

Oborewori
Mourns As
Ex-Minister,
Gbagi, Dies
At 62

Story on Page 5

Odu'a Investment Always
Ready For Growth, Prosperity
Of South West, Nigeria
- Group Chairman **P.24**

**Widows, Other Residents Cry
Out Over Demolition Of
Ancestral Homes In Enugu**

*Beg Gov Mbah, not to turn
them strangers in father's land **P.4**

Young Idoma Professionals
Slam Alia For Neglecting
Benue South **P.4**

EFCC Disowns Report On List Of Ex-Govs Under Investigation For Alleged Corruption

By; **BAYO AKAMO,
I b a d a n &
A R C H I B O N G
ESUENE, Makirdi**

The Economic and
Financial Crimes
Commission
(EFCC), has dissociated
itself from the phantom
report currently published
by some media outlets on
the purported released
full list of ex-governors
being investigated over
alleged corruption by the
commission.

The report carried in some
news outlets according to
the commission with
headline: "EFCC Releases
Full List of 58 Ex-
Governors that Embezzled
N2.187 Trillion", is
completely false and
mischievous.

A statement signed by
Dele Oyewale Head,
Media & Publicity and

made available to New
Nigerian Newspapers,
reads, "the commission
neither issued the said list,
nor entertained
discussions on
investigation of ex-
governors with any news
medium".

"This invariably means
that the so-called list is a
disingenuous fabrication
designed to achieve
motives known only to the
authors."

The commission therefore,
enjoined the general
public to ignore the report
as it is false and misleading
with evil motive.

Oyewale advised media
outlets and practitioners
to crosscheck facts
pertaining to matters under
investigation with the
Commission to avoid
misleading the public with
false reports.



Governor Abba Kabir Yusuf laid a N15 billion three layer Interchange bridge at Kofar Dan'agundi in Kano metropolis as part of vision to enhance traffic flow in the ancient city, he visited the project site yesterday in company of some cabinet members

More Than 300 To Benefit From
Distribution Of Agriculture Equipment
In Kachia LGA **P.16**

**Key Takeaways From 2024 SWAN Full
Council, Integrated Sports Development
Activated Under Isaiah Benjamin**

*Places indefinite suspension on Bonny Nyong, Azuka Chiemeka, Ijeoma Peter-Nwante *Commends Kano Govt, tasks Sports Minister on collaborations **P.20**

**Mega City: Gov Yusuf Lays Foundation
Of N15bn Inter Change Bridge In Kano**

NDLEA Apprehends 5 Int'l
Drug Syndicates, 11 Others
In Lagos, Abuja, Kaduna,
Kano, Osun, Benue, Bayelsa

*Large quantities of
cannabis sativa,
tramadol recovered **P.10**

**Be Patient With President
Tinubu, Senate President
Urges Nigerians** **P.9**

*Akwa Ibom North West Senatorial
District Honours Akpabio

Kwara Gov Welcomes Onikijipa's Emergence As New TUC Chair

By; BILIQIS ONAOLAPO OLAJUMOKE, Ilorin

Kwara State Governor, AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq has welcomed the emergence of Alhaji Abdulrahman Olayinka Onikijipa as the new state chairman of the Trade Union Congress (TUC) at the recently held triennial conference of the labour body in Ilorin.

The governor commended the choice of Alhaji Onikijipa for the position, saying the government looks forward to a harmonious working relationship with the new TUC leader and his team.

Governor AbdulRazaq said Onikijipa's exemplary performance and good antecedents at the RTEAN point at a brighter future for the TUC in the state.

The governor commended the outgoing TUC Chairman, Comrade Tunde Joseph for his patriotic and pragmatic leadership throughout his tenure, especially his passion for healthy dialogue and partnership with the government.

The governor prayed to Almighty God to guide Alhaji Onikijipa and his team on the new task of working for improved welfare of the workers and nation-building, which the



Alhaji Abdulrahman Olayinka Onikijipa

leadership of the labour union entails.

ICC: Wike Hires "Miscreants" To Fight Cause Of Injustice, Northern Politician Lambast AYA

By; TOM GARBA, Yola

A strong member of the All Progressives Congress (APC) from North East Nigeria, Alhaji Sai'du Bobboi has lampooned a group by the name of Arewa Youth Assembly (AYA) that claimed to back the Minister of Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Barr Nyesome Wike over the illegal contract revocation against the Integrated Facility Management services (IFMSL).

Bobboi said AYA is a group of miscreants who were hired by Wike to further the cause of injustice as it's the norm of the FCT minister to project his agenda of fighting some APC loyal members. He said Ali Mohammed and his collaborators have shown high level of shameless thoughts on Senator Ahmad Abubakar Moallayidi, Managing Director of Integrated Facility Management Services Limited (IFMSL), a former Senator who represented Adamawa Southern Senatorial zone.

"Let me help the minds of this so-called AYA, who I believe are faceless groups or if they are real, we don't know about their existence

in the North, if they exist I believe they are the cash and carry group that anyone can hire for paltry to propagate injustice against justice.

"To put the records straight, Sen Moallayidi represented Adamawa Southern Senatorial zone (2015-2019) and left indelible records of achievements.

"First in the North to pass a law for the school of Mining and Forestry, Ahmad was among Senators that championed the cost of a bill that saw the formation of the North East Development Commission. He was one of the core financiers of APC in 2015 that brought President Muhammadu Buhari to power.

"He played a major role in financing and sustaining APC in Adamawa State by working hard to bring into power President Bola Ahmed Tinubu despite coming from the same Senator District as the PDP presidential candidate, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar.

"Trough the Arewa New Agenda (ANA), a group he formed with the likes of the former Secretary to the government of the Federation (SGF), Alhaji Ahmed Yayale, Jonathan Silas Zwingina (former Majority leader), former

Governor of Bauchi, Isah Yuguda, former Governor of Zamfara, Ahmed Yeriman Bakura and so many notable Nigerians to campaign round the country and ensure Tinubu was elected. By simple arithmetics, Ahmad contributed immensely to the election of Tinubu rather than Wike," he said. According to him, the Northern Patriotic Front is fighting in defense of justice because there's no way a leader can be good enough than to respect the rule of law.

He said the issue of the International Conference Center (ICC) is an issue that patterns the rule of law, a contractual agreement that a sane person should respect.

He challenged AYA that if they are not miscreants, they should go back to their master (Wike) and know the true state of the situation and the agreement backing IFMSL and the office of the minister.

"Wike is not the only minister or person working in Tinubu's administration, even if he is the only one working, justice and fairness should be his guiding principles. Justice is the best definition of working.

"We are not going back on

our fight against injustice by Wike's form of maladministration. We are aware IFMSL has entered an agreement with the ministry for ICC for 10 years. The illegal revocation should be reversed and the right thing be done in the interest of justice, fairness, and inclusion," he said.

Saidu Bobboi, a chieftain of APC who was the former National Chairman KOWA Party and a one-time Vice Presidential Candidate of the KOWA Party during the 2015 Presidential Election, said: "It's unfortunate AYA group is used to scamming people around and the Honorable Minister is using them to fight his course of injustice instead of following the rule of law to get things done."

The APC stalwart who was one of the founding members of Arewa New Agenda (ANA), reiterated that Wike must go back to the drawing board, else he will collapse the government of Tinubu with his show of pride and lack of respecting the rule of law.

He described the AYA press statement as, "nauseating from a group of hungry charlatans, hired to submerge justice with their unspoken and nauseating noise of pauper baggers."

Abdullahi Tumburkai Nominated As PDP Leader For Dandume South

By; ISAAC ODEH, Kaduna

In the wake of the untimely passing of their esteemed party leader, Honourable Lawal Isiyaku Tumburkai, the People's Democratic Party (PDP) members in Dandume South of Dandume Local Government, Katsina State, have unanimously nominated Honourable Abdullahi Usman Tumburkai (Dillaliya) as the new party leader for this zone.

This was expressed in a statement signed by Yusuf Aliyu Tumburkai, his Media Aide, dated May 5, 2024.

Tumburkai has demonstrated unwavering dedication and fervor as a longstanding member of our party, consistently championing the values and principles that define us.

Possessing exceptional leadership qualities and a profound comprehension of our community's challenges, he emerges as the perfect candidate to guide us forward.

A committed journalist with extensive experience in the media industry,

Abdullahi has covered a diverse array of topics, ranging from politics and social issues to entertainment and sports.

He garners respect from his peers for his professionalism and integrity, earning numerous accolades for his work. Abdullahi's passion for journalism stems from his belief in its transformative potentials to inform, educate, and inspire societal change.

"As we mourn the loss of Honourable Lawal, we entrust Abdullahi Tumburkai with the responsibility of continuing his legacy, steadfastly upholding the values and principles cherished by our party. With his vision, determination, and integrity, we believe he is well-equipped to lead us to success in the forthcoming elections and beyond.

"We implore all members of our party in Dandume South to throw their full support behind Tumburkai in his new leadership role. Together, we can honor the memory of Lawal Isiyaku and forge a brighter future for our community," the statement said.



Abdullahi Tumburkai

Kaduna: Foundation Performs Ground Breaking for Dorcas Danladi Memorial Skills Acquisition Centre

**To cater for widows, poor, others*

By: AXHADU GABRIEL, Kaduna

Building of Dorcas Danladi Skills Acquisition Centre that will be targeting mostly the poor, widows, school dropouts and other vulnerable people in the society, has commenced in Kaduna by the Caleb Danladi Foundation.

This was disclosed during the groundbreaking ceremony of the centre, held at Kafanchan Road, opposite primary school, Samban Gida in Kwoi, Jaba LGA of Kaduna State at the weekend.

Addressing journalists during the ceremony, the founder and CEO of the foundation, Captain Caleb Danladi Bako explained that the centre would target mainly, the less privileged, school dropouts, students, widows, youths and other vulnerable people in the society. Named after his late younger sister, Dorcas Danladi who passed away about a month ago, Captain Danladi Bako said the dream of the late sister was to have a similar centre to be able to render help before life cut it short.

The founder further stated that the Dorcas Danladi Memorial Skills Acquisition Centre is a historical project particularly for his immediately family, the community and Caleb Danladi Foundation family.

His words, "Just exactly a month today, my sister passed away. Part of her passion in life was to do something similar to skills

acquisition centre, where she can be able to render help but unfortunately, life cut short her dreams.

"She was not able to achieve that dream, but we don't want that dream to go in vain, so we decided to come together to build this center in her memory", he said.

He also said every measure has been put in place for the sustainability of the project in line with every NGO's plan, even from the planing stage, and it would not be a wasteful venture.

According to him, the project is going to impact meaningfully on the entire community, local government area, and the state in general.

He restated the growing focus on entrepreneurial and skills acquisition training into education curriculum nationally.

"Basically this centre is going to go far in delivering one of the key federal government's plans by empowering youth and women in particular, with skills needed in 21st century to cater for themselves, the community development and development goals.

"The poor performance of the recent JAMB results is not because they're not knowledgeable, but because they lack the actual technical skills to be able to use computer or even touch it.

"There'll be a dedicated computer centre to cater for the youth, especially in areas of JAMB, talent education acquisition.



"Even though the centre will provide training free of charge, but for the women trained at centre without equipment, they will be assisted with some in a discounted fee, with the centre when putting it into profitable use, as part of the sustainability plans", he said.

He also said there are plans to build similar ones in Kagoma chiefdom and other local government areas in northern parts of Kaduna State as well as other parts of Jaba LGA.

The centre will also come with borehole in view of the problem of pipe borne water because of

water scarcity in the community in memory of late Dorcas.

According to him, the building of and commissioning of the project will be done by December 2024, to commence operations and rendering service by His Grace.

Even though the resources have been secured for building and completion of the project by the founder personally, according to him, it is however, gathered that contributions of materials by volunteers in terms of sand has been donated by spirited individuals.

The founder promised to collaborate with government and

other international agencies in future for training, after the foundation has been laid and work completed.

The ceremony was graced by esteemed guests, including the Anglican Bishop of Kwoi Diocese, the District Head of Barde Chiefdom, the District Head of Nok, the Chairman of the JNI, the Paramount Rulers of Samban Gida, and the Chairman and Secretary of Kwoi DCC.

Each delivered heartfelt goodwill messages, expressing their support for the memorial center and its potential to uplift the community.

Bandits Kill Eight, Injure Two, Abduct 2 Village Heads In Kaduna

By: AMOS TAUNA, Kaduna

Eight vigilante members have been reportedly killed and two others injured by some terrorists in Kakangi and Unguwan Matinja communities in the Birnin Gwari Local Government Area of Kaduna State.

The terrorists also abducted the village heads of Kakangi and Kisaya villages under Kakangi

Ward.

A source from the area confirmed the incident, saying that the terrorists invaded the villages early Thursday.

