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Food Security: AATF Hands Over Upgraded Green House Equipped With Cutting Edge Technology To IAR

Facility ensures all-year-round seed production

By: SANIALIYU, Zaria
The African Agricultural Technology Foundation (AATF) has handed over the newly upgraded greenhouse facility, equipped with cutting-edge technology aimed at revolutionizing seed storage and production and other facilities to Institute For Agricultural Research (IAR) under the PBR Cowpea Seed Project funded by Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF). Speaking at the handing over ceremony on Thursday March 28, 2024, Director Programme

Development and Commercialisation, Dr. Emmanuel Okogbenin said unveiling the facility is representing not only a physical structure, but also a symbol of their commitment to innovation and progress in agriculture. Dr. Okogbenin also said the upgraded greenhouse, powered by a robust 100KVA solar system, stands as a testament to their dedication to harnessing renewable energy sources for the betterment of agricultural practices. Integrated within the facility are cooling units and a 30KVA solar-

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The Certificate of Excellence was presented to Misilli at the National Spokespersons Awards 2023 ceremony held on Wednesday at the International Conference Centre, Abuja, by the Minister of Information and National Orientation, Alhaji Mohammed Idris Malagi.

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Ebonyi Health Insurance Enrolls Over 51,871 Persons

***Says gov's wife enrolls pregnant women, sickle cell warriors, others**

By; M K P U M A ENYINNA, Abakaliki

In a bid to ensure quality healthcare delivery in the state, Ebonyi State Health Insurance Scheme (EBSHIA) has said that it has enrolled over 51,871 Ebonyians, including pregnant women, sickle cell warriors, among others across the 13 local government areas of the state.

The Executive Secretary of EBSHIA in Ebonyi State, Dr. Divine Igwe made this known to newsmen during the enrollment of pregnant women in Ohaukwu LGA, stating that the agency through the support of Governor Francis Ogbonna Nwifuru has enrolled state civil servants, sickle cell warriors, over 4,000 women, among others

have been enrolled into the scheme in order to reduce the high cost of medical treatment for an average Ebonyian.

According to Dr. Igwe, EBSHIA is for health financing which makes it easier for people to access medical care at a very low cost, adding that maternal mortality has been reduced drastically in Ebonyi State following the increase in enrollment of Ebonyians.

Dr. Igwe used the opportunity to appreciate the unimaginable support of Governor Francis Ogbonna Nwifuru in ensuring quality healthcare delivery across the 13 LGAs of Ebonyi State.

He added that greater part of Governor Nwifuru's charter of needs have been channeled into healthcare delivery for the wellbeing

of Ebonyians.

Some of the beneficiaries like Mr. Christopher Chukwu from Ohaozara LGA, expressed joy over the intervention of EBSHIA in his wife's safe delivery, saying that he will name his child after the wife of the governor, Mrs. Maudline Nwifuru, while Mrs. Chukwuka Promise from Ishielu, Mrs. Mgbegu Uchenna from Ikwo, among other pregnant women, testified that EBSHIA under Dr. Divine Igwe has impacted positively in their lives as all their medical bills after delivery, were totally cleared by the agency as a result of their enrollment. They prayed for God to bless Governor Francis Nwifuru and his wife for supporting EBSHIA to save many lives in Ebonyi State.

Earlier in her address during the grand finale of the enrollment at Ohaukwu LGA, the wife of the governor, Mrs. Maudline Ogbonna Nwifuru stated that she will do everything possible to ensure that greater part of Ebonyians are enrolled into EBSHIA to ensure quality healthcare delivery for all. The wife of the governor who was represented by Dr. Nkechi Echeagu commended all the chairpersons in all the council areas for their commitment and dedication to ensure that rural women are enrolled in the system. She also pledged to give more support in order to make it easier to access of their healthcare system and treatment in Ebonyi State.



2024 Farming Season: Katsina Governor Flags Off Aerial Spraying Against Pests

***Says 50,000 rice farmers received FG support to boost yield**

By; SULAIMAN AHMED MISAU, Katsina

Governor Dikko Umaru Radda of Katsina State has flagged off the aerial spraying exercise against Quail birds and other pests affecting crops annually ahead of 2024 farming season in the state.

Speaking during the

programme held at the Umaru Musa Yar'Adua International Airport in Katsina, Governor Radda disclosed that more farmers in the state are now receiving support from the federal government to boost their farming activities.

He said in a statement by his Chief Press Secretary Ibrahim Kaula

Mohammed that, "About 50,000 identified rice farmers across the state have received federal government support to boost their activities".

Appreciating the federal government for providing the chemicals and the spraying jet to be used for the spraying exercise, Governor Radda hoped the aerial spray would be

sustained in the state.

The governor who regretted the damages and losses caused by quail birds and locusts to Katsina farmers, said the spraying exercise is a routine one conducted, among other measures, to ensure safe farming activities in the state.

Group Commends Ribadu, Other Security Agencies For Tackling Security Challenges, Stabilising Nigeria

By; ISAAC ODEH, Kaduna

Apparently elated over the proactive measures taken recently to rescue kidnapped victims, the Coalition for Peace and National Unity has said that it is left with no option than to commend the National Security Adviser (NSA), Mallam Nuhu Ribadu and other security agencies for tackling security challenges and stabilising the country.

According to group, the recent release of hostages kidnapped by bandits the hard work and tirelessly efforts to ensure the release of the school pupils and other kidnapped victims rescued within good time, is a great feat worthy of commendation.

"We are beginning to see that the security situation is gradually improving in Northern Nigeria compared to what used to be obtainable in the past when daredevil Boko Haram insurgents and bandits had field day operating unhindered, especially in the north." The group stated.

The Coalition for Peace and National Unity, which made the commendations in a statement signed by the Secretary General of the group, Dr. Abdullahi Musa Ringim, said, "We are highly impressed over rescue of the 15 Tsangaya students kidnapped at a Qur'anic school in Sokoto State, who regained freedom; the rescued students of the Federal University Gusau from terrorists that invaded the students off campus accommodation and the rescue of 137 Kuriga pupils abducted more than three weeks ago from their school in Kaduna. It is great feat worthy of commendation."

It also applauded the military operations that led to the killing of most notorious bandits leaders in Zamfara and Katsina states and scores of their fighters.

The group said though there is still works to do on issues of insecurity challenges, especially in the north, the proactive measures taken recently has yield positive results with hope that the fight against banditry and Boko Haram insurgents will soon be history.

While urging the office of

NSA and security agencies to adopt strategic proactive measures to fight against all forms of criminality across the country, especially banditry and Insurgency, it posited, "At this juncture, and from our comparative analysis as well as records obtained by our research unit, we are left with no option than to commend federal government for efforts taken so far to tackle prolonged security challenges in the country, with the last eight months of Tinubu's administration".

According to the group, survey carried out recently revealed that the security situation has tremendously improved in Northern Nigeria compared to what used to be obtained in the past during the days of President Goodluck Jonathan and President Muhammadu Buhari.

"Buhari made a number of promises to address Nigeria's chronic security problems, but failed to effectively address them. Bandits attacked military locations, kidnapped hundreds of school students and abducted travellers. They even bombed a train and abducted passengers.

"The bandit groups existed across the North-West zone and Niger State. These groups were economically driven. When they are not kidnapping for ransom, they exploit the lack of state presence to impose taxes and protection levies on rural communities.

But across the 19 northern states according to research conducted by the group, in states like Kaduna; Sokoto, Zamfara, Katsina, the nefarious activities and attacks by bandits must be contained without any consideration.

"It is no longer news that as a country, we have witnessed unprecedented security challenges such as : Boko Haram Terrorists attacks, militancy, armed robbery, banditry, kidnapping for ransom, Fulani herders/farmers clashes, cultism among other social vices, but now that the federal government has sense of commitment to ensuring that Nigerians can go to bed with their two eyes closed, we should let the government to succeed."

NSCDC Deploys 2,500 Personnel For Easter In Oyo

***To safeguard strategic locations, critical national assets, others**

By: BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

With few hours to the Easter celebration, the Oyo State Command of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) yesterday, announced the deployment of 2,500 personnel to across the state.

According to the State NSCDC commandant, Augustine Padonu, the deployment was part of the proactive measure by the command to ensure the safety and security of citizens in Oyo State.

Commandant Padonu disclosed that the deployment is aimed towards safeguard strategic locations, critical national assets, and infrastructure, as well as protect vulnerable citizens in and across the state, particularly across strategic locations as a proactive measure to ensure the security of our citizens during the Easter period", he said.

"We are fully committed to mitigating any potential security challenges and preempting any



Oyo NSCDC Commandant

untoward incidents through actionable intelligence", he added.

Commandant Padonu added,

"The Counter Terrorism Unit and Disaster Management Unit have been deployed to provide swift responses and address

emergencies promptly."

He pointed out that deployment of personnel to various key areas, such as motor parks, churches, amusement centres, and critical infrastructure, "is part of the command's concerted efforts to proactively mitigate potential cases of insurgency, kidnapping, and attacks on vulnerable citizens.

"By reinforcing security measures, the NSCDC aims to ensure a smooth and secure celebration during the Easter period," he assured.

Commandant Padonu said that to enhance surveillance and patrol activities, the command has deployed the specialized its Counter Terrorism Unit, saying "

this unit will carry out rigorous surveillance operations across the state, ensuring the safety of the public and swift response to any security threats that may arise".

He stressed further that the Disaster Management Unit of the Oyo State Command has been deployed to address any emergencies that may occur during the Easter period, saying, "this unit is well-trained and equipped to handle various disaster scenarios promptly, ensuring the safety and welfare of the citizens".

He then urged the people of the state public to cooperate with the NSCDC personnel and promptly report any suspicious activities or security concerns to the nearest security agencies.

He assured the citizens of the NSCDC's readiness to protect lives and property, emphasizing that security remains a collective responsibility.

Tinubu Has Capacity To Tackle Menace Of Insecurity Across Nigeria - Afenifere

***Backs "No negotiation with, or payment of ransom to kidnappers"**

By: BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

Pan-Yoruba socio-cultural and political organization, Afenifere yesterday, declared that President Bola Tinubu has the capability to summon the political will to tackle the menace of insecurity across Nigeria.

Afenifere in a statement by its National Publicity Secretary, Comrade Jare Ajayi, pointed out that the capability of President Tinubu includes how respective communities can be made to be more involved in the security of their areas.

According to Afenifere, the, "No negotiation with, or payment of ransom to kidnappers' stand of President Bola Tinubu should be lauded, adding that it is strongly in support of the stand.

The organization emphasized that if, "ransom is paid or bandits are treated with kid gloves in form of pardon etc, they are being encouraged to continue in their evil ways.

"In this respect, Afenifere strongly supports Mr. President on his, 'No negotiation with or payment of ransom to kidnappers' stand. There should be no sacred cow as the only person who could not be touched by the arms of the law is the innocent", it said.

Afenifere added, "If ransom is paid or bandits are treated with kid gloves in form of pardon etc, they are being encouraged to continue in their evil ways.

"This is why the government needs to summon necessary political will to ensure that

bandits and their accomplices are not only reined in, they should be severely dealt with. Such should have no room for kid glove treatment of bandits and kidnappers."

It noted that the country's judicial system needs to be rejigged to ensure that cases bordering on banditry including kidnapping are expeditiously dealt with, adding may be "a special tribunal be created in each state for this purpose as a matter of urgency to meet the expediency of the moment".

It then congratulated President Tinubu, Elders in the North, security agencies



Nuhu Ribadu

including the military as well as Kaduna and Zamfara State Governors for the safe retrieval

of Kuriga and Sokoto kidnapped students.

