman of the House Committee on Health Services, expressed displeasure over what he described as unhealthy trend in the state, just as government was also putting up measures to stop the trend forthwith.

According to lawmaker, the state government is deeply concerned about the incident and has brought out a policy that would address it.

The state government, Hon Essien added, was also putting up measures to bolster the health sector and reduce the incidents of brain drain. While noting that a large chunk of the 2024 budget was earmarked to revamp the health sector, Essien said one of his motions on "the need to implement the Akwa Ibom State Health Insurance Agency Law" when executed would also bring a better package to health professionals.

He said though the State House of Assembly was yet to come up with a

legislation to checkmate such, the state government has issued a circular making it mandatory for those undergoing sponsorship to come back and bring their wealth of experience for the development of the state and the health sector in particular.

"In my interactions with the Commissioner for Health and other management of the health sector in the state, I have discovered that they are a lot of persons that were sent out for training abroad, but could not come back, just because they have found a better opportunity in the places they have gone for training.

"As a House of Assembly, we have not yet come out with a legislation to curtail that, but I think the Executive Order is enough to curtail exodus of doctors being sponsored by the state government.

"The State Government has sent out a circular to those undergoing sponsorship for advanced knowledge in their area of discipline, making it mandatory that they must come back and bring their wealth of experience to develop the state and the health sector.

"Not for you to take the government sponsorship and at the end you abandon the state sponsor of the programme to the detriment of the state and the health sector.

"There are so much the present government is bringing starting from remuneration and more incentives. It is trying hard to put all those things medical doctors are complaining in place so that they will not be lured to practice outside."

NDLEA Busts Drug Cartel, Arrests 8 Suspects, Seizes 11 Vehicles, Recovers 44, 948.1 Kg Illicit Drugs In Lagos, Ondo, Edo

By ; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

At least, a total number eight suspects are now cooling their feet in the custody of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) following their arrest during massive raids across Lagos, Edo, Ondo and others by operatives.

Eleven vehicles were reportedly seized from the drug cartels and over 44,948.1 kilogrammes recovered from them.

The Director Media and Advocacy of the agency, Femi Babafemi made the disclosure in a statement made available to journalists yesterday.

He also revealed that a total of 7, 687.8kg of cannabis was destroyed in a warehouse in Ala forest, Akure, Ondo state with another 670kg evacuated, on Saturday March 23, 2024, while no less than 14,310.8625kg of same psychoactive substance was razed on 5.7 hectares of farms in Ohosu/Ugbogui forest, Ovia South West LGA, Edo State on Tuesday 19th March, where five suspects including 67-year-old Sunday Otulugbu; Agbayeogor Joshua, 39; Kelvin Ofuasia, 45; Williams Peter, 37; and Kamaru Onimisi, 44, were arrested.

Babafemi added that the operatives, in another operation in Uzebba/Avbiosi forest on Thursday 21st March, destroyed over 6,500kg cannabis on 2.6 hectares of farms where three suspects: Kabiru Idris, 36; Alaba Jimoh, 40; and Lekan Asobere, 35, were arrested.

Similarly, 5,000kg of same substance was razed in a warehouse in Okpuje forest, Owan West LGA by NDLEA operatives with support from the military on Friday 22nd March.

Giving a breakdown on the arrest and seizures of the vehicles, said " In Lagos, a well-coordinated operation on Wednesday 20th March, according to Babafemi led to the seizure of 10,534 kilograms (10.534 tonnes) of Ghanaian Loud, a strain of cannabis in Ajah area of the state where 11 vehicles were seized from the drug cartel.

" The recovered vehicles include: Iveco truck marked KRD 522 YE; Toyota sienna marked AAA 338 GL; Toyota sienna marked AAA 308 EP; Toyota sienna marked FKJ 381 JC; Nissan bus marked EKY



Some of the recovered illicit drugs

846 YG; Mercedes bus marked EPE 743 XT; an unmarked Iveco J5 bus; Toyota sienna marked LSD 744 GP; Toyota highlander SUV marked KTU 280 FN; Toyota sienna marked AAA 333 GH and Toyota sienna marked FKJ 208 HV", he stated.

" In another raid at Ago Palace way area of the state on Friday 22nd March, a suspect, Miracle Obi was arrested with 1,006 ampoules of pentazocine injection; 50 tablets of tramadol 225mg; 89 bottles of codeine syrup and 2,360 ampoules of Diazepam injection. Another suspect, Kareem Mustapha was earlier on Tuesday 19th March nabbed along the Lagos-Ibadan expressway with 25,000 pills of tramadol and 5,900 ampoules of pentazocine injection.

While 58kg cannabis was recovered at Jagindi village, Kafanchan LGA, Kaduna State on Friday 22nd March, Abdulqadir Muhammad, 34, was arrested with 45 kilograms of same substance by NDLEA operatives along Kaduna-Zaria expressway. In Borno state, Salisu Yusuf, 20, was nabbed with 30kg Arizona, a strain of cannabis at Njimtilo checkpoint on Saturday 23rd March, while another suspect, Rabiou Husseini, 27, was

arrested with 34kg cannabis along Gwagwalada/Abuja highway on his way from Lagos to Katsina state on Wednesday 21st March.

The following day, 22nd March, NDLEA officers on patrol along Gashua-Baymari road, Busari LGA, Yobe state arrested Haladu Hassan with 160 blocks of cannabis sativa weighing 50kg.

In Kano state, a syndicate dealing in cocaine and heroin was successfully dismantled with the arrest of 42-year-old Onyeka Uba at Sabon Gari area of Kano where 1.805 kilograms and 7grams of the illicit substances were recovered from him on Monday 18th March. Another suspect, Ubale Sani, 49, was also arrested with 51.5kg cannabis at Chiromawa area of Kano.

Operatives of a special operation unit of NDLEA also disrupted criminal activities of another cocaine syndicate in Abuja at the weekend with the arrest of three leaders of the group. While Nnajofofor Celestine Kenekukwu, 41, and Okoro Chigozie Christian, 35, were arrested.

On Friday 22nd March at Paint House Hotel, Umar Garba Benna Street, 21 Road, First Avenue, Gwarimpa Abuja with 718 grams of cocaine, a follow

up operation at the residence of Okoro Chigozie at House 30, 69B Road 6th Avenue Gwarimpa, led to the recovery of 19 blocks of Arizona, a strain of cannabis weighing 9.823kg and monetary exhibits: N545,500 and \$250, as well as property documents. Two vehicles: Toyota Camry 2007 marked BWR 94 BM and Toyota Camry 2012 marked RBC 154 BS were also recovered from them.

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Another follow up operation to the residence of Nnajofofor Celestine Kenekukwu at 49 Mercy Orjiakor street, Becky Estate 11, Karu, Nasarawa state on Saturday 23rd March also

led to the recovery of various quantities of Arizona and methamphetamine while his girlfriend and accomplice, Ifemenam Oge was arrested.

With the same vigour, the various commands of the Agency across the country continued with the War Against Drug Abuse, WADA, advocacy campaign in the past week. Some of them include: WADA sensitisation lecture for students and teachers of Government Day Secondary School, Damaturu, Yobe; Government Secondary School, Afaha Ukwa, Akwa Ibom; Total Child School, Awka, Anambra and Celestial Church of Christ High School Oke-Ado, Ibadan, Oyo state, among others.

While commending the officers and men of the Lagos, Edo, Ondo, Kano, Borno, Kaduna, and FCT Commands as well as the Special Operations unit of the Agency for their outstanding feats in the past week, Chairman/Chief Executive Officer of NDLEA, Brig. Gen. Mohamed Buba Marwa (Rtd) equally applauded their counterparts in all the commands across the country for intensifying their WADA advocacy lectures in schools, markets, motor parks, worship centres and work places.

Tinubu Needs More Time To Reposition Nigeria - Afenifere Chieftain

*Tasks Nigerians to be patient

*Insists governors largely responsible for hardship

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

President of Afenifere World Congress and Chairman, State of Kansas Branch, APC-USA, Prince Bayo Ogunmenyo yesterday, said that President Bola Tinubu needs more time to reposition Nigeria.

The APC chieftain in a statement, declared that as a result of this, Nigerians should be patient with President Tinubu in repositioning the country. Prince Ogunmenyo pointed out that President Tinubu is making spirited frantic efforts at repositioning the country and needs more time, saying the President means well for Nigeria and should be given more time to carry out his agenda of turning the country around.

"President Tinubu met a terrible state of affairs. He has been trying to reposition the country, but this will definitely take time. I plead with

Nigerians to please give our President more time. He knows what he is doing", he said.

Prince Ogunmenyo added, "He has the capability and capacity to turn around the fortunes of the country, but Rome was not built in a day. Nigeria is also a federal state, we should also put the state governors on the spot and assess their performance."

"Few months ago, President Tinubu released N5 billion to the state governors as palliatives. He said the governors should buy and distribute rice and other grains for the people of their states. But we all know what happened. Though the president meant well, but some of the governors didn't purchase or distribute rice to their people".

The Afenifere Chieftain noted "Who do we blame? Governors have usurped the functions of the Local Governments Chairmen. It is terrible".

"President Tinubu met a



Afenifere Chieftain, Prince Bayo Ogunmenyo

terrible state of affairs. He has been trying to reposition the country, but this will definitely takes time. The level at which the country was before President Tinubu takes

over, was precarious," The Afenifere Chieftain maintained that the country had deteriorated so badly and that patience is the key word now.

Hardship: We Will Do Our Best To Provide Benue Citizens Succour - Gov Alia

*Sets up committee on new minimum wage

By; ARCHIBONG ESUENE, Makurdi

Conscious of the economic challenges, the Benue State governor, Fr. Hyacinth Alia has said that his administration will do its best to provide its citizens succour in the prevailing circumstances. It would be recalled that Rev. Fr. Hyacinth Iormem Alia after taking the oath of office, ordered temporary restrictions on all government accounts.

The decision was necessitated by the genuine aim to protect government assets and to instill much needed accountability in public expenditure.

This singular move saved the state a lot of money, freeing up much-needed resources for use in the interest of Benue people.

"We are grateful for the understanding and support of the civil service and the good people of our dear state." He said.

On attainment of the objectives set by the government before the

commencement of this policy, the governor recently instructed the Ministry of Finance to put measures in place to remove all restrictions placed on accounts.

According to the Chief Press Secretary in a statement, the Ministry of Finance will be providing updates on this and other matters relating to fiscal responsibility, public procurement and financial reporting to the public soon.

In another positive development, the Executive Governor of Benue state, Rev. Fr. Hyacinth Alia has constituted a committee to review the minimum wage and make recommendations to the government.

The committee is headed by the Secretary to the state government, with the Head of Service and several heads of MDAs as members.

The committee has since held its inaugural meeting and will be collaborating with organized labour.

Oyo CPN Advocates End To Child Kidnapping In Nigeria

*Holds peaceful protest in Ibadan

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

Non-Government Organisation, the Child Protection Network (CPN), Oyo State Chapter and other stakeholders on Friday, staged a peaceful protest to decry the incessant and wanton kidnapping of children across Nigeria.

Speaking with journalists at the protest ground, Total Garden area of Ibadan, the CPN state Coordinator, Mrs Oluwatoyin Ogedengbe said CPN resolved into speaking up against the aberration and that major stakeholders including the government, public spirited individuals, religious/community leaders, and families should rise up to the occasion of saying no to the menace of kidnapping.

Mrs Ogedengbe described the recent kidnapping of at least 287 school children by armed gunmen in LEA Primary and Secondary School in the Kuriga village of Kaduna's Chikun district as highly worrisome, adding that such occurrences has to be stopped at all cost.

Stressing that contrary to the notion that such occurrences only take place in the

North, she disclosed that the recent record of such in Ekiti State is a clear pointer that the life of all children matters, calling on the government at all levels to put mechanisms and structures in place to ensure the security of not just children, but for all and sundry.

Mrs Ogedengbe tasked the government to do more in increasing the budget and allocations of funds geared towards providing efficient and effective equipments for combating terrorism and kidnapping.