He gave the names of the eight vigilante members killed in Kakangi as Bala Kamba, Abdurrahman Musa (Ubale), Kabiru Dan Dugui, Hambali Abu, Aliyu Abu, Nura Jika (Maleka), Mubarak Musa (Dan

Wamba) and Ikra Hantsi.

According to him, "the two victims in the Unguwan Matinja community under Gayam Ward were identified as Christopher Abubakar and Isah Gambo."

He lamented that the vigilantes were attacked while trailing the kidnapped victims who were abducted on their way to a burial between Kakangi and Sabon Layi.

He further explained that the vigilantes engaged the terrorists, killing scores of them but could not rescue the two traditional rulers and others.

Normally, he said that anytime there is a kidnap incident, the vigilantes always trail the terrorists to rescue the victims.

He noted that it's unfortunate that in the process, eight officers of the vigilantes who have been

sacrificing in ensuring the safety of our people were killed by the terrorists.

The Public Relations Officer of the State Police Command, ASP Mansir Hassan, when contacted, said that they are investigating the matter to unravel the true story, stressing that the area where the incident happened had a network problem.

Widows, Other Residents Cry Out Over Demolition Of Ancestral Homes In Enugu

*Beg Gov Mbah, not to turn them strangers in father's land

By; **KELVIN OKPARA, Enugu**

Residents and natives of Uzamu Isinomoh, Emene Nike in Enugu East Council Area of Enugu State, among them widows, have raised the alarm over the demolition of their buildings including ancestral homes by the Enugu State Government.

The victims, including one Ezinne Blessing Nkemjurum Oguike, a widow and octogenarian told journalists that some persons, suspected to be officials from the Government House, Ministry of lands and Enugu Capital Territory Development Authority ordered the demolition of their homes.

Mrs Oguike, who hails from Imo State, South East Nigeria and spoke through his son, Chukwuebuka Oguike, said that they acquired the

land, which they have been using since over 62 years ago, from the ancestral owners of the land before the Akanu Ibiam International Airport was even built. She claimed that they were not given any vacation notice or any notice of acquisition of the land by the government before the demolition exercise took place on Monday, 29th April, 2024, claiming that they have lost over 500 million naira to the demolition.

Mrs Oguike further stated that a former governor of the state, Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi had after listening to their explanations on the real owners of the land, urged them to go and do necessary documentations on the land.

She noted that after filing the necessary papers for the grant of C of O over the land, her request was approved by the Governor,

which approval was communicated to her via a letter dated 20/02/2024. She further stated that she paid the assessed C of O fees of #5,832,120.12 (Five Million, Eight hundred and thirty-two thousand, twelve Kobo into the Enugu State IGR and obtained receipt but was not issued with the C of O on the ground that there was order from above to stop issuance.

The elderly woman said they have documents to prove that the land does not belong to government as they acquired the land from the rightful owners who inherited same from their forefathers.

Another widow and native of Uzamu Isinomoh, Mrs Eunice Agbo whose ancestral home was also demolished, said that after the death of her husband in 1979, she took out time to get a photocopy of a map from the Archives showing her late husband, Innocent Agbo, as the owner of the Ishi Nome

land.

She stated that she made efforts to get the Certificate of Occupancy from ministry of land but was told that it was not necessary because the land is their ancestral land.

The widows therefore appealed to the State Government to wade into the matter to stop them from becoming tenants or evicted from their ancestral/acquired land/home.

"They have been disturbing me since my husband died. My husband died in 1979 and since then they have been disturbing me.

"I have gone to the ministry of lands and archives to make inquiries and it was confirmed that the land belongs to my husband. I have a photocopy of the survey map of the area from the archives where the name of my husband Innocent Agbo was written as the owner of the land." She lamented.



Late Junior Pope

Junior Pope; Family Releases 'Authentic' Funeral Programme For Late Star

By; **KELVIN OKPARA, Enugu**

Programme for the funeral ceremony of the late Enugu State born Nollywood Star, Mr. John Paul Odonwodo, popularly known by his stage name; 'Junior Pope has been released by his family.

According to his elder brother, Dr. Divine Odonwodo who signed the programme on behalf of the family, the requiem mass is scheduled to hold at Christ the King (CKC), Catholic Parish, G.R.A., Enugu, on May 13, 2024.

On May 16, 2024, there will be a vigil mass at Saint Peter's Catholic Church, Ikpogwu, Ukehe his country home by 5:30pm.

His remains will be

committed to mother earth on Friday, May 17, at his country home after a funeral mass at Saint Peter's Catholic Church, Ukehe.

The funeral rites will be concluded with a thanksgiving mass at Saint Peter's Catholic Church, Ukehe, on Sunday May 19, 2024.

Junior Pope and four of his colleagues, drowned after their boat capsized in the Anam area of River Nigeria in Anambra State on April 10, while returning from a movie shoot.

Out of 12 passengers on board the ill-fated boat, only seven were rescued alive, while five died, including Junior Pope who based in Asaba, the Delta State capital.

Young Idoma Professionals Slam Alia For Neglecting Benue South

By; **BASHIR BELLO DOLLARS, Kaduna**

A group, Young Idoma Professionals (YIP), has tasked the Benue State Governor, Reverend Father Hyacinth Alia to adhere to the oath of office taken, by ensuring all round development of the state.

This was expressed in a statement, signed by its convener, Okpani Jacob Onjewu Dickson, made available to newsmen in Kaduna on Sunday May 5, 2024.

The group while reacting to recent contracts awarded by the state governor, lamented that despite the fact that federal allocations and internally generated revenue from the state should be distributed equitably, it is worrisome that projects publicised are in Tiv areas of the state.

"We are worried that the Benue State Government under His Excellency, Reverend Father Hyacinth Alia has approved the 1 construction of more intra

LGA roads in two councils, without any captured in the Benue South Senatorial District.

"This calls for concerns, as all parts of the state should be given equal treatment, or equity should be adopted in projects execution," the group said. They therefore, charged the state government to ensure that projects are distributed equitably, while commending Governor Alia for prompt payment of salaries, as well as the massive infrastructural projects in the state capital.

It would be recalled that last week, Governor Alia approved the construction of two major roads in Vandeikya and Konshisha local government areas of the state, both in the Tiv speaking part of the state.

The governor's approval, followed a request by the former Senator representing Benue North East, Chief Barnabas Gemade, during the Thanksgiving Mass/reception organized in his honour by Ityō I



Jechira in Konshisha Local Government Area.

It was gathered that the two deplorable roads earmarked for construction are Vandeikya-Korinya-Tse-Agberagba-Gungul-Awajir and Ge-Ikyobo-Agbeede-Anshagba-Iber roads.

The governor also enumerated his

achievements in roads construction, solar light installation, prompt payment of salaries among others in less than one year in office, adding that his administration will do all it takes sustain payment of salaries, pensions, payment of salary arrears and clearing up of depths that have been owed by the previous administration.

I Stand In Solidarity With PSC Workers, Police - Arase

By; **RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos**

As Nigerians joined workers across the globe to commemorate Workers Day, the Chairman of the Police Service Commission, Dr. Solomon Arase, CFR, has promised to stand in solidarity with the staff of the Commission and officers of the Nigeria Police Force and ensure their working conditions will continue to improve for better service delivery.

In a message to the staff of the Commission during the celebration, Dr Arase said he will also continue to advocate for their dignity and rights since he believes that together "we will build a PSC and Police workforce where every worker is valued and encouraged.

Dr. Arase, according to a release by Ikehukwu Ani Head, Press and Public Relation of the Commission also reiterated his commitment to the pursuit of the best work environment in the Commission.

The statement reads, "As workers throughout the globe mark today's Workers Day, the Chairman of the Police Service Commission, Dr. Solomon Arase, CFR, retired Inspector General of Police has promised to stand in solidarity with the Staff of the Commission and Officers of the Nigeria Police Force and ensure that their working conditions will continue to improve for better service delivery.

"Dr. Arase said he will also continue to advocate for their dignity and rights since he believes that together "we will build a PSC and Police workforce where every worker is valued and encouraged.

"In line with this year's theme which focuses on ensuring safety and health at work in a changing climate, "I wish to restate my commitment to the pursuit of the best work environment in the Commission.

Happy workers day beloved partners in progress, he wished the Staff of the Commission."

Oborevori Mourns As Ex-Minister, Gbagi, Dies At 62

By: UTEBOR PETER, Asaba

Delta State Governor, Rt. Hon. Sheriff Oborevori, has expressed his heart-felt condolences to the family of former Minister of Education (State), Chief Kenneth Gbagi, who passed on May 4.

Gbagi a senior lawyer, businessman, governorship candidate of the Social Democratic Party, SDP in the 2023 general election and industrialist, passed on at 62, after a brief illness.

In a statement by his Chief Press Secretary, Sir Festus Ahon, Governor Oborevori described the passing of Gbagi as tragic, unfortunate and heart-wrenching.

He commiserated the people of Ughelli South Local Government Area and Oginibo community, in particular, over the demise of the renowned politician and former

Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) chieftain.

He noted that the departed Gbagi, a Criminologist, entrepreneur and lawyer, was Chairman, Legal Aid Council of Nigeria, and, later, Minister of Education (State) during President Goodluck Jonathan's administration.

Oborevori said, "On behalf of the government and people of Delta State, I mourn the passing of a renowned politician and astute businessman, Chief Kenneth Gbagi, who passed on in Lagos on Saturday.

"The news of his death came to me as a terrible shock and my heart-felt condolences go to his family, the people of Oginibo and the members of the Social Democratic Party, SDP".

He prayed God to accept the deceased's soul and grant fortitude to the family and friends he left to bear the loss.



Mega City: Gov Yusuf Lays Foundation Of N15bn Inter Change Bridge In Kano

By: JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

Governor Abba Kabir Yusuf has laid a N15 billion three layer Interchange bridge at Kofar Dan'agundi in Kano metropolis as part of vision to enhance traffic flow in the ancient city.

The governor who visited the project site yesterday in company of some cabinet members, affirmed his administration's eyesight to transform the city centre

to status of a mega city.

Recall that Governor Yusuf in December, 2023, awarded the multi-billion naira project to CCG Nigeria Limited with completion period of eighteen months. The multiple projects was awarded along side another high impact interchange bridge at Talidu roundabout also in the city centre, to ease traffic congestion.

"We have created fordable alternative routes and motorists are expected to

comply with rules for safety and allow the project operation to run smoothly"

Gov. Abba Kabir also laid the foundation of a similar project at Tal'udu roundabout worth 12 billion naira which was initially awarded same time with three layer overpass, underpass and surface layer roads.

In a statement by the Governor's Spokesperson Sanusi Bature, Infrastructure development is a critical

area of the present administration where Gov. Yusuf allocate more resources apart from the education sector.

While responding after the foundation laying ceremony, The Project Manager CGC Nigeria Limited Mr. Gee Wang and the commissioner of works and housing Engr. Marwan Ahmad said in a separate addresses that the project will be completed within the time frame.

Ambassador Ajadi Commiserates Ita-Osin Gas Explosion Victims

By: BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

Chieftain of the New Nigeria People's Party, (NNPP), Ambassador Olufemi Ajadi Oguntoyinbo on Thursday, commiserated with victims of last Saturday gas explosion at Ita-Osin along the Abeokuta-Sango-Lagos Expressway.

Ambassador Ajadi in a statement, emphasized that he commiserates the victims of the incident, particularly those who lost their loved ones and those who are currently receiving treatments in hospitals.

The NNPP governorship candidate in Ogun state in

the 2023 general elections prayed that God in His infinite Mercy will provide for those who lost their buildings and business to the explosion.

"I express my heartfelt condolences to the family of those who lost their loved ones in the recent gas explosion which occurred at Ita-Osin area of the Abeokuta North local government area of Ogun State", he said.

Ambassador Ajadi added, "I equally commiserate with those who lost their properties and businesses to the incident. I pray that the Almighty God in His infinite Mercy will provide for them to rebuild their businesses.

"Let me also wish those



Ambassador Ajadi

recuperating in the hospital, a quick recovery. We pray that

such sad incidents will not occur again in our dear state".



Gbagi

Strengthen Court Of Arbitration For Improved IGR In Nigeria, Legal Luminary Urges FG

By; BAYO AKAMO, Ibadan

The Immediate past President of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (UK) Nigerian branch, Barrister Olatunde Busari (SAN) on Friday, advocated strengthening of Court of Arbitration in Nigeria for an improved Internally Generated Revenue (IGR).

The legal luminary made the call in Ibadan in his keynote lecture at the ongoing 15th Annual General Conference of the Muslim Lawyers Association of Nigeria (MULAN) holding at the International Conference Centre, University of Ibadan.

He disclosed that the establishment of an arbitration-friendly environment in Nigeria will catalyze economic development, adding that the failure of arbitration in the country has added to further decline in the number of investors in the country.