Kuriga kidnapping: Governor Sani Donates N10m, Scholarship To Children Of Teacher Who Died In Bandits' Den



By: **FUNMI ADERINTO, Kaduna**

Kaduna State Governor, Uba Sani has announced a donation of N10 million to the family of the slain teacher who was kidnapped alongside 137 Kuriga school children and later died in the bandits' captivity due to health complications. Governor Sani made it known while bidding farewell to the 137 kidnapped and rescued school children home to reunite with their parents amidst tight security yesterday afternoon. The governor also said that his government would be providing

scholarship up to university level, to the children of the teacher, Malam Abubakar. One of his children, Isah Abubakar who was also one of the kidnapped and rescued pupils, witnessed his father's death in the bandits' den. Governor Sani who returned from Abuja to bid the children farewell after three days of psychosocial therapy at the Kaduna Women and Children Shelter, also disclosed that, he will in his private capacity, under the auspices of Uba Sani Foundation, be supporting the education of all the 137 pupils and students, up to university

level. According to the governor, "we saw the need to keep the children for this long because when they came on Sunday, it was observed that some of them needed some psychological support. So, we had to engage the service of psychologists and medical doctors to attend to them. "Now, they have been given adequate psychosocial counseling and therapy. I am happy today that all the children are happy and they are in high spirit. "Now, you are going back home to meet with your parents and other families members who are

eager to see you. But, I want to assure you that all of you remain my children. "As a result of this, I will be using Uba Sani Foundation, which has been in existence for the past 16 to look after the education of all the 137 of you. "Our government will also be carrying out a lot of rehabilitation works both in the Kuriga community and the school. I have already given directive to that effect. This is because Kuriga community is one of the most peaceful communities in Kaduna State. "Also, the Kaduna State Government has taken a collective decision to support the

family of Malam Abubakar, the teacher who died in captivity, with N10million. Also, because he has a very young family, the Kaduna State Government will be giving scholarship to his children until they finish secondary school and university," the Governor said. He assured the school children that, he would be checking them at Kuriga from time to time to monitor the progress of their education. Some of the children who spoke, expressed appreciation to the Governor, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu and the security agencies who played role in their rescue.



Pensioners In Akwa Ibom Lament Stagnation, Threaten Mass Protest

By: PATRICK TITUS, Uyo

Members of the Nigerian Union of Pensioners (NUP), Akwa Ibom State Council have said that they are facing pathetic conditions in the state due to neglect by successive administrations in spite of repeated appeals for attention.

Addressing journalists on behalf of their members in Uyo on Wednesday, the State Chairman of the union and Secretary, Obong Ekpeyong Ekpo and Obong Cosmos Essien respectively, explained that the worsening condition of members of the Union should be a source of concern to government and public spirited Nigerians.

According to the State Secretary, "The sad plight of our members is that those who retired in the 1980s with salaries of N1000, N1500 or N2000 are still collecting such funds as pension till date in Akwa Ibom State.

"Whenever you retire, what is worked out for you remain static, when the 1999 Constitution in section 173 (3) (2) (10) explicitly explained that pension will be reviewed every five years along whatever increase giving to workers. Government here bluntly refused to implement the review.

"Can you imagine that in present Day Nigeria, many of our members are still collecting N2000 a month, some N1000 a month and their current situation is very pathetic, some don't have children to care for them, few privileged have while those who have children late are still training them in school.

"When Akwa Ibom Government

promised us minimum pension of N20,000 for those who retired before 1997 and N30,000 for those afterwards and asked us to inform members across board, there was jubilation and they also promised to start payment from April 2023 to avoid accumulation of arrears, however till date nothing has been paid. All pressures on government to implement it failed woefully.

"The arrears they tried to avoid has accumulated. We have been praying, crying and reaching out to those in government to help but no sign of change. Our members are dying daily because they cannot afford drugs. over 65% of pensioners are hypertensive, and diabetic, survival in Nigeria presently is very expensive and our members are no longer coping, we have brought our plight to government and they snubbed us". The pensioners lamented.

They said the union has been pushed to the wall to consider staging mass protest to major streets in Uyo, the state capital to let the world know their predicaments.

Though the date for the protest was not announced during the interaction but the Union leaders said the streets demonstration will wrap up with the blockage of main gate of Government House to press home their demand.

They lamented saying, "We have had cases of the past governors announce publicly that they are not owing any pension and I can tell you that 80% of pensioners who are tenants have had their property thrown out by their landlords after receiving such



news on the ground that they are liars

"We have moved round many times as state exco to plead with the landlords that the news are not true. Sometimes it takes us a whole month going round and reconciling the situation between evicted tenants and their landlords.

"These old men are crying daily, they are dying slowly because they can't afford decent living on N2000, or N1000 pension monthly. Government must remember the pensioners who are mostly old, aged citizens must be cared for. Failure for government to care for these people means they don't regard their parents. The world must hear the woes, Akwa Ibom pensioners are going through.

"We the union leaders are also under attack from pensioners who think we are not doing

enough to get government to ameliorate their plight, and we willingly accepted their attacks because we can only say we have performed when money flows in their hands.

"We are begging you journalists to help us inform the governor, stakeholders and the general public of our pathetic conditions of living after spending our entire youthful age and strength to serve our father land".

The Union however, expressed gratitude to Governor Umo Eno for the payment of gratuity stressing that he has within the nine months of his stay in government paid about 14 billion in gratuities which cut across civil pensioners, local government pensioners, primary school pensioners and next of kin.

"If other administrations have made similar efforts, I think we will not have been in this kind of

dilemma we found ourselves today. We really appeal to him to continue as a Pastor with heart of human kindness to salvage the situation. He must not toe the part of his predecessors who abandoned the aged citizens and our prayer for the Governor will be ceaseless in order to do more." The Pensioners noted.

The Union leaders maintained that they have approximately between 25,000 to 28,000 members. "This is because as many are dying on daily basis, others retire into the system too, it is a situation of coming in and exiting of members same time.

They insist that notwithstanding the governor's recent efforts, over N40 billion outstanding pension and gratuities debts remains pending.

They appealed to Governor Umo Eno to come to their aid by establishing Pension Commission or Board.

Katsina Governor Sweats-in Six New Permanent Secretaries

By: SULAIMAN AHMED MISAU, Katsina

Governor Dikko Umaru Radda of Katsina State has administered the oath of office to six new permanent secretaries in the state civil service.

The newly sworn-in officials according to a statement by the Chief Press Secretary to the Governor includes:- Jamilu

Yakubu Batagarawa, Samaila Yusuf Bindawa, Lawal Suleiman Abdullahi, Hamza Mani Tafashiya, Ahmed Hassan Mashi, and Ibrahim Muazu.

Addressing the appointees, Governor Dikko Radda emphasized the merit-based selection process, highlighting that all six permanent secretaries were appointed based on merit after successfully passing the

examination.

He congratulated them on their new roles and stressed the importance of their services, particularly during times of economic and security challenges.

Governor Radda urged the newly appointed permanent secretaries to work together to foster prosperity and peace in the state.

He reassured the state

government committed to addressing security challenges and called on "everyone to offer prayers, especially during the Ramadan fast, and mobilize their communities to confront these challenges effectively."

The oath of office and allegiance was administered by the state's Chief Judge, Justice Musa Danladi Abubakar.

The event was attended by the State Deputy Governor

Honourable Faruk Jobe, Speaker State House of Assembly Honourable Nasir Yahaya Daura, Secretary to the Government of the State, Alhaji Abdullahi Garba Faskari, Head of Service, Alhaji Usman Isiyaku, Chief of Staff, Government House, Honourable Jabiru Tsauri and other top government functionaries.

National Spokespersons Awards 2024: Gombe DG Press Receives NIPR Gold Certificate Of Excellence

*Recognised for outstanding public sector communication



By; **JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON**

In recognition of his exemplary contributions to public sector communication, the Director General of Press Affairs, Government House Gombe, Ismaila Uba Misilli, has received the prestigious Spokespersons Gold Certificate, Public Sector (State) category conferred on him by the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR) in partnership with the Image Marchant Promotion Limited (IMPR).

The Certificate of Excellence was presented to Misilli at the National Spokespersons Awards 2023 ceremony held on Wednesday at the International Conference Centre, Abuja,

marking the end of activities for the 3-day maiden National Spokespersons Summit unveiled by the Minister of Information and National Orientation, Alhaji Mohammed Idris Malagi.

The Spokesperson Awards Programme serves as a distinctive platform to honour and recognize spokespersons for their exceptional contributions on a national scale.

The Jury Sub-Committee of the National Spokespersons Awards, set up by the NIPR and the Ministry of Information, found Misilli worthy of award of excellence among other spokespersons operating across the states.

The organisers of the event, the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations in collaboration with

Image Marchant Promotion Limited (IMPR), emphasized that Ismaila Uba Misilli was selected for this recognition based on his exemplary performance meeting stringent selection criteria, which included strategic clarity, storytelling prowess, audience engagement, and overall impact. The also highlighted Misilli's outstanding eloquence, integrity, and effectiveness in fulfilling his communication responsibilities. "Misilli's journey to receiving the Spokesperson Gold Award is marked by a distinguished career in the media landscape. With over two decades of experience in journalism and public relations, Misilli has demonstrated commitment to excellence in his field, as evidently exemplified in his role

as Director General of Press Affairs, where he introduced innovative approaches to disseminating information, engaging with the public, and promoting government initiatives and activities."

Speaking after receiving the award, Ismail Uba Misilli expressed gratitude for the honour bestowed upon him, and dedicated the award to the support and encouragement of his principal, Governor Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya as well as the hardworking team at the Press Affairs Directorate of Gombe Government House, while reiterating his commitment to upholding standards of professionalism and the principles of transparency, accountability, and responsiveness in all aspects of

his work.

While reacting to Misilli's recognition for outstanding performance, Governor Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya of Gombe State, praised Misilli's dedication to serving the public, emphasizing the pivotal role of effective communication in driving development and fostering democracy, to which Misilli is contributing in his administration

He lauded Misilli for his tireless efforts in promoting government policies and programmes while maintaining high ethical standards and professionalism, urging him to consider this recognition as a motivation to do more and accomplish more successes in the future.



Food Security: AATF Hands Over Upgraded Green House Equipped With Cutting Edge Technology To IAR

■ Facility ensures all-year-round seed production

powered cold storage facility. "These in addition are not merely amenities, but crucial components in our quest to preserve the quality and viability of PBR cowpea nucleus, breeder, and foundation seeds during storage," he said. According to him, "this facility, will ensure optimal conditions for seed preservation, safeguarding the genetic integrity of our agricultural heritage".

The Director said their vision extends beyond mere preservation; encompassing the enhancement of seed quality and productivity, hence, alongside the greenhouse upgrades with installed solar system powered irrigation facilities covering two hectares of land. "This strategic initiative ensures all-year-round seed production, empowering our researchers and and by implication, farmers with the tools needed to meet the

growing demands of a dynamic agricultural landscape.

"This achievement would not have been possible without the collective efforts and unwavering support of various stakeholders.

"I extend my heartfelt appreciation to our funding partners, BMGF whose generosity has made this project a reality," he added.

He commended the dedication and expertise of the researchers

and technicians, whose tireless efforts have transformed vision into tangible success.

"As we embark on this new chapter, let us remain steadfast in our commitment to sustainable agriculture. Let this upgraded facilities serve as a beacon of hope and inspiration, guiding us towards a future where food security is not just a dream but a reality for all". He prayed.

In his remarks, the Executive Director Institute For Agricultural Research (IAR)

Professor Ado Yusuf said, AATF has been in partnership with the institute for over two decades with full support.

He said, having critical facilities from the AATF will assist its researchers to conduct their activities within a short period of time.

Speaking on the cooling facilities, Prof. Ado expressed satisfaction and assured the donor that the institute will use it judiciously.

Artificial Intelligence Course to 5,000 Youth: ALX Partners Enugu Govt

By; KELVIN OKPARA, Enugu

A leading tech career accelerator, ALX, has announced its partnership with the Enugu State Government through the Ministry of Youth and Sports to provide its Artificial Intelligence Career Essentials (AiCE) course to 5,000 youth in Enugu State.

According to the organization, the strategic collaboration is aimed at equipping young people in the state with essential skills in artificial intelligence (AI) and prepare them for the rapidly evolving tech-driven job market. Speaking during the formal launch at a media conference held at the NUJ Enugu Press Centre, Wednesday, the state Commissioner for Youth and Sports, Barr. Lloyd Ekweremadu, emphasized the importance of such collaborations in driving socio-economic development and youth empowerment within the state.

He remarked, "Enugu State recognises the significance of equipping our youth with relevant skills to excel in today's tech-driven world and also compete globally in the technology and ICT space.

"In Nigeria, we know there is a rate of unemployment, and one of the aims of these programmes



and this government is to tackle youth unemployment and we are taking this advantage to build capacity among the youths in times of youth development in tech."

The Commissioner disclosed that, "Through this partnership with ALX, we are opening doors of opportunity for 5,000 young people in our state, enabling them to harness the power of artificial intelligence and embark on promising career paths,"

In her remark, Ruby Igwe,

Country General Manager, ALX Nigeria, expressed the company's passion and unwavering commitment to empowering young people through education and opportunity. She stated.