According to Mrs Ogedengbe, the case of Chibok school girls abductors, who are yet to be apprehended was an indication that government still has so much to do in making sure the lives of all Nigerians is secured.

The CPN state coordinator then charged all Nigerians to join the fight against the kidnapping of children by staying vigilant and reporting whoever is involved and aiding or abating the practice of kidnapping children.

Representative of National Human Rights Commission, Mr Babatunde Onilari in his remarks said the pressure



The protesting CPN Advocates in Ibadan

of existing or impending kidnapping is becoming unbearable for families hence the need for the Northern Leaders Forum, Northern Governors Forum and the Northern Senators Forum to speak out against it.

The Executive Director of Youth Care Development and Empowerment Initiative, Dr Adefunke Ekine advised the government to nip kidnapping in the bud, adding that the economic benefit inclined with the nefarious practise is

what is still keeping it going, Executive Director of Child Development and Concern Foundation, Alhaji Iskil Yusuf noted

that the continued re-occurrence of child kidnapping ten years after that of the Chibok school girls was alarming and a clarion call for the government to wake from its slumber and ensure necessary actions are taken to bring kidnapping to a close in Nigeria.

Former Head Of State, Yakubu Gowon Praises Gombe Governor's Visionary Leadership, Remarkable Achievements

*Governor Inuwa sues for prayers in face of hard times in Nigeria

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Former Nigeria's Head of State, General Yakubu Gowon, has commended Gombe State Governor, Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya CON, for his remarkable achievements, visionary leadership and commitment to the welfare and progress of the people of Gombe State and Nigeria as a whole.

General Yakubu Gowon gave the commendation during a courtesy call on Governor Inuwa Yahaya on Saturday, where he led a delegation of some eminent Nigerians, including Governor Caleb Muftwang of Plateau State, former Speaker of the House of Representatives, Yakubu Dogara, former Minister of Information, Professor Jerry Gana amongst others.

According to a statement signed by the Director-General (Press Affairs) Government House Gombe, Ismaila Uba Misilli, the former Nigerian leader remarked on the profound impression

Governor Inuwa Yahaya's administration has left on him despite not having formally met him formally since his assumption of office as Governor of Gombe State in 2019.

He said the visible strides made by Governor Inuwa Yahaya's administration as seen on various screens and platforms painted a vivid picture of steadfast commitment to effecting positive change, acknowledging that his leadership is making tangible impacts on the lives of the people of the state through legacy initiatives and projects that visible to all.

"I may not have the chance to personally witness the transformation taking place under your leadership in Gombe, but I must commend you for your remarkable strides in governance. It's been quite some time since my last visit to Gombe, and I must acknowledge the evident change. The improvements I've observed are so significant that I find myself unable to recognise certain places from my previous

visit", Gowon said.

"Your Excellency, let me commend you for your efforts and urge you to continue the excellent work you are doing. We are closely observing the positive transformations taking place in Gombe, and you are certainly making us proud. Your genuine care for the welfare of your people, as well as the development and progress of your state and the nation, is highly commendable. I extend my best wishes to you for continued success throughout your tenure", the former Head of State added.

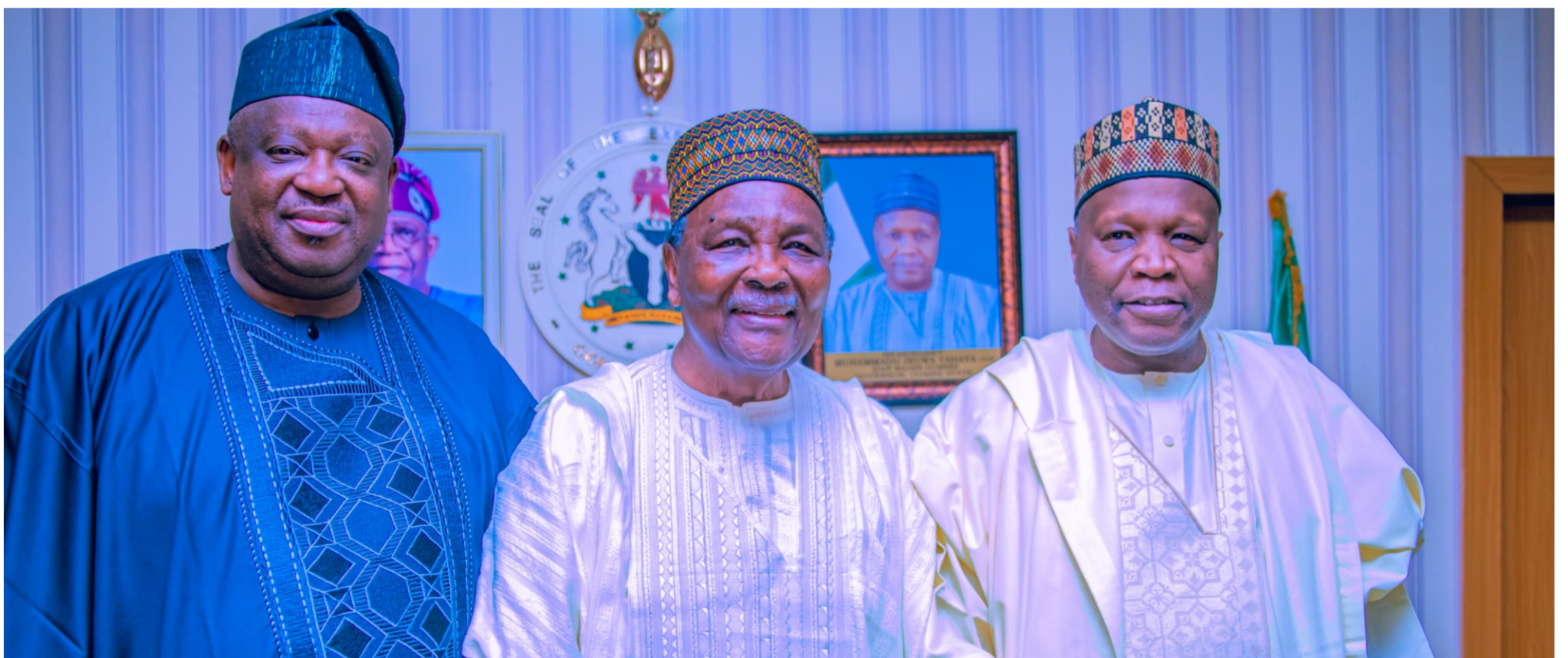
Earlier, Governor Inuwa Yahaya described the visit as an honour done not just to his administration but to the entire people of Gombe State, emphasizing the hospitable nature of the people of the State.

He noted that the gracing of the commissioning of the church by General Gowon and other distinguished Nigerians couldn't have come at a better moment,

coinciding with Muslims observing the Holy month of Ramadan and some Christians fasting for Lent.

"Let us utilize this occasion to advocate for and spread the Gospel of peace. Nigeria is currently facing challenges, and there's no reason for us to be in this situation. We are one people, and your message of unity, Your Excellency Gen. Gowon, resonates with us. We are a people of faith, and during the challenging days of the Nigerian civil war, you stood with us. Now you consistently serve the nation in various capacities, notably through initiatives like the Nigeria Prays, among others. We shall continue to stand together with you for peace and unity of Nigeria", the Governor remarked.

The delegation arrived Gombe State to attend the dedication of a Church in Shongom Local Government Area, built by an illustrious son, Mr. Jerry Damara for his community, Kulishi.



Och'Idoma Visit FUHSO, Commends Management For Academic Excellence

***Efforts in making university world-class is unnegotiable - VC**

By; ARCHIBONG ESUENE, Makurdi

The paramount ruler of Idoma land, the Och'Idoma, Dr. John Obagaji Elaigwu has paid a maiden visit to Federal University of Health Sciences, Otuokpo (FUHSO), and commended the management of the university for academic excellence and monumental achievements recorded within a short period of three years.

The Och'Idoma equally commended the Vice Chancellor of the university, Prof Innocent Ujah for his visionary leadership style as manifested in the massive infrastructural development and sound academic environment for the staff and students.

The first class traditional ruler who stated this when he visited the university along with his Council of Chiefs, said with what the Vice Chancellor and his management team are doing, "the future of FUHSO is great and preserved by the solid foundation laid".

His Royal Majesty who was received by the Vice Chancellor and the management of the university, inspected some projects and facilities on the campus earlier before proceeding to the council chamber of the university where he heaped praises on the developmental stride on ground, stating that in less than four years the institution has achieved a lot under the leadership sagacity of Professor Ujah.

The Och'Idoma who is the Chancellor of Federal University, Otuoke, Bayelsa State, released royal blessings on the VC and the management, enjoining the management not to be deterred by the February 19 protest, but to continue to work for the enhancement of the Institution for the benefit of Nigerians and Idoma people.

While calling on his subjects to embrace dialogue for development to thrive in the land, he said, "let me express my joy

over the composure of the staff and students to receive me and my council of chiefs, my first entry into the university to know what is going on here in my kingdom. My entrance which was made possible by God, shall mark a new dawn in the annals of this institution; whatever has been impossible to FUHSO will be made possible by God via my presence," he said.

The Chairman, Idoma Area Traditional Council showered encomium on the VC, "keep your spirit of development high and God almighty will grant you the well withers to take the University forward; on behalf of the Idoma Area Traditional Council, I tender an unreserved apology to the institution for the ugly protest to the university by some of my children which I intervened in my capacity as a royal father; God said that I should preach peace to all and I must confess that you're (Prof Ujah) a leader par excellence and a role model".

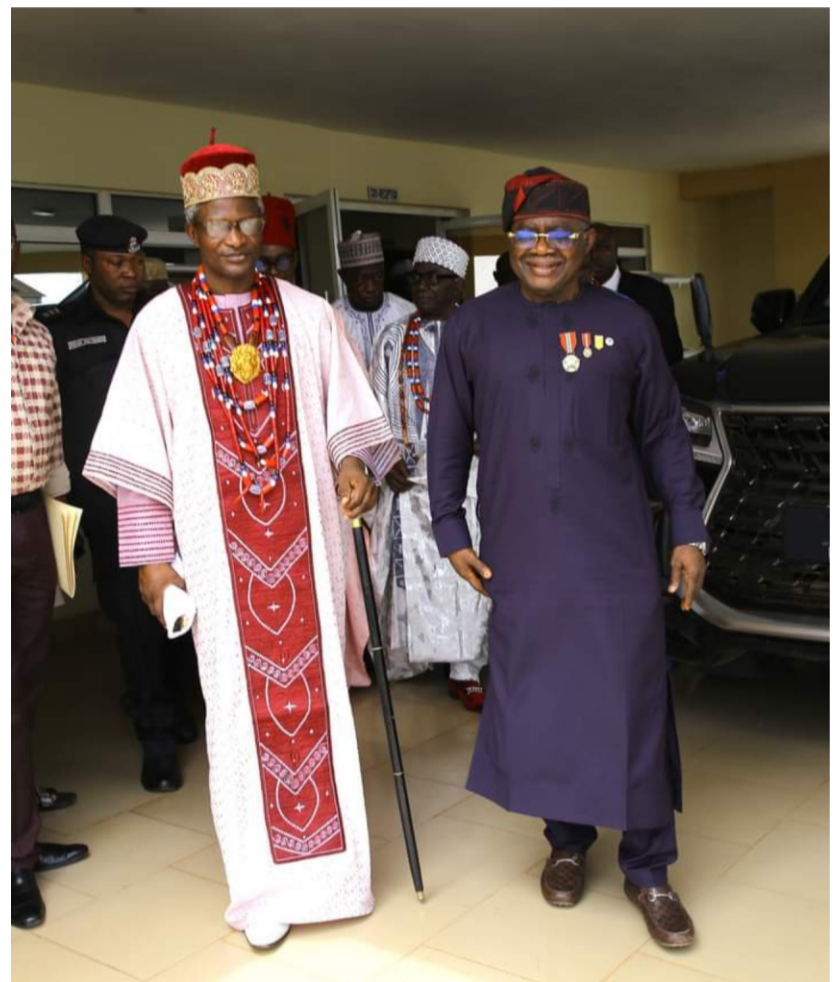
The monarch encouraged the university management to consider his subjects from the nine local government areas in his domain, as well as the host communities for employment and admission into the university.

