

FG Announces Dates For NECO, NABTEB, Other Exams

INNOCENT OWEH
ABUJA

The Federal Government has released a comprehensive sched-

ule for various national examinations for exit classes beginning August 17 to November 18, 2020. Minister of State for Education, Chukwue-

meka Nwajiuba, made the announcement in Abuja, Wednesday, after a series of meetings with chief executives

CONTINUES ON P28 →

CCB Plans To Arraign Magu Over Asset Declaration Violation

The Code of Conduct Bureau (CCB) is said to be preparing charges against Ibrahim Magu, suspended Acting Chairman of the Economic and

Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) for allegedly failing to declare his assets. Those who know about it said Magu would be arraigned at

the Code of Conduct Tribunal (CCT). But his lawyer, Wahab Shittu, has denied the allegation

CONTINUES ON P29 →

Boko Haram Attacks Borno Governor's Convoy

P2

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●N200

Reps Expose Plans To Attack Southern Kaduna After Sallah

AHMED MUSA
ABUJA

● Ask Residents To Be Vigilant, Charge Police For Action

The Southern Kaduna caucus in the House of Representatives said it had

been informed of plans to launch massive and coordinated attacks on its people after the Eid-el-Kabir

break holding this weekend.

The caucus comprising five members of the House of Representatives

from the Southern Kaduna zone disclosed this on Wednesday in Abuja at a press conference with parliamen-

tary reporters.

CONTINUES ON P28 →

Gov. Ishaku Asks For Peace As Birthday Gift At 66 P29



An accident scene at Mile 2 along Lagos-Badagry Expressway on Wednesday.

PHOTO: NAN

INNOCENT OWEH
ABUJA

President Muhammadu Buhari, while presiding over the 10th virtual cabinet meeting on Wednesday, in Abuja, ratified an anticipatory approval for the release of €15.21

CONTINUES ON P27 →

FG Okays N8.64bn For Power Deal With Siemens

- Ratifies Air Transport Agreement With U.S.
- Bans Wood, Charcoal Export

Gunmen Attack Kogi Village, Kill Family Of 13, One Other

- Kill Four P27
- Policemen In Ebonyi Bullion Van Attack

Rigging Edo Poll May Trigger Tragic Reactions Nationwide — Obaseki

- Wike, Obaseki Conspiring To Unleash Violence, Disrupt Election — APC P28

COVID-19 UPDATE World

Cases: 17,055,758
Deaths: 666,512
Recovery: 10,568,979
Active Cases: 5,820,267
Closed Cases: 11,235,491

52-Year-Old Pastor Arrested For Kidnapping P29

NASS Probe May Frustrate Chinese Loan For Rail Projects — Amaechi P29

News

Climate Change: Yobe Govt Flags-off Planting Of Three Million Tree Seedlings

MOHAMMED ABUBAKAR
DAMATURU

Irrked by the effects of desertification on the environment, Yobe State government has launched the planting of three million tree seedlings to restore the environment. It was tagged: "Plant a Tree for Better Tomorrow".

In his address at the ceremony held on Wednesday along Damaturu/Potiskum highway, Yobe State Governor Maimala Buni said that "the occasion provides us with the opportunity to reiterate our commitment to safeguard the environment against man-made and natural factors that have over the years affected our vegetation cover, rainfall pattern, agricultural yield and general climatic condition".

Imo Council Of Traditional Rulers Not Dissolved – Eze Ohiri

ANOLU VINCENT
OWERRI

Chairman Imo State Council of Traditional Rulers, Eze Samuel Agunwa Ohiri, has dismissed recent media report of the dissolution of the council as false and grossly misleading, insisting that he is still in charge as Governor Hope Uzodinma has not sacked him and his team.

Ohiri, who is the traditional ruler of Obi Orodo community in the Mbaitolu Council Area, told newsmen in his palace that at a recent meeting between Governor Uzodinma and monarchs in the state, that the former never made any pronouncement dissolving the council.

He attributed the purported dissolution of the council to the activities of some mischievous individuals who are out to distract the governor from concentrating on his numerous programmes such as fighting the COVID-19 pandemic erosion control, payment of salaries, pensions and gratuities and insecurity. "The governor did not come to the traditional rulers in the state to announce the dissolution of our council and he was careful in order not to be misquoted and so he has not dissolved our council but some people out of mischief, are flying the kite and it is just unfortunate".

The monarch, however, admitted that his office is tenured and that the governor has the right to dissolve them whenever he deems fit.

Railway Workers Canvass Removal Of Tinubu's Name From Station

OLUSEGUN KOIKI
LAGOS

Barely 72 hours after President Muhammadu Buhari renamed several railway stations after some prominent Nigerians, workers and union in the Nigerian Railway Corporation (NRC) have agitated for the expunging of Asiwaju Bola Tinubu's name from one of the beneficiaries.

