

# New NIGERIAN

"The Greatest Weapon is Truth"

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**Kukah**



**Umoh Uno**

By AMOS TAUNA, Kaduna, ARCHIBONG ESUENE, Makurdi, BAYOAKAMO, Ibadan, FUNMI ADERINTO, Kaduna & PATRICK TITUS, Uyo

The Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF), felicitates with Nigerian and worldwide Christian brethren on the celebration of the 2024 Easter Season, while lamenting that it is coming at a difficult time for Nigerians. The forum said the celebration signalled the end of the 40-day Lent Period, that involves sacrifice, fasting, devotion, compassion,

goodwill and sacred sober reflections on the pains of crucifixion and the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The National Publicity Secretary of the forum in a statement issued by Prof. Muhammad-Baba, said, "ACF rejoices in solidarity with all on the Holy Season, one of God's Grace and Mercies."

The statement explained that the celebrations are coming at a challenging time for all Nigerians as they reel under daunting economic, social and political challenges, insecurity and related existential challenges.

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# Kwara Gov greets Christians at Easter

By; BILIQIS  
ONALAPO  
OLAJUMOKE, Ilorin

**K**wara State Governor, AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq has extended hearty felicitations to the Christian community in

the state and across Nigeria on the Easter celebration.

The governor said that Easter evokes the time-tested themes of love, sacrifice, compassion, unity, and triumph of good over evil at different times.

"The sacrifice of Jesus Christ to guide the flock and the enduring legacy he left for humanity call for deeper reflection at this time and always," the governor said. He urged citizens to seize the moment to renew their

faith in God, unite for national and collective growth and to help one another to uphold goodness and justice in the world.

The governor wished the Christian community a happy Easter celebration.

## Tompolo

### Tompolo Disowns Newspapers Advertorials On President Tinubu's Birthday

By; UTEBOR PETER,  
Asaba

**H**igh Chief (Dr.) Government Ekpeupolo a.k.a Tompolo has denied several newspapers advertorials allegedly placed by him and Tantita Security Services Limited, celebrating President Bola Tinubu, saying he stood by the president's directives. President Tinubu had warned against celebrating his birthday, owing to current situation in the country.

This was contained in a statement signed by Dr Paul Bebenimibo, Media Consultant to High Chief Government Ekpeupolo and Chairman of Tantita Security Services Nigeria Limited.

The statement said, "The attention of High Chief Government Ekpeupolo, alias Tompolo, the Ibe-Ebidouwei of Ijaw Nation and Chairman of Tantita Security Services Nigeria Limited has been drawn to adverts placed in front and inside pages of some Nigerian newspapers celebrating President Bola Ahmed Tinubu at 72 years today.

"For the records, High Chief Tompolo did not place any advert to celebrate Mr President in the media. He also did not instruct anyone to do so on his behalf.

"This is owing to Mr President's instruction that no one should organise birthday party or place advert to celebrate him in the media, as result of the

state of the Nation. That such money should be given as alm to the less privileged in the society.

"High Chief Ekpeupolo bought the idea of Mr President wholeheartedly, hence heed the warning and instruction of Mr President. High Chief Ekpeupolo believes in Mr President's capacity in working toward repositioning of the country for steady economic growth and prosperity.

"It is against this background that High Chief Ekpeupolo keyed into the policy thrust of Mr President, by working in synergy with security agencies to totally eradicate illegal crude oil activities in the Niger Delta region for maximum productivity for economic prosperity.

"We wish to emphasis that high Chief Ekpeupolo did not place any advert to celebrate Mr President. Those behind these adverts placement may have done this in good faith, but may not be aware of the consequences of their action. It is our position that it is a grave error and insensitivity to the current state of things in Nigeria.

"High Chief Ekpeupolo expresses his deep regret for this action and also apologise on behalf of those who placed the adverts, to Mr President for any embarrassment this action must have cost him. It is highly regretted." He added.



## Malnutrition: HVCF Distributes Food Worth N3m To Over 270 Households In Kaduna

By; NONYE  
EKWENUGO, Kaduna

**A** governmental organization, Hope for the Village Child Foundation (HVCF) has distributed food items worth N3m to over 270 children and women in Kaduna communities as part of their efforts to reduce the rate of malnutrition in the state. The Deputy Director, HVCF, Rev. Sister Juliana Ekwoanya during the distribution of the items on Wednesday in Kaduna at HVCF centre, said the gesture is part of their

activities in helping the vulnerable to mitigate hardship.

According to her, the objective is to provide essential foodstuff to those in need, especially women and children and to alleviate hunger in the communities.

She noted that the food items are expected to help cushion the effects of economic hardship on the lives of members of the beneficiaries.

She however, lamented the rate of malnutrition among children in the communities, saying a lot needs to be done on food

security in the country.

Sister Ekwoanya said, "this charitable efforts, not only offers immediate relief, but also fosters a sense of community empathy and support, helping to create a stronger, more compassionate society that takes care of its most vulnerable members".

She further said that by distributing the food items, the beneficiaries will have access to nutritious meals and can meet their basic nutritional requirements. The deputy director also urged well meaning Nigerians and government

to assist those in need, saying there is urgent need to take action against food insecurity.

According to her, the items distributed include 12 bags of 100kg rice, 10 bags of 100kg beans, 10 bags of 100kg maize, 5 bags of onions, 2 cartons of maggi and salt worth N3m.

She further noted that the beneficiaries were drawn from Chikun, Igabi and Kajuru LGAs of the state. A 15-year old, Miracle Moses who spoke on behalf of the beneficiaries, lauded HVCF for their support and humanitarian interventions.

# Easter: Fintiri Preaches Unity, Love, Peace

By: TINA PHINEAS, Yola

Governor Ahmadu Umaru Fintiri of Adamawa State has called on Christians to show the spirit of unity, love and peace as the world celebrates Easter. Fintiri, who made the call in a statement signed by Humashi Wonosikou, Chief Press Secretary to the governor, said such fundamental values would go a long way in promoting and strengthening the harmony in the state.

According to him, the season should serve as a reminder of the selflessness, love, sacrifice and tolerance of Jesus Christ.

While calling for a national rebirth in order to move the nation forward, Governor Fintiri urged attitudinal change.

“Remembering that foundation is particularly meaningful this Easter because our nation is facing challenges that we can overcome if we choose to, by exercising collective tolerance and being ready

to make sacrifices.” he said.

Governor Fintiri also advised Nigerians to always provide selfless service to humanity just as Christ demonstrated through his death and resurrection.

He said, “When we show love and offer selfless service just as Christ did, then our nation and indeed the world we live in will be a better place for all of us.” He challenged Nigerians to use the period to supplicate to God on

behalf of the country so that citizens would be able to come out of the present economic challenges.

Fintiri urged the people to make ample use of the opportunity of the season for sober reflection, adding that the teaching on being your brother's keeper is even more apt now.

“It can start with a conscious effort at living peaceably with one another, regardless of religious views.

“Nigeria needs a peaceful

# Easter: Southern Kaduna Christian Leaders Urge Faithful To Help Less Privileged Neighbours

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The Chairman, Southern Kaduna Christian Leaders Association (SKCLA), Apostle Dr Emmanuel Nuhu Kure has urged more advantaged Christians to extend helping hands to their less privileged neighbours during this year's Easter celebration.

He made the call in an Easter message he personally signed and made available to newsmen in Kafanchan at the weekend, congratulating Christians for successfully witnessing the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Apostle Kure noted that Easter is a time for Christians around the world to rejoice in the victory of life over death and to reflect on the teachings of love, peace, and forgiveness that Jesus exemplified.

He added that this year's Easter celebration holds a special significance, especially considering the challenging times we have faced as a community. However, as people of faith, we draw strength and hope from the message of Easter, which reminds us that even in the darkest

times, there is always light and that through resilience and unity, we can overcome any challenge.

The chairman emphasized the importance of embracing the essence of Easter, to promote harmony, tolerance, and love amongst all individuals and communities in Southern Kaduna.

The SKCLA chairman also commended the government, security agencies, and all relevant stakeholders for their efforts in ensuring a peaceful and secure environment for Easter celebrations.

Apostle Kure who is also the Vision Pioneer, Throne Room Trust Ministry Kafanchan encourages all Christians to remember the less fortunate in our midst during this Easter period. Let us extend a helping hand to those in need, offering support and kindness to uplift one another. By doing so, we demonstrate the true Christian spirit and contribute to building a more inclusive and compassionate society.

He also congratulated the Muslim ummah over their fast, and urged them to continue to pray for a more peaceful future together.

# Youth Criminal Activities In Nigeria Becoming Worrisome

By: BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

The nefarious activities of our youth in several criminal activities across the nation is becoming disturbing, worrisome, and negatively impacting the image of the nation.

Investigations showed that in spite of the stiff penalties against acts of same sex relationships offences, there is an upsurge in youth engagements as various incidences recorded at Police Stations across the country are discouraging.

Recalled that one Odiri Rachel Ogezo who was arrested on July 29, 2018 by the Police in FESTAC Area of Lagos while engaging in same-sex with her partner confessed that her involvement was a product of her indoctrination while in a boarding

school.

Also, in April 2019, Marvis Osarodon Ogbemudia was arrested, detained and interrogated by the Police in Aguda, Lagos State along with other accomplices following their conduct of public nuisances while holding a LGBTQ party at Carlsbad Lounge and Nite Club located at Adeniyi Jones, Ikeja, Lagos. They confessed to engaging in same sex affairs and subsequently granted bail.

In a similar case, a lady named Osarumwense Cole was arrested along with other females in June 2022 at a birthday party held at Club Raptor and Lounge along Stadium Road, Odogbo in Benin City where they constituted themselves into public nuisance and breached public peace by participating in a

lesbian party, thereby committed an offence contrary to the law.

In Delta State, the Police in Sapele Divisional Headquarters granted bail to one Goodluck William of 33, Awolowo road, Sapele who was arrested in July 2022 along with other male offenders while engaging in acts of same sex at a gay birthday party at MK Lounge, Sapele.

The culprits confessed to the crime, and some of them have been charged to the court while Goodluck William has absconded in order to evade prosecution.

These disturbing trends have the potential to escalate unless the prosecution and convictions of suspects are timely effected in order to serve as deterrent to other youths with similar cases.

# Alaafin Stool: Oyo Govt Will Not Compromise Age Long Selection Process - Commissioner

By: BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

Oyo State Commissioner for Local Government, Hon Segun Olayiwola on Thursday, hinted that the state government will not compromise the age long process in choosing a new Alaafin of Oyo.

Hon Olayiwola dropped this hint in Ibadan while hosting the State Commissioner for Information, Prince Dotun Oyelade into his office on a fact finding mission.

The Commissioner for Local Government emphasized that there will be no going back in the state government commitment to sustaining the age long tradition of the selection process.

Specifically, Hon Olayiwola, stressed that

the state government will ensure the integrity of the selection process and prevent any form of compromises in choosing a new Alaafin of Oyo for the people.

He maintained that the present administration in Oyo State is committed to the development of traditional institutions in the state and that the near completion of the palace of Olubadan of Ibadan land is possible largely because of the personal intervention of the government.

Hon Olayiwola disclosed that the Gov Makinde administration has enthroned imperial majesties, royal majesties, royal highnesses and Baales running to over 60 in a bid to secure the territorial integrity of Oyo State.

The commissioner also stated that Gov Makinde has been working closely with traditional institutions towards strengthening security architecture across the state, curbing activities of illegal miners through community based approach and stopping the menace of land grabbers and herdsmen

Speaking on local government administration, Hon Olayiwola said local government autonomy can only be sustainable, if the federal government steps in to take up financial responsibilities for public primary schools and medical institutions to relieve the financial burdens of the state government

According to him, the salaries and allowances of

teachers and local government employees in Oyo State amounted to over N5 billion every month, which the state has been managing judiciously to bring dividends of democracy to the grassroots

On the next month local government election in the state, he assured that the Ministry is working tirelessly to ensure that the election is free and fair, adding that his is committed to upholding democracy and good governance in Oyo State. He then tasked all the stakeholders, including political parties, candidates, and voters, to abide by the rules and regulations of the electoral commission for peaceful electoral process



Apostle Dr Emmanuel Nuhu Kure

## Easter: Don't Lose Hope, There 'll Be Light At The End Of Tunnel, Gov Adeleke Tasks Nigerians

*\*Felicitates with Christians*

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

Governor Ademola Adeleke on Friday, urged the people of the state not to lose hope over the prevailing economic realities in the country.

The governor who gave the charge in a message to felicitate with Christians on the celebration of this year's Easter, said there will be light at the end of the tunnel

He stressed that there is the need for the Christians and Nigerians in general to use the occasion to value of love and sacrifice, adding, "Easter is a powerful reminder of the triumph of hope over despair".

"Easter is the clearest manifestation that pain is always a temporary experience and if endured will give way for an everlasting joy. Jesus Christ, as the Holy Book of Bible impressed on us, was a typical lesson on the power of hope and resilience," he said.

The governor added, "Beyond the celebration that comes with the moment, it is also a reminder of how love can save, and why we must imbibe the culture of selfless service to humanity as exemplified by Jesus Christ.

"Let's be concerned about the good of each other, and more, show tolerance, irrespective of our differences."

Reiterating his commitment to impact

lives and transform the physical outlook of the state, the governor stressed that the ongoing infrastructural projects in Osun state are geared towards opening up the state for investments and improving living conditions of the people.

Gov Adeleke said his administration will continue to prioritize decisions and interventions that will have direct bearing on the people of the state, emphasising his resolve to work with governments across tiers to deliver on infrastructure and welfare needs of the people.

"Our administration is committed to a revitalized Osun state with increased opportunities and this explains our choice of investment in public infrastructures across sectors. We are not only committed to seeing through the infrastructure plan unveiled a few months ago but also expanding reach in an effort to broaden the prospect of our economy and stimulate investors interest.