Responding, the Vice Chancellor, Professor Innocent Ujah, described the visit of His Royal Majesty to the university for the first time as a rare privilege, stating that the unreserved apology tendered by his monarch has relieved him and a testament that FUHSO is on a trajectory, noting that the university is a blessing from God in disguise to the Idoma people of Nigeria which he cautioned must be guarded jealously.

The VC explained that as a specialized Medical University, there are certain levels that one could go but for him, he has done the impossibility at FUHSO as first out of the six of its kind established by the Federal Government.

"I did my best to convince the Nigeria Medical and Dental Council to admit 100 students into the University's M B B S programme as against 50 for other universities because FUHSO is a specialized Medical University," he disclosed.

He maintained that the infrastructural development at the university's permanent site at Akwete-Akpa were enormous - including a gigantic College of Medicine; Senate and Administrative buildings; Faculty of Science; students' hostels; Physics and Biological departments; principal officers' quarters; gatehouse and fence which would be completed soon. The Vice Chancellor however, mentioned that his insistence on the right thing to be done was responsible for some variance, but thanked his management team for their support, saying that management of the university is conscious of the comfortability and health of the students, informing that the institution has not recorded any student's death since its inception, averring that the joint



efforts to make the university world-class is unnegotiable.

Prof Ujah who is the immediate past President of Nigeria Medical Association, informed the royal fathers that FUHSO students are doing well particularly those from Idoma extraction, pointing out that admission and employment are not influenced by favouritism, disclosing that the Remedial Science Programme was established to aid the immediate communities secure admission into degree programmes for their children, hence their deficiencies in science subjects, as one of its Corporate Social Responsibility.



CAN Gets New Leaders In Kaduna, Promises To Partner Govt For Peace, Tranquility

By; AMOS TAUNA, Kaduna

The newly elected Kaduna State Chapter of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), was inaugurated on Friday, with the resolve to partner the state government and all stakeholders, to build a state of hope, peace and tranquility.

Speaking after taking over the leadership of CAN in the state, the new chairman, Rev. Ma'aji Caleb said, "Our focus sha'be to build trust, respect and true love among believers and people of other faiths in the state towards ensuring peace, unity and development in the state." According to him, "The Lord has blessed us with a new administration in the state that so far, through her dealings suggested that she is a government that we can trust, support and a government we can collaborate with for the overall development of Kaduna State."

He assured that the new leadership of CAN in the state would continue to consult the past leaders for guidance, saying that they have proved themselves worthy mentors and excellent in leadership.

The new chairman added that the new leadership of CAN in the state is coming

at a time when there is the need for a new approach to put in place to foster unity and development for the body of Christ in order to contribute positively for a peaceful and United state. Earlier, the outgoing chairman, Rev. John Joseph Hayab, thanked the Church for the support given to the outgoing leadership and prayed for more support to the new leadership for a united and purposeful leadership in the state.

He lamented that few days ago, about 400 people have been kidnapped by bandits in the state, but thanked Governor Uba Sani for being there for the plight the people of the state are going through.

According to him, "Governor Uba Sani's government has so far, proved to be inclusive to all and very sensitive to the plight of the common man. He, therefore, needs our prayers and support so that he will be able to carry out the programmes he has for the good people of the state in moving their living standards forward."

Hayab expressed delight that the religious preaching bill which the government of former Governor el-Rufai wanted to regulate the activities of both Christians and Muslims has been quashed in the court of law.

Police Smashes Kidnap Syndicate, Nabs 9 Suspects, Recovers 3 POS Machines In Lagos

By; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

No fewer than nine suspected kidnapers have been arrested during the week by police operatives in Lagos, New Nigerian Newspapers has learnt. They were said to have been arrested after a shootout that lasted several hours at Ajah area of the state.

The operation was reportedly carried out around one of the suspects' hideouts in the Lekki-Ajah axis of the state.

The police said the suspects were members of a notorious gang of

kidnappers operating in the Lekki-Ajah axis.

The Force Public Relations Officer (FPRO) ACP Olumuyiwa Adejobi confirmed the arrest in a statement made available to newsmen on Friday.

Adejobi said the arrest followed the resolution of the police to reduce crime to a manageable level.

He stated that the arrest followed series of complaints from members of the public to the state Commissioner of Police, Adegoke Fayoadé, over an upsurge in kidnapping along the Lekki-Ajah axis.

The force spokesperson added that during the raid,

three Point of Sales (POS) machines allegedly used for the collection of random money and 10 mobile phones were recovered.

Adejobi said over the past weeks, the operations had recorded several achievements.

"In a more recent happening, on March 17, 2024, at about 10:30 pm, the Commander PMF 20, Ikeja, Lagos led a joint team of mobile men and officers from Maroko Division to a suspected den of kidnapers where they arrested nine kidnapers.

"Three of their victims

were also rescued while 10 mobile phones and two PoS machines were recovered from the suspects.

"In a similar occurrence in the same Lagos State, on March 16, 2024, police operatives of the Badagry Divisional Headquarters, Lagos State arrested one Abass Taiwo Hassan, suspected of being the leader of a cult gang involved in the shooting of one Adeniyi Adebajo, on February 26, 2024 and upon his arrest, the suspect confessed to the crime and admitted to being the leader of a 6-man cult gang," he said.



General Yakubu Gowon during a courtesy call on Governor Inuwa Yahaya where he led a delegation including Governor Caleb Muftwang of Plateau State, former Speaker of the House of Representatives, Yakubu Dogara, former Minister of Information, Professor Jerry Gana amongst others.

Delta Govt Confirms Cases of Lassa Fever In 4 LGAs

By; UTEBOR PETER, Asaba

The Government of Delta State has confirmed the outbreak of the dreaded Lassa Fever disease in four local government areas of the state.

The four local government areas include, Okpe, Oshimili North, Oshimili South, and Ndokwa East, with four cases so far recorded.

Announcing the outbreak, the state Commissioner for Health, Dr. Joseph Onojaeme made the announcement while briefing newsmen in Asaba, the state

capital.

Onojaeme said the government is doing a lot of advocacy, especially to health workers, and sensitisation of residents to have a high index of suspicion when they see those cases.

"In week 12, we have four confirmed cases so far recorded with a fatality rate of 50% though the general fatality rate for Lassa fever is 1 – 15% so we are doing everything humanly possible to ensure that we curtail the transmission from patient to health workers and from patients

to relatives."

"The government is doing a lot of advocacy, especially to health workers, and sensitisation of residents to have a high index of suspicion when they see those cases.

"The State government is also working closely with Irrua Specialist Hospital, Edo State, and has been able to achieve less than 24 hours of getting test results on Lassa fever as against what was commonly obtainable which was within the range of 72 hours."

The State Epidemiologist, Dr. Mildred Igumbor said one case of Lassa fever is an outbreak, hence all hands should be on deck to ensure the elimination of the disease.

"To ensure prevention and control measures are in place in our health facilities, health workers must have a very index of suspicion. We are telling everyone that not all fever cases are malaria cases so if you are sick please go to any nearest health facility or qualified medical personnel to seek

medical attention.

"So, if you get there and the health personnel have a high level of suspicion you will be tested and with the result received such patient will be properly managed.

"The Isolation Center in Federal Medical Center Asaba, built by the State Government has the capacity for isolation and management of confirmed cases and if need be for referrals they would be transferred to Irrua Specialist Hospital, Edo State".

Don't Lose Hope Despite Current Insecurity, Pastor Enenche Tells Kaduna Residents

***Tasks leaders on people oriented governance, donates relief materials**

By: AUSTINE AGBO EMMANUEL, Kaduna

The Senior Pastor, Dunamis International Gospel Centre (DIGC) Worldwide Abuja, Dr. Paul Enenche has called on residents of Kaduna State not to lose hope despite the current insecurity challenges ravaging the state.

Pastor Enenche who was in Kaduna at the weekend for Healing and Deliverance Crusade at the Ahmadu Bello Stadium, said Kaduna by history, is strategically important to Nigeria and as such, the need to come down and contribute their quota, stressing that the place of prayers can never be overemphasized.

The cleric who donated relief materials during the crusade to cushion the effects of economic hardship, urged government to live up to their responsibilities in such a way that they can be accountable to God both in time and eternity.

"By the history of Kaduna, we see the state as very important and strategic state in this nation, so we believe that Kaduna is strategic and we believe that Kaduna has had a lot of diverse challenges, security wise and other wise, and we came down to contribute our quota in praying, in declaring and trusting the Lord that the great potentials of this land will be realized by the help and mercies of God.

"My message to the people of Kaduna state is in Psalm chapter 34 vs 5. It says, "they looked up to him and they were

lightened." irrespective of the challenges, if our people in Kaduna will look up to God solely and make him their first and foremost I trust that God will intervene.

"To both the populace and the leadership, everybody should live in such a way that they can be accountable to God at the end of their journey whether President, Governor or anything you are, one day every body will meet with God to account for how they lived their life, how they governed the people, it is very important for the government and the populace to live in such a way that they will be accountable to God.

"We have a welfare outreach that we intend to offer on the second day of the crusade, we have some relief for the people." He said.

Speaking on the crusade theme, on the second day, "the Glory of God," where he prayed for the 23 LGAs of the state, the Minister revealed that the Glory of God is a defense against enemy onslaught and wickedness, expressing optimism that Kaduna and it's environs will see God's interventions not just in their lives but also in every nook and cranny of the state in no distant time from now.

Highpoints of the Kaduna Healing and Deliverance Crusade is the Minister's session, Campus Apostolic Invasion at the Kaduna state University, sharing of rice, wrapper, clothing and other relief materials to crusade attendees so as to cushion the effects of economic hardship.



PDP In Akwa Ibom Harvests New Members

**Leaders, stakeholders of opposition parties decamp in doves*

By; PATRICK TITUS, Uyo

What has been described as a rare movement of solidarity and alliance, played out for the ruling Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in Akwa Ibom State as major opposition parties in the state have surrendered their wards, local government areas and state structures to the party.

At Ibom Hall Grounds, venue for the formal reception on Friday, the defectors to PDP, who are from All Progressives Congress (APC), Young Progressives Party (YPP), New Nigerian Peoples Party (NNPP) and other parties, described PDP as a party that has remained united and unshakable since the return of democracy in 1999.

Speaking through their representatives from the various opposition parties, the defectors also noted the performance of the state governor, Pastor Umo Eno

since taking over about nine months ago as another reason that brought them back to PDP, adding "we are back to the PDP to contribute to the sustenance of the PDP winning streak in future elections."

The speakers include, a former member of the House of Representatives, Hon Emma Ukoette, former State Publicity Secretary of the APC, Mr Nkereuwem Enyongekere, former member of the House of the Assembly, Hon. Mabel Udongwo, Mr Ubong Edem, Mr Kini Ikpeme, Former Transition Chairmen Ukanafun, Hon Udomfu amongst others.

Earlier, the State Chairman of PDP, Rt Hon. Aniekan Akpan in his welcome address, lauded the defectors for deciding to yield to superior reasoning and joining the PDP, noting that the party will continue to keep its doors open for new members and those who had also gone to taste the

political waters elsewhere.

"I am very elated to welcome you back to the PDP on behalf of the Leader of our Party in Akwa Ibom State, His Excellency Pastor Umo Eno. With your decision to join the PDP today, you have all demonstrated patriotism and rare courage and I stand here to tell you that this demonstration of courage, solidarity and patriotism will be positively recorded in the books of the political history of our dear state.

"We receive you back with open arms and we have instructed the entire structure of our dear Party at the Ward and Local Government levels to completely reintegrate you into the fold of the PDP. The PDP is one happy family and I assure you that you will feel the warmth and coverage of the umbrella at all times" Akpan said.

Presenting a register of the defectors to Governor Umo Eno,

his Political Adviser, Dr. Godwin Ntukudeh, said he was elated by the en masse return of the structure of the opposition parties into the PDP and urged them to swiftly learn and remain committed to the ideals of the party.