"At ALX, we are deeply passionate about creating pathways for young individuals to thrive in the digital age. Our partnership with the Enugu State Government underscores our dedication to ensuring that every young person, regardless of

background or circumstance, has the opportunity to pursue a career in tech and contribute meaningfully to society.

"The Artificial Intelligence Career Essentials course offered by ALX covers foundational AI concepts, relevant AI tools and their practical applications across various industries. Participants will also benefit from first-hand learning experiences, mentorship opportunities, and access to ALX's extensive and supportive

global community.

"Enugu State residents, aged between 18 and 34 years, are encouraged to apply for the programme or find out more about the other ALX offerings by visiting our website," she said.

"By offering this course, ALX and the Enugu State Government are committed to democratising access to high-quality tech education and fostering economic empowerment among the youth," she added.

News Of Court Restraining Oginni's Installation Laughable – Chief Adeyeye

By; **BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan**

The Ejemo of Odogbo-Ijesa, Chief Jacob Adedeji Adeyeye has said that there is no controversy or clash with any existing title on the installation of Dr. Olatunde Oginni as the Oba of Oranpon.

Chief Adeyeye stated this in his reaction to the news of an order and interim injunction restraining the Ogboni of Ipole-Ijesa from installing Dr Olatunde Oginni as the Oba of Oranpon,

He maintained that Oba Oginni, "is a law abiding citizen who will not like to prejudice any case that is already in court but will like to put some record straight for the public not be misled by the publication.

"I'm the Ejemo of Odogbo-Ijesa where HRH Olatunde Oginni has been installed by the traditional institution of the community as the first Olodogbo of Odogbo-Ijesa on 20th of January 2012 after more than 150 people within the community signed the

letter that was written to Osun State Ministry of Local Government and Chieftaincy matters demanding for the enthronement of Olodogbo of Odogbo-Ijesa", he said.

Chief Adeyeye added, "Olatunde Oginni has showed to be a worthy leader that can be relied upon since he was installed as Aro ii of this Odogbo-Ijesa in 2009, and considering his contributions to the development of our this town through numerous projects running into several millions of naira, we the progressive minded citizen of the town, after several deliberations and consultations resolved to elevate him to be our traditional leader.

"Nobody has ever occupied such a post in the history of the town, so it is not controversial or clashes with any existing title. We don't have any issue with all other titles which include that of 'Likure of Odogbo-ijesa'. And I'm happy to inform you that an ultra modern palace for the Olodogbo of Odogbo-Ijesa has just been concluded,"

Zulum Reconstitutes Borno Agricultural Transformation Committee

By; **SADIQABUBAKAR, Maiduguri**

The Executive Governor of Borno State, His Excellency Professor Babagana Umara Zulum has graciously approved the reconstitution of the Borno State Agricultural Transformation Committee with immediate effect:

A statement issued and signed by Prof Mohammed Usman Tar, the Honorable Commissioner of Information and Internal Security, Borno State, said that Hon Bukar Tijani, the Secretary to the State Government (SSG), is to serve as the chairman of the committee, while Engr Mohammed Shettima, the Director Irrigation, State MANR (rtd) is to serve as the Secretary of the committee

Other members of the committee include, Engr Bawu Musam, the Hon Commissioner, Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources (MANR), Bulama Gana, the Permanent Secretary MANR, Hon Ali Baba Haruna, the Special Adviser, Agriculture to Governor Zulum and Engr Mohammed Kolo Kaumi, the Director Irrigation, MANR, Engr Baba Gana Alibe, the Director, Rural Development, MANR and Madu Kawu S. Dalatu, the Director Agriculture, MANR.

The rest include, Engr Abatcha Jarawa, GM, BOPLAS, Maina Mustapha Arjinoma, SPC NG-CARES, Borno State, Dr. Bukar Ali Usman, the Director-General, Borno State Livestock Management Agency (BSLMA), Hon Musa Inuwa Kubo, Former Hon. Commissioner of Education, Engr Abba Garba, Former MD, CBDA, Alh Gana Bama, Irrigation Agronomist (rtd), Engr Bukar Kanumbumi, Irrigation Engineer (rtd) and Engr Ngita H Mshelia, Irrigation Engineer (rtd).

Other members are, Engr Madu Usman Chibok, Irrigation Engineer (rtd), Mal Isa Audu Teli, Agric Extension Agronomist (rtd), Engr Baba Gana Soye, the Director, Rural Development (rtd), Hon Alh. Mamman Nur, SSA to the Governor,

Hon Ali Audu Damasak, former SA Agric to the Governor, Hon Idris Yahaya, former SSA to the Governor, Hon Bala Pali Mari, former SSA to the Governor, Engr Bukar Wakil, Director Irrigation, MANR (rtd), and Engr Mohammed Gajibo, Solar Power Irrigation Consultant.



Chief Adeyeye with Oba Oginni and others

Christian Pilgrimage: Prophet Nunayon To Lead Celestial Faithful To Jordan, Israel In Nov

By; **BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan**

Popular Celestial Church of Christ Priest, Prophet Jacob Deji Nunayon in conjunction with ELUKAZ Travels and Tour is to lead Celestial faithful to perform Christian pilgrimage to the kingdom of Jordan and Israel in November this year.

Receiving the ELUKAZ crew led by its CEO, Kazeem Eluwole to the church's auditorium, the Rehoboth Family International Cathedral, Oke Ado, Ibadan, Prophet Nunayon disclosed that the pilgrimage tour is scheduled for November 15 to 23, 2024.

He stressed that,

"Pilgrimage to Israel is a new testament exercise, while pilgrimage to Kingdom of Jordan covers both old and new testament pilgrimage and for a Christian to fully perform holy Christian Pilgrimage exercise, such Christian must visit Jordan on holy Pilgrimage exercise".

The popular Celestial Church of Christ priest maintained that the Biblical sites in Jordan which make a visit to the city is a necessity for a complete Christian pilgrim, the number three man in the Celestial hierarchy globally said.

Prophet Nunayon added that he will take intending pilgrims with him to that point where Prophet

Elijah was taken up by chariot of fire which is in 1 king 2 verses 1-18.

"I am sure all that followed us on this trip will be happy and proud of Elukaz, because they will have renewed spirits and souls owing to the high powered crusades and revivals that we will conduct at important and strategic points in Israel", he said.

The Prophet added, "We shall offer prayers at Mount Nebo where Moses stood to view the Promised Land. (Deut 32 vs 48-52), place where Moses raised his staff to save the children of Israel from snake bite (Num 21vs9), Gadara where Jesus commanded the

unclean spirits out of the two mad men to enter swine, River Jordan, the original place of Jesus baptismal site and the place where John was ordered to be beheaded", said Prophet Nunayon.

"The activities of the children of Israel on their way to the promised land and few of Jesus activities are in the present day Kingdom of Jordan, while we shall also touch most important places in Israel for complete pilgrimage exercise; thereby I will implore you to join me and ELUKAZ by 15th to 23rd of November this year for the holy pilgrimage to the Israel and Kingdom of Jordan".



Celestial Church prophet and members



Former President Obasanjo during the visit

Ondo Only Female Aspirant, Funmilayo Waheed-Adekojo Picks APC Nomination Form

By; ADEBOYE ADO, Akure

Business magnate, Mrs. Funmilayo Waheed-Adekojo, has purchased her expression of interest and nomination forms to contest the governorship primary election of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in Ondo State. Wahed-Adekojo who doubles as an Engineer, picked the form on Wednesday at APC national headquarters in Abuja. Waheed-Adekojo is the first to purchase the forms

ahead of the party's primary election. Speaking at the Party's Secretariat, Funmilayo Adekojo expressed confidence that she would win the party's ticket and would tailor her campaign inline with the guidelines. She said, "I am confident that I will secure the nomination as the party's candidate and emerge victorious in the Ondo State Governorship Election. This is an opportune moment for women to showcase their leadership abilities and make a significant impact in politics. With

determination and support, I am ready to lead the way and bring about positive change for the people of Ondo State." "As a woman, I recognize the importance of representation and diversity in governance. I am committed to amplifying the voices of women and addressing the unique challenges they face. By promoting gender equality and inclusivity, we can build a stronger and more prosperous Ondo State for all its residents." "My candidacy symbolizes a shift towards

a more inclusive and progressive political landscape. By breaking barriers and challenging stereotypes, I aim to inspire future generations of women to pursue their ambitions fearlessly. Together, we can build a brighter future where every individual, regardless of gender, has the opportunity to thrive." Adekojo was warmly received, on behalf of the National Working Committee by Alhaji Suleiman Argungu and others.



Late Olubadan Lekan Balogun Reign Short, Impactful -Obasanjo

**Pays condolence visit to Balogun family in Ibadan*

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

Former President, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo yesterday, visited the family of the late Olubadan of Ibadanland, Oba Lekan Balogun to commiserate with them on the demise of the late royal father. Speaking during the visit, Chief Obasanjo said though the reign of the late Olubadan was short, but it was impactful.

Chief Obasanjo during the visit, described the late Oba Lekan Balogun as his personal friend and the visit being paid was his duty.

"The late Olubadan was not a foreigner to me, he was my friend and it is my duty to pay this visit to his family. He carried the position very well, he was 'Gbobaniyi'", he said.

The former President added, "Naturally, we would have loved him to be around us for much longer time, but God knows best. As it is said in Yoruba that 'o wuni ka jeran pe lenu, oofa ona ofun o je' that's as much as we want to hold the meat in our mouth, the drawer from our oesophagus won't allow us."

"As I said, God knows best. Assuming that death did not come when it came but a worse thing happened, what could have been our reaction? We thank God for him, it is no how long, but how well."

Accompanied on the visit by Chief Fasawe and Arole Gbenga Adewusi among others, the former President in his condolence message wrote, "Kabiyesi Balogun, sleep in your creator's bosom".

The Bobajiro of Ibadanland and former Oyo State Head of Service,

Alhaji Tajudeen Aremu while receiving Chief Obasanjo on behalf of the family of the late Olubadan, said the visit of the former President what the former President was a demonstration of genuine love.

Chief Aremu recalled that Chief Obasanjo truly demonstrated true friend by the visit which was a manifestation of the saying in Yoruba that whoever that identifies with somebody in his or absence is truly a friend of such a person.

"There's nothing our late father can do for anybody now, he is no more in a position to offer anybody anything, either tangible or intangible, so whatever anybody does for him now is not because of receiving anything in return from him, but out of deep love and concern. The family appreciates Your Excellency and it is our prayer that God will preserve you more for the country in general and for Yoruba in particular", Chief Aremu added.

Ekerin Olubadan, Oba Hamidu Ajibade while welcoming Chief Obasanjo and his entourage recalled that the former President was among the dignitaries that paid the late Olubadan visit before his coronation and his coming round now after his death was a clear demonstration of the love that existed between the two of them.

He prayed the Almighty Allah to repay him the good deeds and love being showed the family of the late Olubadan with a charge to him not to make the visit a one off thing but something that should be periodical as a way of identifying with the family.

Insurgency: Borno Govt Assures Support, Collaboration With Allamin Foundation On Demands Of Victims, Survivors Of Boko Haram Conflict

By; SADIQ ABUBAKAR, Maiduguri

Borno State Government has pledged to support Allamin Foundation for Peace and Development enhance peace building, reconciliation, deradicalization, rehabilitation and reintegration of women and girls affected by the over a decade Boko Haram Insurgency in the state

The Borno State Commissioner for Women Affairs and Social Development, Hon. Hajiya Zuwaira Gambo stated this on Wednesday when the Executive Director of Allamin Foundation led management staff and project team of the foundation in a courtesy visit to the commissioner in her office at the Musa Usman State Secretariat Maiduguri.

She also assured the foundation of her ministry's full support to

work together and collaborate with the high powered committee headed by the State Deputy, Hon. Umar Usman Kadafur on areas of rehabilitation, reconciliation, resettlement and reintegration of the survivors and victims of the insurgency, demands especially, women, children and girls who the most affected population during the crisis.

The commissioner also appreciated the efforts, resilience, commitment and determination shown by the Executive Director, Hajiya Hamsatu Allamin to transform, rehabilitate, and develop the victims and survivors through several empowerment and poverty alleviation, psychosocial training and support to the women survivors, girls and victims.