The union; Nigeria Union of Railwaymen (NUR) in a statement by Mr. Segun Esan, its Secre-

tary-General, demanded that the Apapa Railway Station, which was renamed after Tinubu be reversed to its original name Waziri Mohammed Railway Station.

The union also lamented that Mr. Rotimi Amaechi, the Minister of Transportation did not consult with the either workers or the union before submitting the names of the beneficiaries to President Buhari.

Esan, however, said that the union harboured no ill-feelings against any of the beneficiaries whose names were approved by Buhari, but said Waziri

who among other 117 persons perished in the Bellview Airline crash of October 22, 2005, at Lisa in Ogun State, already had the Apapa train station named after him by the government and wondered why the name should be replaced.

Until his demise, Waziri was the Chairman of Nigeria Railway Board. He died in the Bellview's plane crash just 24 hours after visiting the railway office at Ebute Metta in Lagos on official assignment.

The statement said: "To this effect and without prejudice to any of the distinguished personalities

whose names have been given to railway stations by the Hon. Minister of Transportation, we strongly demand that the name of Apapa Railway Station be reverted to its old name, Waziri Mohammed Railway Station.

"Apapa railway station, after the painful death of our beloved Late Alhaji Waziri Kyari Mohammed in a Bellview plane crash, which occurred on 22nd October 2005 at Lisa in Ogun State, was most officially named after him who until his untimely death was the Chairman of Nigerian Railway Board.



Ojekunle Azeez, second Vice President, LASUTH Association of Resident Doctors (ARD) (left); Oaku Itohan, President (second left); Salmon Abeeb, General Secretary (middle); Jeje Bukola, first Vice President (second right), and Durojaiye Temitope, Editor, during their visit to the Heart of Gold Children Hospice, Lagos as part of the association's annual general conference.

Wear Facemask Or Risk Six Months In Prison, Abiodun Talks Tough

SULAIMAN FASASI
ABEOKUTA

Governor Dapo Abiodun of Ogun State on Wednesday for the umpteenth time has mandated the public use of facemask failure of which will now attract up to six months imprisonment.

The governor, while addressing the press at his Oke-Mosan office, said the order was part of the pow-

ers conferred on him by Regulation 7 of the Infectious Diseases (Emergency Prevention) Regulations No. 2 of 2020 (the Regulations).

The governor said the regulation was made pursuant to Section 33 of the Public Health Law of Ogun State which was made to prevent the spread of coronavirus in the state.

"Failure to do so is punishable by up to six

months' imprisonment under Regulation 8 of the Regulations and section 68 of the Law."

The governor also revealed that schools will be reopened for SS3 only on Tuesday, 4th August, 2020 with two weeks revision to prepare the students for the Senior Secondary Certificate Examination.

This, he said, was in line with the resolution of the

Federal Government.

The governor also revealed that with exception of students in exit classes, all students would enjoy automatic promotion to the next class.

He said, "Therefore, in line with the Federal Government resolutions, exit classes, that is - strictly SS3 only (public or private schools) - will resume classes on Tuesday, 4th August, 2020.

Lagos Govt Earmarks N1bn To Boost Hospitality Sector

With the approval of N1 billion seed capital for investment in tourism, Lagos State is set to drive a new growth in hospitality business.

Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu announced the approval of the loan on Wednesday at the 6th Lagos Corporate Assembly held at the Banquet Hall in the State House, Alausa.

The governor said the investment was required to bolster the hospitality sector by providing key operators in tourism

business with soft loans to boost their capacity in driving growth. The initiative, Sanwo-Olu observed, is necessary to position tourism business as a new frontier for job creation and economic prosperity in the post-coronavirus era.

The seed capital will be domiciled in the Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF), the governor said, adding that the funds will be made available specifically to Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) operators in the sector.

The governor said the state would also be collaborating with the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) to further create access for fund to support the hospitality business.

The event with the theme, 'BOS Meets Business', was attended by the captains of industry, manufacturers, and members of Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN).

Besides, Sanwo-Olu disclosed that the state had started the first phase of

the 6,000km optical fibre being laid across Lagos, with the aim of providing technological infrastructure to support MSMEs.

He said the state had continued to strengthen its Ease of Doing Business policies to drive private investment and economic growth.

This, he said, is being made possible by the digitisation of business registration and asset acquisition processes, which, he said, removed administrative bottlenecks.

Lalong Signs Plateau Revised Budget Of N122.8bn

ONOJA AUDU
JOS

Plateau State, Governor Simon Lalong has signed into law the state's revised 2020 budget of N122.8 billion for the fiscal year.

Lalong, while signing the budget on Wednesday in Jos, said his government was forced to revise the budget mid-way into its implementation because Covid-19 has changed virtually every facet of the lives of the people of the state.

He said demands for funds to carry out statutory responsibilities and also respond to the challenges of the coronavirus pandemic made his government to engage in various cost-cutting measures to enable it manage the lean resources efficiently and also "fulfill our most basic responsibilities of providing services to the citizens."