The governor, Pastor Umo Eno who received the defectors into PDP, said it was heartwarming to see several tens of thousands of elders, stakeholders and executive committee members and teeming supporters of the opposition parties come out to publicly declare that their decision to abandon their party was chiefly as a result of the early superlative performance of his administration.

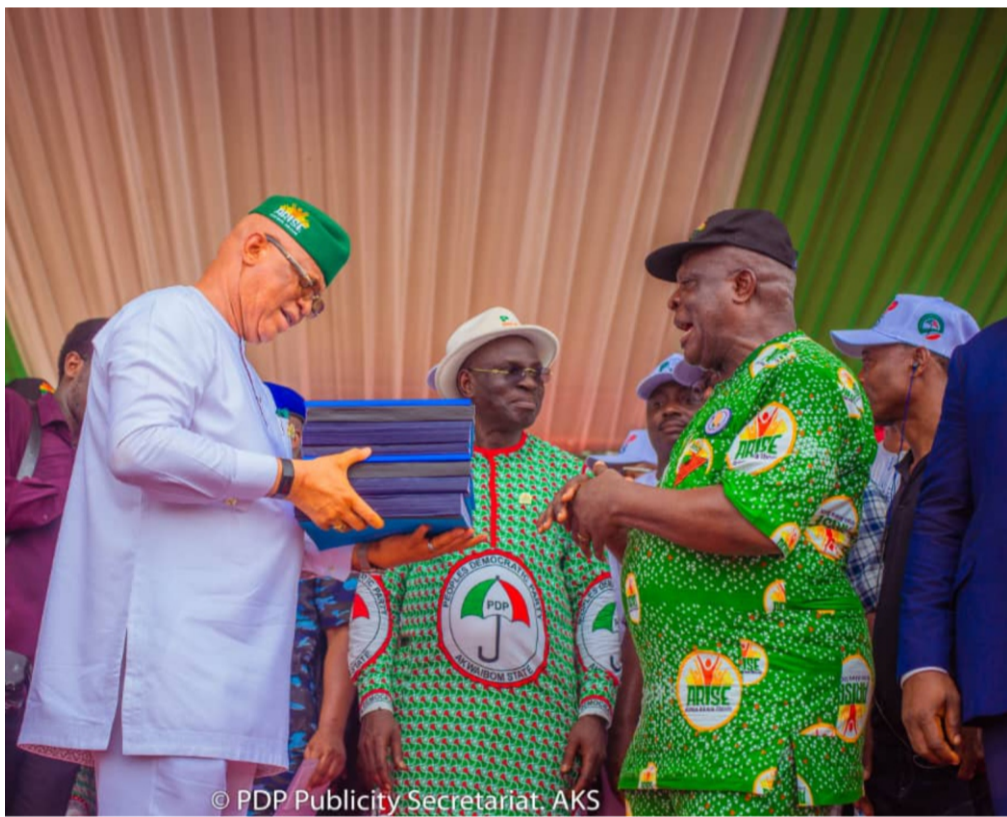
The Governor acknowledged them for the show of overwhelming acceptance of the enormous strength of the PDP in Akwa Ibom State, stressing that in his time as leader of the PDP in Akwa Ibom State, the umbrella

of the Party will continue to grow wider for many Akwa Ibomites to find political coverage under it.

"As Governor, I stand here today to re-echo my unwavering resolve to continue to lead an administration of broad-based people centric transformation so that the lives of Akwa Ibom people who overwhelmingly elected me to serve can become better while our partymen and women can also become proud of our stewardship.

"I am sure that with the return of these enormous structures from all the other opposition parties in the state, our ranks as a Party will be better for it." Governor Eno stated.

He direct that at the State-wide Ward meetings of the Party scheduled to hold on March 30, all should return to individual wards and meet minds on how to continue to deepen the taproot of the PDP across the state.



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Water Day: Average Nigerian Consumes Only 9 Liters Of Water Daily, APWEN Laments



By; **BILIQIS ONAOLAPO OLAJUMOKE, Ilorin**

President Association of Professional Women Engineers of Nigeria (APWEN), Dr. Adebisi Osim on Friday, lamented that average Nigerian consumes only nine liters of water per day. Osim stated this in Ilorin on Friday, while presenting a paper in commemoration of the 2024 World Water Day organized by APWEN, under the theme, "Water For Peace".

According to her, this falls below the national acceptable minimum standards of 12 to 16 liters per day.

She stated that statistics from the World Bank, approximately 70 million Nigerians do not have access to safe drinking water.

"Globally 122 million people have to collect unsafe water from streams or ponds. Two billion people lack safe drinking water and 114 million do not have access to basic sanitation," she said.

Osim who was represented by Mrs. Nihinlola Olawuyi, the APWEN Kwara Chapter Chairman, enjoined all stakeholders to utilize water as potentials to foster harmony, cooperation, and peace among nations and communities worldwide.

She observed that water is not only essential to life

itself, but it also has the power to transcend borders, cultures, and ideologies.

"Throughout history, water has served as both a source of conflict and a catalyst for peace. It has been a cause for dispute over shared resources, yet it has also been a cornerstone for collaboration and diplomacy.

"However, we must recognize that water also possesses the transformative power to build bridges, reconcile differences, and forge pathways to peace," she said.

She observed that inadequate access to water and poor management practices majorly contribute to Nigeria's water and sanitation crisis.

According to her, widespread flooding has also affected 3.2 million people in Nigeria, resulting in over 600 fatalities and displacing of over 1.4 million people.

Osim called on governments at all tiers and other stakeholders to collaborate with APWEN towards goals of securing water for peace.

Also in his presentation, Dr Lawal Olohunbebe, the Senior Special Adviser on community development to the Gov. Abdulrahman Abdulrazaq of Kwara observed the criticality of water and sanitation in pursuit of sustainable development.

He underscored the importance that the state government attaches to partnership with APWEN, Organised Private Sector in Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (OPSWASH), to tackle societal challenges such as water and sanitation.

"The situation is further exacerbated by the effect of climate change, population growth, rapid urbanization and socioeconomic factors.

Similarly, Dr Saheed Aremu, the Managing Director of Lower Nigeria River Basin Development Authority emphasised the need to utilize water for peace in our nation.

He observed that there are many challenges that confront communities in terms of availability of water, including climate change and uncontrolled population.

The Managing Director explained that there is need to make the invisible, underground water, visible and accessible to generality of the masses.

Mr Usman Lade, the Kwara Commissioner for Water Resources, observed that water is paramount to existence, while reiterating the commitment of the state government to collaborate with key stakeholders to achieve better results.

He disclosed that the state government has achieved 74 per cent success on access of water to communities, adding that the state will continue to

improve on this statistics.

Lade also stated that the government has already taken initiative in training of youths on repair and maintenance of boreholes in their respective communities.

In her Lecture, Mrs Oluwatoyin Babatunde, the OPS WASH Coordinator in Kwara, submitted that APWEN's commitment is in support of President Bola Tinubu's administration on community engagement. She explained that OPS WASH is an umbrella body conducting private sector engagement in SDG-6.

According to her, the focus is to create and source partner to make impact and accelerate the private sector coordination in Nigeria for SDG-6 and other related SDGs.

The expert explained that APWEN uplifts communities in various ways, offering career counselling session for female students in primary, secondary and tertiary institutions.

She noted that this is to increase the number of global engineering voices of women for Nigeria.

The OPS coordinator therefore, called for private sector organisation support in Kwara within OPS WASH objectives.

Babatunde also advised better understanding of community needs, private sector support and needs among others.

Ex Enugu State Assembly Aspirant, Ugwele Celebrates Gov Peter Mbah @ 52

By; **KELVIN IGNATIUS OKPARA,**

A former House of Assembly aspirant in Igbo Etiti East constituency in the 2023 state Assembly election, Barr. Joel Ugwele has felicitated Gov. Peter Mbah on his 52nd birthday.

In his congratulatory message made available to newsmen in Enugu on Friday, Ugwele described Mbah as a pragmatic leader whose leadership qualities are unparalleled and wished him many more years.

"It is indeed a great thing worthy of celebration and I thank God for life given to you while I am praying for your long life and prosperity in good health.

"I also wish to use this opportunity to commit my

prayers to Almighty father to give you the strength in demonstrating your good leadership qualities in Enugu State and beyond.

"Our God is good all the time in your life and may he continue to be with you," he points out.

"We thank Gov. Peter Mbah for his good work in Enugu state in all sectors starting from embarking on fulfillment foundation to his political manifestoes, working on the actualization of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) at \$30 Billion.

"Gov. Peter Mbah has changed the narrative in political leadership and good governance in Enugu State by embarking on costly state capital project and mobilizing the contractors in carrying out the work." He said.

DSS Arrests 4 Suspected Kidnappers In Akwa Ibom

By; **PATRICK TITUS, Uyo**

Department of State Service (DSS), Akwa Ibom command has arrested four kidnap suspects alleged to have been terrorizing and masterminding kidnappings in the state in recent times.

The suspects, identified as Idris Abdullahi, Abel Attah Ekong, Ito Edet Effiong and Nsiong Edet Effiong were arrested between February 16 to 28, 2024.

Report from the command informed that the suspects were syndicates who abducted Mr. Ayo Bambe, the Manager of Me Lounge, a popular recreational center located at Osongama Estate, Uyo and two others on January 27, 2024.

According to the report, the command arrested Abdullahi, the driver of the

syndicate in Port Harcourt, Rivers State on February 16, 2024 in a Toyota Sienna vehicle used in the operation.

Another suspect, Ekong was apprehended at Otua Sega community of Ogbia Local Government Area in Bayelsa State on February 26, 2024, while Ito and Nsiong, whose brothers were arrested in their residence at Mbak Etoi in Uyo Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State on February 28, 2024.

"During investigation, the four (4) suspects confessed their involvement in the kidnap of the three victims at Me - Lounge and other attacks across the state.

"Consequently, the suspects will be arraigned by the command at Federal High Court Uyo while a manhunt for other fleeing members is still ongoing". The report from the command said.

APC Crisis: Enugu Stakeholders Pass Vote Of No Confidence On State Chairman, Agballa

By; KELVIN OKPARA, Enugu

Unhappy with the manner the Enugu State Chairman of the All Progressives Congress (APC), Ugochukwu Agballa has been piloting the affairs of the party since assumption of office, its founding stakeholders at the weekend, passed a vote of no confidence on the chairman. The stakeholders, who held a unification meeting in Enugu, however, passed a vote of confidence on President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, National Chairman of the party, Alhaji Abdullahi Ganduje and the Federal Commissioner representing Enugu State in the Federal Character Commission (FCC), Chief Mrs. Ginika Tor, for their commitment in advancing the party. Their decision was part of resolutions reached during the meeting after a voice vote, which received total affirmation by participants drawn from the 17 local government areas of the state in attendance. During the meeting with the

theme, "Uniting The Party In Support of Tinubu/Shettima Renewed Hope Agenda" participants went down memory lane on how the party was nurtured by those unconstitutionally suspended by Agballa to a level where it became unattractive to all. The stakeholders, who spoke during the meeting which was organized under state APC grassroots constituency platform, expressed deep concerns that rather than taking the party to the next level, the Agballa led administration, has destroyed the political house through unconstitutional suspension of founding fathers of the state, such as former Senate President, Ken Nnamani, ex governor Sullivan Chime, ex state Chairman, Dr. Ben Nwoye, former Director General of Voice of Nigeria (VON), Osita Okechukwu, former Speaker of the Enugu State of Assembly, Eugene Odoh and recently Tor. Addressing the stakeholders, Commissioner Tor, expressed displeasure that Agballa has run the party

aground, chasing away the genuine key stakeholders. She described Enugu APC under Agballa, "as suspension party", saying that they would no longer fold their arms and watch strangers who joined their fold from other political parties like Agballa destroying the APC through illegal suspensions and other anti members activities. Tor therefore, maintained that it was high time all the purported suspended stakeholders came back and rebuilt their home for the success of the President Tinubu and APC led Federal Government. She said: "We must come back to possess our possession. We must not be discouraged by the activities of those currently piloting the affairs of the party who do not wish the party well, we must say enough is enough. How could somebody who claims he wish the party well keep suspending people who laboured for the party" she queried. In his remarks, immediate past chairman of the party and moderator of the

meeting, Dr Ben Nwoye, said it is unthinkable for anybody to announce the suspension of such number of big wigs of a political party. He condemned in its entirety the idea of piloting the affairs of the party as a private enterprise by the incumbent chairman, calling on the genuine members of the come back and rebuilt their political house. The ex chairman, noted that the vote of no confidence has shown that all is not well with the party in the state and needed the urgent intervention of the national secretariat to salvage the situation, stressing that the one envious APC has been turned into a laughing stock. Other speakers who expressed worries over the poor leadership and autocratic style of the state chairman, included the pioneer organizing secretary of the party in the state, Hon. Ifeanyichukwu Edeh, and the APC House of representatives Candidate for Igboeze North/Udenu Federal Constituency in the 2023 general election, Dr. Oby Ajih, amongst others.