"Our commitment to the welfare of workers and pensioners is unshaken, and I want to reiterate the willingness of this administration to resolve the inherited liabilities within available resources. Our administration will not treat their welfare with disdain as was in the past." He said.

Emphasizing that his administration will not leave any stone unturned in transforming the state and open up pathway of enduring opportunities for the people, Gov Adeleke tasked the people of Osun State to be alive to their responsibilities as citizens,



## Tension In Enugu Community Over Alleged Imposition Of King 9 Years After Death Of Ex-Monarch

*\*Natives disrupt purported election by govt*

By; KELVIN OKPARA, Enugu

The chieftaincy tussle rocking Ishienu Amofu Autonomous Community, Nkerefi in Nkanu East Local Government Area of Enugu State on Saturday, took a new twist as natives of the locality disrupted a purported election fixed by the state Ministry of Chieftaincy Affairs to elect a new traditional ruler for the community, over alleged imposition.

The aggrieved members of the community made up of five villages namely, Isi-Uga, Umuogbi, Umunama, Umuezeochi and Umuokala said they rose against the purported election because some officials in the state Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Chieftaincy Matters, connived with some selfish individuals in the community to impose one Christian Ogbonnaya Agwu, without recourse to their, 2004, Constitution, which clearly stipulates the procedure for electing a new traditional ruler for the community.

However, on the basis of the alleged connivance to impose a traditional ruler on the locality, three members of the community, namely: Chief John Njoku (one of the aspirants to the Igweship stool), Chief Benedict Ogbu (Secretary to the Igwe-in-Council) and Sylvester Chukwu (Member of the Ruling Council) approached the

Enugu State High Court seeking reliefs pertaining to the constitutional procedure for electing a new Igwe in the community.

In an Originating Summons filed on their behalf by their Counsel, Godwin Onwusi Esq. wherein the said Christian Ogbonna, the General President and Vice President of the town union, the chairman of the Electoral Committee and the Commissioner for Chieftaincy Matters are defendants, the plaintiffs sought, among others.

The determination of the following questions, taking cognizance of the relevant provisions of Ishienu Amofu Constitution, 2004:

1. Whether any other person or group, apart from the General Congress of Ishienu Amofu, can validly set up the Igweship Pre-election screening committee?

2. Whether any other person or group, apart from the Ruling Council in consultation with the Traditional Council, can validly call for the election of a new Igwe to replace a dead one.

3. Whether any election conducted now for a new Igwe without amending the 2004 Constitution can be valid.

4. Whether the candidate being imposed is qualified to contest to be the Igwe.

The villagers contended that notwithstanding that all the defendants in the suit, including the Commissioner for Chieftaincy Matters, have

been duly served, the Ministry officials still came to conduct the jamboree election, an act they said is disrespectful to the court, adding that they will not allow them to disrespect the court in their community.

Consequently, the attempt to impose Chief Christian Ogbonnaya Agu as the new monarch, through an election that was meant to legitimize an already predetermined outcome, was vehemently resisted by the natives who insisted that laid down procedure must be followed.

The aggrieved natives, who had gathered at the community meeting square as early as 8am in their numbers, stood their ground that the election must not take place until the right thing including conduct of a General Congress was done in line with their 2004 Constitution, a development that forced officials of Chieftaincy Affairs to leave the venue abruptly as tension was mounting.

Speaking with journalists, one of the community leaders, Chief Chukwu Matthew Onyeabor, accused some leaders of the community of conniving with some officials of the Ministry of Chieftaincy Matters to impose an unpopular king on them.

He alleged that all the aspirants that indicated interest to vie for the election were deliberately skimmed out by the community town union led

by Ndubuisi Ani whom he accused of working for Agwu to retain his position.

Onyeabor regretted that despite the service of court processes on the town union and Ministry of Chieftaincy Matters on the subject matter pending in court, the ministry still went ahead to fix March 30 for the botched election. He called on the state governor, Peter Mbah to as a matter of urgency, intervene by ensuring level playing ground for all interested aspirants in the stool to participate before the situation degenerates into crisis.

"So what we are saying is that let the right thing be done, let our constitution be followed to the letter in electing our new Igwe. We are saying no to imposition of an Igwe."

Also speaking, one of the aspirants to the throne and the 1st plaintiff in the pending suit, John Njoku said he purchased form with a huge amount of money but was never communicated with any information by the town union leadership on the proposed election.

Njoku also lend his voice to the call by the natives on the governor to intervene urgently on the Igweship tussle to avoid any crisis in the community.

Efforts to reach the Commissioner for Chieftaincy and Local Government Affairs, Deacon Okey Ogbodo failed as his mobile phone number could not go through as at the time of filling this report.

### CHANGE OF NAME

UMARU - I, formerly known as Umaru Haluru Afoso. Now wish to be known, called and addressed as AFOSO ELIJAH HALIRU. All former documents remain valid. General public, Bank and other Relevant Authorities concerned should please take note.

## Elections: Senator Shehu Sani To Clerics, Shun Mischievous Politicians Who Use Sentiments To Divide People

\*Urges them to preach message of peace, unity

\*Warns. Northerners to stop ganging up against Tinubu

By; ISAAC ODEH, Kaduna

Former lawmaker, Senator Shehu Sani has called on all religious leaders across the country to shun selfish and mischievous politicians, who hide under guise of religion and ethnicity to divide the people during elections.

According to him, there is the need for clerics to avoid such politicians, especially, those who have lost power and are now weeping all sorts of sentiments against government of the day.

Speaking during a dinner (breaking fast) held on Saturday evening at in Kaduna, Senator Shehu Sani said, "Poverty and hunger have been so weaponised, to control the masses for self aggrandizement."

While stating that clerics should use places of worship to preach messages of peace and unity as well as enlighten adherents on power of voting good leaders during elections, Senator Sani said democracy can only survive if there is equity; justice, progress and development.

Sani, who said the country does not belong to one ethnic group, stressed, "Power has resided so long

in the North that it has become so toxic.

"Power in the North has not helped Northerners, the region is still backward in all aspects of human and capital development."

He however, advised Northerners who are ganging up against President Tinubu, to instead support the government in the interest of progress and development of the north as against quest for return of power to the region.

"Politicians, who failed to secure appointment under Tinubu-led government can't manipulate us for personal interests. They have lost their sense of entitlement and are now trying to whip sentiments of kinds to be relevant."

On issues of security and economy, Senator Sani blamed former President Muhammadu Buhari for failing to improve on the economy and ensure adequate security of lives and property of the citizens.

According to him, the whole security apparatus was controlled by northerners and Muslims, yet banditry and terrorism thrived.

"Many parents are afraid



to send their children to school, because of fear of being kidnapped. We have heard of mosques raided and imams kidnapped or killed by bandits.

"The clear message is that banditry and terrorism cause existential threats, with Kaduna as one state in the North facing serious problem of banditry and terrorism with the educational crippled in the rural areas.

He however, said despite the current hardship and security situation, the Tinubu administration has done better than Buhari's

years of docile actions against the notorious bandits and bad economy.

He noted, "The rescue of the Kuriga pupils, Tsangaya students and other kidnapped victims across the North in recent days by the National Security Adviser (NSA), Mal. Nuhu Ribadu; the Chief of Defense Staff and other security agencies, deserves commendation, these are signs that there are some level of improvement in the security architecture".

## CNPP Says Labour Party Crisis Mismanaged, Urges Abure To Quit When Ovation Is Loudest

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Conference Of Nigeria Political Parties (CNPP) has accused the leadership of Labour Party (LP) of mismanaging the ongoing leadership crisis in the party, urging the embattled national chairman of the party, Barr Julius Abure to resign now that the ovation is loudest.

The CNPP stated this while reacting to the newest twists to the leadership tussle in the party.

According to a statement issued yesterday by its Deputy National Publicity Secretary, Comrade James Ezema, the umbrella body of all registered political parties and political associations in the country equally hailed the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) for resisting what it described as obvious pressure to use its officials to endorse the outcome of the recent contentious fractional national convention of the party.

"In view of the obvious lack of internal democracy in most of the political parties in Nigeria, INEC has done well for the sake of advancing our democracy by resisting obvious pressure to use its officials to endorse the outcome of the recent contentious national convention organised by a faction of the party.

"Therefore, we call on Barrister Julius Abure to make himself the hero in the crisis by tendering his immediate resignation as the National Chairman of the party.

"Nigeria is supposed to be a liberal democracy, where inclusive representation, rule of law, and protection of the rights and liberties of individuals within the political parties must be encouraged by all democrats and democratic institutions.

"It was against this backdrop of the lack of

inclusivity that characterised the build up to the convention held in Anambra State, making it contrary to the Federal High Court's judgment of Friday, July 23, 2021, which ordered parties in the Labour Party leadership tussle "to maintain status quo ante bellum in order not to disturb the res of the matter pending further order of the court."

"In the same vein, in the judgment of the Federal High Court in Suit no. FHC/ABJ/CS/866/2014 between Labour Party and 3 Ors. vs. Com. Salisu Muhammed, the court unequivocally declared Labour Party as an institutional political party founded, promoted, and registered by the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) on behalf of the Nigerian Workers.

"In this light, the Julius Abure faction of the party misfired by holding the purported national convention of the Labour Party when it fell short of "an expansive and inclusive" exercise as ordered in a widely publicised subsisting court order.

"Leaving out NLC and other critical stakeholders in its consultations ahead of the convention was a miscalculated move as we recall that the former national chairman of Labour Party, High Chief Dan Nwanyanwu, on leaving office, submitted the Labour Party's certificate of registration to the union in recognition of Labour Party as an institutional political party founded, promoted, and registered by the NLC.

"For us, the current leadership crisis rocking the Labour Party is needless and avoidable if basic ingredients of democracy, including inclusivity, justice, and accountability, were observed", the CNPP stated.

## Police Operatives Raid IPOB/ESN Criminal Hideout, Neutralize 2 During Gun Duel

\*Recover AK-47 Rifle, ammunition other exhibits

By; KELVIN OKPARA, Enugu

Operatives of the Enugu state police Command, weekend through the Anti-Cultism Tactical Squad, at about 2:30am carried out an intelligence-guided raid of a suspected IPOB/ESN outlawed criminal hideout in Akwuke community of Enugu South Local Government Area.

The Operatives were, however, met with resistance from the renegades, who opened fire upon sighting them, but they were subdued by

the superior firepower of the Operatives.

Spokesman of the Command, DSP Daniel Ndukwe, who disclosed this in a statement yesterday in Enugu, said, "Two (2) of the criminal elements were neutralized, while others escaped with varying degrees of gunshot wounds.

"One (1) AK-47 rifle, one (1) submachine gun (SMG), one (1) stainless pump-action gun (PAG), twenty (27) live and twenty (23) expended rounds of 7.62 mm caliber ammunition were

recovered after the raid. Also recovered are five (5) live cartridges, and a small blue-colored Gideon New Testament bible used to conceal objects suspected to be charm."

According to him, "a preliminary investigation reveals that the breech AK-47 was wiped off and that the criminal elements are responsible for several attacks and carting away of police officers rifles, as the rifle's magazine bore the Nigeria Police Force colour. Further discreet investigations are

ongoing.

"Meanwhile, the Commissioner of Police, CP, Uzoebgu Kanayo while commending the Operatives for the operational feat, has reaffirmed the Command's unwavering commitment to rid Enugu State of unrepentant criminals. "He, however, solicits the continued support of the citizenry, while urging them and owners of medical facilities, in particular, to report persons found with gunshot wounds to the Police."

## Kogi Govt Debunks Allegation Of Attack On Opposition Party

By; ADAMA JOHN, Lokoja

**K**ogi State Government has frowned at the spurious allegation by the Social Democratic Party (SDP) that its members spanning through the central senatorial district, have been attacked by supporters of the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) for testifying against it.

The two political parties are locking horns at the election tribunal in far away Abuja, over the authentic winner of the off circle November 2023 governorship election, months after the APC candidate Ahmed Usman Ododo got the nod of the electoral umpire.

The state image maker, Kingsley Fanwo who briefed the press on the update at the weekend in Lokoja, said that the intention of the sprawling mischief makers in the garb of SDP supporters, is to distract the government of the day from performing its statutory role for the benefit of Kogites.

"We wouldn't have bothered to respond to the barking of the SDP and its leadership as the State Government is busy with governance; but it is important to set the record straight and address the minds of the public to the tradition of lies by the SDP" said Fanwo.

According to him, the administration of the democratically elected Ahmed Ododo will not leave any stone unturned to serve the good people of the state as he is committed to satisfying the yearnings of the masses.

Kingsley Fanwo found it expedient to educate the Social Democratic Party in the state that the political tussle at the Abuja tribunal is not between individuals, but political parties, hence the state government's priority is to ensure safety of lives and property.

As he stated, "the State Government did not receive any report of politically stirred crisis and therefore, surprised at

the blatant, false, spurious and pedestrian claims by the Social Democratic Party in the party's usual way of whipping up sentiments and spreading falsehood to win public sympathy".

He believes that SDP's petition is suffering an irreversible setback at the Tribunal as the comedians they presented as witnesses probably didn't rehearse their lines well or they are falling because their claims have their foundation in fiction.

"It will be unacceptable for them to vent their impending failure on the State Government that is doing all it can to provide security for all in the State" the commissioner assured.

He stressed that Kogi State cannot be a podium for the SDP to test its songs of division, ethnic bigotry and violence that has become its modus operandi.

He therefore, opined that a absurd and incomprehensible for the SDP to continue to exhibit anti-democratic tendencies and provoke the sensibility of the people in such a reckless manner.

If they are so confident in their incompetent petition, why resort to self help, he asked adding that "as a legitimate Government, we won't be soiled in the oil of prejudice that the SDP has engaged in with impunity."