Hajiya Gambo further explained

that Borno State Government is ever willing and ready to work with such foundation towards a grieving it's 10 years transformation strategic plan and 25 years master plan in the post insurgency era which centered on peace building, rehabilitation, reconciliation, reintegration and agricultural development among others.

Earlier, the Executive Director of Allamin Foundation, Hajiya Hamsatu Allamin intimated the commissioner on the activities of the foundation and efforts made so to promote and establish transition justice machinery to advocate for the establishment of government policies the demands of the survivors, widows and victims of the insurgency who have suffered castration, hardships and conscription among others in the hand of the insurgents in the

Sambisa Forest.

Hajiya Hamsatu promised to render all the necessary support and cooperation towards achieving the set goals and objectives of the project towards having government policies on the demands of the affected women survivors, victims and widows towards consolidating peace, transformation and development of the people in the state.

The Special Adviser to Government on Zulum on Security Affairs, Brigadier General Abdullahi Sabi Ishaq also pledged to liaise and collaborate with the foundation to ascertain and address all issues relating to women and girls affected by the insurgency.

He said it is importance and necessary that the attention of government was drawn to some salient issues and demands while

assuring his full support and cooperation towards drawing the attention of government to the sensitive issues and problems associated with the repentance, deradicalization, rehabilitation, reconciliation and reintegration of the survivors victims and widows.

Brig. Gen. Ishaq made this known during an advocacy visit to the Special Adviser in Security in his office on Wednesday in Maiduguri to acquaint him on the activities of the foundation and efforts made so far for government interventions and establishment of government policies on the demands made by the survivors widows and victims of the insurgency.

Highlights of the advocacy visits include presentation of documents on the demands and group photographs among others.





PERL Holds Technical Session For OGP On SAP III Milestones In Kaduna

Benue Govt Flags Of Distribution Of Items To IDPs

By; ARCHIBONG ESUENE, Makurdi

Benue State Government through the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) has commenced the distribution of essential food and non food materials to displaced persons in the state.

The acting Executive Secretary of Benue State Emergency Management Agency (Benue SEMA) who performed the distribution exercise on behalf of the state

governor, Rev. Fr. Hyacinth Alia at SEMA headquarters, Makurdi.

Briefing newsmen on the exercise, the SEMA boss said that the distribution of the food and non food materials, is targeted at Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) camps and those who were recently displaced in Kwande, Katsina -Ala, Ukum, Apa, Okpokwu, Agatu and Guma among other affected communities.

Sir. James Iorpuu explained that the gesture is part of Benue State

Governor, Rev. Fr. Dr. Hyacinth Iormem Alia's magnanimity in the spirit of both Easter and a continuation of routine food assistance to displaced population affected by armed herdsmen and other forms of disasters.

The Benue SEMA boss commended Governor Alia for consistently responding to the plights of IDPs, assuring that all the relief materials will reach them before Easter celebration.

New Nigerian

Newspapers in Makurdi reports that assorted food items ranging from thousands of bags of rice (25kg) beans (25kg) maize (25kg), garri (25kg) hundreds gallons of red and vegetable oil (20 litres) as well as bags of sugar, salt, noodles.

The non food items (NFIs) distributed according to the Public Relations Officer, Tema Ager, included mattresses, detergents and soap among others.

By; ALEX UANGBAOJE, Kaduna

As part of measures to strengthen the understanding of the leaders of Kaduna Open Government Partnership (OGP), on the State Action Plan III (SAP III) implementation milestones, the Partnership to Engage, Reform and Learn (PERL), recently organised a technical session for representatives of both Civil Societies and Government.

The session, amongst other things was aimed at strengthening and deepening the understanding of the State OGP Steering Committee and Technical Working Groups on the Commitment Areas and the implementation of their set milestones.

It also sought strengthening synergy between government and civil society organizations for the successful implementation of SAP III and also increase awareness on the Strategic Vision of SAP III.

Speaking during the meeting, Kaduna State Team lead of PERL, Abel Adejor, emphasized the need for the Steering Committee to sustain the milestones implementation approach for accurate results.

He urged them to always be proactive in their approach and ensure they continue to seek for collaborations with government and other donors to support the effective implementation

ofSAPIII.

Adejor, noted that PERL is glad to support the steering committee and Technical working groups to understand State Action Plan III Commitment Areas and to deepen the implementation of the set milestones.

"PERL supported the development of SAP I, SAP II and SAP III and also aided the achievement of specific milestones key to its goals and objectives. PERL has equally supported the creation of accountability mechanism in Kaduna State." He added.

In his remarks, CS Co-Chair of Kaduna OGP, Mubarak Abdulganiyi, while appreciating PERL for organising the meeting and continuous support to OGP in Kaduna State, said the supports has been instrumental in equipping members with requisite knowledge and tools to enhance their collective proficiency in making government accountable. "As we forge ahead, it is crucial that we uphold the principle of accountability, keeping a steadfast watch to ensure that value for our money remains a guiding tenet in all our endeavors." Mubarak, noted.

The Co-Chair emphasized the imperative of collaboration within the Technical Working Group (TWG), stressing the paramount importance of working hand in hand to realize the ambitious goals set forth in SAPIII.



Smugglers Cloning Vehicles Chassis Number, Customs FOU Zone B Raises Alarm

***372 bags of offensive rice concealed in local flour sacks intercepted**

***Seizes Items Worth over N700m between February to March 2024**

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON
The Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) Federal Operations Unit (FOU) Zone 'B' Kaduna, has raised the alarm that in their desperation to evade detection, smugglers are now cloning the chassis numbers of vehicles in an attempt to beat officers of NCS, in their renewed bid to frustrate economic sabotage through smuggling activities. This was disclosed yesterday in Kaduna, at a press briefing by Comptroller FOU Zone 'B', Dalha Wada Chedi at the zonal office, where several items seized were displayed. "Let me use this opportunity to draw the attention of the general public concerning

the act of altering VIN (Chassis Number) of Vehicles by smugglers to evade arrest or to manipulate the payment of duty. I want the concerned citizens to always examine the VIN on the windscreen and that on the chassis (skeleton) of the vehicle they intend buying because it is an offence under S.236 (b) of the NCS Act 23 and the offender is liable to a fine of N2, 000,000.00 or imprisonment for a term of two years, or both," he said. According to him, through dedication to duty and patriotic zeal, officers and men of the zone made a total seizure of 98 items worth N769, 465,907.46 between February 17 to March 28, 2024. "Once again, I am pleased to welcome you

to the Federal Operations Unit (FOU) Zone 'B' to give you an update about our anti-smuggling activities for the period covering February 17 until date. "I am also happy to report that our operatives have remained resolute, committed and vigilant in the fight against smuggling and to say that within the period under review, recorded a total of Ninety-Eight (98) seizures of Twenty-One (21) different items which includes contraband foreign parboiled rice, used foreign shoes, petroleum products, vehicles (means of conveyance), pasta among others," he said. Comptroller Chedi said that of particular note was the seizure of 372 bags of

offensive rice that were intercepted by operatives of the Unit and deposited at the Kwara Area Command. "Our eagle eye Officers and Men are constantly responding to the ever newer changing tactics of smugglers, who deploys ever new methods in concealing smuggled rice in local flour sacks to disguise the smuggle rice as flour. "It is also noteworthy that we combine effective intelligence network in combating and exposing these rice smugglers. I said earlier that we remain resolute and will not relent as there is no amount of trick, blackmail or orchestrated attacks that will dampen our resolve," he said.



Smugglers Cloning Vehicles Chassis Number, Customs FOU Zone B Raises Alarm

***372 bags of offensive rice concealed in local flour sacks intercepted**
***Seizes Items Worth over N700m between February to March 2024**

Speaking further, he warned those he described as die-hard smugglers that sponsor mobs to attack their officers and men that such would not deter them from carrying out their constitutional duties.

"I say to those die-hard smugglers that sponsor mobs to attack our operatives and/or organize to stage illegal demonstrations against us that they cannot and will not discourage and deter us from carrying out our job. It is one of two options, either these smugglers turn a new leaf and embrace legitimate trade, or have us to deal with and face the wrath of the law and the full consequences," he warned.

Giving the summary of items seized for the period under review, he said that it included, 698 bags of Foreign Parboiled Rice (50kg each), 367 Cartons Foreign

Spaghetti, Macaroni, Couscous, 136 Bales Foreign Secondhand clothing, 715 Jerry cans of Premium motor Spirit (25 Litres each) and 65 Jerry cans of Foreign Refined Vegetable Oil (25 Litres each).

Others are, 12 Unit Used Vehicles, 4 Units Means of Conveyance, 9 Cartons Chakapain Xtra (50mg), 425.5 Cartons Foreign Milky Creamer & Milk Powder, 136 pieces Foreign used Tyres, 14 Bags Foreign Tiger Nuts, 151 Cartons of unregistered Alcoholic Beverages and 1,314 sachets and 68 Cartons Foreign Butter.

Also seized, were, 40 Cartons Expired Foreign General Goods, 120 Cartons of Foreign Eva soap, 170 bags of sodium sulphate (25Kg each), 20 cartons of Foreign Dye Powder, 600 bags of Sokoto cement used in concealing of items O, P, &

Q, 379 assorted general goods intercepted at Daura for being improperly exported and 400 cartons of unregistered Organic Fertilizer

"The Total Duty Paid Value (DPV) of these items is Seven Hundred and Sixty-Nine Million, Four Hundred and Sixty-Five Thousand, Nine Hundred and Seven Naira and Forty-Six Kobo (N769,465,907.46) only.

"At this point, as Nigerians we must join in thanking the leadership and management of the NCS for graciously tampering justice with mercy so as to provide safe landing for those Nigerians found to have acted in breach of the Customs extant laws, in relation to the directive of the Honourable Minister of Finance and Coordinating Minister of the Economy on the recent 90-days window

granted to vehicle owners to perfect their duty documentation," he said.

He therefore, called on the general public to utilize the 90-days window to regularize their improperly imported vehicles, especially in view of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's fatherly disposition in the light of the current general hardship for which he magnanimously suspended the 25% penalty previously imposed in addition to import duty on improperly imported vehicles; to make it more accessible to the citizens.

"Let me also use this medium to specially thank our amiable Comptroller-General of Customs, Bashir Adewale Adeniyi MFR and his management team for their usual support and encouragement to Officers and Men of the Unit and the Service in general," he said.



Emir Of Zazzau Expresses Concerns Over Increase Of Banditry, Kidnapping In Emirate



Emir of Zazzau, Malam Ahmed Nuhu Bamalli

By; SANIALIYU, Zaria
The Emir of Zazzau, Malam Ahmed Nuhu Bamalli has expressed concerns over the issue of kidnapping and banditry in Giwa, Igabi and the recently Soba local government areas, Emir Bamalli was speaking at the 10th day of Ramadan breaking of fast where sons and well wishers of Zazzau Emirate gathered alongside to eat

and drink as a tradition. He said, the situation is becoming more alarming and worrisome as the emirate is receiving reports on the issues of kidnapping and banditry on daily basis from Giwa and Igabi local government areas. The emir advised communities to join hands with security agencies around by providing them with useful information on any suspicious movement

by anybody so that the situation will be under control. The traditional ruler expressed satisfaction with the performance of security agencies in the emirate for their tireless efforts whenever the need arises, without delays, swinging into action. He urged the communities to support the security agencies by exposing the criminals residing within

them for immediate response. The emir advised parents to be vigilant on their children and to know their movement and associates in order to avoid engaging in criminal activities. He also advised parents on the need to give their children education and skills acquisition to enable them become self reliant or employers of labour.