Ramadan: Caleb Danladi Foundation Supports Muslims With Cash In Kaduna

By; ACHADU GABRIEL, Kaduna

In a demonstration of compassion and solidarity, the Caleb Danladi Foundation (CDF), recently reached out to Muslim communities in Kaduna, offering support during the holy month of Ramadan. Representing the foundation, Umar Bala Babayaro who spearheaded the initiative, distributed cash donations to deserving individuals and families. The gesture, aimed at alleviating the financial burdens often associated with Ramadan observance, brought relief and hope to many households in the region. As recipients gratefully received the donations, Babayaro took the opportunity to emphasize the importance of unity and peace within the nation. Addressing the gathering of faithful, Babayaro underscored the significance of prayer in fostering harmony and stability. He urged recipients to remember the nation in their supplications, praying for continued peace and unity amidst prevailing challenges. The message resonated deeply within the

community, reaffirming the shared commitment to building a harmonious society. The outreach effort by the Caleb Danladi Foundation not only provided practical assistance but also served as a reminder of the power of collective action in times of need. "Through their generosity, the foundation exemplified the spirit of empathy and compassion, inspiring others to join in the collective effort to support those in need. As Ramadan continues to unfold, the impact of such acts of kindness reverberates throughout the community, fostering a sense of belonging and solidarity among its members", he stated. The Caleb Danladi Foundation's contribution serves as a testament to the enduring values of generosity and unity, reinforcing the bonds that unite us all as fellow citizens of Nigeria, he noted. "In these challenging times, gestures of goodwill like this offer a glimmer of hope and remind us of the strength found in coming together to support one another. As the holy month progresses, may the spirit of giving and compassion continue to uplift and inspire us", he added.



Ramadan: Speaker Abbas Gesture To Constituents Worth Emulating - Kwaros

By; SANIALIYU, Zaria

Senior Legislative Aide to the Speaker House of Representatives Dr. Abbas Tajuddeen, Dr. Yusuf Yahaya Kwaros, has described the Speaker's gesture to his constituents at this Ramadan period as worthy of emulation by other political office holders. Yahaya Kwaros was speaking during the distribution of foodstuff to the Speaker's constituents in order to put smiles on their faces during this period of Ramadan. He said this gesture from the

Honourable Speaker, is not the first, and would not be the last as it will be a continuous process. The Senior Legislative Aide said the distribution of foodstuff has no barrier either by political party, religion or ethnicity. According to him, the gesture has captured institutions, agencies, security operatives, associations and religious groups domicile in Zaria Local Government Area as beneficiaries. He called on the people of Zaria Federal Constituency to support and pray for the Rt. Hon. Speaker Abbas

Tajuddeen, to succeed in his mission and vision for his people as their representative at the National Assembly. Yusuf Kwaros said in less than a year in office, the Speaker has proved to his constituents his commitment towards uplifting and assisting the electorate. Similarly, the Speaker has distributed tractors, Keke Napeps, motorcycles, water pumping machines and grinding machines as part of support to make people self reliant.



Information Minister's Visit To Kano Promoting Better National Orientation - Stakeholders

By ; JABIRU A. HASSAN, Kano

Certainly, the two days working visit to Kano State by the Honourable Minister of Information, Mohammed Idris has opened more windows of opportunities towards the successful implementation of policies that are related to national orientation and communications, as expressed by key stakeholders.

The minister who unveiled National Orientation Agency (NOA)'s App Mobilizer, in Kano, was also able to have formal

engagements with media executive and practitioners, as well as the Kano business community, was warmly received by Governor Abba Kabir Yusuf and relevant stakeholders for better synergy on better information management. Stakeholders in media and communications, described the visit as a new dawn towards the progress of excellent dissemination of information especially at present when the democratic governance remained the best option in the globe.

Kano CP Lauds Prof Gwarzo For Donating Two Operational Vehicles To Police

By ; I M R A N A ABDULLAHI, Kaduna

The Kano State Commissioner of Police, Mr. Usaini Gumel has commended the Founder and President MAAUN Group of Universities, Prof. Adamu Abubakar Gwarzo for single handedly donating two operational vehicles to Hotoro Police Divisional office in Kano metropolis. Gumel made the commendation when he

paid a courtesy visit to Prof. Gwarzo and Chairman, Adamu Abubakar Gwarzo (AAG) Foundation recently.

He said the purpose of the visit was to extend his gratitude to Prof. Gwarzo for generously donating two vehicles to the Hotoro Police Divisional office recently.

The CP who appreciated the gesture, described it as a morale booster which will go a long way in

improving the operational efficiency and capacity of the police towards effective service delivery in the Hotoro area and beyond.

Gumel, who further commended the singular effort of Prof. Gwarzo, assured that the vehicles will be judiciously utilized and properly maintained in order to achieve the desired objective.

He, however, called on other well-to-do

individuals in the society to borrow a leaf from Prof. Gwarzo in providing moral and logistics support to police.

Responding, Prof. Gwarzo expressed his sincere appreciation to the Police Commissioner for acknowledging the contribution and pledged continuous collaboration so as to enhance security services within the area in particular and the state at large.



Citizens Deserve Our Compassion, Higher Dedication Now, Sanwo Tells Govt Officials

By ; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

Current hardship facing the country calls for renewed cooperation and higher dedication from all government officials, Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu has told all elected and appointed public officials in Lagos on Friday.

The governor said the challenging situation required public officials to rise up to recommit themselves to social contract with the citizens, stressing that the current circumstances called for compassion and constant engagement to ensure the primary purpose of Government is not defeated.

Sanwo-Olu made the "passionate" appeal at the 18th Executive and Legislative Parley organised by the Lagos State Government with the theme: "Engaging All for Inclusive Governance: Hands On for A Greater Lagos Rising."

The two-day yearly event is a forum for dialogue and collaboration towards facilitating harmonious

relationships between the two arms of the Government.

All members of the State Executive Council, elected representatives in the House of Assembly and National Assembly are attending the forum being held at Eko Hotels and Suites.

Sanwo-Olu called for a scale-up of inclusivity across palliative measures and targeted services aimed at reducing effects of hardship on the citizens, stressing that public officials must show compassion and higher dedication to the welfare of the residents.

He said: "This challenging period calls for compassion. We owe our citizens a duty to show up for them, as every public official is seen as a Government entity. The burden we shoulder at this period calls for higher dedication, innovative strategies, sense of urgency and sacrifice as we weather the current economic downturn.

"We are in a period where every public official must work together and come out with solutions and ideas to solve the

immediate problems of our respective constituents. Sometimes, the issue may not involve money, but giving attention and listening ears to the people to make the difference in their lives.

"Either elected or appointed, we cannot shy away and dissociate ourselves from the Government. When the citizens knock on our doors, we must be able to ensure that we help them solve some of the pressing problems they are facing. We must ensure people feel the impact of the government without having to come to the seat of Government in Alausa."

Sanwo-Olu said both the executive and legislature had maintained "an uncompromising" posture in the pursuit of vision of governance under his watch, explaining that the commitment by the Assembly members to expedite passage of critical bills was an indication of mutual understanding between the two arms.

The Governor said the harmonious approach adopted

by the executive and legislative arms had yielded long-term benefits for the State, listing completion of Blue and Red Lines, 32-metric tons Imota Rice Mill, establishment of food market hubs and other social services as part of the dividends transforming and improving socio-economic conditions of the residents.

Former Governor Babatunde Raji Fashola, who was the keynote speaker, said interaction between the executive and the parliament must continue to be nurtured in order to make governance possible.

Fashola, a former Minister of Works and Housing, pointed out that democracy was becoming dysfunctional all over the world due to failure of governments in fulfilling their primary objectives.

He said the task before the current generation of leaders was to make democracy work for the people, just as he urged participants at the parley to use the forum to reignite the debate on special status for Lagos.

"As we convene here, I want to

use this opportunity to remind us that our work is far from being done, especially to members of the National Assembly. This is a time when a constitutional amendment is being considered. I want them to go back and re-open the books about the campaign for a Special Status for Lagos. This is the time to have that conversation," Fashola said. Speaker, Lagos House of Assembly, Rt. Hon. Mudashiru Obasa, harped on building bridges and fostering collaboration to further strengthen cooperation between the parliament and the executive arm.

Obasa, represented by Majority Leader, Hon. Noheem Adams, urged participants to approach the parley with open mind, while focusing on challenges and goals to bind the officials together.

Special Adviser to the Governor on Political Legislative and Civic Engagement, Dr. Tajudeen Afolabi, said the parley, for almost two decades, had offered a platform to strengthen harmonious relationship among all political actors in the state.

Uba Sani Performs Ground Breaking For 327 Kilometres Road

By; FUNMIADERINTO, Kaduna

Governor of Kaduna State, Senator Uba Sani last Saturday, performed the groundbreaking for the construction of a 327 kilometers road linking College Road to Mashigi, stretching down to Eastern Bypass of Millennium City.

Governor Uba Sani, Deputy Governor Dr Hadiza Balarabe and other government officials were at Unguwar Dosa Extension, when the governor performed the groundbreaking ceremony of the following projects, Nurus Siraj Unguwar Dosa New Extension Layout, 15-span dual carriage bridge linking College Road to Mashigi, IBB Way (10.5km), MKO Abiola Way (7KM) in Kaduna.

According to him, "this is just one part of the project, the total number of kilometres when this project is completed will be about 327 kilometres put together. The new investment flow into Kaduna State is being supported by infrastructure upgrade.

"We are determined to make Kaduna State

a business hub in the North and the choice destination for investors.

"The road will cut across Igabi, Kaduna North and Chikun Local government areas, the 327 kilometers includes the main road linking College Road to Millennium City and other feeder roads within the various districts".

He explained that during the construction period, employment opportunities would be created for skilled, semi - skilled and unskilled labour.

"When completed, the road will ease movement of people and goods," he assured.

Uba Sani pointed out that, "the event brings to 21, the number of roads I have performed their groundbreaking across our local government areas since assumption of office. About 827 kilometers of roads are currently under construction.

"We are ramping up our infrastructural development drive. Our rural transformation programme is being executed concurrently with upgrade of

infrastructure in the urban areas.

"The new investments flowing into Kaduna State are being supported by infrastructure upgrades. We are determined to make Kaduna State a business hub in the North and a choice destination for investors.

"This 15 kilometre road will link College Road to Mashigi, stretch down to Eastern Bypass of Millennium City.

"We have chosen to perform the groundbreaking at this dual carriage way bridge, because it is a key feature of this project.

"This road when completed, will ease movement of people and goods.

"We are putting Kaduna State on a sure path towards actualizing its potentials. It is now my honour to inform you that before this event, under my leadership with the support of deputy governor and senior government officials, we have done groundbreaking of over 21 roads across 23 local government areas of Kaduna State.

"We are currently building skills

vocational cities in three local government areas across the three geopolitical zones that is, Soba, Igabi and Samaru Kataf local government areas.

"This very important project is about approximately three thousand four hundred hectares of land, the entire landscape of these projects.