Lalong added that the revised state budget consisted of 42.8 billion for capital expenditure and 79.9 billion for recurrent expenditure.

P&ID: Adoke Gives Malami 7-Day Ultimatum

PASCHAL NJOKU
ABUJA

Former Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Mr Bello Adoke (SAN), has given the Mr Abubakar Malami (SAN), the sitting AGF and Minister of Justice seven days ultimatum to retract defamatory statements made against him (Adoke) at the ongoing hearing of the Process and Industrial Development (P&ID) arbitration case in England.

Adoke issued the ultimatum through a letter by his lawyers led by Chief Paul Erokoro SAN. The letter was dated July 28.

Boko Haram Attacks Borno Governor's Convoy

Boko Haram on Wednesday attacked the convoy of Governor Babagana Zulum of Borno State, sources said.

The governor was on a trip to Monguno and Baga towns to distribute food to IDPs.

One of the sources said the governor's convoy came under attack while he was returning from Baga, a deserted fishing community in Kaka Local Government Area of the state.

The governor was unhurt as soldiers and policemen guarding him repelled the assault on the convoy, they said.

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**His Excellency MUHAMMADU BUHARI, GCFR
President and Commander in Chief of the
Federal Republic of Nigeria,
His Excellency, Dr. IFEANYI OKOWA,
Governor of Delta State,
The Inspector General of Police,
Commissioner of Police Delta State,
To all men of conscience**

THAT A THIRD KING WILL NOT BE KILLED IN EVWRENI KINGDOM

The previous and the present crises in Ewreni was, and is, a product of ambers of discord that were fanned and are still being fanned by persons who were, and are still never in concord with the decision of the Supreme Court in Chief Utuedor Utih vs Chief Jacob Umurhurhu Onoyivwe (1991) 1 NWLR (PART 166) PAGE 166 AT PAGE 203 wherein Mohammed Bello, JSC as he was then, declared as null and void the competence of any Court to question the selection, appointment, grading and payment of stipends/or salary to Chief Jacob Umurhurhu Onoyivwe as the Ovie of Ewreni.

When Chief Jacob Umurhurhu Onoyivwe died, Ewreni Kingdom in accordance with its native law, custom and usages, appointed Chief Irobogo as reagent, Chief Utuedor Utih again sued Chief Irobogo on the same issues, subject matter and party. This case progressed to the Court of Appeal, Benin City. The Court of Appeal, Benin Division decided that the later case is gross and crass abuse of the judicial process, since the Supreme Court has decided this same case in Utih vs Onoyivwe Supra (as above referred).

For emphasis and for the records, when Chief Jacob Umurhurhu Onoyivwe the beneficiary of the Supreme Court decision died, after the regeancy of Irobojo had expired, His Royal Highness Owin Kumane Eruvwedede II, was validly selected by the Eruvwedede Ruling House and presented to the entire Ewreni Clan. His selection was duly approved and he was coronated by the King Makers, consequent upon which a Staff of office was presented to him by the Governor of Delta State.

From the moment when His Royal Highness Owin Kumane Eruvwedede II, was crowned and presented with a Staff of office, both peace and harmony evaporated like the dew at the zenith of harmattan blight. The king was wrongfully accused of embezzling money; an amorphous sum of N6,000,000.00 (Six Million Naira) purportedly paid by the Shell Development Company of Nigeria Limited to Ewreni Community without documentation. The Royal Father was equally accused of conspiring with the Nigeria Police Force to kill some young men of Ewreni extraction. Both accusations were imaginative, fictitious and false but were designed to create an evil impression to get at the king. In point of fact, no such N6,000,000.00 (Six Million Naira) or any amount of money at all lawfully due and payable to Ewreni Community by Shell was paid to the king nor did he act alone or conspire with the Nigeria Police Force or any person anywhere to kill any indigene or a stranger living within or outside Ewreni Clan. It was this same N6,000,000.00 (Six Million Naira) said to have been allegedly embezzled by the King that was subsequently paid by Shell to the caretaker/peace committee appointed by Ewreni Kingdom, then headed by Chief Jacson Udi of blessed memory, that was spent to build the present Community Town Hall: after His Highness Owin Kumane had been murdered in cold blood!

Also on the cooked up accusation of murder of young men in the Community, the truth is; honest and right thinking men who were resident in Ewreni knew that Owin Kumane Eruvwedede II, emerged as king at a time when a group of dissident men of negative influence resisted everything lawfully done by the king. The insubordination of the dissidents caused total breakdown of all known fabrics of native law and custom, usages, norms and values leading to lawlessness, robbery, banditry and rapping of house wives, by young men. It was the evil-inclined young men that killed the then youth leader Comrade Iwhreko and his Secretary at their different home on same day and set them and their homes ablaze.