Fortunes Of The Polytechnic, Ibadan Will Soar During My Term As Acting Rector - Dr Lasisi

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

The newly appointed acting Rector of The Polytechnic, Ibadan, Dr. Taiwo Abideen Lasisi has declared that the fortunes of the institution will soar during his term. Dr Lasisi stated this when he arrived the polytechnic campus on Monday to resume office to the warm embrace of the staff and students of the institution. The acting Rector promised to key into the road map of development embarked upon by the Oyo State Government by introducing enduring development into academic and infrastructure of the Institution. Emphasizing that he spent a better part of his academic career at The Polytechnic, Ibadan where he rose to the highest academic position as a Chief lecturer and served as Dean of Student Affairs and later Director of Academic Planning and Control Unit before crossing to Ladoke Akintola University of

Technology (LAUTECH), Ogbomosho, Dr Lasisi said his appointment is more of a homecoming. The acting rector appreciated Gov Seyi Makinde for giving him the opportunity to serve. Deputy Rector of the Institution, Mrs Olaide Salawu led the Deans of Faculties and other senior officers, staff, and students to receive the acting rector. Both Mrs. Salawu, who is the Deputy Rector, and Dr. Bolanle Oseni who is the Chairman Committee of Deans and Staff while speaking at the brief welcome reception assured the Acting Rector of their maximum cooperation and support. New Nigerian recalls that The appointment of the Acting Rector was made on Saturday March 23, 2024 in a statement signed by the Chief Press Secretary to the State Government, Pastor Sulaiman Olanrewaju. Dr. Taiwo Lasisi succeeds Professor Kazeem Adekunle Adebisi whose five-year tenure elapsed on Monday March 25, 2024.

Japa: Reps Member Lists Causes Of Talents' Flight From Nigeria

By; UTEBORPETER, Asaba
Member Representing Isoko Federal Constituency in the House of Representatives, Hon. Jonathan Ukodhiko has said that economic hardship, lack of jobs, gross unavailability of power for production, inflation and galloping exchange rates were fueling flight of talents from Nigeria. Rep. Ukodhiko who is Deputy Chairman House Committee on Science and Technology, stated this in his remarks as Chairman of the 2024 Edition of the Maris Annual Public Service Lecture held on Wednesday at the Unity Hall, Government House, Asaba. He said that the theme of the lecture 'Flight of Talents: Navigating Nigeria's Brain Drain Predicament,' was apt considering the negative impact of brain drain on the economic development of the country. Represented by the Delta State

Commissioner for Health, Dr. Joseph Onojaeme, the federal lawmaker lauded the organisers of the annual public service lecture for the choice of the topic, and urged relevant stakeholders to work towards reversing the trend. He said: "As an oil and gas professional, I have through my interests in the downstream and upstream sector, provided jobs for numerous Nigerians, however, the rate at which Nigerians are leaving the country in geometric proportion in search of greener pastures abroad is becoming worrisome. "What is more pathetic about the situation which is now termed 'japa syndrome' is because the best skilled professionals from Nigeria are leaving the country thereby creating vacuums in several sectors of our economy. "Perhaps what is fueling these 'flight of talents' from the country include economic hardship, lack

of jobs, gross unavailability of power for production, inflation and galloping exchange rates, among other factors. "The exodus of highly educated and skilled individuals not only deprives Nigeria of its human capital but also exacerbates the brain drain predicament. "I trust that the erudite keynote speaker and the capable discussants would dissect the topic and proffer adequate solutions to this conundrum that is threatening the fabric of our existence as a nation." Ukodhiko added. In her keynote address, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Delta Agbor, Professor Stella Chiemeké, said the hemorrhaging of talents from Nigeria had reached alarming proportions threatening not only the nation's present but it's very future. "Nigeria loses over 50,000 skilled professionals annually to

emigration according to United Nations Development Programme UNDP estimates. "A study by the Development Research and Project Centre reveals that over 5,000 Nigerian doctors migrated to the UK between 2015 and 2022 and approximately 8,737 medical professionals with degrees from Nigeria are currently working in the UK. "The World Health Organisation WHO estimates a doctor-patient ratio in Nigeria is five times worse than recommended highlighting the devastating impact on healthcare. "The brain drain is not limited to medicine; the exodus extends to diverse sectors like engineering, finance, IT, and academia, each experiencing a steady loss of their brightest." Prof. Chiemeké further said Nigeria could reverse the trend by addressing internal challenges such as significant investments in critical

infrastructure and services, basic needs such as power, education, transport, healthcare, combating corruption and insecurity and other utilities to improve business competitiveness. The lecture which was moderated by Dr Kemi Emina had discussants including the State Commissioner for Technical Education, Hon. Joan Onyemaechi Ada-Anioma, Chief Economic Adviser to the Delta State Governor, Dr Barry Pere-Gbe, Special Adviser on Investments Chief Tony Amaechi, Chief Philomena Edeley and Barr. Freddie Toritseju Erelu-Ede. In his vote of thanks, Secretary Maris Trust Council, Comrade Fidelis Egugbo said the annual public service lecture was in the 5th series instituted in memory of his late daughter, Stella-Maris Chukwufunimnanya Egugbo to address topical issues of concern to the nation.

University Don Calls For Establishment Of Nigeria Cultural Studies At FUL

By; ADAMA JOHN, Lokoja

Professor of African and Post Colonial Literary Studies, Department of English and Literary Studies, Prof. Abel Joseph has called for the establishment of a Centre for Nigeria Cultural studies that would midwife a project to canonize Northern Nigeria writers at Federal University Lokoja (FUL)

Prof. Abel's position was made known at the 17th inaugural lecture on Wednesday on the topic, 'Weaving the tapestry of Northern Nigeria fictional imaginaries from the provincial to the pluriversal' held at the university campus in Adankolo Lokoja, Kogi State.

The University Don noted that, through this, the University can live up to the general and statutory expectations of a centre of learning aware of and vibrancy responding to emerging ideational values and their nuances for research, pedagogy and innovation.

He asserted that, in this centre, scholars can research on significant historical and archaeological aspects of Nigeria's fast disappearing cultural ethos.

The Professor of African and Post colonial Literary studies said, "I will further secure for Federal University Lokoja that capacity for knowledge production and the Possible canonization of same in much the same instances that Universities of Ibadan, Nigeria (Nsukka), Benin, Obafemi Awolowo, have

succeeded in canonising Nigerian writers like Achebe, Clark, Soyinka, Okigbo, es Okpewho, Osundare, Iyayi, Ojaide, and a host of others.

"It would help in raising other gifted but neglected Nigerian Writers from within the immediate avalanche of Central Nigeria and beyond.

"In becoming a center of excellence, inclusive of and beyond the studies in Northern Nigerian literature, the university will be remarked as a nurturer of skilled cultural and social ambassador impacting on the general spiritual and intellectual scope of the community, which shall naturally ensure the noble cross-cutting dialogue between town and gown and vice-versa."

He identified translation initiative, library festival and events, digital platform and online presence, collaboration and partnership, education and literary programmes, author residence and exchange, media engagement, support for literary infrastructure, as some of the strategies for fostering international appreciation of Northern Literature.

"What is expected of any novelist with a pronounced sense of history is to make the past present, to bring the distant near. Accordingly, Northern Nigerian fictional Imaginaries in English have woven their way from the provincial to signify, interrogate history, colonial legacies, power relations, hegemony as well as the continuing interlacing and

overlapping of cultures which define the texture and the tradition of the Novel in post colonial Nigeria.

"Therefore, the frontiers of the Nigerian Novel have been further expanded because the development introduces issues, themes, and experiences which highlights the commonality of Nigeria's predicament.

"Before now, it was almost as if northern Nigeria existed in an isolationist space, and was deliberately resisting 'assimilation' into Nigerian literature in English expression. However, there has been a surge in literary and creative output from younger generation of northern Nigerians whose works now mark an embrace of a culture of 'cosmopolitan urbanity' as the literature now explores all aspects of life in Nigeria..

"These young writers are also exploring the impact of Islam on cultural diversity and are revealing a variant of social and cultural developments which the novels from other regions have not explored.

"Accordingly, scholars like Sani Abba Aliyu (1988, 1993), Oba Abduraheem (1990), Abdalla Ubah Adama (2003, 2005), Abel Joseph (2005), Richard Ugbede Ali (2009) and many others are stirring up conversations on creative works written within secular liberal tradition and which have drawn on several traditions to transcend the provincial peculiarity to participate in the discourse on

national development and global post colonial contexts.

"It is interesting that in spite of its lack of concern with 'national issues', the northern Nigerian fictional imaginaries have in recent years knitted significant national politics into their art. These works now also embody and signify certain phenomena that are peculiar to the North but have extended to issues of such of feudal hegemony and power relation, elite formation, and the gender relations and representations, especially in the says in which these relations are negotiated within post colonial Nigeria.

"The pluriversal essence in literature to me signifies a broader acknowledgment of the value of all human experiences and a celebration of the rich cocktail of cultures that make up our global society. The submission here is that the Northern Nigerian fictional imaginaries have emerged and integrated into the larger canon of Nigerian fictional narrative in very significant ways especially in terms of the novels' 'interrogation of issues of post colonial social and political experience such as governance and responsibility, poverty, marginalization, urbanization and globalization; issues that are well beyond parochial, regional or Provincial interests".

Prof Joseph acknowledged the place of literature in shaping cultural understanding of humanity.

According to him, "STEM is

important but is not superior to humanistic discourses as she alone does not define life.

"Like all other spheres, Science is also shaped by the political, religious, social and economic considerations/interests. There is no grant or funding for scientific researches that are offered without these considerations because, these grants and funds are deliberately channeled to support or help particular political, economic or religious goals.

"I would suggest for the encouragement that all Science related courses in the University have at least a course in literature for deeper understanding of the pluriversal nature of humanity.

"Pluriversal literature holds significant importance in the context of the new post-human reality, which encompasses the evolving relationship between humans, technology, and the environment.

"Pluriversal literature holds significant importance in the context of the new post human reality, where advances in technology, shifting identities, and inter-connected global experiences are shaping the way we understand ourselves and our world.

"Pluriversal literature is relevant and valuable in this evolving landscape: in this new reality, literature allows readers to engage with characters who navigate both physical and virtual worlds, reflecting the emergent post human condition," he stated.



Ramadan: Sale Of Water Melon Booming In Kano - Report

By; JABIRU A. HASSAN, Kano

Water melon sales and marketing is going successfully as the vendors and dealers across Kano State now witnessing bumper sales when the Ramadan fast is ongoing.

Our correspondent who went to some markets and water melon sales joints reported that the vendors lamented boost in their daily sales because the number of

the consumers increased due to Ramadan fasting.

At Badume Rural Market, Malam Musa Bala disclosed that, "our water melon is pure and fresh that is why we makes sales more than any other place that sells the commodity, and you can see how fresh our goods are being displayed for the respective buyers". He stated.

In his remarks, Auwal Magaji who grows and sells water melon for a

long time, announced that this year alone, water melon business is one of the successful income generating products, where he lamented that water melon is an important consumables during fastings.

The price of the commodity remained from 200 Naira, 300 and 700 but it depends on the size of each piece which includes the transportation expenses.

Timi Frank Congratulates Senegal's President-elect, Bassirou Faye

**Tasks new President on welfare, empowerment of youths*

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Former Deputy National Publicity Secretary of the All Progressives Congress (APC), Comrade Timi Frank, on Thursday, congratulated the President-Elect of Senegal, Mr. Bassirou Faye, on his victory at the polls.

Frank in a statement in Abuja, urged the incoming Senegalese President to prioritise the welfare, interest and empowerment of the youths of Senegal during his tenure.

He urged him not to disappoint the people of Senegal that elected him but rather should be an exemplar of the rich ideas, innovativeness and transformative energy of youths in Africa and beyond.

Frank said: "We urge you to put the interests of the youths of Senegal first before any other consideration. Work hard to show that the youths can also be relied on in the continent.

"Make sure you keep to your campaign promises and be a good ambassador of not just the youths of Senegal but the entire continent. Besides, Don't betray opposition leader, Ousmane Sonko, since

you are now the ultimate beneficiary of his struggles, political persecution and imprisonment.

"Never forget that the sacrifices he made contributed immensely in your emergence as Senegal's incoming President. Above all, work with all positive and progressive forces in Senegal to build the country."

He added: "I most earnestly enjoin you, on assumption of office, to immediately release all political detainees incarcerated by Mr. Sall. Also ensure that all those that died during the struggle to defend the country's constitution and democracy are accorded special honour by remembering their families."

Frank who is the United Liberation Movement for West Papua (ULMWP) to East Africa and Middle East, said he is particularly gratified for lending his voice in support of the struggle that led to the eventual victory of the opposition when ex-President Marky Sall was oppressing and suppressing the movement.

He said: "Recall that about



Timi Frank

two months ago, precisely on February 7, 2024, I had in a statement condemned President Macky Sall, for postponing the presidential election earlier scheduled for February 25.

"I had equally called on the governments of the United Kingdom, United States of America and the European Union to place a visa ban on Sall over his attempt to derail democracy in Senegal."