"At the same time, this project comprises of the provision of water and sanitation to all the communities, provision of power utilities and it will also cut across about eight districts.

"The project will also cut across about three local government areas that is Kaduna North, Igabi and Chikun. We are putting Kaduna State on a sure path towards actualizing its potentials.

"It is now my honour and privilege to perform the groundbreaking of this important road that will link College Road to Mashigi, stretch down to Eastern Bypass to Millennium City for the benefit of people of Kaduna and humanity.



Unilorin Will Deliver Smart Agenda - Vice Chancellor

**Says institution foremost in Nigeria*

By; **BILIQIS ONAOLAPO OLAJUMOKE, Ilorin**

The Vice Chancellor of the University of Ilorin (Unilorin), Prof. Wahab Egbewole, has restated his dedication to fostering a conducive environment for the university to realize its 'Smart Agenda'.

Egbewole made these remarks during the annual Media Iftar with journalists in Ilorin, Kwara State, over the weekend.

He emphasized the importance of creating favourable conditions for students' learning, staff members' professional

activities, and the overall achievement of the university's smart agenda.

Egbewole recalled his earlier commitment during his inauguration, expressing strong belief in the university's human capital potentials and the collective ability to elevate it to the forefront of African academia by being SMART.

He expressed confidence in the ongoing progress of the university and assured that disruptions would be avoided, particularly highlighting the smooth progression of the current semester

examinations without disturbances to the academic calendar.

Furthermore, the Vice Chancellor highlighted various achievements of the university, including infrastructural developments and improvements in student welfare.

He noted the completion of projects such as the Chemical Engineering facility and the construction of a new car park, alongside renovations and the construction of new hostels.

Egbewole also underscored the importance of innovation and global

competitiveness, emphasizing the need for the University to adopt distinct approaches to become a significant player on the global stage.

He commended the university unions for their responsible conduct during the recent NASU and SSANU warning strike, crediting their commitment to ensuring minimal disruption to student activities.

In conclusion, he proudly declared the University of Ilorin as the foremost institution in Nigeria today.



SGBV: NGOs Builds Safe Space For Women, Girls In Kaduna Community

By ; NONYE EKWENUGO, Kaduna

A non-governmental organization (NGO) International Alert (IA) in partnership with Global Peace Development (GPD) has built safe space for survivors of Sexual and Gender Based-Violence (SGBV) in Goska and Dangoma communities in Jema'a Local Government Area of Kaduna State.

The Country Director, International Alert Nigeria, Dr. Paul Nyulaku during the commissioning of the safe space on Tuesday in Goska Community, said that the structure will help to address conflict between the two communities, adding that it will be utilized by women and girls in order to share their experience and proffer solutions to them.

Goska and Dangoma community have experienced series of attacks in the past, which led to conflict in the communities over the years.

Nyulaku said, "We are happy that members of Goska and Dangoma are sitting together, it is a huge sign that peace will stay, conflict has no benefit to anyone let us join hands and work for peace".

In her remarks, the director of Policy, Advocacy and Communications, IA, Hannah Ward urged the two communities to live in peace, saying that International Alert is ready to support initiatives that promote peace.

During an interview with newsmen shortly after the commissioning of the safe space, the Executive

Director of Global Peace Development, Ebruke Esike explained that SGBV is prevalent in Goska and Dangoma communities.

"SGBV is prevalent in this two communities, coupled with conflict between them, so to address cultural norms and SGBV issues, we felt that we should address the concerns of women that could lead us get the men and we can promote peace within the communities. Both Dangoma and Goska had been worrying communities and now they are back together, talking together and they are supporting us in all that we do to promote peace.

"For us, we think that one major hindrance is their women not having except open environment, so we felt that we should provide them protective safe space that the women and young girls can have time to sit down and discuss issues that concern them and address them holistically as a body.

"Before we came in, Goska and Dangoma were not sitting together, they were in war-torn, we brought them together for the first time after a long time of crisis".

Speaking on behalf of the two communities, the village heads, Mr. Samuel Barde of Goska and Malam Muhammad Bayi of Dangoma respectively, thanked the NGOs for providing the safe space.

"It will also reduce much of the cases of SGBV in our communities because justice is bound to be served to perpetrators and would serve as deterrence to others". They said.



Yobe Govt Partners WHO On Gender Based Violence, Preventing Sexual Assault

By; JACPB ONJEWU DICKSON

Yobe State Government has taken a bold step in mitigating the challenge of Gender-Based Violence (GBV), Preventing and Responding to Sexual Assault (PRS) through the training of recognized seven Civil Society Organisation (CSOs) in the state.

While explaining the objectives of the training, the WHO PRS Coordinator, Sylvia Opinia who was represented by Dr. Inigbehe Oyinloye, the (WHO PRS Technical Officer) revealed that the participants were drawn across 6 selected (LGAs) local government areas of Fika, Potiskum, Nangere, Nguru, Damaturu, and

Bade.

"This capacity building is to increase awareness of GBV, its consequences, and the role of health workers in supporting survivors in the context of meningitis response. It is also aimed at creating awareness of PRSEAH (Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment) and its reporting among the communities, as well as to break the culture of silence and address the stigmatization of survivors" she said. She explained the training will be integrated with key messages of meningitis so as to increase awareness and improve across the CSO's LGAs of assignment.

Earlier in his welcome address, the State

Commissioner for Health, Dr. Lawan Gana who was represented by the Executive Secretary, Yobe State Emergency Medical and Ambulance Services (YEMABUS), Abdullahi Danchuwa who also doubles as the Chairman, Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARC) explained a total of over 1,000 cases of GBV were recorded in the year 2023 alone.

"As I welcome you to this capacity building on behalf of Commissioner for Health, Dr. Lawan Gana who could not come here in person due to tight schedules, being members of the Civil Society Organisations, you play a very significant role of watching over what happens in your society" "Yobe state government

has zero tolerance for GBV in the state and we will continue to partner you in ensuring the cases of GBV are reduced to its barest minimum because over 1,000 cases of the crime were recorded within the state in the year 2023 alone.

He also charged them not to be found wanting in discharging their duties as doing so will jeopardize the successes recorded in the last few years.

The training is in response to Yobe state request during the WHO's 13th Joint Operations Review (JOR) meeting held in Yola, Adamawa state. Currently, over 20 participants converged in Damaturu the state capital to receive the capacity building



X-Raying Prof Suleiman Yahuza Imam's Stewardship At NBAIS

By; **MOHAMMED DAUDA EIBO**

Professor Yahuza Suleiman Imam did his basic primary education and joined the Provincial Arabic School, where he obtained a Junior Arabic and Islamic Studies Certificate. He proceeded to Al Azhar institute in Cairo, Egypt for his secondary education, setting the stage in his journey to acquire knowledge in Arabic language.

Professor Imam obtained a bachelor's degree in Arabic at Al Azhar University, a Post Graduate Diploma at the Institute of Arab Research and Studies. He bagged his Master's degree in Linguistics (Arabic) and then a Doctorate from the same institution.

He started his teaching career and worked with a few universities, Cairo Radio and Television in Cairo.

He later returned to Nigeria and continued to work in the academia at the Ahmadu Bello University, ABU, Zaria, where he held several positions, supervised several PhD theses, rose in rank and finally elevated to a professor in 2019.

Prior to his appointment as the Registrar/CEO, National Board for Arabic and Islamic Studies, NBAIS, Professor Imam was the Director, Quality Assurance of the agency on sabbatical. He is a member of several professional associations in Cairo, and a member of the Nigerian Association of Teachers of Arabic and Islamic Studies.

An Advisor of Human Development and Information Technology which is in alignment with the Vision, Mission Statement and Core Values of the Board of NBAIS is indeed on the right tract as Imam is doing everything humanly possible in ensuring that the Board compete fervently with other national Examination body like WAEC, NECO and others. NBAIS is older than NECO and for Prof Imam that is the focal point of the board.

As an External Examiner with Bayero University Kano, Usman Danfodio University, Sokoto and Umaru Musa Yar'adua University, Katsina in 2014, 2015 and 2016, respectively, Professor Imam has attended several international and local conferences. He also presented over 13 conference and seminar papers in addition to 11 post promotion papers.

Professor Imam is married and blessed with kids. He has over 27 publications in Nigeria and overseas. The NBAIS helmsman is a recipient of a Merit Award as the best student in Al Azhar

University in 1996, 1997 and 1998.

In barely few months of assumption of office, the erudite, venerated and impeccable Registrar/CEO, NBAIS, Prof. Yahuza S. Imam embarked on a tour, to see things for himself, to all offices to supervise and monitor examinations. This is significant as it portrays Imam as a technocrat par excellence who fully understands the dynamics and expectations of his office. No wonder, at all centres visited, members of staff were indeed in joyful mood, saying, "This is the first of its kind that a registrar will be visiting immediately on assumption of office. This is commendable and should be sustained".

The chief executive officer's inspection visit to all NBAIS centers nationwide is a pointer to the fact that, he is poised to reposition the agency towards achieving its statutory mandate. Indeed, this is matching words with actions.

According to Professor Imam, "NBAIS, God willing, is now a household name in Nigeria as we plan for expansion in all states of the federation with the support of the stakeholders. The Board is surely on the right path of national and international acceptability with the right trajectory and robust plans".

He who urged the staff, management and all stakeholders to join hands in taking the Board to greater heights. "We shall work assiduously to ensure that the basic function of the board is achieved, especially in areas of supervision of all Arabic schools and colleges, development curriculum and syllabus ensuring standard amongst other things".

Professor Imam disclosed that the Board has gone through a lot of transformation which has helped in service delivery. So, NBAIS' as the National Examination body charged with enormous responsibility of supervision and others is doing great under the watchful eyes with the erudite Professor Suleiman Yahuza Imam is moving NBAIS to the next level desirous of emulation. Effective conduct and monitoring of the Senior Arabic and Islamic Secondary Schools Certificate of NBAIS and Advocacy among others too numerous to mention here.

NBAIS has witnessed grandiose and increased recognition within Nigeria and beyond under his leadership. Within these Months vehement achievements have been made in various areas of improvement with remarkable

footprints in the endorsement of the Board's SAISSCE by relevant stakeholders.

People from all works of life have described Prof Imam as a great friend! "Strong headed', adamant', reliable ally. General of the common sense revolution in business non extravagant', honest and blunt to a fault' great and good example of common sense revolution man with courage of conviction, knowledgeable driven by the well-being of others', unhappy with unjust system', an activist', 'change agent', 'a social democrat', technocrat, a "dogged fighter', among several accolades attributed to him.

It's noteworthy that the former Registrar of the Board, Professor Muhammad Shafiu Abdullahi (Wakili Makarantar Zazzau), had played a vital role in the establishment of NBAIS as a national examination body under the Federal Ministry of Education. Professor Abdullahi described his successor as a hardworking educationist, a straightforward person whose quality and integrity have been tested and trusted over the years.

NBAIS certainly relies on top notch administrative professionals with the right acumen like Imam to succeed. So, as an astute administrator. Imam, who is described by his peers as a 'man who the cap fits' will surely put things in a proper perspective in the Board of NBAIS, by keeping it running efficiently having been mentored by Abdullahi who played a fatherly role and mentorship at NBAIS.

Peers described Prof Yahuza S Imam as a good friend, workaholic, reliable ally, a General of the common sense revolution in business, non-extravagant, honest and blunt to a fault, courageous, knowledgeable, a change agent, compassionate, dogged fighter, among several other accolades and encomiums.

The registrar's recent charge to staff to sit up and do more in order for the interest of the Board, it is indeed, a clarion call to duty he added.

Already, NBAIS is wearing a new look, given the ongoing turnaround. Prof Imam is, no doubt, the propeller of this innovative outlook. His intellectual prowess and as a goal-getter disposition may have largely accounted for his appointment.

Imam, an erudite Professor of Arabic studies and Modern Literature, a technocrat who fully understands the dynamics and



Prof Suleiman Yahuza Imam

workings of NBAIS, for sure, his appointment came at a critical time when his ingenuity, veracity, and expertise are needed to resuscitate the NBAIS.