The legal luminary stressed that the country must give room for arbitration to thrive, which will help to decongest cases on commercial disputes pending in court to be addressed in no time. Emphasizing that the measure will also repose confidence in the foreign and local investors in funding their businesses in

the country, he maintained that a conducive atmosphere for arbitration in Nigeria will improve national progress.

"Arbitration can thrive in Nigeria if it is practiced the way it should be. You will find out that the same delay techniques that lawyers use in traditional courts are being brought into arbitration. That is what we are fighting against, ensuring that many lawyers and judges are trained in arbitration procedures. If a matter that should not be in court comes to court, the judge should refer it to arbitration," he said.

Barrister Busari (SAN) added, "the bigger issue arises when you obtain your final award. Arbitration is now perceived as a precursor to litigation, undermining its time and cost effectiveness.

"As many lawyers as possible should be trained in arbitration. When an award is obtained, if anybody wants to initiate court action against it, they should know when to decline. If Nigeria becomes arbitration-friendly, more investment will flow in because investors will trust that the judicial system supports arbitration. This will lead to increased use of arbitration as an alternative to litigation, fostering trade and



Barrister Busari (SAN)

commerce."

The Attorney General of the Federation, Prince Lateef Fagbemi (SAN) while declaring open the AGM charged Nigerians to embrace arbitration in the nation's legal system.

Prince Fagbemi represented by a former Attorney-General of Oyo State, Mutalubi Ojo Adebayo (SAN), emphasized the need to prioritize arbitration and ensuring proper training for legal professionals.

"It is imperative for Nigeria to embrace arbitration. By prioritizing arbitration and ensuring proper training for legal professionals, we can enhance our legal system

and provide a more efficient mechanism for resolving disputes", he said.

Speaking, the MULAN National President, Dr. Kazeem Olaniyan said the integration of arbitration into our legal framework is essential for the advancement of our nation.

"The integration of arbitration into our legal framework is essential for the advancement of our nation. By embracing arbitration, we can expedite dispute resolution processes and create a more conducive environment for the National development".

Northern Awareness Network Demands Swift Action against Sponsored Protests

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The Northern Awareness Network (NAN) has issued a strong demand for action from the All Progressives Congress (APC) in addressing and eradicating the concerning rise of sponsored protests aimed at ridiculing the party and President Bola Tinubu.

The NAN has expressed deep concern over the troubling trend of financing unruly crowds to engage in misconduct under the guise of protest, which serves hidden agendas rather than genuine grievances.

The recent orchestrated protest, sponsored from Zamfara State, was a blatant example of this alarming trend," stated Chairman of NAN, Salihu Suleiman.

NAN firmly believes that this protest, which aimed to belittle President Bola Tinubu and his loyal allies, was not an authentic expression of discontent but rather a calculated attempt to undermine the presidency and embarrass the government.

The deliberate targeting of Minister of State Defence Bello Matawalle, a dedicated supporter of President Tinubu, clearly demonstrates that this protest was driven by political motives, seeking to sow division and discord within the ruling party. The use of the APC's name as a platform for such misconduct is unacceptable and demands swift and

decisive action.

While protests play a vital role in any democratic society, the NAN emphasizes that when these protests are hijacked by external forces with ulterior motives, they lose their legitimacy and become tools for manipulation and deception. It is crucial for the leaders of the APC to take a firm stance against sponsored dissent and ensure that the party remains a symbol of integrity and transparency.

The NAN called for the sponsors of such protests to be exposed and appropriately sanctioned, as this is a necessary step in rooting out this insidious practice. Those who seek to manipulate public opinion for personal gain must be held accountable for their actions, and the APC leadership must demonstrate that they will not tolerate such behavior within their ranks.

Sponsored dissent represents a dangerous trend that threatens the integrity of the political system and undermines the trust of the people in their leaders. The APC must heed the call of the Northern Awareness Network and take decisive action to address and eradicate this practice.

By standing firm against manipulation and deceit, the party can uphold its commitment to transparency and accountability, ensuring that Nigeria's democracy remains strong and vibrant.

Polio: 2,104 CHILDREN Immunized In Kaduna - JAP

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

A total of 2,104 children were immunized during the April 2024 round of Polio Immunization Exercise in Kaduna State.

Journalists Initiative on immunization Against Polio, (JAP), State Coordinator, Mallam Lawal Dogara disclosed this in a statement made

available to newsmen in Kaduna on Tuesday. According to him, since 2007 JAP has been conducting road shows, drama performances, sensitization programmes and Town Hall meetings with community leaders and parents for the promotion of polio immunization.

"During the April Polio vaccination, our

organization (JAP) visited four local government areas which are Makarfi, Zaria, Igabi and Kaduna South, all in Kaduna State, where 2,104 children immunized," he said.

He noted that for every round of polio exercise in the State, JAP usually do its programmes as a follow up in various

communities across Local Government Areas to get to children who missed out in the House to House vaccination.

Dogara advised parents not to relent in their efforts towards ensuring a polio free Nigeria by bringing out their children from age zero to five years to receive the vaccination.

Sickle Cell: Nigerian Surgeon Develops Compression Therapy For Leg Ulcers

By; **BILIQIS ONAOLAPO OLAJUMOKE, Ilorin**

Dr. Ayodele Ogunkeyede, a Plastic, Reconstructive and Aesthetic surgeon with Hafar Al-batin Central Hospital, Hafar Albatin, Eastern Region, Saudi Arabia, has developed novel compression therapy for sickle cell anemia chronic leg ulcers.

The New Nigerian Newspapers reports that the compression therapy involves applying a special bandage to the legs to squeeze/compress out stagnant blood from the legs and thereby allowing blood to flow better in the legs.

This process accelerates wound healing, so wounds that never heal are made to heal within weeks.

Speaking during an interview session with newsmen on Friday in Ilorin, Ogunkeyede explained that through extensive research and innovative thinking, he developed a pioneering technique utilizing compression therapy in 2015.

The Surgeon, who is also a distinguished fellow of West African

College of Surgeons of plastic surgery and a fellow of the American College of Surgeons, said that the procedure has offered a ray of hope to those afflicted by this challenging condition. According to him, ulcers that once took years to heal can now be resolved within a mere three to six months due to this innovative approach.

He pointed out that the cost of the bandages was very high, but with his intervention, of manufacturing and importing the bandages, the cost is now affordable.

Ogunkeyede explained that his passion in the field has been his motivation in the innovation in the field of Sickle Cell Disease (SCD) treatment.

"As both a leading surgeon and a pivotal member of the central working committee for the Sickle Cell Hope Alive Foundation, I have dedicated my career to advancing treatment strategies and improving outcomes for SCD patients worldwide," he said.

Ogunkeyede explained that the treatment has revolutionized the



Dr. Ayodele Ogunkeyede



healing process of chronic leg ulcers, which is a debilitating complication that significantly impacts patients' quality of life.

The expert noted that the groundbreaking work has been disseminated through publications in prestigious scientific journals and presentations at esteemed conferences including, the Sickle Cell Disease American Association's 2018 annual conference.

"Studies also involves patients suffering from chronic leg ulcers in SCD, gathering invaluable insights that have informed and shaped treatment protocols.

"It also includes empowering caregivers and ensuring the

widespread adoption of effective treatment strategies," he said.

Ogunkeyede disclosed that many healthcare givers in Nigeria were equipped and trained on how to administer compression therapy technique effectively, thus ensuring that patients receive optimal care and support.

The Surgeon stated that people living with SCD, continue to motivate his drive and passion to drive efforts and continue to inspire hope to transform the lives of countless individuals afflicted by this challenging condition. He added that he frequently dedicate his time in free-treatment of indigent people with SCD in Nigeria.



Dr. Ayodele Ogunkeyede

ACReSAL Project All About People - Geidam

By; BASHIR BELLO DOLLARS,

The Mandate Secretary, Agriculture and Rural Development Secretariat, Lawan Kolo Geidam has described the World Bank-assisted Agro Climatic Resilience in Semi-Arid Landscapes (ACReSAL) Project as a people-centered initiative.

Geidam stated this during the visit of the World Bank-Federal Project Monitoring Unit (FPMU) support Mission to Kwali to engage with 11 communities under the Pukafa-Wako catchment of Kwali Area Council.

The Mandate Secretary who was represented at the event by the Permanent Secretary, Agriculture and Rural Development Secretariat, Grace Adayilo lauded ACReSAL for laying emphasis on direct engagement with communities which she noted, has ensured the project reflects the actual needs of the people.

Adayilo disclosed that the ACReSAL Project in the FCT has begun to yield the expected dividends with the completion of the construction of solar-powered boreholes in 8 communities of Kwali Area Council adding that as a strategy to boost food production, the Project has procured tractors

In his words, "We have procured tractors as well as completed the construction of 8 solar-powered boreholes across various communities in Kwali Area Council, In the same vein,



arrangements have rexed advanced stages to procure critical agricultural inputs such as fertilizers agro-chemicals and improved seedlings to assist our farmers"

He expressed optimism that with the progress that ACReSAL have been able to record especially in building the capacities of farmers in sustainable and eco-friendly management of water resources, ACReSALs objective of mitigating the impact of climate change and improving the livelihood of the communities will be realised.

Earlier in her remarks, the World Bank ACReSAL Task Team Leader, represented by

Madam Ugonne Wunyi.

In her remarks, Task Team of the World Bank-supported ACReSAL project, Dr. Joy Agene enjoined community members to take full ownership of the project.

Agene, who was represented by and official of the project, Ms Ugonne Wunyi, pointed out that the project would fail without active support of community members.

She said: "ACReSAL is a project of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and supported by the World Bank. So, it is basically and primarily your project, and without you, we cannot not achieve it.

"So, we are craving your indulgence to actively participate and take this project as your own, so that we can get all the results that we deserve, in terms of our livelihood; in terms of our farm produce and making our environment sustainable for the future"

On her part, the Project Coordinator in FCT, Mrs Caroline Opara, reiterated that the essence of the community engagement was to interact and sensitise communities on the the project and how to benefit from its various interventions.

According to her: "ACReSAL is a community driven project and

that is why we are here to hear from you and for you to know how to implement the project effectively in your various communities."

Earlier in his welcome remarks, the chairman of the council, Mr. Danladi Chiya thanked the project implementation team, the FCTA for supporting to improve the livelihood of rural dwellers especially in the council.

Chiya, who was represented by Mr Bala Malami, Supervisory Councillor, Agricultural Services, therefore pledged FPMUs continued support for the success of the project.

In his speech, the representative of the National Project Coordinator (NPC) Garba Ibrahim affirmed the commitment of the Federal Project Monitoring Unit (FPMU) to providing the much needed guidance to the FCT ACReSAL Project Implementation Unit to ensure that their programmes are implemented to meet the Project Development Objectives of ACReSAL.

During a presentation at the engagement session an official of the World Bank Task Team Andrew sensitised the communities on Community Revolving Fund (CRF), Community Interest Groups (CIGs) Landscape Restoration and Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) all of which are key components on the intervention of the project.

High point of the event were question and answer session.

Protests Confirm Plot Against Tinubu, AYCF Says

By; ISAAC ODEH, Kaduna

The Arewa Youth Consultative Forum (AYCF) has issued a statement highlighting the recent protests orchestrated from Zamfara State as confirmation of a sinister plot against President Tinubu's chances of reelection.

The AYCF, led by its President General Yerima Shettima, has been vocal in its warnings about a brewing conspiracy by disgruntled politicians to undermine President Tinubu.

In a statement issued by the President General of the AYCF, Yerima Shettima, the organization reiterated its call for President Tinubu and his team to remain vigilant and take concrete steps to counter the efforts of these disaffected politicians. Shettima further emphasized the importance of solidifying Tinubu's support base in the North, with figures



President Tinubu

like Bello Matawalle being crucial allies in this endeavor. The AYCF is of the opinion that the threats being made against politicians like Matawalle are merely distractions, with the real target being President Tinubu.

Shettima warned that these machinations should not be taken lightly and called on Tinubu to be proactive in safeguarding his candidacy and ensuring a fair electoral process. The recent protests targeting

Bello Matawalle are linked to destabilizing Tinubu's support base in the North and are a clear indication of a concerted effort to undermine Tinubu's candidacy and influence in the region.

Shettima alleges that Bello Matawalle is being used as a mere pawn in a larger scheme aimed at derailing Tinubu's presidential ambitions. The protests, orchestrated by a Zamfara group, are seen as a vindication of the Arewa Youth Consultative Forum's claims about political interference and manipulation. In light of these developments, Shettima has emphasized the importance of remaining vigilant and proactive in safeguarding Tinubu's candidacy. It is crucial for President Tinubu and his team to navigate these challenges effectively and protect the

integrity of their support base in the North.