To reverse the siege of bandits on the Community, the King immediately set-up a new youth executive lead by Mr. Agbaghara Jonathan who was supported by many other courageous young men such as Messrs Young Abodo, Prince Ochuko Kumane, Owhe Clever, Prince Matthew Uba, Blessing Okri and Samuel Mariere, the later became a member who represented Ughelli Constituency 1 in the State House of Assembly for two terms. As it would be expected, the principal task of the new executive was to stop the bandits who were on rampage. To this end, the said executive engaged the services of the Nigeria Police Force and it worked assiduously with one police Inspector Sanni and another Police Officer, Egbe of blessed memory. The result was a lot of the community boys who were involved in robbery, killing and arson were successfully arrested and handed over to the police, many of them who engaged the police in fire duel died in the process: Can the late King be validly accused of killing innocent youths by ridding the community of bandits by using the youth executive which worked in concert with the police?

It has been established that the late King Owin Kumane was killed for no justifiable reason; for the alleged N6,000,000.00 (Six Million Naira) said to have been paid to him that he embezzled, was never paid by Shell to him or anybody else as at the time the king was killed. The charge of killing innocent youths also collapsed from the facts adumbrated above, as those youth who died in the hand of the police on account of cross fire, were robbers, rapist and arsonists. It is correct to conclude that Owin Kumane was killed by conspiracy of group of people and this conspiracy still continue today to undermine the peaceful reign of his son who succeeded him; the Current King; His Royal Majesty Oghenekevwe Owin Kumane, Eruvwedede III.

Bright Adjogbe, the elder brother of Engr. Samuel Adjogbe contested the position of President General of Ewreni Clan Improvement Union. The election eventually held on the 22nd of October, 2019. Of the ten elective positions for which election was to be conducted, it was only the position of the President General that election was conducted and separate results were returned for the position of President General. It was on the basis of the inconclusive election and in order for the need to maintain

peace, law and order, amid threats by some people, that the Ewreni Traditional Council headed by His Royal Majesty, Ovie of Ewreni set up Elders Committee comprising of men of proven integrity who are Gen. Oviemo Ovadje (Rtd), Evang. S.O. Olutu, Mr. K.K. kumane, Engr. James Asakpa, Mr. Ochuko Dafiawhare amongst others, to resolve the political impasse.

The foregoing elders committee then resolved that as Collins Udi the second President Candidate has given them his blessing to bring peace, Bright Adjogbe should be allowed to form his cabinet with men of his will for the term of three years while his opponent at the election, Chief Collins Udi should be allowed to rule for three years thereafter. It is this gracious tenure of three years commencing on the 2nd November, 2019 that Bright Adjogbe is using in exercising maximum force.

Insubordination to constituted authority reared its ugly head so soon after Mr. Bright Adjogbe has by proclamation vide the doctrine of necessity brought to office by the Elders' Peace Committee. In July 2019, the Ughelli North Local Government Chairman acting in concurrence with the Divisional Police Officer, 'A' Division Ughelli requested the Seven Kingdoms in Ughelli North, namely: Agbarha Kingdom, Agbarho Kingdom, Ewreni Kingdom, Ogor Kingdom, Orogun Kingdom, Uwheru Kingdom and Ughelli Kingdom to reduce the names of persons in the list of the respective Vigilante Group each Kingdom had submitted from thirty (30) to twenty(20) persons. Bright Adjogbe on becoming President General got wind of this proposed alteration to the list. When the king, His Royal Highness called Mr. Bright Adjogbe that the list is his prerogative, he challenged the king to produce a documentary evidence of such authority. It took the intervention of the Local Government Chairman and the said DPO before Bright Adjogbe let go his caustic opposition to the list of the twenty (20) fit and proper persons which the king submitted. One does not need the clairvoyance of naustradermous to be able to unravel that raising a parallel vigilance group can compromise the king security, and make him vulnerable in the event of an attack. It should be recalled that the father of the current king Owin Kumane was attacked by Vigilance Group that killed the king on Thursday, 20th January 2000 at 12:37pm. Sometime last year, the elephant tusk, one of the symbol of the King's authority that went missing over thirty years ago was found in a woman's house. What a mystery.

It is also a diversionary play to claim that it was some persons from Ewreni community that attack personal aides of a prominent engineer on 20th of June, 2020 on the East-West Road close to Ewreni. The truth is, some suspected Fulani bandits attacked various persons on the same spot on that day. It is on record that the King of Patani was one of the persons attacked on that day, even Hon. Samuel Mariere as well as the Chairman of Agadama Community of Uwheru Kingdom was also attacked on the same spot. It therefore, came to everybody as a surprise when the engineer turns the story to a failed imaginary assassination attempt on his life.