"We will protect all the people and residents of the State and also protect our integrity and image. If any attack did happen as claimed by the SDP, it must have been stage-managed by the SDP to justify their failure to produce the number of witnesses they claimed to have in line with their modus operandi as witnessed during the campaign," the commissioner said.

He therefore, urged the people of the State to go about their normal businesses as there won't be any chance for anyone to attack any Kogite. No stone will be left unturned to ensure peace and security in the state.

## SERAP Gives 36 Governors, FCT 7 Days Ultimatum To Provide Loan Agreement, Spending

By; AMOS TAUNA, Kaduna

**T**he 36 states governors and the Minister of the Federal Capital Territory, Nyesom Wike, have been given one-week ultimatum by the Socio-Economic Right and Accountability Project to provide the loan agreements and spending details of the loans obtained by their states and the FCT.

A statement issued yesterday by the organisation's Deputy Director, Kolawole Oluwadare, explained that details and locations of projects executed with the loans that amount to N5.9 trillion and \$4.6 billion are requested to be included.

It urged the state governors and the FCT minister to widely publish copies of its requests as it would help keep Nigerians in the know of how their states' governments spent their loans, and also ensure that persons with public responsibilities are answerable to the people for the performance of their duties in the management of public funds.

SERAP also urged them to promptly invite the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) and Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) to investigate the spending of the domestic and external loans obtained by their state and the FCT.

The statement noted that its request followed the disclosure made by Sani,

on Saturday, when he lamented the huge debt inherited from his predecessor, Nasir El-Rufai, on May 29, 2023, saying that the state is now left with a few amounts, not enough to pay salary, as his administration inherited a total of \$587m, N85bn and 115 contract liabilities from the ex-governor.

The organisation said that in the Freedom of Information requests dated March 30, 2024 and signed by SERAP deputy director Kolawole Oluwadare, the organisation said that it is in the public interest to publish copies of the loan agreements and details of how the loans obtained are spent.

It added, "Widely publishing copies of the loan agreements and spending details of the loans obtained would ensure that persons with public responsibilities are answerable to the people for the performance of their duties in the management of public funds."

The FoI requested that it would be grateful if the recommended measures are taken within seven days of the receipt and/or publication of the letter, stressing that if they have not heard from them by then, SERAP shall take all appropriate legal actions to compel them and their state to comply with their request in the public interest.

It said that it is seriously concerned that many of the country's 36 states and FCT are allegedly mismanaging public funds

that may include domestic and external loans obtained from bilateral and multilateral institutions and agencies, saying that according to Nigeria's Debt Management Office, the total public domestic debt portfolio for the country's 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory is N5.9 trillion, while the total public external debt portfolio is \$4.6 billion.

The statement observed that many states and the FCT reportedly owe civil servants' salaries and pensions, while several states are borrowing to pay salaries with millions of Nigerians resident in your state and the FCT continue to be denied access to basic public goods and services such as quality education and healthcare.

It said that it is concerned that the domestic and external loans obtained by the state and the FCT are vulnerable to corruption and mismanagement, stressing that the government has a responsibility to ensure transparency and accountability in how any loans obtained by the state are spent, to reduce vulnerability to corruption and mismanagement.

The effective operation of representative democracy, the statement explained depended on the people being able to scrutinised, discussed, and contribute to government decision making, including on the spending of loans obtained by your state and the FCT, pointing out that to do this, they need information to enable them to participate

more effectively in the management of public funds by their state government and the FCT.

The organisation further stated that there is a significant risk of mismanagement or diversion of funds linked to loans obtained by state governments including the state, saying that the accounts of Nigeria's 36 states and the FCT are generally not open to public scrutiny.

The state, the statement explained has obligations under international anti-corruption and human rights law, including a responsibility to promote transparency and accountability in the management of public funds, prevent mismanagement or diversion of public funds, and redress any abuse of public trust.

Opacity in the spending of loans obtained by states, according to the statement has continued to have negative impacts on the fundamental interests of the citizens and the public interest.

It said that the state cannot hide under the excuse that the Freedom of Information Act is not applicable to the state to refuse to provide the details being sought, as the state also has clear legal obligations to provide the information as prescribed by provisions of the Nigerian Constitution 1999 [as amended], and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (Ratification and Enforcement) Act.

## Borno Arrests Syndicates Behind Fire Outbreaks In IDPs Camps

By; SADIQ ABUBAKAR, Maiduguri

**T**he Borno State Government has received Situation Reports (SITREPs) from reliable sources regarding suspected cases of fire outbreaks in some IDP camps within the State.

This recent rise in frequency of infernos in IDP camps has been a matter of concern, and all hands are on deck to forestall any further occurrence of fire outbreaks in the State.

A statement issued and

signed yesterday by Professor Mohammed Usman Tar, the Honorable Commissioner, Borno State Ministry of Information and Internal Security and made available to newsmen in Maiduguri, said that the state government has been investigating the occurrence of the infernos on a case-by-case basis, with a view to establishing the remote and extant causes, and developing a strategy to stem future occurrence.

On 29 March 2024, the

Ministry of Information and Internal Security said it received a report in which a suspect admitted that he and his "co-conspirators" were "hired" by some NGOs (names withheld) to set IDP camps on fire.

This matter is under investigation and further necessary action shall only be taken on the basis of the outcome of the investigation.

Those arrested are in detention, undergoing intensive interrogation, while the NGOs who were pinpointed in the alleged

violent practice have been summoned for preliminary interrogation.

The statement added that government has assured members of the public that this matter will receive appropriate and expedited attention, and any culprit will be dealt with according to the law.

Meanwhile, members of the public are urged to be calm, peaceful and law-abiding and report any breach of security to the nearest law enforcement agency or traditional rulers for transmission to the relevant authority.

# Uba Sani Emerges Coordinating Governor Of North-West

By; F U N M I A D E R I N T O, Kaduna

Governor of Kaduna State, Senator Uba Sani has been inaugurated by the National Chairman of All Progressives Congress (APC), H.E. Dr. Umar Ganduje as the Coordinating Governor of the North-West.

He was inaugurated on Wednesday with the following responsibilities: To coordinate the Governors of the North - West to always identify with, and participate more in the activities of the party; Initiate periodic interface between the Governors of the North - West Zone and the leadership of the party; With the role, he is expected to liaise with the party to commence immediate process for genuine reconciliation of aggrieved members in the North - West Zone.

He is also expected to mobilize governors of the North - West Zone to effectively and physically participate in party

activities within and outside the zone.

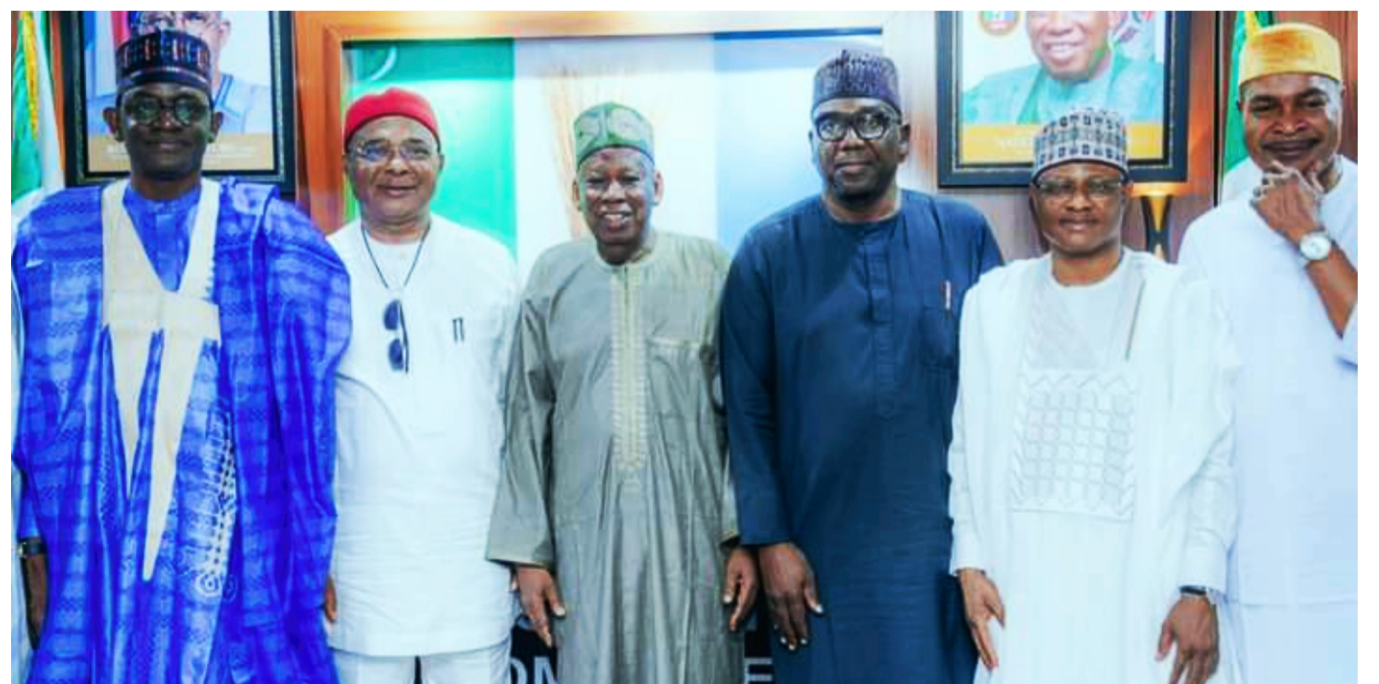
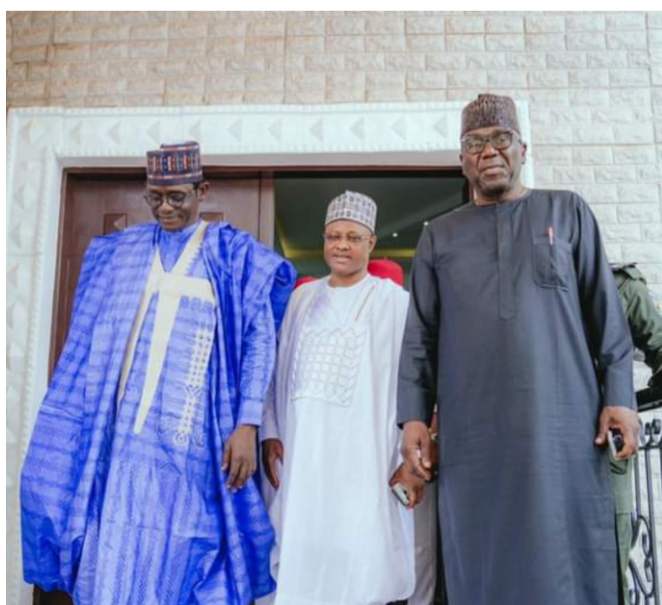
"Consult with governors of the North - West Zone on issues that will further enhance the progress and unity of the party within the zone; and

"Assist the party on resource mobilization within the North-West Zone," are other roles he is expected to play.

The inauguration of six governors to coordinate others in their zones is part of the efforts by the national leadership of APC to further build, coordinate and strengthen the party, as well as achieve the Renewed Hope Agenda of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR.

Governor Uba Sani expressed appreciation to the National Chairman of APC and members of the National Working Group (NWC) for the honour.

"We shall work assiduously to mobilize and unify our members, deepen internal democracy and prepare for future political contests," he said.



# Ex-SGF Boss Pays Tribute, Buries Political Ally, Tahbi In Adamawa



By: TOM GARBA, Yola

The immediate past Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF), Barr Boss Mustapha has paid tribute to one of his political strong allies and confidant, Hon Eli Gamaliel Tahbi.

Boss alongside seasoned politicians in Adamawa State in the likes of Hon Kobis Harris Thimnu, House of Representatives (HoR) representing Guyuk/Shelleng constituency, former Majority Leader in the Senate, Senator Silas Zwingina, former HoR member, Gibion Goroki, Rt Hon Sunday Peter and a host of many others were in Baptist Church Guyuk, Guyuk Local Government Area of Adamawa State for the funeral service of

late Tahbi.

Boss described Tahbi as his friend with strong fraternity not only in politics and cherished their political lives while in SDP in the late 80s and early 90s.

Late Gamaliel's biography was penned that he was Boss Mustapha's closed associate and both served the SDP as PRO and Chairman respectively, bringing it to limelight in the North Eastern region. The former SGF with a heavy heart in his tribute to late Tahbi, said, "Adieu dear friend, you lived a fulfilled life as a Middle Belter of repute and your passing is a great loss to all of us. The indelible mark you have printed in the hearts of many in the Middle Belt Region, will remain with us and our memories of your

commitment and good works will ever be remembered. Rest in the bosom of the Lord dear compatriot."

"Tahbi has immensely contributed to my political journey and successes, he was my confidant and friend Brother who stood for me at all times, a dear friend who was few among supported my journey in life." Boss Said

Boss used the opportunity and paid a condolence visit to Kwandin Nunguriya, HRH Dr Kuruhaye Dishon Dansanda II the President and Chairman of Lunguda Traditional Council.

While at the Palace of His Royal Highness He commiserated with the entire people of Guyuk, Lunguda Traditional Council and the entire family of late Eli Gamaliel Tahbi.

Former Majority Leader, Dr Jonathan Silas Zwingina in his tribute, said, "Tahbi is a dear brother, a friend and political associate of all times has gone home to rest in the bosom of the Lord. Rest in peace, Adieu my confidant."

Many people paid tributes to Tahbi, who was the former Adamawa State Secretary to the Government during the reigns of Governor Boni Haruna and told the congregants that he lived a good life from his childhood to adulthood.

The biography of late Tahbi was read to have spent 75 years on earth and was born in Guyuk from 1949-2024. The former SGF extolled him as a confidant and political associate of all times throughout his life.