"The AYCF calls on President Tinubu to take decisive action to solidify his support in the North and thwart the efforts of those seeking to derail his reelection bid. As a respected voice within the North, the Arewa Youth Consultative Forum stands firm in its support for true democratic practices and urges Mr. President to remain vigilant against any attempts to undermine his candidacy," said Shettima.

"The AYCF will continue to monitor the situation closely and is committed to defending the interests of the North and its people. We call on all Nigerians to remain united in the face of these divisive tactics and to support President Tinubu as he works towards a better future for our great nation," the statement said.

Be Patient With President Tinubu, Senate President Urges Nigerians

*Akwa Ibom North West Senatorial District Honours Akpabio

By: PATRICK TITUS, Uyo

President of Senate, Senator Godswill Akpabio has called on Nigerians to continue to be patience with the federal government in the task to fix Nigeria to regain its bridal place as the giant of Africa.

Senator Akpabio stated this at the weekend in Ikot Ekpene during a Welcome Back Reception organised in his honour by his people in Akwa Ibom North West senatorial district of Akwa Ibom State.

Akpabio, who praised President Tinubu's leadership traits and experience, said that the policies and programmes emplace in the Country by President Tinubu's administration are pointers that God is on his side to succeed and bring the country out from the deep hole it was plunged into by successive administrations.

According to the Senate President, President Tinubu and his Vice, Senator Kashim Shettima were both former governors and senators, the positions he noted, have put them on a good stead to not just understand the plights of Nigerians but also how to solve them.

"His Excellency, President Ahmed Bola Tinubu is deeply committed to fixing the economy of this Country. The policies so far put in place by him show clearly that God is with him and that he will succeed.

"This is the first time in Nigeria that you have a Senator as the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Senator as Vice President, and of course, you also have two of them as former governors. In the Senate, you also have the former governor as the Senate President, so we we all understand the plights of the people. If there's anything that can be achieved in Nigeria for Nigerians, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu will achieve in Nigeria for Nigerians.

"He has done it in Lagos State and today, Lagos State is one of the most vibrant economies in the whole World. So just be patience with him, we met a very deep hole therefore what President Bola is doing is to increase the revenues of this

Country as he did in Lagos State in order for Nigeria to take its bridal place in Africa. What we as Nigerians owe him, is prayers" The Senate President stated.

Reflecting on the event, Senator Akpabio applauded his people for honouring him, promising that he won't take it for granted and would continue to do his best to uplift the standard of living, and be their worthy representative.

He specially thanked the state governor, Pastor Umo Eno for leading members of his cabinet and the entire state executive council of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) to grace the event as well as the honour done him and his colleagues from the National Assembly when he received them on courtesy call at the Exco chambers of Government House, Uyo.

Senator Akpabio charged Gov Eno, on the need to unite the state across party lines for the continued development and progress of the state and not make his father's enemies his enemies.

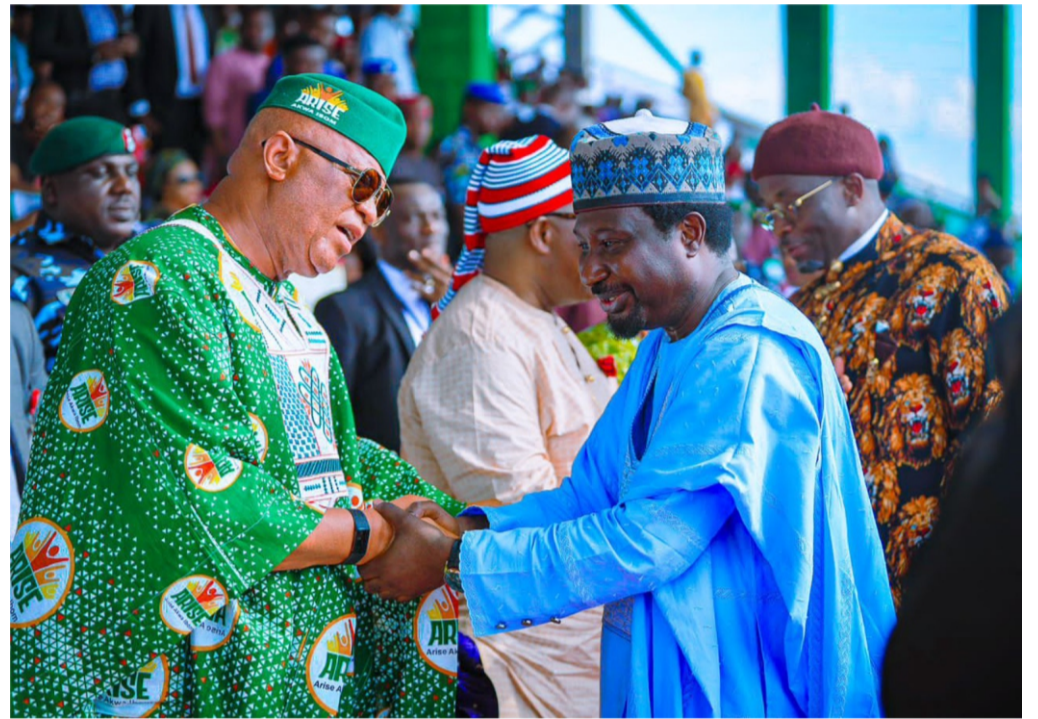
He had earlier described the Governor as a man of peace and an Apostle and disciple of peace, noting, "Akwa Ibom is a very easy state to rule and govern but also a very difficult place to unite."

"It is a major duty bestowed on you by God to unite the whole state. Let your actions speak unity to the the state. As a governor, I united the state by appointing people into key positions without considering where they came from.

"I want you to unite your people without any political considerations. Even if you inherited a policy that was not in the best interest of the state, have the courage to change it.

The former Governor advised Governor Eno to see himself as a surgeon in governance with three attributes of being brave as a Lion, soft in heart as a maiden and having the eye of an eagle, to see what others can't see.

"Do not inherit the enemies of your father, make your friends and enemies by yourself and remember always that it is one thing for you to get to the top and you must learn the balancing act in order to



remain at the top.

"I want to extend the felicitations of the Federal Government to the Government and people of Akwa Ibom State and I want to assure you that if there is anything the Federal Government would do for other state governments, Akwa Ibom State will also be highly considered for same." He admonished.

In his address, Governor Umo Eno expressed gratitude to Senator Godswill Akpabio and the people of Akwa Ibom North West Senatorial District for the support they have given his administration and the award bestowed on him.

Governor Eno promised to redouble his efforts in bringing dividends of democracy to the people and to showcase Akwa Ibom State as a united State where the people speak with one voice.

his goodwill message, Deputy Senate President, Senator Jubril Barau who led the cream of the National Assembly members to the event, expressed the confidence of the legislators in the

capacity of Senator Akpabio to lead them. Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives, Benjamin Kalu described Senator Akpabio as a jinx breaker who broke the 59-year jinx to be elected as an Executive member of the Inter-Parliamentary Union from Nigeria. He commended Senator Akpabio for the passage of the South East Development Commission Bill which he said when signed into law will change the development paradigm of the region. Setting the tone of the event, the Minister of State, Petroleum Resources, - Gas, Obong Emem Ekperikpe Ekpo, himself from the district, said that the grand reception was thier own special way of telling the Senate President, Senator Godswill Akpabio that they love and appreciate him.

The event, which was chaired by a retired Chief Judge of the State, Justice Godwin Abraham, witnessed millions of Senator Akpabio's supporters and associates from the state and beyond convoke on Ikot Ekpene Stadium for the event.



May Day 2024: Gov Dauda Lawal Renews Commitment To Improving Welfare Of Zamfara Workers

By; IMRANA ABDULLAHI,
Kaduna

Governor Dauda Lawal has reiterated his administration's commitment to improving the well-being of Zamfara workers. The governor participated in the May Day celebration, which took place on Wednesday at JB Yakubu Secretariat Complex, in Gusau.

A statement signed by the spokesperson for the Zamfara Governor, Sulaiman Bala Idris, restated that the state government is committed to actively involving workers in the governance of Zamfara.

He added that, while addressing the Zamfara State workers, Governor Lawal pledged to fully implement all the six points of his administration's Rescue Mission, which will form the basis of the transformation agenda.

"My administration has recognized workers' vital role in delivering services and implementing government policies. Workers and governments are partners in actualizing our people's dreams

of development.

"Workers serve as the machinery through which the government achieves its goal of providing services to the people. In view of this, we will continue to explore ways of improving your well-being and that of your families, most especially considering the current difficulties being faced as a result of the removal of the oil subsidy and monetary policies that have led to a decline in the value of the naira and unprecedented inflation in the country."

The governor also highlighted some of the achievements of his administration during his first eleven months in office.

"My fellow comrades, I am happy to state that within eleven months of our administration, workers in Zamfara state have every reason to celebrate. We have made a solid beginning by clearing the backlog of inherited salaries while ensuring the prompt payment of current salaries and extending additional welfare packages.

"To sustain these efforts, the government has implemented mechanisms to ensure that only

genuine workers are on our payroll. We are also in consultation with labor on salary and wage review, given the realities of living today. I would like to put on record here my appreciation for my administration's support and harmonious and synergetic relationship with the leadership of labor unions in the state. It is indeed one of the success factors of progress in restoring and improving governance.

Furthermore, the Zamfara State Governor pledged to digitize all government activities and reform the civil service to adopt a modern approach to conducting government business.

"To improve service delivery, we shall soon unveil our plans for digitizing all government activities and civil service reform to actualize a modern approach to conducting government business. This will include new methods of



assessing workers' performance, training and retraining, and the entrenchment of accountability mechanisms, among many other initiatives.

"Similarly, the government is determined to block leakages and prevent frauds that have, in some instances, characterized government business.

"In recognition of the sacrifices made by workers during their active service, it is only fair that they are treated with respect and dignity. This informed our

decision to settle the backlog of gratuity arrears inherited by this administration. As soon as we clear the backlog, we shall ensure the prompt payment of gratuities to all retirees from state and local government services. With this act, in sha Allah, workers will no longer have any reason to fear retirement, which often leads to falsifying records to remain in service."

NDLEA Apprehends 5 Int'l Drug Syndicates, 11 Others In Lagos, Abuja, Kaduna, Kano, Osun, Benue, Bayelsa

**Large quantities of cannabis sativa, tramadol recovered*

By; RAYMOND TEDUNJAYE, Lagos

Five members of an international drug syndicate are now cooling their feet in the custody of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) for alleged involvement in illicit drug dealings.

Similarly, 11 others were also arrested in Lagos, Abuja, Kaduna, Kano, Osun, Bayelsa and Benue over alleged

possession of different kilogrammes of cannabis sativa, codiene syrup and tramadol.

The members of the international drug syndicate, identified as Umeh Chisom Peter, Obum Michael, Mrs. Chiwendu Uche Ugbe, Onyejakor Francis Chimezie and Naaji Valentine Chukwukere, were said to be members of a cartel with networks in parts of Nigeria, Thailand and

South Africa.

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

According to the statement, the cartel were nabbed upon NDLEA's two weeks intelligence in Lagos, Abia and Anambra States leading to the seizure of illicit drug consignments at the NAHCO import shed of the Murtala Muhammed International Airport (MMA), Ikeja, Lagos.

The unravelling of the drug cartel, it stated, started on Sunday, April 20 when their cargo of four big suitcases arrived the NAHCO shed on an Air Peace airline flight from Johannesburg, South Africa.

"After days of close monitoring and investigation, the first suspect, Umeh Chisom Peter was arrested on Wednesday 24th April after he showed up to pick two of the suitcases containing Loud, a synthetic strain of cannabis owned by a Thailand based member of the syndicate, Obum Michael. The consignment of four parcels was concealed in false bottoms of the two suitcases, while the four suitcases contain a total of 17.6 kilograms Loud and drug candies.

"Another member of the syndicate, Mrs. Chiwendu Uche Ugbe whose South Africa based husband, Aloytus Uche Ugbe sent some of the consignments, was traced to Anambra State where NDLEA

officers arrested her on Saturday 27th April while attempting to collect the drug parcels sent to her by her husband," it stated.

It added that two other suspects; Onyejakor Francis Chimezie and Naaji Valentine Chukwukere, with links to the cartel were also apprehended in parts of Lagos on Monday, April 29.

According to the release, their arrest led to another operation in Abia State where Mrs. Chinazo Osigwe was nabbed when she was to pick up some of the parcels containing loud and drug candies sent by her husband, Osigwe Chidiebere Anthony who is also operating from South Africa.

In a related development, NDLEA operatives on stop and search operation along Abuja-Abaji highway on Wednesday, May 1 intercepted a 40-ft gas tanker marked RBC 77XG and upon a thorough search discovered 511 jumbo sacks of cannabis sativa weighing 4,752kg concealed in the gas tank compartment of the truck.