To sustain the charge of criminal attack, the police were brought with intent to arrest detain and keep out of circulation every voice of dissent and to undermine the king. The following persons namely Mr. Ifaka Hero, Mr. Stephen Atiri (a.k.a. Actor) and even the lawfully appointed vigilance group Chairman, Mr. Tuesday Okwa, were the persons who were threatened with arrest. It was the insistence of Mr. Tuesday Okwa that both the Divisional Police Officer "A" Division Ughelli and the Police Area Commander, Ughelli Area Command be called first by the Police to confirm his arrest, which the police could not do, that delayed their "false" arrest. The king Oghenekevwe Owin Kumane who was returning from a journey met the police and Okwa arguing. The amiable king intervened, pleading with the police that he should be allowed to produce by himself whomever that they want in his domain. In opposition, one of the masterminds of the operation stood his ground and rain insults on the king saying that "the days of the king and his end shall be more tumultuous than that of his late father". The above quoted sacrilegious utterance was responsible for the attack by the young men at the scene on the speaker, who immediately ran from the scene to gather some of men in the terrorist group to launch an unprovoked attack at the palace by firing gunshots at the King's car at the palace gate.

The said unprovoked attack was repelled by some youths who were attracted by the gunshot to the palace. The king came out of his palace and pleaded with the youths in the company of Honourable Victor Ohare that they should not go and fight. While the king was pleading that peace, law and order be maintained, some other youths brought before the King a notable person who was armed with a locally made gun; and who confessed on camera that the gun in his possession was shared to him to go and attack the King's palace. To avert crises, HRM Oghenekevwe Owin Kumane pleaded once more with the irate youths not to kill the man but that he should be handed over to the police. The king instructed the Vigilance Group Chairman, Mr. Tuesday Okwa to call the DPO 'A' Division Ughelli who sent some policemen to whom the king handed over the man and his locally made gun.

It may interest the police to know that the subject has made useful statement to the police indicting the killers of Sylvester Adjogbe as he was present at the scene of the killing. It should be noted further, that the vehicle, and every other equipment including guns and bullets used by the Community Vigilance Group were bought for them by some persons who, till September 2019, were paying the Vigilance Group Members monthly salary. The relationship between members of the Vigilance Group and their sponsors became strained even despite the tremendous amount of money spent on the members, they remain resolute and vehemently refused to join hands with him to fight the King.

It is on the strength of this miserable, sordid and morbid facts adumbrated above, of a king under siege and in a state of annihilation, in the hands of his subjects who are wealthy and very powerful and who boasted that the reigning King HRM Oghenekevwe Owin Kumane III "that the days of the king and his end shall be more tumultuous than that of his late father" who was murdered in cold blood on Thursday, 20th January, 2000; that we now politely but urgently urge you to use your good office to plead with the sponsor to reign in on his attack dogs at Ewreni in order to sustain the fragile peace, law and order so as to avert the killing of another king.

We thank you profusely in anticipation that you will act on this petition to avert the killing of another innocent king as well as to protect the lives and properties in the Kingdom.

Yours faithfully,
K.K. KUMANE JP.
For the Royal Family

News

COVID-19: Committee Insists On Social Distancing Among Commuters In Anambra

RAYMOND OZOJI
AWKA

Patrick Obalum Udeoba, the Chairman House of Assembly Committee on Transport and lawmaker representing Anambra-West state constituency, has stressed the need for transporters to ensure social distancing among passengers as well as ensure that all other COVID-19 protocols were observed to curb the spread of the virus.

Udeoba, who stated this during an interview with our correspondent in Awka, explained that there was need for transporters operating in the state to comply with government directives on containment and prevention of coronavirus infections.

He said the federal government has stipulated the number of passengers inter and intra-state commercial buses should accommodate in order to ensure compliance with the social distancing protocol.

Why Transferring Federal Roads To States May Be Difficult – Gbajabiamila

The Speaker of the House of Representatives, Femi Gbajabiamila, says transferring federal roads to state governments might be difficult due to some challenges.

Gbajabiamila said this on Wednesday while speaking with journalists shortly after he visited Gov. Dapo Abiodun in his office in Abeokuta.

While noting that the ob-

servations made by the governor for transfer of some roads to the state was well received, he insisted that the House might have to fashion out ways to handle this.

He contended that the transfer may require the amendment of the Privatisation Act, adding that the lawmakers could explore other avenues to achieve this.

According to the Speaker, states such as Ogun which

play host to many industries must have good roads to ease transportation.

“Those observations were received. It is for us to look at whether it is even possible legally for the Federal Government to transfer federal roads to any states; I’m not sure how feasible that is.

“But there is more than one way to skin a cat. So, even where that is not feasible, it might even require

the amendment of the Privatisation Act; it’s the Federal Government assets.

“If that is not feasible, there are other models that we can look at, in terms of other people fixing the roads and then the Federal Government owing them or settling off whatever debts owed by the state.

” So either way, something definitely needs to be done about those roads,” he said.

Obaseki Signs N128.8bn Revised 2020 Budget Into Law

Edo State Governor, Mr. Godwin Obaseki, has signed the Revised 2020 Appropriation Bill into law with a pledge to make necessary sacrifices to ensure the sustenance of critical sectors of the state’s economy amid disruptions caused by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

The budget, which was reduced by 30 percent from N179bn to N128.8 billion, was signed into law after the Speaker of Edo State House of Assembly (EDHA), Frank Okiye, and leadership of the House presented it to the governor in Benin City.