He called on security agencies and electoral bodies in other African countries to learn what it means to conduct a peaceful, free, fair and

credible elections from Senegal.

"It is our hope that Nigeria's electoral body, security agencies and similar institutions in other countries within the continent will learn from Senegal how to conduct free, fair and credible elections.

"We expect every other country to borrow a leaf from Senegal's sterling example because peaceful election is the only antidote to post election crisis and violence and with losers having no option but to concede defeat."

Delta Varsity Ozoro Partners MG VOWGAS On Practical Engineering Training For Students

By: UTEBOR PETER, Asaba

Delta State University of Science and Technology, Ozoro has signed a memorandum of understanding with MG VOWGAS LIMITED, an indigenous oil and gas servicing company for the practical engineering training of students of the nascent University.

At the signing ceremony at the company's office in Port Harcourt, the Rivers State capital, the Vice-Chancellor of the University, Professor Jacob Oboreh said the partnership marks a turning point in the university's quest to produce world class engineering and technologically savvy graduates.

Professor Oboreh thanked the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of the company,

Mr. Godwin Izomor and the General Manager of the company for Government and External Relations, Mr. Anthony Ogilo for their interest in partnering with the University to develop young professionals in the oil and gas as well as engineering industry.

"As part of deepening Delta State University of Science and Technology Ozoro in areas of engineering, we have come to seek collaboration with MG VOWGAS engineering company in Port Harcourt in the area of practical engineering training for our students and for further areas of assistance to the University.

"On behalf of His Excellency, the Governor of Delta State, Rt. Hon. Elder Sheriff Oborevwo and the good people of Delta State, I thank

you for accepting to collaborate with Delta State University of Science and Technology, Ozoro."

The elated Vice-Chancellor said the content of the agreement would be very very beneficial to the University adding that details of the agreement would be communicated to the Governor for further action.

The Vice-Chancellor was received by the General Manager for Government and External Relations, Mr. Anthony Ogilo who said he has been directed by the Managing Director and Chief executive Mr. Godwin Izomoh to prepare agreement of collaboration and sign with the university.

Highlight of the Vice-Chancellor's visit ended with signing an agreement on collaboration with the university in several areas.

Ohanaeze Hails Tinubu Over Release Of Kaduna School Children, Youth Quota Approval

By: KELVIN OKPARA, Enugu,

The Youth wing of apex Igbo socio-cultural body, Ohanaeze Ndigbo Youth Council Worldwide has hailed the President Bola Ahmed Tinubu government for the release of the schoolchildren abducted by bandits in Kaduna State.

The group was also full of praise for the Tinubu administration over the Federal Executive Council (FEC), approval of a two per cent youth quota and 30 per cent representation of young people in all government appointments. It would be recalled that the pupils, who were freed in Zamfara State, arrived in Kaduna on Monday amid jubilation by their parents and guardians.

The federal government has also come out to say that no ransom was paid for their freedom.

In a statement made available to journalists on Wednesday, National President of Ohanaeze Ndigbo Youth Council Worldwide, Mazi Okwu Nnabuike described the efforts of the government and the security agencies as historical.

Okwu said the swift action taken by the government was responsible for the successful rescue of the hostages, stressing that "such would have been the case with Chibok girls, but the then government, which was ill advised, lived in denial until the children were moved to different locations."

He said, "we are glad that the President marched words with action and it produced the success story we are celebrating. This is what we should be. Nigeria should not be made to look like the safest abode for

criminals.

"It gladdens our hearts that these innocent children have now been safely reunited with their loved ones."

He, however, advised the government to go all out and arrest anyone who has anything to do with the escalating cases of abductions and banditry in the country.

"No matter how highly placed, such persons should be arrested and made to face the full weight of the law.

"There should be a tough stance against all promoters of terrorism in whatever form," Okwu advised.

Meanwhile, the Ohanaeze youths have also commended the FEC for approving two initiatives aimed at fostering better inclusion and development opportunities for the teeming youth population of Nigeria.

They include the institutionalisation of a 2 per cent youth quota, 30 per cent representation of young people in all government appointments and the restructuring of the Nigerian Youth Investment Fund, NYIF.

Okwu described the decision as "another milestone by the Tinubu administration on youth inclusion.

"This is why we continue to appeal to the youths to remain calm and positive as we have every assurance that this government means well for the youthful generation.

"We salute Mr President so much and urge those in charge to ensure full implementation of these approvals to enable the youths contribute their quota towards the success of the Renewed Hope Agenda of the President."

Oyo Working Towards Reducing Numbers Of Out Of School Children - Prof Adelabu

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

Oyo State Commissioner for Education, Science, and Technology, Professor Salihu Adelabu, has disclosed that the state government is working towards reducing numbers of out of school children in the state by ten per cent.

Prof Adelabu made this known on Wednesday at a 3-Day Support Mission Organized by the Oyo State Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology for three BESDA AF- TESS Beneficiary States, (Oyo, Adamawa and Katsina in collaboration with the World Bank at the University of Ibadan.

The Commissioner maintained that the state government is leaving no stone unturned to ensure that residents in the state have access to quality education, thereby improving numeracy and literacy levels in the state. Emphasizing the importance of the BESDA - AF- TESS project, he said the programme is in line with the Sustainable Development Goal four and Seventeen, that by 2030, education should be for all, adding that all school aged children are expected to have access to quality education, irrespective of their background.

"This BESDA Additional Financing is targeting four major points. First is access, there should be school for all, all the school aged children must be in the school. The other one is quality; that is why we are strengthening the system, we are putting a lot of things in place to make sure that there is access, there is quality and there is improvement in our

numeracy and literacy level in the state", he said.

Prof Adelabu added, "In the last administration of Governor Seyi Makinde, 20 percent of our out of school children were back in school, and we are working around 10 per cent because we want that to be reduced drastically" Adamawa State Commissioner for Education and Human Capital Development, Dr. Umar Garba Tella while speaking, said concerted efforts would be made so that the aims and objectives of the program development partners in Adamawa State comes into fruition.

Dr Tella lauded the World Bank for supporting the Adamawa State Government in its determined efforts to provide the children the right access to acquire quality education, regardless of where they live.

"This project is a performance-based project, two indicators were given to us in Adamawa, and we are happy to partner with the World Bank. Fundamentally, we want a situation whereby there won't be any child in the state, that is out of school, there won't be any school without a teacher"

The Education Specialist, World Bank, Martin De Simone in his remarks said the intervention was targeted at improving the quality of teaching and learning in basic schools, providing infrastructure and increasing the numbers of classrooms.

De Simone then advised participating states to learn from each other and focus largely on how to achieve results within the programme's life span.

Zulum Meets Tinubu Over South Chad Irrigation Scheme

*Says President approves Gwoza FCE take off



By ; SADIQ ABUBAKAR, Maiduguri

Borno State Governor, Babagana Umara Zulum, on Tuesday, met with President Bola Ahmed Tinubu to discuss the post-conflict developmental programme for his state. Zulum speaking to newsmen after meeting President Tinubu at the Presidential villa, he said he discussed modalities for reactivating the South Chad irrigation scheme with the president. Zulum noted that with peace gradually returning to Borno, the state is committed to harnessing all avenues that will bring

development.

"We spoke about the Lake Chad Basin. Now that we are having relative peace in Borno State, there is a need for the government to ensure the re-establishment of the South Chad irrigation project," Zulum said.

Zulum stated that in responding to his request, President Tinubu has expressed commitment to improve security around the Lake Chad Basin and facilitate access to agricultural land.

"I spoke with Mr. President and he assured me to look into establishing a solid security outfit in the Lake Chad Basin so that people can access the agricultural

lands," Zulum said.

The governor added, "The South Chad irrigation project has tremendous potential to produce food to cater for the needs of the entire northern Nigeria or I can say even the whole country. But, due to insecurity in the region, the irrigation scheme has not been functioning very well for a decade or more."

"So, I think this is very important information now that the country is working towards ensuring food security, both in quantity and quality. "Insha Allah, when these irrigation projects are reestablished, I believe the issue of food security will be addressed not only in Borno state but also in

Nigeria."

Meanwhile, Governor Babagana Umara Zulum stated that President Bola Ahmed Tinubu has approved the immediate take-off of the Federal College of Education, Gwoza.

"I'm pleased to notify you that the President has approved the immediate takeoff of the Federal College of Education Gwoza," Zulum said.

Zulum also discussed the repatriation of displaced persons that are indigenes of Borno State from the Republic of Chad, Niger and Cameroon which has been suspended. He said President Tinubu has given his commitment that it will resume.



Comptroller FOU Zone 'B', Dalha Wada Chedi at the zonal office, where several items seized were displayed.

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

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Width	25.4 (CM)	Width -	10 (Inches)

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

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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	

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S/NO	POSITION	SIZE	RATE	VAT	TOTAL
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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			
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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)	550,000.00	41,250.00	591,250.00
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

Hardship: Governor Eno Launches Food Scheme In Akwa Ibom

*Announces N1.5bn interest free loan

By: PATRICK TITUS, Uyo

As part efforts to cushion the effects of the current economic melt-down on the masses, Akwa Ibom State Governor, Pastor Umo Eno has launched a food security programme in the state.

At the flag-off of the programme, tagged "ARISE Free Food" at the Itam Market, Itam in Itu Local Government Area on Tuesday, Governor Eno, who reiterated his administration's commitment to the wellbeing of the downtrodden, said he will continue to develop policies geared at lifting the poor from a state of despair.

To further ease the problem, the governor announced a 1.5 billion naira interest free revolving loan scheme for all traders in the state. He said that under the scheme, 500 million Naira is earmarked for traders in each of the three senatorial districts of the state.

The governor announced the appointment of three Senior Special Assistants to the Governor on Traders Matters to cover the three senatorial districts of the State, and ten special assistants on traders matters to cover the ten federal constituencies of the State.

He said the traders' credit facilities, will be made available to the traders through the state owned, Ibom Fadama Micro Finance Bank and urged the traders to open accounts in the bank.



"We are releasing to each senatorial district market an interest free loan of five hundred million Naira per senatorial district.

"Every money will be paid into the Ibom FADAMA Micro Finance Bank. So if you do not have an account with the bank, do so. Each business person should open an account with them.

"This is for everyone. There's no such thing as portfolio marketer. The people must have their stalls in the market working with the SAs and Market Union."

Governor Eno said.

He said the idea is to enable effective monitoring and implementation of the various schemes instituted by his administration for traders in the State.

The governor said the Bulk Purchase Agency, the anchor vehicle of the scheme, which was recently inaugurated in the State, was meant to work towards crashing and stabilizing the price of food in the state.

Speaking further on the scheme, the governor charged the personal aides to ensure

transparency and accountability in the process.

Pastor Eno announced plans to set up an agriculture committee to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the programme across the state.

"Let no one make any mistake that these vouchers can be replicated. You will not be able to fake this one because these vouchers are printed by the Nigeria Printing and Minting Company and if we catch you, it is an offence.

"So when they give you the voucher then they will give you the food. Garri will be 5kg, rice 5kg, and beans 5kg.

"There is no guarantee that one person will have more than one voucher. So whatever voucher you have, take it to the market and a scale will be used by the agent at the redemption center to measure the food to you.

"For those who want to be part of the scheme, it is a business and all measurements must be done with scales and not cups. If you do not have a scale, you are not qualified."

The governor warned his personal aides drawn from all the 368 wards to ensure that only people who are in the social registers, are given the food vouchers.

He also announced that each personal aide has been given a mobile computer tablet to ensure the social registers are meticulously used to execute the

programme.

The governor however, insisted that "what is important is that we must have a way of sustaining this programme; all of us will go back to the farm."

He added that the Bulk Purchase Agency will be on hand to offtake crops harvested by farmers in the State at favourable costs to all famers and encouraged everyone to take advantage of the offer to embrace farming.

Earlier, the Chairman of Bulk Purchase Agency, Dr. Dan Akpan, Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development, Dr. Offiong Ofor, the Senior Special Assistant to the Governor on Traders Matters, Mr Idorenyin Raphael and representative of traders, Godwin Ebong- President of Itam Traders Union and Madam Magdalene Udom, State Woman Leader of the trader's union, appreciated the Governor for embarking on the scheme and pledged their resolve to ensure they worked hard for the success of the food intervention programme.

Highpoints of the ceremony, were the presentation of food vouchers to some vulnerable persons from Itu local government area, while other local government areas in the state are expected to carry out their flag-off next Tuesday.