Since Nigerians' expectations from the Prof Suleiman Yahuza Imam are high, it is necessary for him to stay focused which is the hallmark for high performance.

The good job currently going at NBAIS's offices nation wide is mind-blowing as the monumental turnaround is great. Looking at the ten (10) years working modality or plans which includes stork and long plans explains that, Prof Imam is the right man for the job. Imam needs not to be told of what to do in term of internally revenue generation is also a focal point.

It is a call to nation building. Imam understands his mandates like the back of hands. He has the while withal to take National Board for Arabic and Islamic studies NBAIS comparatively. He is focus in putting the right people in the right places is developmental. We, therefore, expect result-oriented policies and programmes; and as Prof. Imam has already hit the ground running.

Imam will surely consolidate on the successes recorded in NBAIS, considering his wealth of experience, knowledge and background. The good legacies of NBAIS will be resuscitated, sustained and enhanced because, NBAIS is Imam's constituency. The entire workforce will have no cause to worry under Prof Imam's leadership and watch, because of his deep knowledge of the workings of the Board.

Prof Imam is indeed a goal getter, with excellent and right attitude, calmed and delighted in the full

actualization of NBAIS Mandate, Mission, Vision and Core Values which is on course as amplified by the agency's stakeholders who are pleased with his leadership acumen and styles.

It is his philosophy and principle of the NBAIS boss that, all members of staff must add values, ensure and imbibe culture of discipline as a Hallmark of any reputable organization and NBAIS' is not an exception.

He truly believes that good name is better and greater than silver and gold. As advocate of united Nigeria, strong believer in the Nigerian projects where all hands must be on deck. An anti corruption crusader. A great family man who treats everyone with dignity. He is a greater mentor who doesn't need distraction of any kind but need for our undiluted supports anyway we can for all and sundry as his main focus is for the Board of NBAIS. Imam has shown sincere purposeful leadership qualities since coming onboard with great policies and programmes that are yielding great results in many areas of his mandates.

So, continue with your sterling leadership qualities. There is no gain-saying that we expect good policies and programmes from the current Registrar/CEO, NBAIS. He knows NBAIS too well administrative wise.

He has the wherewithal to take the agency to enviable heights. He needs no introduction. What he needs is the support of members of staff to greater successes, as NBAIS is the right track.

Mohammed Dauda Eibo, is a Media and Communication Specialist sent in this piece from Kado FCT, Abuja

UK, Taking Medicines For Russia's Headache

By Owei Lakemfa

THE United Kingdom (UK) has become the chief mourner, wailing over the presidential election in Russia which gave President Vladimir Putin a new term.

For a country at war and under all sorts of sanctions, it might have been expected that the Russian election would be postponed indefinitely. But it not only held, there was also a reported voter turn-out of 74.22 per cent.

The UK, from its colonial history, assumes that democracy is what it thinks, and any election it does not like, is not democratic. So, it supported the 'democracy' of Apartheid South Africa, and declared that those like Nelson Mandela, Joe Slovo and Walter Sisulu who rejected the Apartheid system, were "terrorists".

The British media reported that: "Reuters journalists saw an increase in the flow of voters, especially younger people, at noon at polling stations in Moscow, St Petersburg and Yekaterinburg, with queues of several hundred people and even thousands."

There are also some facts about the election which have not been disputed. There were over 94,000 polling stations which opened daily for 12 hours from 8am. Russians in 144 countries abroad, including the UK, cast their votes in 295 polling stations. Voters also voted on online. Given the country's size, the world-wide election, and the fact that Russia is at war, only eight electoral incidents were recorded where there were attempts to set polling station buildings on fire.

Internet service providers in Russia reported that there were over 90,000 Denial-of-Service (DDoS) cyber-attacks from Ukraine and North America targeting the Central Election Commission, State Services portal and other government websites.

Additionally, Ukraine tried to sabotage the election by repeatedly shelling Russian regions and oil refineries during the three-day election. Also, thousands of anti-Putin demonstrators protested at polling stations inside Russia and abroad over the February 16, 2024 death of jailed opposition leader, Alexei Navalny.

In the final outcome of the election, Putin defeated the presidential candidates of the New People Party, Vladislav Davankov; the Liberal-Democrat Party of Russia, Leonid Slutsky; and the Communist Party's Nikolai Kharitonov.

The UK could not condemn Putin for having a fifth term probably because

like Russia, its Prime Minister has no term limit. A British Prime Minister like Sir Robert Walpole spent 20 years, 314 days in office, while William Pitt the Younger, spent 18 years, 305 days in office.

I do not subscribe to a president spending more than two terms in office, but it is not in our place to dictate term limits for countries.

Expectedly, the Russian election was condemned by many Western countries. Studying their statements, one got the impression that some might have been drafted before the election was held.

Although Western countries have lined up to condemn the Russian election, they are generally silent on the refusal of Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelensky to conduct election which fell due this March. He said the martial law which he had declared, precluded election from being held. So, he is likely to stay in power without election for as long as he wants, or until he is thrown out.

Perhaps the most strident was that by the UK, issued by Foreign Secretary, David Cameron. Without providing any evidence, it claimed that there was "suppression of opposition voices during the Russian election". Expectedly, it was unhappy that elections also took place in some of the breakaway regions of Ukraine.

Although the turnout was far higher than the 66.7 per cent in the 2020 United States presidential election and, the 67.3 per cent in its 2019 general elections, the UK claimed that: "These Russian elections starkly underline the depth of repression under President Putin's regime, which seeks to silence any opposition to his illegal war." It added that: "Putin removes his political opponents, controls the media, and then crowns himself the winner. This is not democracy." Really, the turnout does not mean anything?

The UK, from its colonial history, assumes that democracy is what it thinks, and any election it does not like, is not democratic. So, it supported the 'democracy' of Apartheid South Africa, and declared that those like Nelson Mandela, Joe Slovo and Walter Sisulu who rejected the Apartheid system, were "terrorists".

But it is not only external elections it



rejects; the British establishment also condemns elections won by those considered to be anti-establishment. For instance, there was a by-election on February 29, 2024 into the Rochdale Constituency in the UK Parliament. This followed the death of Labour MP Sir Tony Lloyd. The established parties were in for a rude shock as George Galloway, the outsider from the Workers Party of Britain, caused a Tsunami. He won 40 per cent of votes, overturning a 9,668 Labour votes at the 2019 general election.

Galloway won 12,335 of the votes, David Tully of the Independent came a distant second with 6,638 votes, Paul Ellison of the Conservative Party was third with 3,731 votes, Labour's Azhar Ali was fourth with 2,402 votes and Iain Donaldson of the Liberal Democrats came fifth with 2,164 votes. All hell seemed to have broken loose, especially when Galloway is not only pro-people but also campaigned openly for a stop to the on-going Israeli genocide in the Palestine.

A shocked Prime Minister Rishi Sunak called a hasty press conference outside No 10 Downing Street where he said Galloway's victory was "beyond alarming". He wondered how British voters could have voted overwhelmingly for a candidate who "dismisses the horror of what happened on October 7", when he said Hamas murdered 1,200 people in Israel.

Putin in defending Russian democracy said: "The whole world is laughing at what is happening (in the United States). This is just a disaster, not a democracy". Apparently, in reference to the four criminal cases against Republican

candidate Donald Trump, Putin added: "...Is it democratic to use administrative resources to attack one of the candidates for the Presidency of the United States, using the judiciary among other things?"

But Galloway after being sworn-in said he had not come to parliament to make friends: "I've always loved the building – the people in it not quite so much."

On Prime Minister Sunak's attack on him for winning the election, Galloway said: "I despise the Prime Minister. And guess what? Millions and millions and millions of people in this country despise the Prime Minister. I do not respect the Prime Minister at all."

Although Western countries have lined up to condemn the Russian election, they are generally silent on the refusal of Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelensky to conduct election which fell due this March. He said the martial law which he had declared, precluded election from being held. So, he is likely to stay in power without election for as long as he wants, or until he is thrown out.

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On the Russian election, the UK is like a person insisting that his neighbour is sick, and since the latter insists he is healthy, decides to take medicines on his neighbour's behalf.

NNL24: Nasarawa United End Wikki's Unbeaten Streak; Ameh Godwin Emerges MOTM



By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Two penalty goals, one in each half, were all Nasarawa United needed to end Wikki Tourists' unbeaten run in the 2023/24 Nigeria National League Season.

In a feisty match-day eleven encounter at the Lafia City Stadium on Saturday afternoon, former Wikki player, Anas Yusuf, thought he had put United in the lead when his breathtaking acrobatic ball found the back of the net in the 12th minute only for the goal to be ruled out as offside.

A statement signed by the Media Officer, Nasarawa United FC, Eche Amos, made available yesterday, said that the energetic winger wouldn't be perturbed for too long as he rose to the occasion to put the his side in the lead in the half-hour mark after menacing attacker, Ibrahim Umar Ada was hacked down inside the box in the first-half.

Upon the restart, United effected some tactical changes, with the introduction of midfield maestro, Chidera Nduka, and

attacking sensation, Adamu Hassan in places of Habibu Alakija and Umar Ada, to add both depth and bite upfront.

In the 71st minute, Peter Eneji struck the cross bar with a powerful shot before Wikki replied with multiple attempts on goal but for the bravery of Goalkeeper, Ameh Godwin, who saved each attempt to the applause of the home fans.

With twenty-three minute before regulation time, substitute, Adamu Hassan, was brought down inside the box with the referee pointing to the spot without hesitation.

Former Nigerian junior international and fellow substitute, King Osanga, stepped forward to convert from the spot to bring score to 2-0 in favour of the home side.

As the game approached full-time, tempers began to flare as Wikki's Bismarck Duah shoved down one of the ball boys, but the referee was able to bring the situation under control.

Further attempts by either side couldn't make any difference to the scoreline as Nasarawa

United brought to an end the unbeaten form of the Bauchi-based Wikki Tourists this season as Goalkeeper, Ameh Godwin, of Nasarawa United was voted Man-of-the-Match for his spectacular goalkeeping ingenuity.

The win means United are head-to-head with the Big Elephants on 23 points, with the latter team having played a game more.

Wikki are ahead of the Solid Miners only on goals' advantage, United having nine goals against Wikki's thirteen.

The Solid Miners will be on the road to Yobe to face Yobe Desert Stars FC on Saturday, 30th March, 2024, but before then, they will take on Nationwide League One side, AYD FC of Doma in the Nasarawa State Federation's Cup Semi-Final clash on Monday, 25th March, 2024, by 3pm at the Lafia City Stadium, in their bid to pick one of two available tickets for the National Federation's Cup competition.

The Solid Miners' next home clash is against El-Kanemi Warriors FC on 6th April, 2024.

Mighty Jets of Jos will be United's second to the last away game this season on 13th April, 2024, with their last home game against EFCC coming up on 20th April, 2024.

The game away to Zamfara United will be the Solid Miners' last game of the Season on 27th April, 2024, primus inter pares.

* P O S T - M A T C H REACTIONS*:

C O A C H U S M A N ADAMS(NAS): "To God be the glory for the great victory against Wikki Tourists who had never lost any game since the beginning of the Season

"Currently, we have reduced their goals' advantage as we are now tied on points.

"The league is getting more interesting for us as we have five more games to wrap up the Season against Wikki's and El-Kanemi's four each.

"Our next game against Yobe Desert Stars, we will make sure we don't drop points.

"I thank the State Government for solidly standing by us to ensure we get the ticket to the Super Eight.

"We also appreciate, most sincerely, our supporters for their perseverance and consistency in boosting our morale.

"On behalf of the team, I wish to assure the Governor and the beautiful people of the State that Nasarawa United will return to the Premier League as we will take every game as it comes."

* CAUTION (YELLOW CARD)*:

Anas Yusuf(NAS)13'
Klinshak Longbak(WIK)36'
Habibu Alakija(NAS)36'
Hussain Mubarak(NAS)38'
Bismarck Duah(WIK)67'

NASARAWA UNITED LINE-UP: Ameh Godwin, Abubakar Abdullahi, Mubarak Hussain, Moyi Hassan(Gambo Musa 64'), Saviour Chukwu, Emeka Onyema, Peter Eneji(Moses Ajiboye 80'), Ibrahim Umar Ada(Adamu Hassan 47'), Okonkwo Chinonso, Habibu Alakija(Chidera Nduka 47'), Anas Yusuf(King Osanga 64').