The consignment was loaded into the tanker in Ondo State and meant to be delivered in Abuja for further distribution. Four suspects: Efe Abel Mikel, 39; Ebicide Cyril, 29; Ejechi Monday, 41; and Friday Benson Chukwudi, 39, have been arrested in connection with the seizure.

"While two suspects: Aminu Umar, 25,



Some of the suspects and recovered items

Workers' Day: Gov Umo Eno Makes Farming Compulsory **Declares Farm Day in Akwa Ibom*

By: PATRICK TITUS, Uyo

The Akwa Ibom State Governor, Pastor Umo Eno has declared every 1st and 3rd Friday in a month as Farm Day in the state as part of his administration's efforts to not just ensure availability of food, but also its sufficiency all round season in the state.

Gov Eno announced this on Wednesday in his address to mark this year's workers day celebration in the state at Uyo Township Stadium, Uyo, venue for the year 2024 May Day celebration.

Governor Eno, who was the Special Guest of Honour, declared farming in the state compulsory for all including his cabinet members, warning that no burial ceremony would be allowed to hold in these two days declared as Farm Day in the state.

Recall the state government has recently Innuagurated a food intervention agency called "Akwa Ibom State Bulk Purchase Agency" saddles with the responsibility of buying food in bulk direct from farmers and producers in state and its environs and sell to end users at an affordable price as well as eliminate scarcity.

The State Governor while declaring the farm day in state, reminded the people of the state that the Bulk Purchase Agency was just an intervention agency for a short time term solution to a long term problem in the state.

"A long term solution will be for all us to go back to the farm, and ensure that we produce food. A people that cannot feed themselves cannot boast of



2024 May Day in Akwa Ibom

anything. We must go back to the farm working with the State Ministry of Agriculture and the Agriculture Committee.

"To ensure that all of us, the workers in Akwa Ibom State will cultivate a farm, I therefore declare the 1st and 3rd Friday of every month a Farm Day in Akwa Ibom State. It will not be a day for burial. Nobody will attend burial on that day.

"All of us will go to farm starting from the Governor, Deputy Governor, State's Lawmakers and chairmen of local government areas. I will visit your local government area to inspect the farm every month".

The Governor stated.

Governor Eno also announced the release of additional two billion Naira for payment of gratuities to retired workers across board for the month of April, 2024 and implored the organised labour unions in the state to strictly monitor the payment of money and report to him, where they observe unauthorized practice.

The release according to him, brought to a total of 16.1 billion Naira so far released by his administration for payment of 11 years backlog of gratuities and pensions owed retirement civil servants in the state.

Reflecting on the theme of this year's May Day celebration "People First" Governor Eno reiterated his administration commitment to put the people of the state first because according to him, "there will be no governance without the people". He also pledged that the welfare of workers in the state would continue to receive priority attention, just as he described workers as resourceful and articulate partners for the growth and development of the state.

Yielding to the plights of the casual workers in the state, the State Chief Executive directed the compilation of all casual

workers for possible offering them full employment.

He commended the labour leaders in the state for their show of love, solidarity and understand with government in resolving any labour issue in the state, and donated a brand new Hilux vehicle each to NLC and TUC.

Earlier the state chairpersons of Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC), Comrade Sunny James and his Trade Union Congress (TUC) counterpart, Comrade Dominic Abang have in their various goodwill messages, lauded Governor Umo Eno for his magnanimity towards the welfare of workers in the state.

They said the labour unions in the state have not had it so good before compared to governor Eno administration, adding the entire workers in the state are grateful with him, noting the various backlog demands of workers such as release and prompt payment of promotion arrears, prompt payment of salaries, gratuities and pensions among other incentives as evidence that he cares about workers welfare in the state.

Highlights of the celebration include March Pass by members of the he organised labour/Taking of salute by the Governor assisted by the NLC and Tuc chairmen

The State Council of Nigeria Union of journalists, (NUJ) emerged first position in March Pass, followed by National Association of Nurses and Midwife while Radio, Television and Theatre workers Union came

NDLEA Apprehends 5 Int'l Drug Syndicates, 11 Others In Lagos, Abuja, Kaduna, Kano, Osun, Benue, Bayelsa

**Large quantities of cannabis sativa, tramadol recovered*

and Anas Umar, 22, were arrested with 207.1 kilograms of cannabis sativa in their house at Unguwan Rimi, Basawa, Samaru, Zaria, Kaduna State on Monday 29th April, Bashir Umar, 35, was nabbed at Ladanai, Hotoro area of Kano on Friday 3rd May with 194 bottles of codeine syrup,"NDLEA said.

Elsewhere (Osun State), NDLEA operatives on Wednesday, May 1 arrested an ex-convict, Suleiman Usman, 51, who is currently facing trial for another drug offence at the Federal High Court in Osogbo.

NDLEA added: "At the time of his latest arrest at Okinni town, Suleiman was found in possession of 4.4grams of Cocaine, 28.5kg of cannabis sativa, 20 tabs of rophynol weighing 6.2grams and

812 pills of tramadol.

"The following day, Thursday 2nd May, NDLEA operatives at Agbara checkpoint, Seme border, Badagry Lagos intercepted a Toyota camry car marked KJA 825 FT conveying 113 jumbo parcels of cannabis with a total weight of 64kg. The driver, Charles Amoni, 45, was promptly arrested."

Similarly, NDLEA operatives on patrol along Bauchi-Jos road in Bauchi State on Monday, April 29 apprehended Clement Chukwuka, 39, with 595 bottles of codeine; 38,260 pills of opioids such as tramadol, rohypnol and diazepam, while another suspect, Friday Ibochi was nabbed at NDLEA checkpoint, Aloma junction, Otukpa, Benue State on Tuesday, April 30 with 66 blocks of

cannabis weighing 33kg.

The agency also arrested Ifeanyi Stanley, 42, with 12kg of same substance at Swali Jetty, Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

In the same vein, the various commands of NDLEA across the country continued with the War Against Drug Abuse (WADA) advocacy campaign in the past week – and some of them include: WADA sensitisation lecture for students and teachers of Ekimogun Community Grammar School, Bolorunduro, Ondo East LGA, Ondo State; Students of Lafenwa High School (Senior), Abeokuta, Ogun State.

Others are Students of Sky Brain International School, Enugu Ezike, Enugu State; Intending Muslim pilgrims on dangers of illicit drug trafficking, Katsina

State and WADA advocacy visit to Olobaoke of Oba Oke land, Oba Adam Iyiola Bamidele Yusuf and his chiefs, Osun State as well as WADA advocacy visit to Lagos State First Lady, Dr. Mrs. Ibijoke Sanwo-Olu.

The Chairman/Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of NDLEA, Brig. Gen. Mohamed Buba Marwa commended the officers and men of the MMIA, Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Kano, Kaduna, Osun, Seme, Bayelsa, Bauchi, and Benue Commands of the Agency for their outstanding feats in the past week.

Gen. Marwa also applauded their counterparts in all the commands across the country for intensifying their WADA advocacy lectures

Governor Uba Sani Vows To Prioritize Welfare Of Kaduna Workers



By: FUNMIADERINTO, Kaduna

Kaduna State Governor, Senator Uba Sani on Wednesday, said that his government will continue to prioritize workers' welfare and equip them appropriately within available resources. Governor Uba Sani disclosed this when he joined comrades, Nigerian workers, and colleagues in the human rights and pro-democracy struggle to celebrate the International Workers Day at the Murtala Square, Kaduna.

According to him, in the well attended and colourful ceremony, "we honoured the invaluable contributions of Nigerian

workers to the struggle for Nigeria's independence, the growth and development of our democracy and economy, and continuing agitations for better working and living conditions for Nigerian workers."

He disclosed that, "the government under my leadership will continue to prioritize workers' welfare and equip them appropriately within available resources, conscious of the fact that a committed and motivated workforce is critical to the achievement of our Rural Transformation Agenda."

He noted that human capital development

and poverty reduction will continue to receive robust government attention through investment in education, health, agriculture, housing, micro, small and medium enterprises, as well as support to security agencies as they tackle terrorism, banditry, kidnapping, and other violent crimes.

Senator Uba Sani said Nigerian Governors, under the platform of Nigeria Governors Forum, are in consultation with labour unions at the federal and state levels in order to come up with a decent and acceptable salary increase for state and local government workers.

"As a comrade and veteran of the struggle for better working conditions for Nigerian workers, I will not rest on my oars until we agree on a wage package that will put smiles on the faces of our workers".

"As we ramp up our Rural Transformation Drive and implement innovative programmes to reinvent our economy, we seek the cooperation and total commitment of Kaduna State workers".

"Increased productivity and sustained industrial harmony will help reposition our economy and put our government in good stead to frontally tackle our myriad security and developmental challenges".



Press Freedom Day: Gombe Governor Hails Journalists, Urges Vigilance Against Fake News, Misinformation



By: **JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON**

Gombe State Governor and Chairman of Northern States Governors' Forum, Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya, CON has urged journalists to continue to uphold their role as watchdogs of the society and guardians of public interests while embracing the responsibilities that come with

their profession.

In a goodwill message on the occasion of this year's World Press Freedom Day, Governor Inuwa Yahaya commended media practitioners in Gombe State for their dedication to promoting democratic ideals, emphasizing the crucial role of the Press in enlightening the public about government policies and global developments.

A statement signed by the Director-General (Press Affairs) Government House Gombe, Ismaila Uba Misilli, said that while recognizing the impact of digital era on press freedom and journalists' safety, the governor emphasized the need for responsible journalism in the face of evolving challenges. The World Press Freedom Day, he said, serves as a call to affirm the importance of cherishing

information as a public good, and exploring what can be done in the production, distribution and reception of content to strengthen journalism, and to advance transparency and empowerment while leaving no one behind.

He noted the impact of the digital era on the freedom of the press, the security of journalists, and access to information, advising

them to always guard against fake news and misinformation as well as ensure accurate and balanced reportage of events and activities.

The NSGF Chairman assured to continue to work with the media as partners and critical allies in his determination to entrench transparency, accountability and openness in governance in Gombe state.

Ododo Pledges Welfare For Kogi Workers As Labour Demands Improved Welfare

By: **ADAMA JOHN, Lokoja**

Kogi State Governor, Usman Ododo has assured workers in the state of improved welfare just as they asked for review of the existing salary structure that is no more in consonance with the reality in the state. Governor Ododo pledged to implement policies that will promote the rights of workers, restating his commitment to implement agreements that are tailored towards improving workers' welfare in the state.

Ododo made the promise while responding to the organised labour demands during the 2024 May day celebration in Lokoja midweek assuring them that all requests by the Unions will be looked into with utmost dispatch.

“As a state, we may not be

there right now, but I can assure you that soon and very soon, ongoing conversation about compensation for civil servants in the state will be concluded.

“At this juncture, I want to specially commend the labour unions in the state for the collaborative spirit between the government and labour centres. Your constructive engagement has enabled us to address issues and find solutions together, thereby fostering a conducive environment for the growth and development of the state,” he said.

He urged workers to remain calm, peaceful and supportive of the government as partners in progress.

Speaking on security, Ododo asserted that his administration was winning the war against crimes and

criminalities.

Earlier in his address, the State Chairman of Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC), Gabriel Amari, appealed to the state government to implement the N35,000 minimum wage award.

According to the comrade the current N30,000 national minimum wage falls short of meeting basic needs of workers in the prevailing market conditions of the country.

“We advocate for the immediate implementation of a wage award totalling around N35,000 in Kogi State. This adjustment is not only fair but also urgent, given the relentless rise in the costs of



Gov Ododo

goods and services, which continuously erode the purchasing power of workers. “Until the long-awaited negotiations for a new minimum wage are concluded

and put into effect, the wage award would serve as a temporary relief for workers grappling with the current economic hardships.”

Kaduna Fish Farmers Association Seeks Govt's Support

BY; HAUWA ADAMU KIDAH, Kaduna

Kaduna Fish Farmers Association has called on the state government to assist its members with incentives and other necessary supports for increased and quality production to meet nutritional and protein needs of consumers.

The fish farmers decried rising cost of feeds and other basic implements for the production of one of the known sources of protein in the country which they said had pushed many out of business, resulting in high cost of the product in the market and denying several households access to the essential produce.

Vice Chairman of the association, Michael Sabastine, in an interview with newsmen in Kaduna, also harped on the need for young graduates to embrace fish farming as a vocation, saying it would go a long way in reducing overdependence on government job and curb societal ills caused by unemployment.

"Fish farming is very lucrative and financially rewarding, thus should be embraced by our young men and women who are out of school so they will be engaged on productive venture that would keep them away from idleness.

"Government can support us to make the business attractive to young school leavers which I believe will assist in

creating job opportunities and checkmating insecurity in the process.