Obaseki said the budget was coming at an unusual

time when the COVID-19 pandemic has imposed certain challenges, noting, “The challenges may be difficult now but in the medium and long-term, this administration would need to re-think the economy of the state.

“The financial and economic consequences of

COVID-19 pandemic are challenging, if not more challenging than the health crisis it created. Following several reforms taken by this administration, especially in our financial management and budgeting system, and that of the economy, the impact has not been so devastating.”

Plateau Suspends Prayers On Eid Grounds

ONOJA AUDU
JOS

Plateau State government has directed that prayers at eid prayer grounds in Jos and other parts of the state be suspended and restricted

to Friday mosques only.

It directed worshipers to observe all Covid-19 protocols.

Secretary to the State Government, Prof Danladi Atu, gave the directive at a press conference in Jos.

According to him, elderly people were encouraged to stay at home during the prayers as they were most vulnerable to the virus.

He also directed that all festivities, including visits to recreational centers such as zoo

and wildlife parks be halted.

According to Atu, residents of Jos city and other parts of the state should use facemasks on the occasion and especially children conveying food items to neighbours.

Gas Explosion: Ajao Residents Mourn Death Of Four Of Its Own, Others

JOY ANIGBOGU
LAGOS

Residents of Ajao estate in Isolo Local Council Development (LCDA) of Lagos State are mourning the death of four residents, which occurred when an industrial gas exploded on Tuesday night.

The explosion which took place at Inua Mohammed Street occurred when an industrial gas market dispensed gas to one of his customers at the same time a welder was cutting metals, which resulted in a spark.

Chinedu Onwuchekwa, an eye witness told Daily Independent that at about

6.30pm on Tuesday, an explosion occurred, which made residents scamper for safety. According to him, the explosion occurred when the seller was dispensing gas to a customer during which time a spark from the welder’s end triggered the explosion that resulted in the fire, killing four persons.

Onwuchekwa said, “This explosion shocked the very foundation of Ajao estate resulting in the burning of the high tension cable. You can see that building under construction, it caught fire. A lot of other properties were affected, lines of shops were destroyed. The swift arrival of officials of Lagos State Emergency Management Agency (LASEMA), and

men of fire service helped to put off the fire. It is unfortunate that we lost Victor, the tailor, Mama Funke and her granddaughter, Funke and a customer who came to buy gas. I must say that over four persons died in that explosion because the tailor has boys working for him and we haven’t seen any of them. Some many people have lost properties worth millions of naira. My property was also affected”

At the time of filing this report, men of LASEMA and Lagos State environmental protection agency were seen evacuating remains of the deceased, some of them in bags, burnt beyond recognition, even as the scene was cordoned off.

Caverton Revenue Slumps 5% To N16.1bn For 2020 Half Year

OLUSEGUN KOIKI
LAGOS

Caverton Offshore Support Group Plc, (COSG) has announced its unaudited first half year results for 2020.

The results showed a profit before tax of N889 million and an after-tax profit of N766 million.

A statement from the company indicated that revenue went down by five per cent within the period.

In the same vein, direct operating expenses

dropped by four per cent supporting the earnings per share, which also dropped by 55 per cent when compared to 2019 half year results.

Commenting on the recent events, Mr. Bode Makanjuola, COSG’s Chief Executive Officer said: “As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to have adverse effects on our economy, the petroleum and aviation sectors have borne the major brunt.

“In addition to the pandemic woes, revenue from aircraft contracts dropped

during the period as a result of the decline in hours flown due to severe weather conditions and we have had to implement downward review of our existing contracts as a result of contraction in oil production.

“Despite the drop in revenue, we remain resilient in weathering this storm and look forward to finishing the year on a much stronger footing as we look forward to ease on travel and work restrictions and completion of some of our capital projects.



CAVERTON OFFSHORE SUPPORT GROUP
UNAUDITED CONSOLIDATED RESULTS
FOR THE FIRST HALF, (SIX MONTHS), ENDED 30 JUNE, 2020

The Board of Directors, (“the Board”), of Caverton Offshore Support Group, (“the Group”), hereby announces the following Unaudited Results for the First Half, (six months), ended 30 June, 2020:

Income Statement The Group	The Company			
	30-June-20 N’000	30-June-19 N’000	30-June-20 N’000	30-June-19 N’000
Revenue	16,079,074	16,904,119	-	-
Operating expenses	(10,455,238)	(10,899,183)	-	-
Gross Profit	5,623,836	6,004,936	-	-
Administrative expenses	(2,438,775)	(2,776,351)	(31,442)	(153,834)
Net Exchange difference	(603,670)	-	-	-
Other operating income	105,460	485,346	-	566
Total Operating Profit	2,686,851	3,713,931	(31,442)	(153,268)
Finance cost	(1,831,104)	(1,088,258)	-	-
Share of (loss)/profit of an associate	-	33,390	-	-
Profit for the period before income tax	889,137	2,625,673	(31,442)	(153,268)
Income tax expense	(123,121)	(913,103)	(10,192)	(23,840)
Profit for the period	766,016	1,712,570	(41,634)	(177,108)
Other comprehensive income that may be reclassified to profit or loss in subsequent periods (net of tax)	-	-	-	-
Share of other comprehensive loss of associate	3,682	-	-	-
Exchange difference on translation of foreign operations	-	-	658	-
Other comprehensive income for the period	4,341	-	-	-
Total comprehensive Income for the period	770,357	1,712,570	(41,634)	(177,108)
Profit attributable to:				
Owners of the Company	757,597	1,704,106	-	-
Non-controlling interests	8,419	8,464	766,016	1,712,570
Total comprehensive income attributable to:				
Owners of the Company	761,938	1,704,106	-	-
Non-controlling interests	8,419	8,464	770,357	1,712,570
Basic Earnings per share (N)	0.23	0.51	-	-
Number of Shares in issue	3,350,509,750	3,350,509,750	-	-

Comments:

The results show decreases in the Profit-Before-Tax; Profit After-Tax; Revenue; and Earnings-Per-Share respectively. The Profit-Before-Tax for the period is N889million, while the After-Tax Profit is N766million. Revenue also dropped by 5% to N16.1billion, when compared to same period in 2019.

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to have adverse effects on our economy the petroleum and aviation sectors have borne the major brunt. In addition to the pandemic woes, revenue from aircraft contracts dropped during the period as a result of the decline in hours flown due to severe weather conditions and we have had to implement downward review of our existing contracts scope as a result of contraction in oil production.

Despite the drop in revenue we remain resilient in weathering this storm and we look forward to finishing the year on a much stronger footing as we look forward to ease on travel and work restrictions and completion of some of our capital projects.

Dated the 31st day of July, 2020

By order of the Board

Amaka P. OBIORA
Company Secretary
1, Prince Kayode Akingbade Close, Victoria Island, Lagos.

The detailed Financial Statements for the period are available on the company’s website,
www.caverton-offshore.com

NGO Trains Bayelsa Police Officers On Gender-Based Response To VAPP Act

IGONIKO ODUMA
YENAGOA

The Centre for Environment, Human Rights and Development (CEHRD), a non-governmental organisation, has trained gender and human rights desk officers of the Bayelsa State Police Command on “Gender-Based Response As It Relates to the Enforcement of the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act, 2015.”

The training, which took place in Yenagoa on Wednesday, was organised by the NGO with support from the Embassy of the Netherlands, Abuja.

Dr David Vareba, Head of Governance and Human Rights at CEHRD, said the essence of the training, which involved syndicate group discussion, was in anticipation of the domestication of the VAPP Act by the state House of Assembly.

Vareba said it was imperative, therefore, to train the officers entrusted with enforcement and prosecutorial powers in the law.

CELEBRATING THE RESCUE CAPTAIN

Gov. DDI @ 66

The Executive Chairman, Taraba State Internal Revenue Service, **DR. SIMAN S. AMBITAA**

wishes to on behalf of the Management and the entire Staff of the Board felicitate with his Excellency the Executive Governor of Taraba State, **Arc. Darius Dickson Ishaku DDI**, Taia Ndola on his 66 birthday, your Excellency, you have sojourned on earth for 66 years with track records of myriads of achievements as a second time governor of Taraba state.

At 66, you have carved a niche for yourself as evidenced in the area of Health, Education provision of portable water, construction of DDI Housing known as DDI Garden, the ongoing construction of Flyover Bridge in Jalingo and dualization of Jalingo Pantinapu NYSC road. Above all, the tremendous improvement in internally generated revenue in the past 5 years of your administration.

DDI, you are indeed God sent to Taraba, We pray for more insight, wisdom and good health as you celebrate your special day today.

We wish you more fruitful years ahead ***your Excellency, the Rescue Captain.***



Signed

Dr. Siman S. Ambitaa

Executive Chairman

Taraba State Internal Revenue Service

Metro

Tricycle Operators Protest Alleged Police Extortion In Ughelli



The protesting keke riders.

SUNDAY APAH
UGHELLI

Tricycle riders popularly known as Keke operators in Ughelli North Local Government Area of Delta State on Wednesday besieged the Ughelli Area Command of the Nigeria Police in protest of alleged extortion and arrest of some of their colleagues by men of the force.

The operators numbering over 1,000 with their tricycles alleged that the police officers were collecting between N5,000 to N40,000 from alleged violators of a new directive by the state government which placed a ban on the operators from plying Federal roads in the state.

The Delta State Government, through the Ministry of Transport, has barely announced the ban on Monday, July 27, 2020, when men of the Area Command started arresting and collecting money from the operators, some of who claimed ignorance of the new directive.