Zulum' Distributes Palliatives: To 3,000 Men, Disburses N5,000 Cash, Wrappers To 3,500 Women In Marte

By; SADIQABUBAKAR, Maiduguri
Borno State Governor, Prof. Babagana Umara Zulum' has distributed food palliatives and disbursed cash support to selected 6,500 households/families in New Marte, Headquarters of Marte Local Government Area of the state. The distribution, which took place in New Marte on Monday and Tuesday, included 25 kg bags of rice to 3,000 male households and 25 kg bags of maize to each of the benefitting 3,000 male

families, while on Tuesday, 3,500 female households were disbursed N5,000 cash alongside a bundle of Nigerian textile fabric wrappers each to the women that benefitted from the N5,000 provision. The entire distribution process was closely supervised by Borno State High powered Palliatives Committee Chairman, Hon. Engr. Bukar Talba who is also the House of Representatives Member representing Marte, Monguno, and Nganzai Federal Constituency at the National Assembly on behalf of the State

Governor, Prof. Babagana Umara Zulum'. New Marte is the administrative seat of Marte Local Government Area of Borno State located at the western coast of Lake Chad as one of the stronghold Boko Haram terrorists that was among the few LGAs that were yet to be liberated by the military sharing international border with Niger and Chad republics, which was attacked and came under Boko Haram's occupation displacing the people until it was liberated by the military recently and the IDPs were resettled by Governor Zulum on November 30, 2020

and still under tight military guards like Kala Balge, Guzamala and Abadam LGAs located in Northern Borno. Engr. Talba was accompanied by Engr. Mohammed Gombomi, Member representing Marte LGC State Constituency, at the State House of Assembly, Honourable Commissioner for Agriculture and Natural Resources, Engr. Bawu Musami and the Executive Chairman of Marte, Hon. Babagana Abatcha as well as Alhaji Ali Shettima Marte among others.





Journalists at the Ramadan lecture

Hardship: Embrace Agriculture, Patronise Locally Made Products, Sheikh Atere Tasks Nigerians

By; **BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan**

Chairman of the Oyo State Pilgrims Welfare Board (Muslim Wing) Sheikh Hashim Atere last Saturday, charged Nigerians to embrace agriculture and patronise locally made products.

Sheikh Atere gave the charge at the 6th annual Shina Peller sponsored Ramadan lecture of Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) Oyo State Council, held at the NUJ Press Centre, Iyaganku, Ibadan. The Chairman Oyo State Pilgrims Welfare Board (Muslim Wing) attributed the current economic hardship in the country to neglect of agriculture and locally made products among the citizens.

According to him, many Nigerians have neglected agriculture which is causing food scarcity in the country with most Nigerians patronising foreign goods at the expense of locally made products thereby causing them more money.

"If we are talking about hardship, it was not caused by the government. Nobody want to patronise locally made products. We have neglected agricultural sector. We do not have farmers again especially here in the South West. We have used all the lands to build estates", he said.

Sheikh Atere added, "We want to eat eggs but we don't rear hens. The hardship was caused by neglect of agriculture. We are the ones causing the hardship. Let us eat locally made foods and stop depending on foreign goods".

On the topic, "Ramadan: Spirits of sharing and caring as panacea for

hardship", he stressed that one of the solutions to reduce the hardship is for the citizens to have a change of mindset by embracing agriculture and patronise locally made products.

Speaking further, Sheikh Atere said "Payment of Zakat is one of the pillars of Islam. We don't do it the way it supposed to be. That is why we have many poor people", adding, "The rich should ensure payment of Zakat. It is just one percent out of 40 per cent of your money. We have neglected all these things and that is why we have hardship in the last".

"The rich should make people happy, they should assist the poor and politicians should not wait for 2027 elections before they assist the people".

Ayedero of Yorubaland, Hon Shina Peller who sponsored the lecture appealed to journalists in the country to always discharge their duties in accordance to the rules of their profession.

"We started this Ramadan lecture seven years ago. This is the sixth edition because we do not have opportunity to do it in 2020 during COVID-19", he said.

Hon Peller added, "Journalists are very powerful people. They are very important in any government and no government can play with them. I was them to discharge their duties as expected".

The lecture was attended by a former Deputy of the state, Barrister Azeem Gbolarumi, Hon. Sina Oyedeji, Hon. Adebayo Adepoju, Dr. Bayo Busari, and the Oyo state NUJ Chairman, Alhaji Ademola Babalola among other dignitaries.

Lagos Taskforce Sanitises Restricted Routes, Impounds 470 Motorcycles

By; **RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos**

The Lagos State Taskforce has said that it has impounded a total of 470 motorcycles plying restricted routes in some parts of the state within a week.

According to the agency, the achievement is marking a significant stride in the ongoing endeavour to safeguard motorists and maintain sanity on Lagos Highways.

A statement made available to journalists on Monday, the Director, Press & Public Affairs Lagos State Taskforce, Gbadeyan Abdulraheem said that the operation was led by its Chairman CSP Shola Jejeloye.

He added that the operation, spanning various strategic locations including, Berger, Fagba, Dopemu, Iyana Ipaja, 2nd Rainbow, Festac, First

Gate, Alakija, Mile 2, Ilasan, Maroko, Lekki, Ikota, and Chevron, resulted in the confiscation of 150, 120, and 250 motorcycles, respectively. The statement reads, "The Lagos State Taskforce, under the leadership of Chairman CSP Shola Jejeloye, has intensified its efforts to enforce the ban on motorcycle operations, popularly known as Okada, in restricted areas across the state.

"In a week-long operation, a total of 470 motorcycles were seized, marking a significant stride in the ongoing endeavor to safeguard motorist and maintain sanity on Lagos Highways.

"The operation, spanning various strategic locations including Berger, Fagba, Dopemu, Iyana Ipaja, 2nd Rainbow, Festac, First Gate, Alakija, Mile 2, Ilasan, Maroko, Lekki, Ikota, and Chevron, resulted in the confiscation

of 150, 120, and 250 motorcycles, respectively, from these areas.

"The Chairman stated that most okada operators seen riding their bikes believe the ban would blow over and they would be allowed to creep back onto the Highways but that is not the case.

"Any right thinking okada operator would at this point in time realise that it is not business as usual. Our operations have been precise and consistent which indicates that there is no room for okada in Lagos."

CSP Shola Jejeloye emphasized the unwavering commitment of the Lagos State Government to eradicate Okada operations, aligning with the master plan outlined in the THEMES PLUS Agenda of the State Government. Highlighting the inherent risks associated with motorcycle transportation, he urged commuters to

prioritize safer alternatives like new blue/ red line railway services and Millennium Buses services to avoid potential bodily harm by okada or prosecution by the State Government if caught on a bike.

CSP Jejeloye further disclosed that the concerted efforts of the Lagos State Taskforce supports the State Government's dedication to promoting a safe, secure and habitable environment, fostering responsible transportation practices, and ensuring the well-being of all Lagosian. He appealed to okada operators still operating in the shadow to seek other legitimate means of survival or relocate out of the State. He assured Lagosians that the Agency would carry on with its raids across all restricted areas, highways and bridges till Okada operations become a myth.

Nigeria's Ginger Farmers Get NADF N1.6bn Input Support

By; **ISAAC ODEH, Kaduna**

The National Agricultural Development Fund (NADF) Executive Secretary, Mohammed Abu Ibrahim, has said that the Federal Government, through the NADF, is providing support valued at N1.6bn input package to ginger farmers in three states, including the Federal Capital Territory. The input support is under package, which is the Ginger Recovery Advancement and Transformation for Economic Empowerment (GRATE).

He disclosed this at the Launch of Ginger Blight Epidemic Control Taskforce support Initiative supported by the office of the Vice President held in Kaduna on Wednesday.

According to him, 15,000 ginger farmers from

Kaduna, Plateau, Nasarawa, and the Federal Capital Territory were affected by the recent ginger blight epidemic in the country.

According to him, this happens when the country has started witnessing considerable growth in ginger export.

Abu said the National Bureau for Statistics (NBS) reports that revenue from ginger export increased by 17% to hit N10bn in Q2 of 2023 compared to N4.6bn over the same period in 2022.

According to him, It is in response to the epidemic crisis that this task force was set up.

"At the first instance, the Federal Government through the NADF is providing support valued at N1.6bn starting out with 1 ha input packs appropriately named the GRATE package, which is the Ginger Recovery

Advancement and Transformation for Economic Empowerment.

"The recent ginger blight epidemic, while affecting an estimated 15,000 farmers across Kaduna, Plateau, Nasarawa States, and the FCT, came at a time our country had started to see considerable growth in ginger exports," he said.

He explained that the support package to be given to the farmers, contains 1pc 20kg bag of high-yield seed variety, 4pcs 50kg bags of NPK fertilizer, 2pcs 50kg bags of urea, 2pcs 1kg bag of fungicide.

Others are 1pc 1ltr of insecticide, 2pcs 1 litre of herbicide, 1pc 2 litre of post-emergence herbicide. He said the team is eager to see ginger being grated in rural communities again in the immediate term.

In her remarks, Technical

Assistant on Agriculture office of the Vice President, Maryam Moon said the presidency is taking the issue of agriculture and ginger farming very seriously as part of the government's renewed agenda program.

According to her, many countries, among them Mexico, are busy trying to grow Nigerian Ginger because it's one of the best in the world.

She also urged farmers to increase ginger production in the country.

The State Governor Uba Sani represented by his Deputy Hadiza Sabuwa Balarabe commended the federal government for its support to the affected farmers in the state.

He described the state ginger as one of the best in the world urging them to be more dedicated to their farming business.

2024 World Tuberculosis Day: Borno Govt, WHO, Others Flag Off Commemoration Programme

**Each day, close to 3,800 people lose lives to TB, about 30,000 people fall ill to TB - Prof Gana, Borno Health Com*

By: SADIQ ABUBAKAR, Maiduguri

Borno State Ministry of Health and Human Services in collaboration with World Health Organization (WHO) and partners has organized a one day commemoration activity to mark 2024 World Tuberculosis Day held at PHEOC Eye Hospital Conference Hall in Maiduguri on Monday, with a theme, "Yes, we can end TB".

The Borno State Commissioner of Health and Human Services, Professor Baba Malam Gana said each day, close to 3,800 people lose their lives to TB and about 30,000 fall ill with this preventable and curable disease. Processor Baba Malam who stated this on Monday at the commemoration activity to mark 2024 World Tuberculosis Day at the PHEOC Eye Hospital Maiduguri Conference Hall, added that global efforts to combat TB has saved an estimated 75 million lives since the year 2000.

While emphasizing that tuberculosis remains an important public health problem in Borno State and awareness about the disease, its diagnosis, and treatment among the public will help in controlling the disease and reduce it to a drastically level if not eradicate it completely.

He said with the present cases, a TB person can spread or extend to about 10-15 other persons in a community which makes it dangerous and to be prevented and treated with all seriousness while calling on the media as partners in progress to help dissemination and educate the public on the availability of free drugs and diagnosis as well as treatment for TB across the nooks and crannies of the 27 LGAs of the state.

Processor Gana further appreciated WHO and other health partners for their significant role and support to address the issues and challenges of TB in Borno state where WHO have signed an MoU to assist and support the Borno state government overcome the predicament and training in capacity building of 60 TB handlers and coordinators at the 27 LGAs and some TB state managers and officers team participated in the training while sophisticated equipments and other apparatus have been provided by WHO.

He charged the media to

collaborate with the ministry and its partners in the campaigns on TB prevention and treatment in order not to allow a split over to neighbouring countries if Chad, Niger and Cameroon Republics as TB is transmissible, dangerous as a killer disease but can be prevented and cured or treated.

The State Commissioner added that Predisposing factors associated with tuberculosis includes poverty, insecurity, crowding, under nutrition, and co morbidities, pointing out that, people need to be health educated on importance of cough hygiene, cross ventilation and nutrition.

"And also to create awareness on cause of tuberculosis and its sign and symptoms which include cough for two week and above, Weight loss, fever and night sweat by the media.

"Also on importance of contact tracing. We should not leave the fight against tuberculosis for government and partners alone its need collaborative effort from household, community, religion leaders and these will be achieve through advocacy, communication and social mobilization.