"It is a skillful and respectful venture that can keep one engaged and productive in the context of productivity," he maintained.

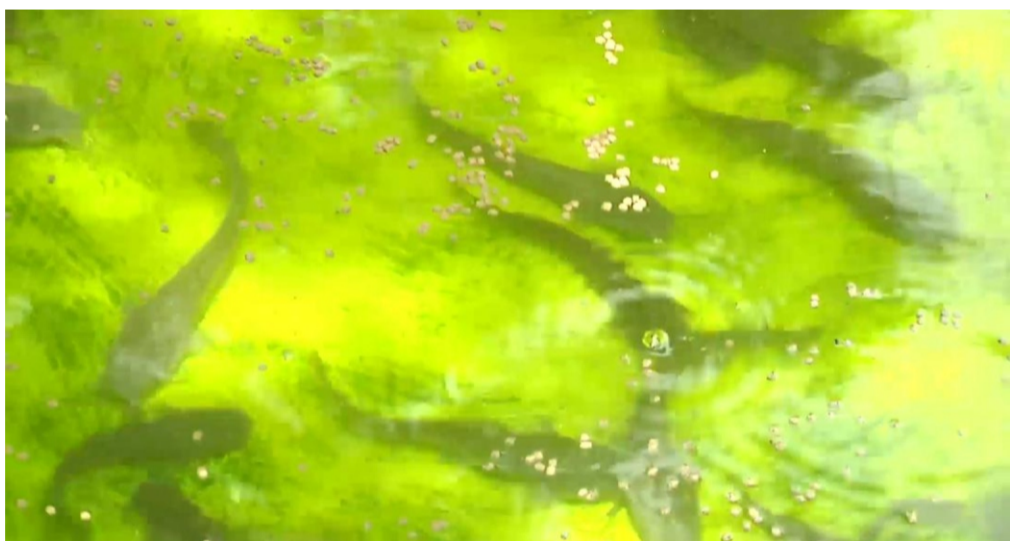
Earlier in his remarks, Ejike Ude, Chairman of the association lamented desertion of farmland due to activities of bandits, saying the sad development had negatively impacted on food production. He advocated government input in farming business in areas of provision of loan incentives so actors in the vocation can have value for their effort and remain in the field for the good and progress of the

state.

He however, commended the present administration in the state for making progress and positive impacts in some key sectors across the state.

"Farmers who could not access their farmlands have now turned to fish farming because it could be practiced at home.

"In the light of the above, it is imperative for governments to encourage us by making cheap and affordable feeds, seedlings and other vital needs of fish farming so we can assist in economic growth and development of our dear state," he appealed.



Kaduna State: 2024 Local Government Budget, Where Are We On Its Assent?

By YUSUF ISHAKU GOJE

Section 100, sub-section 4 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended) states that, "where a bill is presented to the Governor for assent he shall within thirty days thereof signify that he assents or that he withhold assent." While sub-section 5 states, "where the Governor withholds assent and again the bill is again passed by the House of Assembly by two-third majority, the bill shall become law and the assent of the Governor shall not be needed." The issue of concern here is that, today is exactly two months (beyond the thirty days allowed), since the Kaduna State House of Assembly, in fulfillment of its appropriation function, was reported, 5th of March, to have passed the 2024 appropriation bill of N107.7 billion for the 23 local government areas in the State. This is an increase of about 13% from the initial proposed budget of about N94 billion presented before the Assembly by the Executive arm. However, the budget seems to have not been assented into law by the Governor, sixty days after. The use of the word 'seems' is because a search on the official handles of the administration and news platforms have no update or report on its assent.

When only last week, the Governor signed four bills presented to him, through the Majority Leader, into Law, with that of the passed 2024 Local Government appropriation bill conspicuously missing. The assented laws are to: Establish the Kaduna State Roads Fund (KADSRF) and the Kaduna State Roads Fund Administration Board (KADSRFAB), along with other Matters Connected Therewith; Establish the Kaduna Rural Access Roads Authority (KADRARA) and for other Matters Connected Therewith; Enact the Kaduna State Emergency Management Agency Law, 2024, and for other Related Matters (Amended); and Establish the Kaduna State Environmental Protection Authority, 2024. (Amended).

Before going further, one wonders the justification for the increase in budget size by the State Assembly. Considering that the trend analysis of local

government revenues have consistently shown underperformance. The increase in Statutory allocation from Abuja, induced by fuel subsidy removal, is not enough reason - as most of the funds are utilized by the State Government on behalf of the LG Councils. More so, that a huge chunk of it is remitted back to the State government as first line charges in line with Section 9 of the State Joint Local Government Account Allocation Committee Law, 2019.

A brief look at the Kaduna State 2024 approved budget shows that, under Capital Receipt, donation by Local Governments is N13.5 billion, which is 62.5% of the total budget for Aids and Grants. These are the contributions from Local Governments to the State government in the budget: Compensation to Victims of Communal Violence - N1 billion; Security - N786.8 million; 1% Local Government Training Funds - N361.1 million; Zaria Metropolitan Authorities - N2.17 billion; Kaduna Capital Territory Authority - N2.18 billion; Kafanchan Municipal Authority - N2.18 billion; 60% contribution from LG for Salaries of Local Government Health Workers - N4.5 billion; Overhead to PHCs - N152.4 million; and IPDs/Emergencies (SPHCB)-N230 million.

In addition, the State government has over the past years also consistently fallen short in adequately remitting the

independent revenue collected on behalf of the LGAs in line with the Tax (Codification and Consolidation) law, 2020; as well as, the zero or meager remittance of the statutory 10% IGR - as reported, from 2018 till date, by the Kaduna State Office of the Auditor-General. It is important to note that a credible budget depends on realistic assumptions and projections as captured in the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF, 2024-2026). So to increase the budget size will require the review of the fiscal strategy that informed the initial estimate. Was that done?

Back to the assent of the 2024 Local Government budgets, in line with the constitutional provision quoted in the first paragraph, other germane questions begging for answers are, had the Governor, within the

prescribed thirty days, thereof signified to the State Assembly that he has assented or he withheld assent to the passed 2024 Local Government appropriation bill? Has the State Assembly as part of its oversight function followed up to ensure compliance to the constitution and will they invoke sub-section 5?

That aside, it is imperative to note that timely passage of the budget is key to effective policy-budget linked implementation. Especially if the current administration is going to actualize its social contract of rural transformation for inclusive development in line with pillar two of its SUSTAIN manifesto. Furthermore, it will also enhance transparency and accountability in line with the Open Government Partnership

(OGP) - as currently the LG Councils directly and indirectly seem to be carrying out expenditures without an approved budget. More so, it makes it difficult for non-state actors to track the utilization of funds/implementation.

Therefore, it is a civic responsibility to call on the Governor to accelerate the signing of the passed 2024 Local Government appropriation bill into law. Equally, when assented into law, we urge the State Assembly, as the voice of the people, to carry-out rigorous and thorough oversight to ensure the budget translates to improve service delivery that improves the living standard of the people at the grassroots.

Goje is an active citizen, civil society member and OGP enthusiast



More Than 300 To Benefit From Distribution Of Agriculture Equipment In Kachia LGA

By: FUNMI ADERINTO, Kaduna
Kaduna State Governor, Senator Uba Sani has committed to transforming the rural economies and ensuring farmers welfare across 23 local government in Kaduna State. Governor Uba Sani who is committed

towards promoting agriculture flagged off the distribution of farm inputs and agro-processing machines to thousands of beneficiaries under the (Tallafin Noma A Koma Gona) scheme. The scheme which was launched through the Kaduna State Ministry of Agriculture

distributed the equipments to about 300 beneficiaries in Kachia Local Government. The scheme will be extended to beneficiaries across the 23 local governments in Kaduna State. The beneficiaries received the following: Quality seeds, Bags of NPK and urea

fertilizers, Agrochemicals, Complete set of power tillers, Vegetable grinders and Knapsack sprayers with PPE. Governor Uba Sani remains committed to transforming the rural economies and ensuring farmers welfare.



Nigeria's Rivers Hoopers Coach Promises BAL 2024 Playoff Finals Qualification

*Team wins first game in Sahara Conference



By: MOHAMMED ABDULLAHI, Dakar

The coach of Nigeria's Basketball Premier League reigning champions, Ogoh Odaudu has promised Nigerians qualification to the 2024 Basketball Africa League (BAL) playoff finals in Kigali as Rivers Hoopers defeated home team, AS Douanes in their first game of the ongoing Sahara Conference in Dakar, Senegal.

Coach Odaudu visibly elated and confident after the team's 77 to 68 points win over AS Douanes, stated categorically that Rivers Hoopers will not just be participants in the competition but determined to pick one of the available playoff finals tickets. According to Odaudu, "this is our second participation at the BAL and unlike the inaugural edition where we participated blindly due to our inexperience, this time around we have set up a

goal of qualification to the finals in Kigali and this is evident in our win against the highly tactical home team."

The Nigerian team although, started the game shakily losing the first quarter by 5 points but gained confidence in the second quarter as the deficit was reduced to 2 points.

In the third quarter despite an almost full 10,000 capacity at the Dakar Arena overwhelmingly supporting the home team,

Rivers Hoopers escaped with an 8 points lead and cemented the win in the 4th quarter with a 9 points difference.

Devine Eke, with a man of the performance scored a joint career high 31 points, 12 total rebounds, 3 assists and two steals.

Earlier in the first game of the Sahara Conference, debutants APR of Rwanda stunned US Monastir of Tunisia by 89 to 84 points.

The game dramatically went overtime as Obadiah Noel of APR beat the last minute time-buzzer with an incredible 3-points shot to tie the game at 78 all at the end of the 4th quarter.

The Sahara Conference drama continues on Sunday, 5th May with match day two. Rivers Hoopers plays APR Rwanda at 3:30pm Nigerian Time while US Monastir takes on AS Douanes by 6:30pm.



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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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- All adverts are expected to be in cash or bank draft in favour of New Nigerian Newspaper's Limited.
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- Advertisers will be surcharged 20% of the applicable rate where artworks are not provided.
- Adverts may not be published if the visuals given are considered too poor as to affect the reproduction.
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6 COLUMNS			
Depth	38.1 (CM)	Depth -	15 (Inches)
Width	25.4 (CM)	Width -	10 (Inches)

POLITICAL RATE

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

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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

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

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

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

America, Iran And The Abuse Of Democracy, Human Rights

By: HASSAN GIMBA

“One of the shrewdest ways for human predators to conquer their stronger victims is to convince them steadily with propaganda that they are still free.” N. A. Scott, American author.

Every human being currently living on earth came to this world and saw the United States of America posing as the cradle of democracy, a bastion of freedom and a citadel of human rights.

For those of us in Africa, especially West Africa, and particularly those along the coastline, that America ruptured family cohesion, ties and lineage by forcefully taking our able-bodied forefathers and enslaving them, was either forgotten, forgiven, or both.

That after it was forced to abolish slavery by a changing world, it found a way to continue enslaving our able-bodied and intelligent youths in the name of providing greener pastures for them, which was either overlooked, not realised, or both.

As time went on, that it labelled those who wanted the best for their people as communists and demonised them, creating a bipolar world was either accepted as gospel truth by those who did not know the truth or parroted by those who were recruited to do that, or both.

That the then Eastern bloc (or communist/socialist countries), under the guidance of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), and its star boy, Fidel Castro of Cuba, all lined up to fight apartheid for African freedom was either lost on us or remained unappreciated, or both.

That Fidel Castro's Cuba fought enslavers out of Angola for Angolans to taste freedom, training African youths in its universities and supplying Africa with medical doctors and free drugs while we still preferred to rush to America where we paid for everything through the nose reflected our slave mentality or lack of capacity to embrace truth, or both.

Truth is, we all grew up looking up to Uncle Sam as someone who cared for us in the third world, even when it was propping up the apartheid regime in South Africa or being a pillar of support to Ian Smith in Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe (Southern Rhodesia) and Zambia (Northern Rhodesia). Many of us did not see anything wrong in its support for Joshua Nkomo against the pan-Africanist Robert Mugabe.

For a long time, America has been working on the psyche of youths, especially in Africa, the Middle East, Asia and the communist/socialist countries to make them see their society as primitive and America as modern. The youths see their cultures and traditions as backward

and archaic, their religion as stories of old, and Western depravity as the new religion. It found a way in 1989 to infiltrate and brainwash Chinese students to rise against their country, demanding "political and economic reforms and greater respect for human rights". The protesters gathered in Tiananmen Square in central Beijing, where they were forcefully evicted by military units, who killed a lot of them.