UNUSED SUBS: Jerry Isaac, Akoza Suleiman, Akala Olakunle, Ekesi Ebuka.



Gombe Govt Sponsors 13 Clubs To Participate In Nationwide League One

***Governor Inuwa launches 2024 Tournament, presents licences to registered clubs**

By: **JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON**

Gombe State Governor, Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya, CON has launched the 2024 Nationwide League One Season and presented licenses to 13 state-sponsored clubs participating in the tournament.

Speaking at the launching ceremony held at Jewel Hall of School of Nursing and Midwifery, Gombe, the Governor emphasized his commitment to youth development and employment creation through sports initiatives.

According to a statement signed by the Director-General (Press Affairs) Government House Gombe, Ismaila Uba Misilli, made available on Saturday, the governor said, "Our aim is to empower young people, make

them productive members of society and reduce unemployment."

Represented by the Commissioner of Youths and Sport Development, Hon. Adamu Inuwa Ibrahim, Governor Inuwa highlighted Gombe State's recent achievements across various sectors, including sports.

"Just last week, Gombe shone brightly at the Commonwealth Conference, a feat we achieved due to the exceptional leadership of His Excellency, Governor Inuwa Yahaya," he remarked.

Governor Inuwa Yahaya further emphasized the leading role of Gombe in sports, becoming one of only two states with two clubs participating in the national premier league.

He attributed this success to good leadership and support to sporting activities in the state.

The Governor challenged the licensed clubs to reciprocate the government's investment by delivering strong performances.

"We want you to become a breeding ground for talented players sought after by top clubs nationwide," he declared.

"Our commitment extends beyond football. We are dedicated to promoting all sporting activities in the state to create employment opportunities and reduce youth restiveness."

In his opening remarks at the event, the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Youth and Sport Development, Modi D. Shelpidi, applauded Governor Inuwa Yahaya's dedication to sports development within the state.

"His Excellency's passion for sports is evident in the concrete steps he has taken to support our local clubs. He has ensured that

all 13 clubs participating in the league are registered, with each receiving 300,000 Naira in funding. This commitment extends beyond the clubs themselves, as the welfare of referees and coaches has also been addressed", Mr. Shelpidi stated.

Mr. Shelpidi highlighted the positive impact of Governor Inuwa's leadership. "Thanks to His Excellency's efforts, we are proud to host zonal matches here at Pantami Stadium for the 2024 league", he said.

In his remarks, the Chairman of the Gombe State Football Association, Yakubu Philemon Sarma, represented by Comrade Ibrahim Gimba, commended Governor Inuwa for his sponsorship and support for sports development in the state.

Also speaking, the Chairman of

the Gombe State League One Forum, Hashimu Ibrahim, acknowledged that only two of the 13 participating clubs were initially able to register before the deadline. However, upon learning of their challenges, Governor Inuwa promptly intervened by approving their registration, affiliation fees, and additional welfare support for the clubs.

In his goodwill message, the Head of Civil Service, Abdullahi Ahmed Kasimu, echoed the Governor's emphasis on strong performance. "Gombe is a home of sport, and therefore we cannot afford not to perform," he declared. "Go and win, make Gombe State proud! Make your talent shine for the recognition of the outside world. Be good ambassadors of the state."



2024 FA Cup: Chairman Of AYD FC, Commends Nasarawa FA Board For Changing Narratives

By; ECHEAMOS, Lafia

Chairman of AYD FC, a Nationwide League One side based in Doma, Nasarawa State, Abdullahi Yakubu Doma, has thumbed up the board of the Nasarawa State Football Association headed by Salisu Galadima 'Basira' for introducing breathtaking innovations and incentives to grassroots football in the state. In an exclusive interview with Eche Amos on Wednesday, immediately after his team's 3-2 win over Keffi Warriors FC in the curtain raiser of the 2024 Nasarawa State Federation's Cup tie decided at the Lafia City Stadium, the young but versatile club administrator bared his mind thus.

"Honestly, I am impressed with the Organizers of the Federation's Cup, that is the Nasarawa State Football Association chaired by my friend and brother, Alhaji Salisu Galadima because of the innovations and other beautiful developments that are springing up since his assumption of office, especially from what I witnessed on the pitch today (Wednesday).

"I can see the FA Board has introduced the 'Man-of-the-Match' award for the best player on the field per match.

"Also, I learnt there will be cash

prizes to the two finalists of the FA Cup this year; this is very rare, you know. It's marvelous and a good initiative.

"And then, the massive involvement of the Media to cover the Competition is heartwarming. It's as if it is only Nasarawa State that is playing the FA Cup in Nigeria because the news has really gone viral, whether through the electronic, print or online mediums.

"What this means is that our budding talents are being exposed to the world and the efforts of the State FA are being followed around the globe.

"So, I must commend the FA Chairman and his Board and urge them to continue with this beautiful step to greatness they have taken.

"We the stakeholders will join hands to support both the Chairman and his Board to take football to an enviable position in the State and beyond."

Speaking on his expectations for his club, AYD, in this year's FA Cup, Abdullahi disclosed that his desire was to play in the final and pick one of the two available slots for the National Federation's Cup competition.

"For this competition (FA Cup), we recruited some new players to complement the ones we already have on ground.

"This is to curtail any



complacency and give us an edge over any opposition in this competition. You know this is a knockout inter-club tournament where you don't give room for complacency nor have a second chance. You can only become the best when you beat the best, and we are fully ready for that challenge.

"No doubts, Nasarawa United FC who are our next opponents are the highest ranked team in

this competition and have won the trophy more than any other team else since the inception of the FA Cup in Nasarawa State, but if Basira FC could win them in the 2023 edition, my boys will pick it up from there as a challenge to achieve similar feat. "We might be the underdogs but the outcome will surprise you. We want to play at the National Challenge Cup.

"Additionally, I give a lot of

morale-boosting incentives to my players that enable them to go an extra mile in any game we play to deliver result."

AYD FC set a Semi-Final clash against Nasarawa United FC who were drawn bye after a deserved victory over Keffi Warriors, and are seeking their first appearance in the final of the State FA Cup since the club was founded in 2014.

13th African Games: Former African Sprint Queen Commends Athletes

*Salutes Inclusion of home-based athletes in team

By; MIKE MBONYE, Accra

Former African, Commonwealth and Olympic medallist in 100m and 200m sprint events, Mary Onyali has said that she is impressed with performances of track and field athletes at the 13th African Games.

Onyali spoke in Accra, Ghana during the athletics events at the African Games.

"From the athlete's perspective, they have been giving their best. This is an Olympic year, so this being our first major African championship, we see this as our African Olympics.

"The athletes are prepared. They have been

dropping fast times here, personal best, national records and we are just looking for a World record from somebody," she said. Onyali commended Ghana for organising the games, saying despite initial challenges; the country has given Africa a very entertaining session. On Team Nigeria, the former African sprint queen said her athletes have done well so far.

"In athletics, Nigeria is leading on the medals table and we hope to continue the medal haul up until the final day. We usually don't miss the top three medal table in athletics because athletics is the mainstay of team Nigeria," she said. Onyali said she is

impressed with successes recorded by home-based athletes in track and field events.

She said that from the look of things, some of them will become big stars in future if they remain focused, determined and dedicated.

"I am extremely happy with the Games. Majority of our athletes are home-based and home grown.

"This is a testament to the fact that our foreign based athletes, whom are majority student athletes, if not released by their schools to attend events like this, we usually feel like we didn't have anybody and we start losing hope.

"This year, the Athletics Federation of Nigeria has

deemed it fit to believe and trust in our home based athletes and coaches.

"I am happy that we are beginning to see that there is really some good things coming out of our home-based athletes and I want this to continue, so that we don't continue to rely on our foreign based athletes to perform," she said.

Onyali advised home-based athletes to use their first outing at the African Games as a bench mark and those who did not make the team, not to relent because the future is bright.

She also commended the coaches for doing a great work on the athletes.



**Gombe Govt
Sponsors 13 Clubs To
Participate In Nationwide
League One**

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Makarfi LG Boss Tasks Wealthy Individuals To Assist Less Privileged

By: SANIALIYU, Zaria

Makarfi Local Government Council Chairman, Engineer Kabiru Mu'azu Meyere, has charged wealthy people in the community to always assist the needy in order to have an easy livelihood particularly in this period of Ramadan fasting. Represented by the Council Secretary, Barrister Abdulhadi Abdullahi Makarfi who doubles as Chairman of the Committee in charge of Palliatives Support to Orphans, organized by the People Advocative forum, held at Makarfi. Engineer Mu'azu Meyere pointed out that many people have been affected by the economic crisis and high inflation, which is currently biting harder in the country are in need of urgent assistance hence the desired for collective efforts to alleviate the current economic hardship. In their remarks on behalf of the

philanthropists, Alhaji Garba Mai Kwai, Mohammed Jumare Sada, Kabir Abdullahi Sada, commended the initiative by the organisers and urged governments and political office holders to emulate the forum by enrolling orphans into skills acquisition training and Qur'anic schools to prevent them from criminal activities. Also speaking on the religious perspective the Chief Imam's of Tashar Yari (JIBWIS) Mosque, Sheikh Surajo Mujistapha and head of Da'awa Committee, Yakubu Isah, advised wealthy individuals not to relent on their efforts in feeding and providing foodstuff to needy orphans in order to reduce high rate of poverty and suffering among residents, devoid of nepotism. They called on people to always remain obedient to Almighty Allah and to give out zakkat as one of the five pillars of Islam as revealed in the holy Qur'an.

The Secretary General of the forum, Adamu Mohammed Makarfi, and acting Chairman, Kaseem Gambo, appreciated the elders and elite for their tirelessly efforts and support. They prayed for Almighty Allah's guidance and protection from evil influences and also urged all stakeholders to put hands on deck in redoubling their usual commitment towards this direction. On his part, the District Head of Makarfi, Alhaji Adamu Abdullahi Sulukin Zazzau, represented by Alhaji Umar Abdullahi, expressed delight to Makarfi People Advocative Forum for the gesture. He appealed to the organising committee and stakeholders, wealthy individuals and government officials to invest into orphans fund to address current hardship in support of government's efforts in the country.



Senator Alli Proposes Naming Senate Committee Room After Late Olubadan

***Advocates sending high-powered delegation on condolence visit**

By: BAYOAKAMO, Ibadan

The Senator representing Oyo South Senatorial District, Senator Sharafadeen Alli on Wednesday, proposed the naming of one of the Senate Committee rooms after late Olubadan of Ibadanland, Oba (Dr) Mohood Olalekan Balogun to immortalise his memory. Senator Alli also advocated the sending of high-powered delegation on a condolence visit to the governor of Oyo state, the late monarch's royal family, chiefs and the people of Ibadan as well as paying a visit to the incoming Olubadan, who incidentally was a member of House of Representatives. According to a statement signed by the Special Adviser on Media to Senator Alli, Akeem Abas proposed the naming in his motion of urgent national importance at the plenary on Wednesday. The motion called for expression of heartfelt condolences to the late



Olubadan's family, chiefs, the people of Ibadan, Yoruba race, and Nigeria as well as highlighted the exceptional contributions of the revered monarch, saying he excelled as a statesman, former Senator and custodian of Yoruba culture and tradition. Senator Alli in the motion, stressed that late Oba Balogun's wisdom, leadership and dedication to his people would be deeply missed, calling for unanimous support as a fitting tribute to his remarkable legacy. He then urged the Senate to observe a minute silence to honour the memory of the late monarch, who is also a former senator and elder statesman a request granted and observed by the Senate. Also, the trio of Sen. Yunus Akintunde (APC-Oyo Central), Sen. Abdulfatai Buhari (APC-Oyo North) and Sen. Abba Moro (PDP- Benue South) among others rose in Plenary and supported the motion.