# Easter Coming At Difficult Times For Nigerians Under Daunting Challenges - ACF

- We Will Overcome Current Harsh Economy, Gov Eno Assures
- Come Up With Robust Template To Reserve, Put Nigerians On Path Of National Building, Kukah Tasks Tinubu
- Make Teachings Soul Winning Based, Anglican Bishop Tells Preachers
- Choose Love Over Hatred, Peace Over Violence, Good Over Evil - Hon Peller, Ajadi
- Triumph Of Hope Over Despair - Uba Sani

times, communities face dire socio-economic conditions, disappointing political representation, corruption, nepotism, among others, egregious ingredients for tough lives for Northern communities specifically," the statement explained.

While it is easy to send arms flailing up in agony, the statement observed that people cannot and should not lose hope or surrender to despair.

According to the statement, "The occasion of the remembrance of the life and times of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace and Hope, provides reason to look up to God Almighty, for emancipation from humankind's tribulations and trials." In the spirit of the season, ACF, therefore, called on the Christian Ecclesia to pray for the peace, security and economic recovery for Nigeria, and God's intercession so that Nigeria's leaders are re-endowed with faith, strength, Divine Love and Wisdom as they pilot Nigeria's affairs with righteousness in intentions and deeds.

It called for God to guide and bestow the security agencies with the needed strength and bold resolve with which to crush all agents of criminality, insecurity and social and political destabilisation in Nigeria and that the fear of God Almighty enters the evil minds of terrorists and other criminals that they repent and reject, in totality their culture of criminality, sin and social profanity.

The statement urged Nigerians to pray that God Almighty comes to the aid of any and all innocent citizens being held captive in the criminals' dens so that they are released unharmed without further delay, and God Almighty to restore hope for a better and more hospitable world on the pedestal sustainable prosperity, justice, equity as opposed to the current culture of despair and hopelessness so that humanity rises again from the ashes.

**\*We Will Overcome Current Harsh Economy, Gov Eno Assures**

The Akwa Ibom State Governor, Pastor Umo Eno has admonished the people of the state to keep faith alive in God, saying the challenges will be overcome just as Jesus Christ overcame death two thousand years ago.

Eno, who stated this in his Easter broadcast yesterday, likened the current economic realities in the state and indeed Nigeria to the period of trial that Jesus Christ went through on the Cross of Calvary.

He assured that his administration through its economic blueprint - the ARISE Agenda is strongly committed to turning the challenges and anxieties of today into opportunities for growth and expansion tomorrow.

Acknowledging the place of agriculture in



Ajadi



Peller

combating and hunger and engender food security, the governor said the ARISE Agenda, places huge premium on agricultural revolution, aimed at ensuring food security for all.

His words, "We are living in a moment and time that mirrors what Christ went through over two thousand years ago, a period of trial and tribulation, of economic pains and anxieties but conditioned by hope that, just as Christ overcame death, we, too, will overcome this period and victory will be ours eventually.

"We remain dedicated to turning the challenges and anxieties of today into opportunities for growth and expansion tomorrow. That, explains the intentional manner we have gone about tackling the harsh economic realities we are currently facing.

"When nations or subnationals are confronted with dire economic circumstances, leaders devise means of addressing the needs of the people - short, medium and long term. That is precisely what we have done by showing compassion, love and attention to the most vulnerable and the neediest amongst us.

"The headwinds of harsh economic atmosphere arising from the removal of fuel subsidy has affected us all, especially those on the lower rungs of the economic ladder. Thankfully, it was as if we knew this moment would come, as the key focal point of our governance blueprint, the ARISE Agenda, places huge premium on agricultural revolution, aimed at ensuring food security for our people," Governor Eno posited.

Governor Eno, who again thanked the people of the state for given him thier mandate to lead as their Governor through March 18, 2023 poll, also reiterated his pledge to justify the confident reposed in him and his administration.

"This is my first Easter broadcast to you my dear AkwaIbomites, since you massively elected me on March 18, 2023, to be your Governor. My gratitude to you for the love and faith you displayed on that day will forever, be deeply appreciated and ingrained in my heart. I will do all I

can, to live up to the faith and trust you had reposed in me on that day."

He noted Easter as an important event in Christendom. "It signifies the trial of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, the pain and suffering he experienced leading to His crucifixion, and His ultimate victory over death through resurrection, which has brought salvation and redemption to mankind.

"It is also the ultimate display of sacrifice and of love as aptly captured in Ephesians 5:2 (KJV) "And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us as offering and a sacrifice to God.

"So my fellow Akwaibomites, as we celebrate Easter, let us remain hopeful that the future looks great, our collective dreams for prosperity across all layers of the society is realizable.

"I am dedicated to serving you well, bringing governance closer to you, applying the resources we have been blessed with, to affect you positively and give our youths a reason to remain hopeful." He assured

**\*Come Up With Robust Template To Reserve, Put Nigerians On Path Of National Building, Kukah Tasks Tinubu**  
The Bishop of Catholic Diocese of Sokoto, Matthew Hassan Kukah, has called on the federal government to come up with a robust template for how to reverse and put Nigerians on a path of national healing.

In doing do, he said, it must include a deliberate policy of inclusion that would drastically end the immoral culture of nepotism.

He said, "The government must design a more comprehensive and wide-ranging method of recruitment that is transparent as a means of generating patriotism and reversing the ugly face of feudalism and prebendalism."

In his Easter message, Kukah stressed the need for the government to design a more comprehensive and wide-ranging method of recruitment that is transparent as a means of generating patriotism and reversing the ugly face of feudalism and

prebendalism.

"There is need for a clear communications strategy that will serve to inspire and create time-lines of expectations of results from policies. There is need for clarity over questions of the Who, What, When, and How national set goals are to be attained and who can be held accountable. This will take us away from the current Communications by announcement of appointments policies as if this is all that government is doing," he observed.

According to him, the notion of rejigging the security architecture is a hackneyed cliché that is now at best, an oxymoron, adding that it is difficult to fathom the current situation regarding the ubiquity of the military in Nigerians national life.

He observed that it is impossible to explain how Nigerians can say they are in a civilian democracy with the military literally looking like an army of occupation with an octopussean spread across all the 36 states and Abuja, alleging that it has very serious consequences both for its professionalism, its integrity and perceived role in protecting society.

He noted, "No other person than the immediate past Chief of Defense Staff, General Lucky Irabor who recently referred to the military as facing the dilemma of what he called, see finish. It is now difficult to say whether the persistence of insecurity is a cause or a consequence of military ubiquity. Trillions of Naira continue to go into bottomless pits with little measurable benefits.

"Our military's professionalism cannot be diluted by the recruitment of hunters, vigilante groups and other unprofessional and untrained groups. This is not sustainable because it leaves the military open to ridicule and perceptions of surrender."

He lamented that fighting insecurity is now an enterprise, believing that the country's security men and women can defeat the criminals in a matter of months, as all Nigerians hear and see are fingers

*Continued on Page 11*



# COMMUNITY FOCUS

## Communal Support During Ramadan: DAMMF, HOA Foundation, Fitila Movement Unite To Provide Essential Food Support In Odogbolu

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

In a spirit of compassion and solidarity during the holy month of Ramadan, The Detola Abike Mogaji Memorial Foundation (DAMMF), Hon Oluwaseun Adekunmi (HOA) Foundation, and Fitila Movement have joined forces to provide essential food support for Iftar to residents of the Odogbolu community in Ogun State.

This collaborative effort and shared commitment mark a significant milestone in the ongoing commitment of DAMMF, HOA Foundation, and Fitila Movement to serve the community and promote unity through various initiatives. Over the past three years, these organizations have undertaken projects ranging from educational excursions to historic sites, back-to-school programs, feeding programs, healthcare interventions, hygiene promotion events, medical interventions, and employability skill training among youths. The 2024 Ramadan Iftar

food distribution initiative aimed to alleviate hunger and foster unity within the community was carried out across various mosques throughout Odogbolu. The collaborative effort was led by Hon Ladejobi Shuaib, the Executive Chairman of Odogbolu Local Government and convener of Fitila Movement.

Hon. Ladejobi Shuaib expressed heartfelt appreciation for the collaborative effort and the gesture was a demonstration of love and solidarity towards the grassroots population emphasizing the importance of ensuring every member of the community feels valued and included.

Hon. Oluwaseun Adekunmi Oguntade, the promoter of HOA Foundation, emphasized the critical need to address hunger, particularly among fasting elderly and women. "By distributing staple food items such as rice and garri, we can contribute to the well-being of our neighbors and alleviate hunger in our

communities," said Hon. Oluwaseun Adekunmi Oguntade.

Mogaji Olatunde, the promoter of Detola Abike Mogaji Memorial Foundation (DAMMF), reiterated the significance of collective support, especially during challenging times. "Through our collaboration, we aim to foster unity, generosity, and compassion, embodying the true spirit of Ramadan," said Mogaji Olatunde.

In honor of his late mother, Adetola Abike Mogaji, whose legacy inspired the iftar initiative, Mogaji Olatunde offered prayers for love, compassion, and forgiveness.

The beneficiaries of the food distribution expressed profound gratitude towards the donors, emphasizing the timeliness of the support in meeting their pressing needs. They encouraged more privileged individuals to extend love and support beyond the Ramadan period, underscoring the importance of ongoing community solidarity.



# Easter Coming At Difficult Times For Nigerians Under Daunting Challenges - ACF

pointing to the top, while the alternative is too frightening to contemplate.

He said that it is cheering to hear that the President has announced that kidnapping and banditry are now to be treated as acts of terrorism, stressing that Nigerians need to see a relentless and implacable plan to end the menace with a definite date line for bringing the terrorists to their knees, no matter what it will take.

According to him, "Without a timeline for eliminating these evil, despicable, malevolent and execrable demons from among us, our future as a people will be imperiled."

He commended the government over its promise to stop paying ransom to bandits and kidnappers, saying that merely going to the forest and returning with victims leaves the government open to suspicion from citizens.

He said that the government needs to show results of a well co-ordinated plan and time lines to bring back all citizens in captivity and give Nigerians back their country.

Kukah encouraged the President to continue on the path of probity, to take further steps to cut down the overbearing costs of governance and to put in place more comprehensive plans towards achieving both food and physical security across our nation, pointing out that merely distributing money through already corruption riddled structures is not enough and diminishes the dignity of the citizens.

"No one needs to line up to receive aid when we are not in a war. Give our people back their farms and develop a comprehensive agricultural plan to put our country back on the path of honour and human dignity," he emphasized.

**\*Make Teachings Soul Winning Based, Anglican Bishop Tells Preachers**

The Bishop of Ibadan North Anglican Diocese, Rt Rev Dr Williams Oluwarotimi Aladekugbe has tasked religious bodies especially the Christian preachers, to make their teachings soul winning based and not always material gains and prosperity

Rt Rev Aladekugbe gave the task in a message by the Diocesan communicator, Comrade Ayoade Solomon Olugbemiga to felicitate with Christians across the World on this year's Easter celebration.

The Anglican Bishop described Easter as the core or center of Christianity, saying,

if Jesus didn't resurrect, our religious activities are in vain for only Easter gives humanity the hope of eternity, backing up his assertion".

"If Jesus Christ is alive, there is hope for the world, if not I do not see the slightest glimmer of hope in the horizon, added I believe Christ resurrection to be one of those attested facts of history", he said.

Rt Rev Aladekugbe pointed out that Jesus resurrection was evidenced in the fact that He was crucified, buried, raised from the death and that after resurrection appeared to Mary, Thomas and disciples before ascension to heaven"

Easter is seen as resurrection Sunday in the commemoration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead on the third day of His crucifixion.

**\*Choose Love Over Hatred, Peace Over Violence, Good Over Evil - Hon Peller Ayedero of Yorubaland and former member of the House of Representatives, Hon Shina Peller on Sunday, charged Christians to choose love over hatred, peace over violence and good over evil in the spirit of Easter.**

The former lawmaker gave the charge while congratulating Christians on the occasion of the 2024 Easter celebration.

According to the Ayedero of Yorubaland, Easter symbolizes victory over loss, forgiveness, love over hatred, gain over pain, joy over sadness, peace over violence as well as good over evil.

Hon Peller emphasized the need for all to embrace all the good things that Jesus Christ represented which according to him include peace, love, humility, forgiveness, tolerance, patience and charity.

"Happy Easter to my Christian friends and fans both at home and in the diaspora. To God be the glory for witnessing the moment. Easter symbolizes victory over loss, forgiveness over sin, love over hatred, gain over pain, hope over hopelessness, joy over distress, belief over disbelief, peace over violence and good over evil", he said.

The Ayedero of Yorubaland added "So, as you celebrate, I urge you all to embrace all the good things that Easter represents as true followers of Jesus Christ (Peace be unto him)"

Hon Peller stressed further, "In addition, always remember that Jesus Christ, who was the main reason for Easter

celebration, represented and preached peace throughout his lifetime".

Maintaining that "His act of humility, forgiveness, tolerance, charity, patience and love for humanity knew no bound and should be emulated by all, irrespective of our religious status", Hon Peller urged everyone to reach out to the needy, rekindle the hope of the hopeless and touch lives positively in whatever way they can during and after Easter.

"Importantly, in whatever way we can, let's spread love around, reach out to the needy, put smiles on the faces of the depressed, rekindle the hope of the hopeless, and touch lives positively during this Easter celebration and even after. May God make it possible for us. Amen.

"Once again, I wish everyone of you a fantastic Easter celebration and May we witness many more on earth. Amen."

**\*Pray For Nigeria To Overcome Present Challenges - NNPP Chieftain, Ajadi A New Nigeria People's Party (NNPP), Chieftain Ambassador Olufemi Ajadi Oguntoyinbo has tasked Christians in Nigeria to pray in the Easter celebration for the country to overcome its present challenges.**

Ambassador Ajadi gave the task in his Easter message to Christians across the country on this year's Easter celebration.

The NNPP gubernatorial candidate in Ogun State in the 2023 general elections maintained that Nigeria as a country is facing issues of insecurity and poverty, adding that the problems do not only affect the economy and the progress of the nation but threaten its existence.