Tiananmen Square, or Tian'anmen Square, is a city square, measuring 765 x 282 metres, in the city centre of Beijing, meaning "Gate of Heavenly Peace". The square contains the Monument to the People's Heroes, the Great Hall of the People, the National Museum of China, and the Mausoleum of Mao Zedong, who proclaimed the founding of the People's Republic of China in the square on October 1, 1949. It has great cultural significance in Chinese history.

America and its Western allies and propaganda machines did not allow what happened in China to be swept under the carpet or forgotten easily. It kept hammering on China's "evil of repression", that it emasculated and silenced the voice of the voiceless because that's what students are. It told the world that China was an enemy of freedom, free speech, free association and democracy which it proclaimed as the only acceptable world order, despite its dalliance with repressive, autocratic and monarchic regimes, around the world.

Now fast-forward to 2024 and the pinching shoe is in America's feet. Its students in no fewer than 15 universities and counting, with Columbia University in the lead, are protesting with the battle cry "Free, Free Palestine" for the freedom of Palestine that has been under Israel's subjugation for decades.

America, the self-acclaimed doyen of freedom of association and speech, the guardian angel of democracy, is cracking down on the students for freely associating and using free speech to seek the freedom of another country. So far, scores of them have been arrested, some suspended, and some dismissed outright, while lecturers have been threatened with sack if they showed any sort of support to the students' cause.

But that will hardly deter academics used to free speech as a first nature. One professor in the university bravely declared: "This is about a genocide being carried on with American money and with American weapons, against a people enduring generations of occupation."

In a cheeky, and poignant, role reversal, Iran, which had suffered American instigation of its youths over time and had to deal with as it deemed fit, called on the US not to jeopardise democracy, freedom



Hassan Gimba

*Monday
Column*

of association and free speech.

Shiraz University, a globally ranked university in Iran, just announced that it will grant scholarships to the students of American and European universities who have been expelled for supporting Palestine. It is also going to hire professors who have been fired or threatened with sacking for their stance towards Palestine.

Before the breeze blew and we saw the anus of the fowl, this was what America was doing to others all over the world - instigating youths against their fatherland, and when the country attempted to rein in its citizens, they would cry foul. They will then dole out scholarships, grants or work and Green Cards to those who fought against their country and its system.

In the words of Samuel P. Huntington, an American political scientist and academic, "The West won the world not by the superiority of its ideas or values or religion...but rather by its superiority in

applying organised violence. Westerners often forget this fact; non-Westerners never do."

Now America is receiving a dose of its medicine and it has failed to behave better than those countries it accused of truncating democracy, free association, free speech and human rights abuses.

Truth, it is said, is the only one that lasts. Falsehood and hypocrisy are just as temporary as the time it will take to blindfold the people.

What America is showing the world today is exactly the echo of the time immemorial words of Abraham Lincoln, its 16th president, who issued the Emancipation Proclamation that declared slaves forever free: "You can fool some of the people for all of the time, and all of the people for some of the time, but you cannot fool all of the people for all of the time."

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

Key Takeaways From 2024 SWAN Full Council, Integrated Sports Development Activated Under Isaiah Benjamin

*Places indefinite suspension on Bonny Nyong, Azuka Chiemeka, Ijeoma Peter-Nwante
 *Commends Kano Govt, tasks Sports Minister on collaborations

By; JACOB ONJEWU DICKSON

The Sports Writers Association of Nigeria (SWAN) on Thursday May 2, held its Full Council Meeting, tagged, "Kano 2024" under the amiable leadership of a seasoned sports writer, Isaiah Kemje Benjamin. The gathering attracted key stakeholders of sports development in the country, bringing together, sports writers and administrators. It was a gathering that shows that with committed leadership, Nigeria can get it right in the sports sector. Ahead of the May 2 Full Council, National Executive of SWAN held an important meeting which lasted through the night, ending in the early hours of Thursday morning. It was indeed a brainstorming session, aimed at looking at the best ways that sports can be aggressively developed at the grassroots, with deliberate positive reportage from SWAN members. That marathon National Executive Committee (NEC) of SWAN set the tone for the business of the day at the full

council. On arrival in Kano days earlier, SWAN President, Isaiah Kemje Benjamin, led some NEC members on strategic courtesy visits to several sports administrators, notable among whom were, former NFA Chairman, Alhaji Ibrahim Galadima, whose wealth of experience was poured out in form of advice. Other visits, include, the Honourable Commissioner of Information of Kano State, Baba Halilu Dantiye, a veteran journalist, who spared no words in advising his visitors on how to ensure the noble journalism and sports writing profession is taken to greater heights. Dantiye, a former SWAN executive in Bauchi State, as well as ex President of the influential Nigerian Guild of Editors (NGE), promised to attend the Full Council, one he also fulfilled. At the Full Council, held at the prestigious Global Suites, 34 states of the Federation were represented by SWAN Chairmen or secretaries from states or both, where decisions were taken after deliberating for hours, from where a communique that

captured the resolutions were taken. At the colourful opening ceremony of the Full Council, SWAN rolled out honours to several who distinguished themselves in sports development across the country. They are, Alhaji Ibrahim Gusau (SWAN Football Development Icon Award), Alhaji (Dr.) Ibrahim Galadima (SWAN Excellence Award), Senator John Owan Enoh (SWAN Sports Outstanding Leadership Award), Hon. Abubakar Ekene Adams (SWAN Sports Grassroots Development Award), Alhaji Dr. ISiyaku Umar Tofa (SWAN Sports Philanthropy Award), Alhaji Halilu Dantiye MNI (SWAN Sports Legendary Award) and Mr Moses Adisu (SWAN Sports Development Award). Also recognized, were, Rabi Ali (SWAN Sports Legendary Award), The Chairman, Nigeria Nationwide League One (SWAN Most Improved League), Alhaji Dr. Rabi Inuwa (SWAN National Merit Award) Senator Barau Jibrin (SWAN Excellence People's Representation Award),

Senator Kawu Sumaila (SWAN Distinguished Service Award), Kano State Governor, Alhaji Kabir Yusuf (Nigeria Sports ICON) and Mal. Ibrahim Shekarau CON, P.E.N. SARDUNAN KANO, (Award of Excellence for Sports Development). The well attended opening ceremony was also graced by several dignitaries and key stakeholders. Notable among those at the opening, were, Minister of Sports Development, Senator John Enoh represented by acting Zonal Coordinator North West, Mohammed Danmallam. Others are ex SWAN President, Alhaji Saidu Abubakar, ex SWAN Deputy President, Alhaji Abubakar Sadiq Moyoyo, ex SWAN Secretary Generals, Olawale Lawanson Alabi and Jude Opara, ex NFA Chairman, Alhaji Ibrahim Galadima and Alhaji Dr. ISiyaku Umar Tofa, among others. According to the communique issued after the Full Council, which was jointly signed by Chimezie Anaso (Chairman), Segun Giwa (Secretary), Chinwe Nnadozie (Member), Mustapha Musa (Member) and

endorsed by Secretary General, SWAN, Ikenna Okonkwo, punishment was handed out to some erstwhile members, who of recent, dragged the name of the association to disrepute through insubordination and other unwholesome activities, including illegally holding a NEC meeting. In spite of pleas from the SWAN president, Full Council insisted such erring members deserved punishment ranging from suspension to relieving some from positions in the NEC. Those axed by the Full Council include, Bonny Nyong (Deputy President), Azuka Chiemeka (Vice-president South-South) and Ijeoma Peter-Nwante (Financial Secretary). Also, the following appointees by the President/NEC of the association were relieved of their various positions. They are, Frankie Omonkhua (VP, South-East), Olalekan Ige (Deputy Secretary-General) and Mansur Mohammed (VP North-West). The Full Council among several other decisions, resolved to look into an earlier decision taken in 2019, that led to a strained relationship between SWAN and



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the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ).

Hence, the "divorce" that was adopted in 2019 has been reviewed by the 2024 Full Council. SWAN resolved to maintain a cordial relationship with NUJ, since most of its members are practicing journalists, registered with NUJ. For a glimpse of the other resolutions, read the full communique below;

COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE END OF 2024 SWAN FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT GLOBAL LUXURY HOTEL, KANO, TAGGED "KANO 2024" BETWEEN MAY 1 AND MAY 3, 2024

After opening ceremony and deliberations, the following formed part of the Resolutions at the Full Council Meeting...

1) Guests in their various messages of goodwill commended SWAN under the leadership of President Isaiah Benjamin for its role in the development of sports in Nigeria and reiterated their readiness to continue to support and partner with the noble association.

2) Full Council confirmed and regretted the abuse of power and rascality in the build up to July 2023 Triennial Delegate Congress in Omok which led to the arbitrary disqualification of some aspirants in that election by the Honour Sirawo-led administration and commended the affected persons for the maturity with which they managed the injustice.

3. Full Council considered the purported wrongdoings leveled against President Isaiah Benjamin by some unregistered

members of National Executive Committee (NEC) after listening to his side of the accusations and absolved him of any form of culpability.

4) Full council cleared the President of hateful, vengeful, gross abuse of privilege and declared allegations against him of no consequences, null and void.

5. Afterwards, Full Council unanimously passed a vote of confidence on Isaiah Benjamin as President of the Association and the entire NEC as presently constituted.

6) Full council agreed that the needless crisis orchestrated by some members of NEC had brought public embarrassment to the association, dented its corporate image which has rubbed it of immense benefits.

7) Full Council having considered the activities of three elected NEC members, suspended them indefinitely, just as it also approves the relieve of three others appointed into the leadership of the association of their duties.

The indefinitely suspended NEC members are;

- Bonny Nyong - Deputy President
- Azuka Chiemeka - Vice-president South-South
- Ijeoma Peter-Nwante Financial Secretary,

Also, the following appointees by the President/NEC of the association were also relieved of their various positions...

- Frankie Omonkhua - VP, South-East VP
- Olalekan Ige - Deputy Secretary-General
- Mansur Mohammed - VP

North-West

8) Full Council commended the Nigeria Pillar of Sports, Chief Donatus Agu-Ejidike, for his continued support to SWAN activities and Sports development and affirmed that he is indeed Nigeria's Pillar of Sports.

9) Full Council also condemned the shady handling of ID card registration and implementation in the past and non-remittance of percentages to states and called for better ways of handling both annual registration/renewal of membership.

10. Full Council relieved Dr. Honour Sirawoo of his position as Board of Trustees (BoT) chairman, approved the expansion of the size of BoT from three to seven, while

calling on members to determine their leadership.

11. Full Council resolved that the tenure of the current SWAN statute is due for review and a committee be set up accordingly at next Full Council.

12. Full Council resolved that it is a criminal offense for anybody or group outside the Isaiah Benjamin-led NEC to use SWAN for any personal or unofficial Communication.

13. Full Council approved a positive review of SWAN relationship with NUJ and mandated the President/NEC to engage in further discussion that will smoothen relationship as it used to be

14. Full Council wished Ogun State successful hosting of the forthcoming National Sports Festival, while calling on the Local Organising Committee to make adequate provisions for all participants including Sports Journalists.

15. Full Council resolved that former President Honour Sirawoo should return all the property of SWAN in his possession including the certificate of registration.

16. Full Council urged the SWAN President to act swiftly on indiscipline and/or any act of factionalisation at the some state or National level of the association.

17. Full council frowned at illegal claims springing up in Gombe, Bayelsa and Edo States and affirmed that Mr Hakilu Mohammed Feli is the recognised Chairman in Gombe, Mr. Loveday Herbert as interim Chairman in Bayelsa, while calling on Edo State to conclude registration and conduct election

that will usher in its substantive leadership.

18. Full Council resolved the dissolution of all factions of SWAN in Lagos State chapter and set-up of a harmonised caretaker committee to make way for a proper election. Just as it commended the steps taken so far by the President in the FCT Chapter and urged him to ensure him to sustain all efforts at bringing the chapter under one umbrella.

19. Full Council congratulated Finidi George on his appointment as Super Eagles coach and charged him to justify the confidence reposed on him while urging the Nigeria Football Federation to provide the enabling environment for him to succeed.

20. Full Council commended Nigeria athletes at the recently held 13th African Games in Ghana and urged the Ministry of Sports and Nigeria Olympic Committee to intensify preparations for Paris Olympics.

21. Full Council called on the Sports Ministry to collaborate more with SWAN and reserve more slots for its members of the association in subsequent international competitions sporting competitions remain media event.