"We have seen the political will and commitment in the state in fight against tuberculosis, support from WHO and other partners with that collaborative effort, we will change narrative of tuberculosis in Borno state," Gana said

Borno State TB Programme Manager, Dr. Goni Imam said World Tuberculosis Day is an Annual event being observed worldwide to sensitize and enlightenment as well as educate the public on the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of TB which has been identified as a killer disease and dangerous to human health globally.

He added that efforts have so far been made by the ministry to ensure low level or total reduction of not of the eradication of the disease which affects both the children and adult.

Dr. Imam also noted that despite the high level percentage of the prevalence if the disease in Nigeria and also Borno state, measures are being put in place to bring to an end TB in the state in line with the WHO support through capacity building and equipments as well as other diagnostics and treatment machines and drugs among



others.

The TB Programme Manager thanked WHO and other partners for their support and interventions in TB and other related diseases in all the books and crannies of the state at this monumental period.

"People with tuberculosis are among marginalized and vulnerable and face barriers in accessing care. Stigmatization and discrimination are major drivers of the tuberculosis epidemic, despite it is preventable, treatable and curable.

"The year 2024 is the year of action with positive outcome At conclusion, I appreciate the effort of public sectors such H M B, S P H C D A, EMERGENCY OPERATION CENTER AND BOSCHMA for their support in tuberculosis case finding and management," Dr. Imam said.

State Coordinator WHO, Borno, Dr Ibrahim Salisu commended Zulum for his support and provision of enabling environment for partners to support the state.

He said, "We are all gathered to mark the 2024 World Tuberculosis (TB) Day. Tuberculosis has plagued humanity for centuries, claiming countless lives and inflicting untold suffering on individuals, families, and communities worldwide.

"There was a significant worldwide recovery in the scale-up of TB diagnosis and treatment services in 2022. It

shows an encouraging trend starting to reverse the detrimental effects of COVID-19 disruptions on TB services.

"Despite significant strides in medical science and public health, TB remains a formidable global health threat, particularly in vulnerable and marginalized populations. TB is present in all countries and age groups. But TB is curable and preventable.

"Today, as we gather to commemorate World Tuberculosis (TB) Day, we come together not just to raise awareness but reaffirm our commitment to combating one of the oldest and deadliest diseases known to humanity.

"It's a day to reflect on our progress, acknowledge our challenges, and renew our dedication to ending the suffering caused by TB. In order to scale up TB case detection and treatment in Borno State, WHO has just concluded the training of over 60 State and LGAs TB and Leprosy Control Managers, including some partners and CBOS on TB program management," Dr. Salisu said.

Dr. Salisu added after the training, WHO will continue to provide technical support, drugs and commodities and ensure adequate case detection, treatment and data management. All hands must therefore be on deck to change the TB narrative in Borno State.

He added that the theme of the World TB Day 2024 'Yes! We can end TB!' - conveys a message of hope that getting

back-on-track to turn the tide against the TB epidemic is possible through high level leadership, increased investments in TB Control efforts and faster uptake of new WHO recommendations.

WHO State Coordinator also commended Governor and Honorable Commissioner for Health for allocating nearly 15% of the total state budget to the Health Sector, pointing out that, "with this allocation, we believe that there would be adequate resources to support all health programs, including the TBL program in the state."

"In its latest Global Tuberculosis Report, WHO highlighted that more than 7.5million people with TB received access to diagnosis and treatment in 2022, the highest since we began monitoring almost 30 years ago.

"On behalf of WHO team in Borno, I wish to recognize the Ministry of Health under the leadership of Professor B. M Gana for the giant strides achieved and the strong collaboration we are enjoying today," Dr. Salisu said.

Highlights of the event include road walk/street show for Public Awareness from State Epidemiological Unit (SEU) to Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Eye Hospital Damboa Road Maiduguri, presentation on childhood TB-MSF Belgium, Interview of TB Survivors, songs and photographs among others.

African Games: SWAN Thumbs Up Minister Enoh For Team Nigeria's Performance

**Hails Sports Journalists For Robust Coverage*



By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The Sports Writers Association of Nigeria (SWAN) has expressed satisfaction with the overall performance of team Nigeria at the just concluded 13th African Games in Ghana.

President of SWAN, Mr. Isaiah Benjamin, who spoke in Abuja during a post African Games World Press Conference, conveyed and addressed by the Minister of Sports Development, Senator John Owan Enoh, attributed the successful participation and exploits of team Nigeria to strategic and proactive measures by the Sports Ministry leadership hierarchy.

While recalling the podium performance of team Nigeria in recent times at the Games, President Benjamin reckoned that the outcome of its 13th edition stood the country out.

Nigeria finished strong at second position out of 52 countries, with 47 Gold, 33 Silver and 41 Bronze medals.

According to a statement

signed by the Secretary-General, SWAN, Ikenna Okonkwo dated March 27, 2024, he said, "I must not fail to specially commend the high level of human management skills of the Honourable Minister, Senator John Owan Enoh. Despite the short period that athletes and officials had in camp before proceeding to Accra, the leadership of the ministry ensured that no stone was left unturned in making that the athletes are kept informed about their welfare and every other arrangement.

"The very interesting aspect is the steady assurances, backed by action by the Honourable Minister which I believe propelled the athletes to put in their best in virtually every sport.

"Also, the other ministry and team officials were outstanding in carrying out their duties. There was this continuous flow of information from the Minister's media team such that my colleagues always had a pull to pick from.

"Again, the Minister's straight

postulation about preparing for the 2027 African Games immediately is a welcome development."

The country's number one Sports Writer, however, singled out teaming Nigerian Sports Writers who were in Ghana for high octane applause.

"I sincerely want to use this opportunity to appreciate and congratulate members of the Fourth Estate of the Realm who trooped to Ghana and ensured that team Nigeria was given adequate coverage.

"In fact, the coverage by over 50 Sports Journalists in Ghana, then the many Sports Reporters/Editors who couldn't make it the Games was outstanding. Truly, we placed Nigeria's image positively on a high. At a time, it was as if Nigeria was the first on the medals' table due to intense reportage," the SWAN President reckoned.

He then enjoined the Sports ministry to sustain the gains of African Games by intensifying preparation for 2024 Olympics in Paris, France.

Basketball Africa League Announces Ticket Sales For Nile Conference Group Phase Tipping Off April 19 In Cairo, Egypt

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The Basketball Africa League (BAL) has announced ticket sales information for the league's Nile Conference group phase, which will tip off on Friday, April 19, 2024, at the Hassan Mostafa Indoor Sports Complex in Cairo, Egypt.

The Nile Conference group phase will feature home team and defending champion Al Ahly (Egypt), first-time BAL participants Al Ahly (Libya) and Bangui Sporting Club (Central African Republic) and two-time BAL participant City Oilers (Uganda).

Tickets for the games in Cairo are on sale now at BAL.NBA.com and Tazkarti.com. Single tickets for the Nile Conference group phase start at 75 EGP.

Fans can benefit from a 20% discount by getting a Conference pass to watch all games of the home team Al Ahly (Egypt). Fans who purchase tickets can watch the

home team play on every game day, including the weekends.

Fans will also have free access to the BAL Fan Zone at the Hassan Mostafa Indoor Sports Complex. Group ticket purchases of 10 or more tickets can be made through Tazkarti by calling 15355. Fans can save up to 35% off single ticket prices for group packages by emailing BalTickets@thebal.com.

"We are super excited to welcome our passionate fans in Egypt, from across Africa and around the world for the third consecutive BAL Nile conference games in Cairo," said BAL President Amadou Gallo Fall.

"We will build on the momentum from our inaugural Kalahari Conference group phase which saw nearly 25,000 fans attend the games in Pretoria.

"We encourage our fans in Egypt to purchase single, multi-game or group ticket packages, where they will be treated

to topflight professional basketball and a uniquely African entertainment experience."

The 2024 BAL Nile Conference group phase opener will feature first-time BAL participants Al Ahly (Libya) taking on fellow newcomers Bangui Sporting Club (Central African Republic) at 4:00 p.m. CAT on Friday, April 19.

Home team and defending champions, Al Ahly (Egypt) will then take on City Oilers (Uganda) at 7:00 p.m. CAT.

The 2024 BAL season is reaching fans in 214 countries and territories in 17 languages through free-to-air and paid TV broadcast partnerships with the African Union of Broadcasting, American Forces Network (AFN), Canal+, NBA TV, Tencent Video, TSN, TV5 Monde, Visionary TV and Voice of America (VOA), and livestreaming on the NBA App, NBA.com, BAL.NBA.com and the BAL's YouTube channel.

The BAL successfully concluded the inaugural Kalahari Conference group phase in Pretoria, South Africa earlier this month, with Morocco's FUS Rabat Basketball (3 -1) and Angola's Petro de Luanda (2-2) picking up the first two tickets for the BAL Playoffs and Finals.

The Nile Conference group phase will take place from Friday, April 19 – Saturday, April 27 at Hassan Mostafa Indoor Sports Complex in Cairo. The Sahara Conference group phase will take place from Saturday, May 4 – Sunday, May 12 at the Dakar Arena in Dakar, Senegal.

The top two teams from each conference and the top two third-place teams from across the three conferences will travel to Kigali, Rwanda for four seeding games followed by an eight-game single-elimination Playoffs and Finals from Friday, May 24 – Saturday, June 1 at BK Arena.

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**Hails Sports Journalists For Robust Coverage*

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Hayin Hago Harps On Barau Jibrin's Mode Of Representation

By: **JABIRUA. HASSAN, Kano**

The Deputy Senate President, Senator Dr. Barau I. Jibrin has been commended for being a good representative to his constituency at the Nigerian parliament, despite present economic predicament.

This was expressed during a chat with one of his legislative aides, Alhaji Sa'ad Hayin Hago, where he stressed that Kano North Zone is certainly blessed with a competent person who is working selflessly towards the progress of his people.

He emphasized that from what is being witnessed by the constituents across the 13 local government areas, Senator

Dr. Barau Jibrin is making excellent efforts towards ensuring the betterment of his electorate.

"Distinguish Senator Barau Jibrin remains a tested and trusted leader who is trying his best to make his people's dream a reality, and I am certain that Kano North Senatorial zone is one of the best constituencies, not only in Kano State, but in the country at large". He added.

Alhaji Sa'ad Hayin Hago called on the people of Kano North senatorial district to give more support to the Deputy Senate President in order to enable him fulfil his desired objectives and policies in every sector.



Deputy Senate President

2024 World Day: Oyo Govt Set To Revitalize Water Sources Across State - Commissioner

By: **BAYO AKAMO Ibadan**

Oyo State Commissioner for Environment and Natural Resources, Architect Abdulmojeed Mogbonjubola has disclosed that the state government is set

to revitalize water sources across the state.

Speaking at the 2024 World Water Day celebration, held at the House of Chiefs, Parliament Building, Secretariat, Ibadan on Monday, he said the gesture is to

improve the provision of potable water across Oyo State.

Architect Mogbonjubola while speaking on the theme for the year "Water for Peace," at the world Water Day organized by the Ministry in collaboration with the Oyo State Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Agency (RUWASSA) and UNICEF emphasised the importance of access to clean and safe water for human life.

Stressing the role water played in maintaining public health and preventing the spread of waterborne diseases, he reassured that the state government is committed to rehabilitating water sources across all regions of Oyo State, with a focus on ensuring equitable access to potable water.

A University Don from the Ajayi Crowther University, Dr. Ronald Anthony Isibor while presenting a paper highlighted the need for collaborative efforts to address water-related challenges and to promote water as a catalyst for peace and development.

Dr Isibor highlighted the potential risks associated with water scarcity, as health issues, poverty, and conflicts between

communities.

Oyo State Head of Service, Mrs. Olubunmi Oni, represented by the P.S. Service Matters, Mr. Paul Oyekunle, commended the organizers for choosing a timely and relevant theme for the event.

He called for sustainable management of water resources by residents

"When we manage our water resources, we are taking care of them for our future. We need to conserve our water such that it will not harm the environment," he said.

The General Manager of RUWASSA, Mr Adeniyi Adeduntan in his remarks emphasized the importance of accessible water for supporting agriculture and maintaining sanitation standards.

UNICEF's South West Field Officer, Mr. Johnson Monday, said the necessity of providing potable water as a fundamental service to protect vulnerable populations, especially children, from waterborne diseases.

He emphasized that access to clean water is critical for promoting peace and prosperity within communities.



Architect Mogbonjubola