"I urge all Nigerians to pray for peace and security amidst seemingly intractable insecurity around Nigeria and an end to all kind of criminal activities in the land", he said.

The NNPP Chieftain added, "We should also not forget the present economic hardship facing the Nigeria and her citizens".

"Easter which is the season of the remembrance of the crucifixion, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ marks the trial, sacrifice, victory and completion of the divine mandate of the author of the Christian faith".

While stressing the need for peace, love and tolerance among Nigerians, Ambassador Ajadi called on Christians to use the occasion to pray for peace and

security during the Easter celebration.

"Our nation is faced with rampant insecurity from Insurgents, bandits' attacks, kidnapping, herders/ farmers clashes that are not only affecting the economy and the progress of the nation but threatening its existence. I call on all to pray for peace and security during the celebration of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ".

**\*Triumph Of Hope Over Despair - Uba Sani**

Governor Uba Sani on Saturday, extended his warmest felicitations to Christian brothers and sisters on the joyous occasion of Easter, which is in commemoration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

He said Easter is the climax of forty days of fasting, prayer and charity works. For Christians all over the world, the cardinal lessons of Easter lie in Jesus Christ's unconditional love, absolute forgiveness and glorious self-sacrifice for the redemption of mankind.

"Something unique and symbolic is happening to us this year. Something that points us in the direction of unity and religious tolerance.

"The Lenten period merged with the Ramadan period. Christians and Muslims found themselves bound together in fasting and prayer about the same period. As a people of faith this is highly significant.

"I believe this provided us the opportunity to reflect on and pray for the realization of our collective vision for a truly united, strong and prosperous nation.

"We must also use the Easter holiday to reflect deeply on what we need to do as a people to ensure the total defeat of the evil forces that work against our unity, progress and economic development.

"I am convinced that the measures being taken by my government is in line with President Bola Tinubu's commitment to eliminating all forms of criminality, and restoring peace and security to our troubled communities.

"I therefore, urge you, at this solemn occasion, to rededicate yourselves to making sacrifices and supporting government to bring into fruition a peaceful and prosperous Kaduna State, and "a Nation bound in freedom, peace and unity.

"I wish you joyful Easter celebrations," he said.

## Journalists Demand Justice For Brutalised Colleague By DSS Officers In Oyo

**By: BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan**

Journalists in Oyo State on Friday, demanded justice over an assault on a journalist in the state, Tony Babatunde Daniel by the DSS officers at a filling station in Ibadan.

The journalist according to eye witness, was brutally assaulted by the DSS officers

at the NNPC Filling Station near the Oyo State NUJ Press Centre in Iyaganku GRA area around 9.30am.

The witness said Daniel was reportedly assaulted mercilessly by the DSS officers during which he was brutally injured and was rushed to the hospital for urgent medical attention.

Daniel while recounting his ordeal in the hands of the DSS officers, said the incident occurred at the NNPC station, where a routine fuel purchase turned into a nightmare of brutality and intimidation at the hands of the DSS officers.

He narrated that the DSS officers reportedly pounced on him for asking

them to follow the queue at the filling station, adding that during which he was seriously battered and his car damaged.

The journalist stressed that the DSS officers during the said assault on him, allegedly exhibited excessive force and aggression on him.



**Buratai**

## Buratai Foundation Felicitates President Tinubu On 72nd Birthday

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

**T**Y Buratai Humanity Care Foundation has extended warm felicitations to President Bola Ahmed Tinubu GCFR on the occasion of his 72nd birthday. This message of celebration and well wishes was conveyed in a statement signed by the Chairman of the Foundation, Amb Ibrahim Dahiru Danfulani Sadaukin Garkuwan Keffi and Betara of Biu, which was released to the press on Friday in Kaduna. The statement further emphasized the Foundation's Grand Patron, His Excellency, Ambassador Lt Gen Tukur Yusufu Buratai (Rtd) CFR, former Chief of Army Staff, who also expressed his best wishes to President Tinubu on his special day. Gen. Buratai urged Nigerians to join in prayer for the good health and

longevity of Mr. President, emphasizing the importance of his leadership for the progress and prosperity of the nation.

Notably, the foundation commended President Tinubu for his unwavering commitment to fulfilling his campaign promises, particularly in the realm of national security under the Renewed Hope Agenda. The foundation lauded the President's dedication and efforts in addressing crucial issues of national importance, including security challenges, and expressed confidence in his leadership.

"As President Bola Ahmed Tinubu marks another year of life, the TY Buratai Humanity Care Foundation's message of goodwill and support serves as a testament to the unity and collective aspirations of Nigerians for a brighter future under his leadership," it said.

## Easter Celebration: Gombe Governor Urges Reflection, Love, Sacrifice

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

**T**he Chairman of Northern States Governors' Forum and Governor of Gombe State, Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya, CON has extended heartfelt felicitations to Christians in Gombe state and worldwide as they celebrate this year's Easter festivities.

In a goodwill message, Governor Inuwa advocated for prayers for sustained peace and stability in Gombe State, Northern Region and Nigeria as a whole, emphasizing the significance of unity, brotherhood, and service to God and humanity during and beyond the Easter period.

This was contained in a statement signed by the Director-General (Press Affairs), Government House Gombe, Ismaila Uba Misilli, made available on Friday March 29, 2024.

It said the governor, who highlighted the essence of Easter, which symbolizes

love, sacrifice, and the triumph of good over evil, urged Christians to reflect on these core principles and integrate them into their daily lives.

"I extend warm congratulations to our Christian brethren for completing the Lenten Season and celebrating Easter. We are grateful to the Almighty for granting you the strength to

go through this significant spiritual journey. May the blessings of this period rejuvenate our nation and steer us towards lasting peace, progress and prosperity."

He expressed optimism in overcoming prevailing socio-economic and security challenges



**Gov Inuwa**

through collective effort and divine intervention.

The NSGF Chairman acknowledged the current distress faced by the nation amidst security threats and socio-economic strains, occasioned by the recent removal of fuel subsidies and global economic downturn. Nevertheless,

he urged citizens to find solace in the blessings of Easter and work towards sustainable peace and development.

He urged religious leaders to continue to utilize their platforms to promote peace, tolerance, and unity among Nigeria's diverse population.

## Easter: Itu Council Boss Preaches Sacrificial Love, Peace

By; PATRICK TITUS, Uyo

**A**s the people of Itu Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State join brethren the world over to celebrate Easter, Rt. Hon. Etetim Onuk has stressed the need of the people to live a life that reflect the essence that Jesus Christ died on the Cross of Calvary.

Onuk, who is the Transition Committee Chairman of the Council, stated this in his Easter message to the council area on Friday.

He noted that Easter signifies the death, crucifixion, burial, and the triumphant resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

"In this significant season, let us think about the unconditional love that Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour, had for us, that He gave His life for our sins to bring salvation to

mankind.

"I urge us to reflect on His sacrificial love and to learn of what we can achieve by faith in our belief in the sacrifice, the benefits it has brought to mankind generally and individually. "Let us all therefore take advantage of the season to make the ideals of peace, harmony, tolerance, loves, and goodwill to all, even more manifest in our interactions with one another." He stated.

While expressing thankfulness to God to mankind, through the son, Jesus Christ, Onuk prayed that the season birthed in the people, "the lessons of self-sacrifice, brotherly love, tolerance, obedience, respect for constituted authorities, honesty, justices, and fairness to allow. It will help us to build more peaceful, secure, united, progressive and prosperous Itu LGA."

The Council Boss also pledged to bring development to Itu by implementing the ARISE Agenda of the state government.

"With God Almighty as our guide, strength and facilitator, this administration will continue to implement the ARISE agenda of Pastor

Umo Enoled administration in the state.

"As a local government, we shall continue to partner with the state govern

ment in furtherance of her avowed commitment to improve the living conditions of all Akwa Ibom people." He assured.

"I shall continue to count on your prayers, support and cooperation to the build Itu Local Government Area of our dream." The Council Boss added.



**Rt. Hon. Etetim Onuk**

## NEMA Distributes Food Items Donated By S/Arabia To 1,750 Households In Jigawa

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), has commenced the distribution of food items donated by the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre (KSrelief) to 1,750 vulnerable households in Jigawa.

Director-General NEMA, Mrs. Zubaida Umar during the inauguration of the distribution on Saturday in Hadejia, said it is to support the vulnerable citizens and to cushion the economic downturn. She informed that the leadership of the Saudi Arabia-based KSrelief has been providing humanitarian aid and relief to those in need outside the Kingdom's borders.

Represented by the Director, Special Duties, Fatima Kassim, Umar said that the donation of the food was timely, as it coincided with the Holy month of Ramadan.

She said, "Each household will get a total of 59.8kg of food items, including rice (25kg), beans (25kg), masa vita flour (4kg), tomato paste (2kg), vegetable oil (2 litres), seasoning cube (0.8kg) and salt 1kg."

Umar urged the beneficiaries to make good use of the items to

give succour to their families.

She added, "The humanitarian footprints of KSrelief had impacted several disaster hot spots in Nigeria affected by land-use conflicts, communal crisis and banditry."

Umar commended the Saudi Arabia's King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Crown Prince, and the Prime Minister, Mohammad Bin Salman for the support, on behalf of President Bola Tinubu. On his part, Haruna Mairiga, Executive Secretary, SEMA, Jigawa said, "This show of compassion has confirmed the long historical and brotherhood relationship that exists between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Nigeria."

He also commended NEMA for the collaborative effort with the agency and urged the beneficiaries to use the items judiciously.

The Emir of Hadejia, Alhaji Adamu Abubakar, commended King Salman and KSrelief for the gesture, saying that it came at the right time due to the economic hardship being experienced.

He urged the beneficiaries to extend the love to others around them by sharing what was given to them especially in this hard time



## I Have Eye Problem, Couldn't See For One Year, SDP Witness Whose Claims Contradict Deposition Tells Tribunal

*\*Others deny being polling agents as Tribunal adjourns to April 1*



By; ADEBOYE ADO, Akure

Six witnesses provided by the Social Democratic Party (SDP) at the Election Petition Tribunal on the Kogi State Governorship election, on Saturday, entertained the court with different amusing submissions as they struggled to answer questions during cross-examination.

At the resumed hearing, all the six witnesses gave testimonies contrary to

their depositions on oath and confirmed that they were not polling agents as stipulated by law, but voters.

An interesting part of the testimonies was when one of the witnesses, Yakubu Dahiru (PW 10), confronted with the contradictions between his claims and depositions, said he had not been able to see for the past one year, owing to an eye problem, yet he claimed to have written his witness deposition.

A witness, one Isah AbdulGaniu from Okene Local Government area, who said he was a fashion designer, also noted that he was neither a member of the SDP nor polling agent and denied knowledge of Form DCE-41, which was part of his deposition.

In all, while some of the witnesses denied averments in their depositions, some claimed they made mistakes when it was found during cross-examination that what they said in court was

different from what they submitted.

Some of the witnesses said they dictated the statement to their lawyers and later crammed it before coming to the Tribunal.

Despite the fact that their petitions showed the names of the petitioners, petition number and lawyers' names, some of the witnesses interestingly claimed that they did not know the petitioners and their lawyers.

The testimonies of the six witnesses were similar in nature but visibly contradictory.

After the sixth witness, the petitioners' lawyer, Pius Akubo SAN, sought for adjournment. The hearing was consequently adjourned to April 1, 2024, for continuation of hearing.

Kanu Agabi SAN represented the Independent National Electoral Commission, Alex Izion SAN represented Governor Usman Ododo, while Abdulwahab Muhammed SAN represented APC.

The witnesses, from Okene Local Government Area who testified today were: Isa Abdulganiyu, Aliyu



# Enugu First Lady's NGO, Takes Sensitization Campaign On WASH, Maternal Health Care To Rural Community Women



# Easter: Unilorin VC Greet Christians

By **BILIQIS ONAOLAPO OLAJUMOKE, Ilorin**

The Vice Chancellor of the University of Ilorin, Prof. Wahab Olasupo Egbewole, SAN, has felicitated with members of the institution's Christian community and the Christendom at large, on the occasion of this year's Easter celebration, describing the events that led to the institutionalisation of the festivities as enduring lessons for mankind.

In a statement signed by the University's Director of Corporate Affairs, Mr Kunle Akogun, the Vice Chancellor thanked the Almighty God for preserving the lives of members of the University community to witness this year's Easter celebrations. He added that the celebrations, which coincided with the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, is

a lesson in unity and fraternity not only for the adherents of Islam and Christianity but also to the entire human community, saying that human beings are one and the same people created by the Almighty God for the purpose of extolling His greatness.

Prof. Egbewole said that members of the human community, particularly Christians, must always reflect on the enduring attributes of Jesus Christ whose experience before, during and after his crucifixion more than 2000 years ago laid the foundation of the celebrations.

He enjoined all to emulate and always exhibit the honesty, humility, simplicity, piety, generosity, sacrifice and perseverance of Jesus Christ in their private and public lives for the nation not only to be at peace with itself but also witness



**Prof. Wahab Olasupo Egbewole**

tremendous rapid development. Prof. Egbewole assured members of the University community that his administration would continue to treat all with fairness and equality and

without any form of consideration for region, tribe or faith. The Vice Chancellor wished a very peaceful and rewarding Easter celebrations.

By ; **KELVIN OKPARA, Enugu**

A Non Governmental Organization (NGO), Custos Care Foundation, has taken a one day sensitization campaign on Maternal and Child Health Care, Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), best practices to women of Ugwuaji Rural Community, in Enugu South local Government Area of Enugu State.

The programme according to the organizers, is part of the NGO's commitment in promoting a healthy living among women and children in the state, especially at the localities. Speaking during the one day programme, held at Ndiaga town hall Ugwuaji, Managing Director (MD) of Custos Care Foundation, Mrs. Blessing Egodi Igwe, stated that the charitable organization which is a pet project of wife of Enugu State Governor, Mrs. Nkechi Mbah, was established to provide social services to the poor, needy, and the socially excluded people in the society.