22. Full Council commended the Government and People of Kano State for playing a good host to the leadership of the association. **Communique Drafting Committee**
Chimezie Anaso - Chairman
Segun Giwa - Secretary
Chinwe Nnadozie - Member
Mustapha Musa - Member
Ikenna Okonkwo - Secretary General, SWAN



NBB Of C Decorates Idowu Rasheed With UBO African Belt

By: AYO OJEDOKUN, Lagos

Nigerian boxer, Idowu 'ID Burster' Rasheed who was controversially denied victory in Ghana early last month, was on Wednesday, May 1, 2024, decorated with his title belt as the new Universal Boxing Organisation African Light heavyweight champion. It would be recalled that Idowu Rasheed of the Francis Aiyegbeni Boxing Club, Ibadan with a record of seven fights in which he won five, drew one and lost one, on Saturday April 13, 2024 at Kawakude Park, Nima, Accra, Ghana knocked out more experienced Ghanaian boxer, Bastie Samir in round two of their title fight after which his opponent was stretched to the hospital to be revived but to the astonishment of all, the Ghanaian officials declared the fight a technical draw.

This prompted the Secretary General of Nigerian Boxing Board of Control (NBB of C), Remi Aboderin to send the video clips of the fight to the President of Universal Boxing Organisation and after careful review, the fight was awarded to the Nigerian and the belt sent to the country for presentation to the boxer.

Presenting the belt to Idowu Rasheed, President of Nigerian Boxing Board of Control, Dr. Rafiu Ladipo described the boxer as a true champion who did the country proud in Ghana. He explained that the NBB of C decided to wade into the matter

to ensure that the real champion was not robbed of victory with a declaration that his board will continue to protect the interest of the country's boxers as they'll not allow any Nigerian boxer to be cheated.

"It's a thing of joy that the injustice meted out to our boxer was corrected by the boxing body and the true champion presented with his belt.

"We decided to come into the matter and ensure that justice is done because in the past, we've seen boxers from other African countries come here to beat our boxers without being robbed of victory.

"You will remember that some time ago, a Kenyan boxer came to Ibadan and defeated one of our boxers in the presence of his home fans and we did not make any attempt to favour our boxer and that's how it's supposed to be done", he stressed.

Ladipo while commending his coach for a job well done and the scribe of the boxing body, Remi Aboderin for the role he played in ensuring that Rasheed got justice announced that plans are on the pipeline to present the boxer to the Governor of Osun State; his home State, Senator Ademola Adeleke and Oyo State Governor, Seyi Makinde as well as traditional rulers in



both states for their fatherly blessings and financial support. He however advised the boxer to be disciplined, respect his coach, be focused and take his training serious, reminding him that he has six months to defend the title. Speaking at the occasion, Secretary General of NBB of C who also doubles as President of West African Boxing Union (WABU), Remi Aboderin while expressing happiness that justice was gotten reminded the boxer that the title is a stepping stone to more successes even as he

charged him to be steadfast with a promise that the board will always defend it's boxers.

In separate interviews, Chairman of Oyo State NBB of C, Honourable, Gbenga Opaleye, his coach, Michael Jombo and the boxer thanked the leadership of Nigerian Boxing Board of Control for all their support in upturning the injustice.

The Oyo NBB of C chairman said, "We're really grateful to the national body for helping our boxer claim his title which shows that the interest of our fighters

and development of professional boxing in the country is their topmost priority.

"My promise is that we at Oyo State will continue to produce more champions for the country because our board since assumption of office has produced many boxers including a world champion in the person of Ridwan 'Scorpion' Oyekola and now African champion and we'll continue to produce more because we have many talented boxers in the state", he concluded.

Odu'a Investment Always Ready For Growth, Prosperity Of South West, Nigeria - Group Chairman

operations, and maximize value for its stakeholders by aligning its real estate ventures with Wemabod Limited

"Today marks the culmination of a strategic decision that underscores our commitment to excellence and innovation-consolidating our real estate business under Wemabod Limited. This decision was driven by a thorough analysis of market dynamics and a clear vision for the future. By aligning our real estate ventures with Wemabod Limited, we are poised to unlock new

opportunities, streamline operations, and maximize value for our stakeholders".

Managing Director/CEO of WEMABOD, Mr Yemi Ejidiran in his comments on the project hailed the "exceptional dedication and hard work of the combined teams at Odu'a Investment Company Limited ICL, Wemabod Limited and Aerofields Ltd, saying " project represents not just bricks and mortar but a testament to our resilience, innovation and unwavering commitment to excellence that define Odu'a

Investment Company Limited and its subsidiaries.

"The 1st phase of the AURORA WESTLINK ESTATE is a premium residential development comprising of total of forty units (40) sitting on about 7400sq.m. of land and broken down to 20 of 3-bedroom terrace apartments, Eight numbers of 3-bedroom Maisonnets, Eight units of four and three bedroom penthouses all with attached guest chalets", he said.

Mr Ejidiran added, "The 2nd phase sitting on about 3717sq.m

of land parcel and comprising of another 14 units of apartments of various typologies and expansive recreational facilities suell as swimming pool, football pitch, basketball court convertible to Lawn Tennis court and children playground. The two phases of the development are imbued with exquisite quality finishing standards 2nd to none in the vicinity of the project site.

" We at Wemabod therefore, extend our profound gratitude for the trust and confidence

reposed in our capabilities. Your dedication to instituting a regime of professional management grounded in corporate governance, transparency, integrity, and accountability is exemplary."

Appreciating the partnership support from the Odua Investment Company Limited and Wemabod, the Executive Director of Aerofields Home Limited, Mr Adetomiwa Adetilelewa promised to deliver on the mandate of the project.

Lagos Possible Host City Of BAL In Future As BAL 4th Season Sahara Conference Begins In Dakar

By; MOHAMMED ABDULLAHI, Dakar

Basketball Africa League (BAL), premier African clubs basketball competition will possibly be hosted in Lagos, Nigeria in the nearest future according to BAL President, Amadou Gallo Fall during the opening press conference of the BAL's 4th season Sahara Conference in Dakar, Senegal.

While answering questions from journalists, Amadou noted Lagos as an important market for BAL having been one of the initial six host cities designated for the inaugural BAL in 2020 before Covid-19 truncated the plans.

He also seized the opportunity to

congratulate Nigeria and the project team behind the groundbreaking 12,000 capacity Lagos Arena which is scheduled to be completed in December 2025.

BAL 4th season Sahara Conference begins on Saturday, 4th to Sunday 12th May 2024 at the Dakar Arena with 4 teams including Nigeria's reigning champions, Rivers Hoopers, AS Douanes from the host city, Dakar, US Monastir, Tunisian club that won the second edition of BAL and APR club Rwanda.

In the past three editions of the BAL, Rivers Hoopers and Kwara Falcons represented Nigeria in the 2021 and 2023 regional qualifier conferences respectively but failed to qualify

to the BAL playoff finals, all in Kigali, Rwanda. Hopefully, Rivers Hoopers will break that jinx this year.

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.

Nigeria Wins Medals, Sportsmanship Awards @ 2024 VEX Robotics World Championship

**Making Nigeria Proudly*

By HOSEAYUSUF, Abuja

At the just concluded 2024 VEX Robotics World Championship in Dallas, Team Nigeria, proudly represented by Glisten International Academy Abuja, received the Sportsmanship award and medals in Dallas.

This year's championship featured a diverse array of participants from more than 90 countries, with over 24,000 students, and only 84 qualified teams competing in various categories, of which Nigeria presented three qualified teams from Glisten International Academy.

The Executive Director of the school, Engineer Abba Saidu who led the team, commends

the impressive achievement and improvement of the team, in ranking and receiving of medals and Sportsmanship Awards.

He enthused that the school's directors and management are grateful to the esteemed Parents, the Deputy Senate President, his representative, the Hon Minister of Information, NITDA, DG TRC, foundations and private companies, Brekete family, the media, and families and friends who believe in the team.

He looks forward to more collaboration and support from relevant stakeholders for future participation in International VEX Robotics competitions in future.



The National President of the National Association of Proprietors of Private Schools (NAPPS) Samira Jibir PhD, commended the team for their tenacity, Nigerian spirit of showing resilience and confidence in participating on such wide global stage and with teams from more technologically advanced countries.

She congratulated the team for not only placing Nigerian on the global stage and flying the national flag in such a huge

global event, but for also making Nigeria proud for the Sportsmanship Award and medals received.

She reiterated that as the nation continues to make strides in the fields of robotics, innovation and technological advancement, this achievement serves as a compelling reminder of the boundless potential and opportunities for our youths.

She called for support from Government agencies, private

sector and organisations, individuals to rise up to the occasion in supporting and sponsoring this programme so that Nigeria can have larger participation next year.

"Preparation for the 2025 competition must start NOW!" She added.

She commended all Nigerians for their support and encouragement in making this tournaments a reality, 2024 VEX Robotics World Championship in Dallas.



NBB Of C Decorates
Idowu Rasheed With
UBO African Belt

Story on Page 22

May Day: Zulum Assures Of Reducing to Barest Minimum, Pending Demands By Workforce

*Charges all civil Servants to key into state's 25-year Development Plan

By; SADIQ ABUBAKAR,
Maiduguri

Borno State Governor, Professor Babagana Umara Zulum has assured of continuous prioritisation of the welfare of civil servants in the state by ensuring that all backlog of promotions, Leave Grant and other entitlement are cleared as and when due.

The governor stated this at the 2024 International Workers Day celebration, which held at Ramat Square Maiduguri.

Ablly represented by the Deputy Governor, H.E Umar Usman Kadafur, the governor noted that his administration has conducted series of training and retraining workshops under the office of the head of service, assuring workers in the state that these training will continue for effective service delivery.

Similarly, Professor Zulum recalled how his administration has provided two billion Naira (N2.0000,000,000.00) interest free loan to interested workers in the state, while extending his appreciation to the leadership of the NLC and TUC for their cooperation, support and

understanding.

"I urge all workers both within the private and public sectors to remain steadfast, law abiding and dedicated as every effort will continue to be made by government to reduce to the barest minimum, all the pending demands by the Workforce in the state as well as those who have retired from active service will be considered" he concluded.

Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) Chairman, Borno State Council, Comrade Yusuf Inuwa, said there is no gainsaying that the present administration at the state is trying very hard to make life better for workers at the local government, however, he appealed for the consideration of implementing minimum wage to local government employees, this he believes, will further increase their productivity in service delivery.

He added that, "Your Excellency, another area of concerned for the organized labour, is the issues of promotion benefits to the local government staff, we sincerely wish to appeal for considering the implementation of promotion benefits to the local

Government employees. Also of great concern is the payment of outstanding Leave Transport Grant from 2015-2020".

In his remarks, the TUC chairman, Comrade Babayo Hamma, implored the state government to also follow suit and implement the recent approval of 25% and 35% salary increase for civil servants of the federal government.

Comrade Babayo Hamma also appealed to workers to desist from publishing their salary alert on social media, this he said, is jeopardising the efforts of Organised Labour in the negotiations of their demands with the state government.

Borno State Head of Service, Barr. Mallam Fannami commended the NLC in the state for maintaining industrial harmony with the state government, adding that the state government under his office will map out plans to ensure that all categories of civil servants in the state could have the chance to benefit from training and retraining.

The Head of Service equally commended the workers for their hard work, loyalty and



Gov Zulum

dedication to duty and assures of present administration's determination to continue to reposition the state civil service for optimal performance.

In their separate remarks, the guest speaker at the event Professor Ibrahim Umara, the representative of the Vice Chancellor University of Maiduguri, Professor Aliyu Shugaba dwelled on the need for government at all levels to lay emphasis on human development, security of lives

and properties as well as creating opportunities through people-centered policies that could provide enabling environment for the people to be self reliant instead of depending heavily on government.

They also advised governments at all levels to devise workable mechanisms in addressing the country's foreign exchange crisis as it adversely affects the purchasing power of the people (especially the civil servants).



Odua Group Chairman turning the Sod

Odu'a Investment Always Ready For Growth, Prosperity Of South West, Nigeria - Group Chairman

By; BAYOAKAMO, Ibadan

Group Chairman of Odua Investment Company Limited (OICL), Otunba Bimbo Ashiru has said that there will be no going back in the company's readiness for the growth and prosperity of South West region and Nigeria. Speaking at the ground breaking of Aurora-Westlink Estate located in the heart of Ikeja GRA, Otunba Ashiru pointed out that towards this, Odua Group has been upgrading its business network and subsidiaries, particularly

focusing on real estate assets to align with industry standards.

According to Otunba Ashiru, Odua Investment Company Limited "acknowledge the privilege of contributing to the growth and prosperity of our region and Nigeria, thanks to the legacy of the Odua Group.

"The Odua Group has been upgrading its business network and subsidiaries, particularly focusing on real estate assets to align with industry standards", he said

Otunba Ashiru added "In line with our strategic intent for Real

Estate, we have brought on board Wemabod Limited, with its 62 years of expertise to be instrumental in the development of the Aurora-Westlink Estate and other projects. We invite you to invest in our real estate developments and explore opportunities across various sectors."

The Group Managing Director, Odua Investment Company Limited, Mr Adewale Raji while speaking, noted that Odua Group is poised to unlock new opportunities, streamline

Continued on Page 22