"We work in five major intervention areas, which includes, mother and child healthcare, and welfare, basic education for all, women and youth empowerment, social protection and mentorship," she said. According to her, the organization which operates in collaboration with office of first lady of the state, promotes women and children's health, through parental/postnatal care, nutrition, immunization education, illness management and insurance access.

"So, today, we are at Ugwuaji Community in Enugu South local Government Area of Enugu State to sensitize the rural populace, particularly women on health and hygiene issues. " We invited people from WASH sector, and the Enugu State Agency for universal health coverage, with a view to sensitizing and enlightening the women on how to live a healthy life, and also how to embrace the state health insurance scheme.

She added that, "we are here also, to educate the Ugwuaji rural women residence on the need to maintain good health through good hygiene practices in the

environment".

Igwe, who disclosed that the organization recently visited some council areas of the state for same programme, urged the citizens to embrace the state health insurance scheme for their own good, appealing to wealthy individuals, corporate organizations and groups to assist less privileged ones in their domains to enrol into the scheme which is one thousand naira per month, and 12, 000 yearly as premium.

Our correspondent writes that a member of the State House of Assembly, representing Enugu South (Rural) constituency, and Chairman, House Committee on Water Resource, Hon. Princess Obiajulu Ugwu, who attended the programme, paid insurance premium for five nursing mothers and five aged women for one year, thanked the NGO for its intervention in her constituency.

The female lawmaker, who is also the Deputy chief Whip in the state Assembly, promised to use her office to partner the NGO in ensuring that the hygiene message delivered to the women yields the desired result.

A public health educator and Senior Special Adviser SSA to wife of Enugu State governor, Mrs. Uzoamaka Uzoechina, while addressing the women, in local language, harped on the need for them to always keep their surroundings neat at all times.

She enlightend them on the dangers inherent in living in a dirty environment, including indulging in indiscriminate defecation, stressing that many diseases are contracted via unhealthy living.

Uzoechina however, challenged the women to join hands with the community leaders in saying no to open defecation in the community and environ.

Speaking with our correspondent, a nursing mother and beneficiary of the lawmaker's insurance premium payment, Mrs. Chioma Edeh, expressed appreciation to the governor's wife and legislator, for their kind gesture, urging them to keep up with the humanitarian support to the less privileged in the society.

Katsina State Governor, Malam Dikko Umaru Radda, has administered the oath of office to six new permanent secretaries in the state civil service. The newly sworn-in officials include, Jamilu Yakubu Batagarawa, Samaila Yusuf Bindawa, Lawal Suleiman Abdullahi, Hamza Mani Tafashiya, Ahmed Hassan Mashi, and Ibrahim Muazu in Katsina. Photo: BASHIR BELLO DOLLARS



# No Police Can Succeed Without Stakeholders - ACP Opebiyi

By: RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

The Assistant Commissioner of Police in charge Area "B" Command in Lagos, ACP Sunday Opebiyi has emphasised the importance of stakeholders to the success of the police, stressing that no police can succeed without the stakeholders.

ACP Opebiyi made the remarks at a stakeholders meeting during his maiden visit to Badia Divisional Headquarters on Friday.

With particular reference to members of the Community Development Association (CDA), Opebiyi applauded all the stakeholders for their cooperation and support to the police.

He also lauded the officers and men of the Division for the remarkable achievements recorded in reducing crime rate to the barest minimum.

"If members of a community is not enjoying the services of the police, they will not honour you when you call. The presence of stakeholders at this gathering is an indication of your good working relationship with them. The Commissioner of Police has always implored us to practice community policing because the stakeholders are the eyes of the police."

Speaking further, Opebiyi implored the stakeholders to desist from posting information about criminal activities on the social media, but report to the police for prompt action.

He urged them to give their children proper education and teach the right path, stressing that the children are their future.

The Area "B" Command boss advised them to warn their children against cultism, rape and other vices, noting that

they are punishable offences.

Speaking earlier, the Divisional Police Officer (DPO) Badia Divisional Headquarters, CSP Ayoola Olawole Moses pointed out that the menace of cultism was a major challenge in the area, adding that it has been reduced to the barest minimum with the cooperation of stakeholders.

In addition, he said an end has been put to traffic robbery on all the roads within the jurisdiction of the Division since his assumption of office.

CSP Ayoola who however acknowledged the existence of some handful of crimes, said no case of armed robbery has ever been recorded in the area.

"Cultism used to be a major challenge, but it has been reduced to the barest minimum.

When I resumed here, I met a terrible situation where cultists cut human head and use it to play ball. As a result of cooperation with stakeholders, we've succeeded in putting an end to it. With the doggedness and commitment of my gallant officers, we've also put an end to traffic robbers on all the roads in our jurisdiction.", CSP Ayoola emphasised.

He assured that the Division will not relent in its efforts to battle crime to a standstill within its jurisdiction and environment. We

Speaking on the challenges of the Division, the DPO hinted that it lacks adequate manpower, logistics and comfortable office space.



R-L: ACP Sunday Opebiyi in hand shake with Baale of Ebute Iganmu Chief Musedeen Oseni flanked by CDC Chairman Alhaji Azeez Okeola and others.

He urged the Area Commander to assist in the replacement of 15 personnel transferred from the station.

His words, "Fifteen personnel have been transferred without replacement, we have only one patrol vehicle and the station is always waterlogged when it rains and the offices very uncomfortable."

The DPO however commended the chairperson of Apapa-Iganmu LCDA Chief Mrs. Olufunmilayo Akande Mohammed for her support to the Division and volunteering to build a one-storey building new Police Station, which completion has reached an advance stage.

The meeting had in attendance notable stakeholders which include the Baale, Balogun, Iyalode of Ebute Iganmu community, Baale of Abule Onimalu community, the chairman of Community Development Committee (CDC) and members of Community Development Association (CDA) Apapa Iganmu LCDA, Chairman Police Community Relations Committee (PCRC), Chaplain and Imam of the Division, President Landlord and Tenants Association, the Odua Peoples Congress (OPC) and the Hunters Group.

## 5 Suspected Hoodlums Nabbed in Oyo State For Setting Patrol Van Ablaze, Vandalizing Police Out Post

*\*No weapon was carted away nor any life lost - Police*

By: BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

Five suspected hoodlums are now in Police net in Oyo State for allegedly setting ablaze a Police Patrol Van and vandalizing some parts of the building housing the Elete out station on new Oyo-Ogbomoso Expressway

The state Police command in a statement by the Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), SP Adewale Osifeso for the Oyo State Commissioner of Police, CP Adebola Hamzat disclosed that the

five male suspects were arrested alongside two unregistered DAF and Volvo trucks taken as exhibits.

According to the command "no weapon was carted away nor any life lost" during the attack on the Police out station by the suspected hoodlums on Saturday.

Oyo Police command noted that during the attack, the hoodlums were resisted from breaking into the Out-station by overwhelming support garnered from men on confidence building patrols from nearby Police Divisions,

including the Area Command. Preliminary investigation reveals that the suspected hoodlums after realizing they had been held up in the gridlock for a while, charged in their numbers towards the nearby Elete Out-Station over the perceived failure of the Police to rid the traffic, completely setting ablaze the Out-Station's recently refurbished Patrol Van and vandalizing some parts of the building", it said.

Vowing to resist any kind of dehumanization on its personnel or attack on its

facilities by sinister-minded individuals or groups, the command said the case has since been transferred to the State Criminal Investigation Department, Iyaganku to unravel other underlying sinister motives besides the suspect's acclaimed "triggering gridlock issue". It pointed out that the "suspects will be charged to court upon the completion of the ongoing investigation inquiry".

The Case has since been transferred to the State Criminal Investigation

Department, Iyaganku to unravel other underlying sinister motives besides the suspect's acclaimed "triggering gridlock issue". The suspects will be charged to court upon the completion of the ongoing investigation inquiry.

"Moving forward, the Command enjoins residents to be proactive in sharing timely and credible information as always anchoring on the Mantra, If you see something, say something and the Police will immediately do something."



# 'I Am Still Standing'; A Human Survival Account Capable Of Changing Humanity

By; JEROME-MARIO UTOMI

Grand Knight Emeritus, Sir Tonna Okei (Ikuku Oma)an Ekuku-agbor, Agbor, Ika South Local Government Area of Delta State born, but South Carolina, United State of America based Nigerian, is globally recognized as President of South Carolina Organization of African Unity(OAU), a Honourable member of the board of trustees of knight of Columbus and a man that exudes torrents of energy when it comes to promoting Ika and Anioma cultures and tradition.

What many of his admirers and cultural enthusiasts did not, however, know is that from 2021 till date, Knight Sir Tonna has, in the mixed of his social, religious, corporate and community development efforts, relentlessly fought and won hydra headed health and socioeconomic challenges.

This was revealed in a book titled 'I Am Still Standing' published by him and launched in the United States of America (USA) on the 16th of March, 2023.

Essentially, the masterpiece which was the first from Knight Sir Tonna's stable amply qualifies as Ika blockbuster celebrated by the world with forwards from world and perhaps the most famous platform ever seen to celebrate Ika/Anioma language and customs, gave a graphic description of how the Ekuku Agbor cultural ambassador was medically diagnosed of ulcerative colitis and primary scholagantis.

'I Am Still Standing' which was forwarded by very revered traditional rulers and globally recognized professionals such as; HRM Dein of Agbor, HRM Nana Apraku 111 Odomase, Ghana, Chief Ozigbo Esere, Osuma of Benin Kingdom, His Excellency, General John Yeri Fss, Psc, Mni, Military Governor of Defunct Bendel state, HE Mrs Eki Igbinedion, Former First Lady Edo State, Congressman Jim Clyburn among others, also underlined with vivid imageries and pectoral supports how he fought and survived colon cancer, Liver failure and Liver Transplant, carried ileostomy bag for six months, multiple surgeries, procedures and drainage pipes fixed on him, through prayers to God almighty and supplication to the gods of our land.

While it highlighted the series of excruciating pains that he survived, the book also deeply

brought to the fore a tragically unique account of how Tonna was discharged from the hospital on December 24th 2022, and his house collapsed the next day. Despite these afflictions, he is still standing.

Narrating his ordeal to media professionals recently, Tonna said; well, in the past three years, I have gone through a lot of medical challenges. From liver transplant to fighting colon cancer among others-and after all these, when I got home, my house collapsed the following day.

Despite the situation, I was still functioning. At this point, most people started saying that I should write a book to document all these so you can inspire others and so your children and generations yet to come can read about these medical challenges and how you carried it.

I was still on admission when I started writing it. This partially explains why I named the book; I AM STILL STANDING.

Asked what the book is out to achieve, Tonna responded thus; It is to give inspiration to people. Now look, when you were interviewing me last year, I am not sure you knew I was passing through a lot. People did not know. I did not tell much. I was still functioning, I was still smiling. And that's the intention. I tell people that when you pass through challenges, you don't have to wear it on your face. You can still be functioning well. Just believe that tomorrow, things will get better.

Tonna who ruled out spiritual attack as being responsible for the harrowing health challenges that he underwent, further explained that the book is about the story of a man who passed through the very worst or what we call the biblical Jonah and lost almost everything but by the grace of God and the goodwill of men and women, survived and decided to write and capture it, using his African ancestral language - Ika.

So, the book relates with Ika proverbs, theories and prayers. It is a mixture of what happened, a lecture on Ika proverbs and to inspire people using biblical verses also. Never in the history of Anioma was a book so well celebrated in the International Circle.

Asked of his next line of action, Tonna responded this way; You know, a journey of a thousand miles starts with a step. We've launched the book here. It's a bestseller here because African Americans have been waiting to read a book that would capture

spirituality and African proverbs. They've seen it. Now, how do we go back home? That is the next issue.

I am discussing with the very high and mighty in Agbor if they could coordinate it so we can do a book launch and I would give 80% of the profit to Agbor so that they can build a gastroenterology center because that's my medical diagnosis.

I don't want Ndi-Ika and Ndi-Anioma to suffer this again. So, I am willing to partner with Ika leaders to open a GI center in Agbor, so we can begin to help our people that have Gastroenterology and abdominal issues, colon cancer. So, I'm talking to them now. Let's see what we can do to set up a GI center. I've spoken to American Gastroenterologists and they are willing to train those doctors and nurses for two years. So, if Ika leaders fail to take up these projects, I'll rather decide to import the books from America and begin to sell them in Nigeria or look for a good printer in Nigeria that would print it and we'll come and launch it privately.

On how to access the book, Tonna said; officially, it is now on Amazon for 50 dollars. But we know that that price will be too high for our people back home, so that is why we're looking at what we can do; If it's to launch it in Nigeria and bring the price down.

As to the level of support he received during his trying moment, Tonna again hinted that most times, it's only in suffering you know your true friends. In his words, "I would say I have been blessed with people who I didn't even know before this. They always told us that it may not be your children or family that will help you during your difficult times. I had some family members who I thought would have helped. But they're nowhere to be found. Some have not called, some have not given a dime but those who don't know me, maybe they read my articles in the past, they've truly helped me. Most family and friends sure supported but unfortunately very few, very few decided to stay away. Some I even empowered have now become scarce

'I have been blessed by friends,



mostly those I do not know. Some of them we've never seen face to face. They just know my name and what I've done. Most family and friends I've helped, Some Ndi-Ika I've helped, and they all just abandoned me at the most trying times'.

Away from support to a message of appreciation, Okei emphasized that his message to Ndi-Ika is to thank all those who have supported particularly members of Ika people's Congress.

Also, I want to inform them that through God and their support, I have written a book to document their journey, and the book is laced with Ika language, Ika proverbs. This is a book all Ika's should not only get but should keep. So all those who are not good at celebrating their culture can see that an Ika who was not born in Ika land and has lived abroad for about thirty years now, is celebrating Ika culture. That should inspire Ndi-Ika to be appreciative of their culture, to celebrate their culture. And this book will inspire them that a fellow Ika passed through all this and is still standing".

On the relevance of the book to students of tertiary institutions in the state, the Ekuku Agbor born Administrator cum Cultural

Ambassador pointed out that the book is not a full history book but can help deepen our pride in our language. It can help both the medicine students, can help in philosophy, and can help mostly education students.

I believe that this book can serve as a reservoir and fountain of knowledge for those in medicine and education too, to understand medical challenges, to inspire people in philosophy and psychology. And for those studying African languages, this book will help them to say 'look, somebody in America can be so proud of his language and document it in a book celebrated in America. If the State Government should agree with it, they can make it a part of the curriculum for tertiary students. Anything is possible but let them see it first, let them read it. Then, we'll take it up from there. He concluded.

For me, there are big lessons that bother on resilience, perseverance and need to keep faith alive to draw from the above narrative.

*Utomi is the programme coordinator, media and policy, Social and Economic Justice Advocacy (SEJA), Lagos. He can be reached via; jeromeutomi@yahoo.com/0803 2725374*

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

### TERMS OF ADVERT PLACEMENT

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

### TECHNICAL DATA

<b>6 COLUMNS</b>			
Depth	38.1 (CM)	Depth -	15 (Inches)
Width	25.4 (CM)	Width -	10 (Inches)

### POLITICAL RATE

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

### LOOSE INSERTS

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

### CLASSIFIEDS

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

### Special Position

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

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

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

# Why Should Nigeria Not Breakup?

By: HASSAN GIMBA

Two weeks ago, in my article entitled “Tinubu, beware the gathering dark clouds (2)”, I touched on our unity and rhetorically ended by asking if going our various ways would be better for all.

I said, “To stitch the “merely a geographical entity” that we currently have, therefore, is a task that must involve all of us. We do not have any other country to call ours. And we cannot afford to see the country put together by God through the British rendered asunder.

“Another reason I always look at some Nigerians from the south and north who shout 'let Nigeria be divided:' “Do they know what they are saying? Do they think that is feasible anymore? Would it be beneficial to all concerned? We will look at this next.”

Yes, we have to look at it because from the uppermost tip of the north to the southernmost part of the Nigerian map, you find those agitating for “everyone” to find their way out of Nigeria. Well, to these people, there is good news and bad news.

I will start with the latter.

On January 31, 2021, I wrote here, under the title “Mandela and the parable of the Fulani”, that “But I have always maintained that even if Nigeria would balkanise, now is the wrong time, for all our sakes. The best time would have been 1966 and, perhaps by now, we would all have been independent nationalities, each with its peculiar problems and prospects. But now, none of the six geopolitical zones can survive outside Nigeria. Bandits, insurgents, militants and all would overwhelm us.”

The North East will just be an easy pick for Boko Haram, and the North West an easy meal for the bandits while the North Central will be a good 'brunch' for the kidnapers and killer-herdsmen militia. And you know what? All three sets of criminals are somehow interconnected. The security forces will, in the event of a national breakdown, all be concerned with protecting themselves and their families, for there will be no country to live in or a nation to die for.

In the same article, I pointed out that in the South, “even the Igbo nation cannot stand on its own if left to the whims, arrogance and demagoguery of its self-anointed secessionist leaders who will make Yoweri Museveni look like a saint”.

“But many intelligent Igbo know this. The problem is there is a herd movement towards something that the gullible, used as cannon fodder, do not even know what it is. To them, it is “freedom”. Sure? Freedom from what? From where? From who? If it happens, which is doubtful, then they will recall Nigeria with nostalgia and rue over a Nigerian slang “one chance”. They would realise its real meaning, albeit late in the day. This is assuming various warlords have not

emerged to deny everyone peace. And freedom.”

The Asari Dokubos and Tompolos will control the South-South of Adaka Boro and there is nothing anyone can do about it. Then throw strongmen like Nyesom Wike into the mix and the cauldron is complete.

This would necessitate international action that would see Chad and Niger Republics encouraged to come in and take over the North because the world cannot stand a fake Afghanistan or a country of bandits. In the South, Cameroon too will have to be encouraged to come in and help. The survivors among our children and their children and their children's children would now be left struggling to reunite because they would forever remain second or third-class citizens in their new countries.

Well, perhaps the western region would escape this scenario because, after the first hiccup, it would pick up, as it is currently the only zone that can survive as a mini-nation. Under the government of President Olusegun Obasanjo, the zone consolidated itself as a democracy and economic powerhouse. Please compare Lagos and the North's economic hub, Kano, in just one area - transportation. Can you see the modern intra-train services in Lagos and how Keke NAPEP (commercial tricycles) has become the symbol of the state? Can you see the industries in the South West employing tens of thousands while in Kaduna billions were collected as a loan to build roads that cannot bring revenue in any way while moribund industries were overlooked?

But that is still with a big “perhaps” because the South West too has its fair share of rabble-rousers and enfant terrible. It has the Sunday Igbohos and Gani Adams before he was tamed. Maybe they are good at taming their problem children.

The North could have survived and escaped being landlocked had the late President 'Yar'Adua's vision of the Baro Port been sustained by the last president of northern extraction. Or even if there was a genuine commitment to get oil in the North. Sadly, both were used to deceive the ever-gullible northern voter at every

“Can you see the industries in the South West employing tens of thousands while in Kaduna billions were collected as a loan to build roads that cannot bring revenue in any way while moribund industries were overlooked?”



**Hassan Gimba**

*Monday  
Column*

election cycle.

What made the North this pathetic is that it lacked a genuine leader and, therefore, vision and focus. Do you know that most of the Fulani terrorising Nigeria now could have long been engineers, medical doctors, professors, big dairy and meat factory owners, etc? The regime of General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida started what it christened nomadic education. Under it, there were many things involved that could change the way the Fulani live. But because most of our leaders were, and are, short-sighted and prioritise lining their pockets, they never

took that programme seriously. Now, with all the money they have sliced for themselves, those who should have been empowered with skills and knowledge yesterday will not allow them to enjoy it today. And what of the nomadic education programme started by the much-maligned President Jonathan in which billions were expended but allowed to work?

The good news is that the scenario painted will never happen. Despite intra-fights, threats and blackmails, Nigeria has come to stay. While it is said that “there is nothing the good and visionary can do when demagogues opiate the minds and souls of the gullible herd,” or so it seems, we should also keep in mind Edmund Burke's letter to Thomas Mercer, a 19th-century judge. A summary of the letter is: “The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.”

Ultimately, for this country to stick together for the long haul, the governance pillars must be probity, justice, fairness, equality, equity and inclusiveness. Leaders who work at variance with these values are the greatest enemies of Nigeria's unity.

*Hassan Gimba is the Publisher and Editor-in-Chief of Neptune Prime.*

# NDLEA Uncovers Qatar Bound Illicit Drug Concealed In African Salad, Rejects N5m Bribe In Lagos

By ; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos.

**A**ttempt by a drug peddler to export 20 parcels of cannabis sativa weighing 10.70 kilograms concealed in African salad popularly called Abacha and dried vegetables to Doha, Qatar through the Murtala Muhammed International Airport (MMIA) Ikeja Lagos State has been busted by operatives of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), New Nigerian Newspapers has learnt.

Similarly, move by another drug dealer to compromise officers of the agency with a bribe of ₦5 million cash was rebuffed while the money was documented as part of exhibits to prosecute the suspects in court.

The Director Media and Advocacy of the agency, Femi Babafemi made the disclosure in a statement issued yesterday. He said, the Qatar bound drug peddler identified as a 35-year-old lady, Chidinma Chinenye Agbazue was apprehended by NDLEA officers at the Lagos airport working in partnership with men of the Department of State Security (DSS) had on Thursday March 28, while boarding from Lagos to Doha, on Qatar Airways during clearance of passengers at the screening point of terminal 11 of the MMIA.

According to Babafemi, preliminary investigation revealed that Chidinma was based in Qatar, but returned to Nigeria last December for Christmas celebration.

He explained that, Chidima, preparatory to her return to Doha, was lodged at Club Dice Hotel in Ikotun area of Lagos, where the consignment was handed over to her for trafficking to the Arab country. On the drug dealer who attempted to bribe operatives with N5 million, the NDLEA spokesperson hinted that the suspects named Monday Okeke and Chigozie Emeka were on Tuesday March 26, arrested by NDLEA operatives in Oniwaya, Yaba and Agege area of Lagos, where they recovered from them 842,560 pills of opioids especially tramadol in addition to 15 litres of codeine syrup and 596



*The suspect and exhibits recovered by NDLEA.*

grams of Molly.

He said attempt by Okeke to bribe the NDLEA officers with ₦5 million cash was rebuffed while the money was documented as part of exhibits to prosecute the suspects in court.

Babafemi who also disclosed other achievements recorded by the agency, said, " In Bayelsa, the bid by three suspects: Ebuka Eze, 31; Ugochukwu Okoro, 44; and Kingsley Uzim, 27, to smuggle opioids including codeine, molly, tramadol and diazepam weighing a total of 73.425 kilograms to the creeks in Southern Ijaw area of the state was thwarted on Wednesday March 27, by NDLEA operatives at Swali jetty, Yenagoa where Ebuka and Ugochukwu were arrested while Uzim was nabbed at Amasoma in a follow up operation.

" The drugs were concealed in jumbo sacks and conveyed to the jetty in a tricycle.

"While two suspects: Eniola Muyideen and Bankole Shuaib

were arrested with 137 blocks of cannabis weighing 71kg during a raid at Orile Imo, Ogun state on Friday 29th March, NDLEA operatives in Taraba recovered 39,980 pills of tramadol from a suspect, Abubakar Mohammed, 33, in Lankaviri village, and another suspect, Apaji Vincent, 29, arrested in Wukari on Thursday 28th March with 131kg cannabis sativa", Babafemi stated.

Similarly, in Abia state, Nwachukwu Chinedu, 28, was arrested on Friday 29th March at Akara Ahuba, Isikwato LGA by NDLEA officers.

"Recovered from him include 46.65kg cannabis and different quantities of tramadol, methamphetamine and rohypnol as well as N71,500 monetary exhibit.

"At least, 127.5kg cannabis loaded in a Volkswagen Vento saloon car marked NTT 215 AA was recovered along Isua/Kabba road, Idoani area of Ose LGA, Ondo State, while a 30-year-old female suspect,

Chinasa Christopher was arrested with 400 bottles of codeine syrup in Sabon Gari area of Kano.

"The owner of a consignment of illicit drugs intercepted along Zaria-Kano road, Bakura Goni was arrested at Mile 2 market in Lagos on Tuesday 26th March in a follow up operation and flown to Kano to face charges. The consignment consisting of cannabis and tramadol weighing 73.8kg was earlier seized in a truck conveying it from Lagos to Kano.

"While 278kg of cannabis going to Idoani in Ondo state was recovered during a raid at Oloma-Okpe forest, Akoko-Edo LGA, Edo State, not less than 3,065.255kg of the same psychoactive substance was razed on two farms at Amahor waterside forest in Igueben area of the state where three suspects: James Thankgod; Wisdom James and Akpa Festus were arrested on Thursday 28th March.

"In the same vein, Commands across the country intensified

their War Against Drug Abuse, WADA, advocacy lectures in the past week. These include: Sensitisation lectures for students of Federal University of Technology, Ihiagwa, Owerri, Imo; students and teachers of Community Secondary School, Eyo-Abasi, Oron, Akwa Ibom; students and teachers of Oke Iragbiji Grammar School, Osun; commercial motorcycle riders in Oye Ekiti, Ekiti state; commercial motorcycle riders at Ankpa, Kogi state and Muslim faithful at Aliade Central Mosque, Aliade, Benue state", Babafemi revealed.

While commending the officers and men of the MMIA, Lagos, Edo, Ogun, Kano, Abia, Bayelsa, Ondo, and Taraba Commands of the Agency for their balanced efforts in the past week, Chairman/Chief Executive Officer of NDLEA, Brig. Gen. Mohamed Buba Marwa (Retd) equally applauded their counterparts across the country for intensifying their WADA advocacy lecture.

# Nigerian Army Male, Female Teams Win 2024 Kaduna FA Cup

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Green Beret and Gallant Queens of the Nigerian Army have emerged champions of the 2024 Kaduna State Football Association (FA) Cup in the men and women's category respectively.

Green Beret defeated Simoiben Football Academy 2-0 in the men's final, while Gallant Queens humbled Kada Queens 6-0 in the women's final played at the Ahmadu Bello Stadium (ABS) on Saturday.

The acting Director of Physical Training Army Brigadier General Abdulrahim Bello expressed delight with his side's

victory, adding that the club would represent the state creditably at the national Federation Cup.

The Brig Gen who admitted that Simon Ben FC gave his side the best that it was a real test for Green Beret to get prepared for the league.

He said, "I am super excited with the performance of both teams in the final; they have shown a high spirit of determination on the field. The teams are dedicating the trophies to the Chief of Army Staff (COAS), Lieutenant General Taoreed Lagbaja for his support in financing the teams.

"It's an opportunity for me to be part of Green Beret and

Gallant Queens; the first time Organisation winning both trophies at a time. the Nigeria Army is determined to give the necessary support to both teams in their respective leagues.

Revealing his assessment on the club's technical crew, he commended the efforts of the technical crew while admitting the club has bounce of quality players capable of helping the club compete for honours.

He assured the coaches his best support while promising not to interfere in their selections of players but insisted he will be ready to offer technical observations to achieve good results.



## SWAN President To Sports Writers: Remain Steadfast, Courageous, Always bide In Love At Easter, Beyond

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The national leadership of Sports Writers Association of Nigeria (SWAN) has enjoined Christians and indeed all practitioners to remain resolute in love always as efforts to reposition the professional body remains on course.

This formed part of Easter message by the President of SWAN, Mr. Isaiah Benjamin, conveyed through a statement by the association's Secretary-General, Amb. Ikenna Okonkwo, on Sunday in Abuja.

President Isaiah who went down memory lane on the significance of Easter celebration, said like Jesus Christ, only passion and sincerity of purpose in service at any given opportunity will salvage mankind from all shackles of deception and falsehood. While assuring sports journalists of his

administration's desire to take SWAN to greater heights, the number one Sports Writer in Nigeria said, "It's my earnest desire to serve you as one dedicated to lead our great Association to the enviable destination.

"Just like Jesus, our commitment as a leadership is unwavering, with the eyes focused on the ball. I therefore enjoin all SWAN members nationwide and beyond to keep supporting us, irrespective of whatever distraction from any quarter. We will not disappoint.

"Together, we will create a new path that will make the desired impact. Keep believing, don't despair."

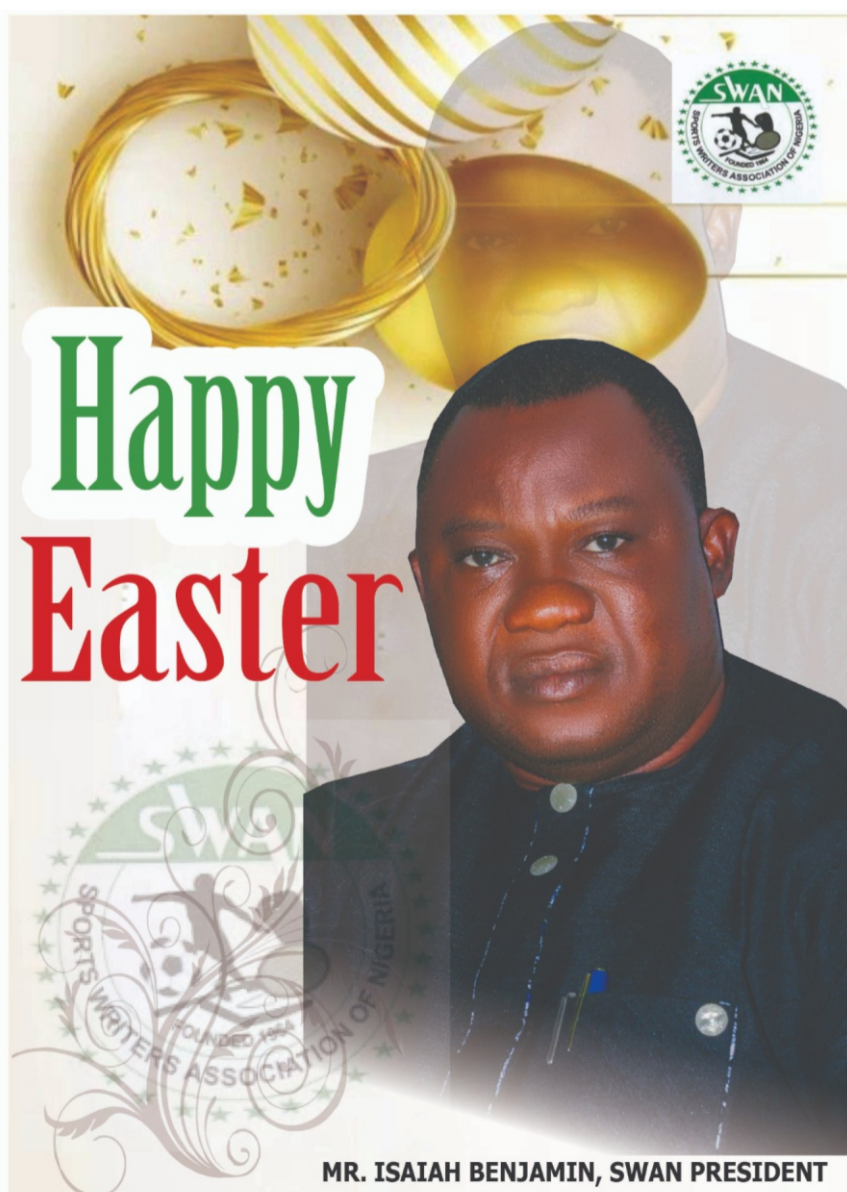
He then prayed, "May the blessings of Easter fill your heart with peace, your home with happiness, and your life with love. May the spirit of Easter bring you hope and renewal. May the promise of Easter give you

strength and courage. Happy Easter to you and your loved ones!"

The SWAN President used the occasion to rally political, business, religious leaders, corporate bodies and others to deploy reasonable resources in human development using sports as a way of tackling unemployed, insecurity and all forms of societal vices.

"Any other investment other than focusing on human development fades away with time. So, both the government and non-governmental organs should be strengthened to devote more resources towards empowering the youth," he said.

He also commended notable individuals we use their God-given resources and potentials to impact the society positively through sports and urged them not to relent.



MR. ISAIAH BENJAMIN, SWAN PRESIDENT

# Ikot Abasi Beat Uyo To Lift A'Ibom Gov Cup

## \*Pick N5m

By: PATRICK TITUS, Uyo

Ikot Abasi Local Government Area emerged champions of the 2023/24 Akwa Ibom Governor's Cup competition after beating hard fighting Uyo Local Council 4-3 on penalties, following a 1-1 draw in regulation time. At the final played on Friday at Uyo Township Stadium which had Governor Umo Eno as the Special Guest of Honour, Ikot Abasi took the lead in the second minute of the encounter through Abraham Basse, before Shedrack Anthony levelled for Uyo five minutes after the interval. The second half started with an early goal

from Uyo, but the effort was ruled offside by the FIFA badged centre referee, Mfon Akpan. Uyo continued to threaten, but missed a golden opportunity to grab the winner in the 83rd minute when striker Shedrack Anthony failed to convert from the spot. With the game straight into penalty shootouts, Uyo missed their first and the last kick, as Ikot Abasi scored four times to win Governor's Cup for the first time in the history of the competition. Earlier, Urue Offong Oruko pushed Essien Udim team out to clinch the bronze medal of the competition.

Speaking before the presentation of the trophy to the Champions, Gov Eno who was represented by his Deputy, Senator Akon Eyakenyi congratulated Ikot Abasi for their spirited performance at the final and commended Uyo for putting up a good fight. He thanked all the 31 teams that took part in the competition and assured that his administration would continue to support the growth and development of sports in the state, which he described as a veritable tool for peace, unity and talent discovery in the state. The Governor who announced the prize

money of N5 Million to the winners, N3 Million to second place team and N2 Million to the third place team, promised to personally receive the three teams next week at the State Executive Chamber, Government House Uyo. For the individual awards, Agada Daniel from Urue Offong Oruko emerged the Highest Goal Scorer with nine goals, Hossana Uyoh from Uyo was awarded the Most Valuable Player of the competition, Ikot Abasi goalkeeper, Blessed Iwok won the Best Goalkeeper while Essien Udim was voted the Best Behaved Team of the competition.



# Chikun Kajuru Reps Member Doles Out N20m To 8 Kaduna NLO Teams

By JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The Chairman House Committee on Sports, House of Representatives, and member, representing Chikun/Kajuru Federal Constituency, Hon. Ekene Abubakar Adams has donated 20 million Naira to eight Kaduna teams ahead of the Nationwide League One, (NLO) slated for kick off next month across various

centers in the country.

The lawmaker who announced the donation during a media parley with members of the Sport's Writers Association of Nigeria, (SWAN) Kaduna State Chapter, amongst other stakeholders on Friday, at the popular Ahmadu Bello Stadium, (ABS) Kaduna said he desires good things for sports in Kaduna State.

Speaking on the need for the various teams to put up their best in the league, the Honourable member said that the donation is for logistics of the eight teams who qualified for the game, adding that when the teams are motivated, they will showcase their potentials to the fullest.

"We will do everything humanly possible to support the teams in order for them to do well in the forthcoming game. For that

reason, I am supporting the eight teams with the sum of 20 million Naira for their logistics.

career in sports. We are now the ones in government, so if the previous government was doing anything wrong, we are to correct those mistakes and carry everyone along," he said.

In his response, the Chairman Football Association (FA) Kaduna State, Mr. Faisal Mohammed Abdullahi, said that since the lawmaker assumed office, they have been able to record significant giant strides.

He added that some of the steps that they have taken so far, would take a little time to materialize. Meanwhile, he revealed that there was a disconnect from the previous government but since the coming of Hon. Ekene, he has been able to sit down with Governor Uba Sani twice on the need to revitalize sporting activities in the state.

Also, the National President, Sports Writers Association of Nigeria, (SWAN), Isaiah Kemje Benjamin, (JP) appreciated the Hon. Member for his efforts and determination to see that sports thrives in the state and the country at large.

He urged members and well meaning Nigerians to prioritize the lawmaker in their prayers so that God can give him the courage and the enablement to match action with his words even as he said that governance requires the contributions of all and sundry.



SWAN President, Isaiah Kemje Benjamin (left), speaking during a parley with House Committee on Sports Chairman, Honourable Ekene Abubakar Adams (middle), at the Ahmadu Bello Stadium Kaduna on Friday March 29, 2024. With them is the Kaduna State FA Chairman, Honourable Faisal (right).

## NFSC Boss Ikpea, Bags Integrity Award From NACJ

By; JOSEPH ODOEKWU, Lagos

The National Chairman of the Nigeria Football Supporters Club (NFSC) Rev. (Amb) Samuel Ikpea has bagged another award from the Nigeria Association of Christian Journalists (NACJ).

Ikpea who was presented with the award of Man of Integrity & The Patriot of The Year Award

2024 at the Sheraton Hotel, Ikeja in Lagos was recognized by the group for his tireless efforts in championing Nigerian football and being a source of inspiration, part or the statement read.

'You passion, dedication, and unwavering support have united fans from all walks of life, fostering a sense of pride and camaraderie that transcends borders'.

Ikpea, a seasoned sports administrator and multiple award winner has contributed immensely towards the development of football both at the national and global scene.

Recall that he was appointed to lead the Qatar Fan network in 2022 when the FIFA World Cup was hosted by the oil-rich nation.



**Ikot Abasi Beat Uyo To Lift A'Ibom Gov Cup**

**\*Pick N5m**

**Story on Page 22**

## Kaduna; Foundation Moves To Address Out-of-school Prevalence

*\*Begins in Jaba LGA \*It will reduce insecurity - CDF*

By: **ACHADU GABRIEL, Kaduna**

Addressing challenges of out of school children is a task that needs all hands on deck, the Education Secretary (ES) Jaba LGA of Kaduna State, Dr. Joshua Danjuma has stressed.

The Education Secretary, Dr. Joshua Danjuma, made the observation at the weekend, at a one day seminar on out-of-school children, organized by NGO, Caleb Danladi Foundation (CDF), in Kwoi, Jaba LGA of Kaduna State.

Dr Joshua Danjuma, while noting that Jaba Local Government Area has about 5.5 per cent prevalence of out of school children in Kaduna State, said the council is working towards achieving zero per cent out of school children by 2025.

While he commended the initiative of Caleb Danladi Foundation for the organising



*Founder CDF (right) and host during seminar on out of school prevalence in Kaduna at the weekend.*

the one day seminar, the ES assured that the local government would collaborate with the foundation in

addressing the prevalence of out of school, adding that government is committed towards providing conducive

atmosphere for education to strive in the area.

In her presentation, the guest Speaker, Mrs Alice Shagaya said lack of education is one of the factors responsible to some of the social vices and criminalities facing the country today, adding that most of the youths engaged in these immoral acts did not go to school.

Mrs. Alice Shagaya who is the principal ECWA Christian girls academy kwoi said although available data has shown that Jaba local government area has only 5.5 percent of out of school children there is need for all hands to be on deck towards achieving zero percent out of school children in the area.

The educationist commended the NGO Caleb Danladi foundation for the its commitment towards

addressing the challenge of out of school children in Jaba local government area and urged other wealthy individuals and groups to emulate for a free out of school society.

She also lauded the efforts of the Kaduna state and Jaba local governments toward providing quality and affordable education.

Earlier, the founder of the Foundation, Mr Caleb Danladi Bako said out of school children constituted great nuisance to the society hence the need to complement government efforts in address the menace of out of school children for a better society, beginning with Jaba LGA.

Caleb Danladi who expressed concerned over the current insecurity bedevilling the country was optimistic that if the rate of out of schools is addressed the situation would reduce.

Caleb who later met with representatives of Muslims community in Jaba local government area congratulated them for the ongoing Ramadan fast and urged them to used the period for sober reflection.

While announcing a cash donation to assist them in during the fasting Mr Caleb also promised to support them towards the development of one of the Islamiya schools in Kwoi. Similarly, the chief of Badebin Jemaa local government area, Mr. Iliya Daniel has called for the provision of basic amenities needed to improve the well-being of the people in the chiefdom.

The Royal Father who was speaking when he received the founder of Caleb Danladi foundation on a courtesy visit in his palace expressed concern on the absent of development projects in the chiefdom.

He also commended Caleb Danladi foundation for enrolling some less privilege persons from the chiefdom into the health insurance scheme free and thanked him for the visit.



*From left:: Head of Food Desk, Standard Organisation of Nigeria, Mr. Yunusa Mohamad, presenting the Micronutrient Fortification Index Top Five Tier Award and the Fortification Excellence Award to Dangote Sugar as a leading brand in food fortification and excellence to the Group Managing Director/CEO, Dangote Sugar Refinery Plc, Ravindra Singhvi, and Head Quality Assurance, Dangote Sugar Refinery Plc, Adepoju Aderemi; at the 2024 edition of Technoserve MFI Annual Awards and Millers for Nutrition Launch awards ceremony held in Lagos. Photo: AKINOLAARIYO*