Speaking on behalf of the protesters who also barricaded the East-West and Isoko Road, causing gridlock for hours, Pastor Sunday Okorie, said the protest was over the challenges they faced with series of government directives that tended to hinder their operations.

Okorie said, "During this COVID 19 period we have been restricted to carry only two passengers, meanwhile some of us are balancing between N1.2 million to

N1.5 million for the Keke, so it is already difficult for us to meet up with the new directive, but yet we are complying.

"Now the state government has come up again to say we should not ride on the federal highways. And these highways are the major roots of some of our colleagues. Second, the police are already capitalising on this new directive to arrest and extort money from our people. As soon as they see a Keke rider on the road even though he just wants to turn to the other side of the town, they would arrest him.

"They are now telling us that we cannot cross over to other parts of the town with our keke. Somebody from Afiesere or Upper Afiesere, for instance, cannot cross to Mission Road and other parts of the town, they will just arrest him. You don't just make laws suddenly and start prosecuting people without any prior notice or engagement."

Okorie added, "We want the state government to first of all look into our plight and consider reversing the decision because inside the town is saturated with Keke and there is no way you can meet up if everyone is riding within the town alone. We want the government to properly define the directive because, Ughelli, for instance, is divided into two parts and it is separated by the highways."

In Lions Club, We Keep Serving, Challenging Others – Lion Origho

District Convention Chairperson, Effuru-Warri Multiple District 404B2 2020, of the International Association of Lions Clubs, Lion Phina Origho, has stressed the need for continuous service by members of the club.

Speaking at an award ceremony held on Monday, July 27, at the Marble Brand Hotel, Ikeja, Lagos, Origho insisted that the main cardinal programme of the club is service to hu-

manity.

The gathering, which turned out to be one of the best moments in the year, judging by the enthusiasm of the participants, was solely planned to reward clubs and members who partook in the preparation for the Multiple District Convention which was later called off due to the prevalent pandemic, the novel Coronavirus.

The Convention Committee, had earlier pro-

fessed that it would honour our clubs who register early; clubs with the highest number of registered members; those who helped to generate massive registration towards the convention, among others.

Commending members during the award presentation, Origho said the team was pleased with the sacrifice of its members, saying, it's a reward of diligence.

My Wife Has Refused To Get Pregnant For Me, Man Tells Court

A businessman, Eddy Williams, on Wednesday prayed a Mapo Customary Court in Ibadan to dissolve his six year-old marriage to his estranged wife, Gloria, on grounds that she has refused to get pregnant and wants to take over his property.

Testifying in court, Williams said, "I decided to call it quits with Gloria because she has made up her mind to illegally claim my property even when she doesn't merit it.

"Gloria has refused to get pregnant for me. This

is to my disadvantage because she has four children from her first husband.

"She has taken over my buildings, documents; Certificate of Occupancy (C of O), land agreement and building plan. She has been sleeping with different men around town.

"Gloria is stout-hearted because whenever she does something wrong and I advise her, she prefers to maintain her stand," Eddy said.

Gloria consented to

the suit, but denied ever stealing her husband's land and building documents.

She argued that the reason why Williams wanted her out was because she was not interested in joining him in his business.

"Eddy runs a beer parlour with a prostitute and that woman and I usually fight. Before marrying him, I made it clear that I do not want to give birth again because I have four children and he agreed to that," Gloria said.

News

FG Marginalisation: Ogulagha Leaders Protest, Threaten To Cripple Oil Production

SUNDAY APAH
UGHELLI

The leaders of Ogulagha Kingdom in Burutu Local Government Area of Delta State have protested against the alleged marginalisation of the area by the Federal Government, threatening to cripple oil production in the area.

In an open letter to President Muhammadu Buhari, dated July 24, 2020, signed by Chief Igere Williams and 12 others, the people said Ogulagha kingdom, made up of 30 major communities, several satellite villages under the rulership of His Royal Majesty King Joseph I Timiyan JP, is one of the

highest producers of crude oil in Nigeria.

They lamented that Ogulagha Kingdom had not benefited in any way or through development projects from the federal government despite their huge and overwhelming contribution to the growth of Nigeria economy.

"In Ogulagha Kingdom, SPDC operates Forcados Tank Farm and Oil Terminal, Crude Oil Export Loading Platform, South Bank Flowstation, Yokiri Crude Oil Flowstation, Yokiri Gas Lift Flowstation, North Bank Flowstation, North Bank Gas Station, Estuary Oil Flowstations I and II, Afremor A and B Flowstation which consist

of 56 oil clusters and more than 250 oil wells and 30 gas reservoirs.

"Other multinationals and indigenous firms in Ogulagha Kingdom are Agip, Chevron, Britannia-U, SNEPCO, Oando Plc, operating facilities such as Beniboye Crude Oil Flowstation (20) oil wells; MEJI Oil Flowstation (100) oil wells; AJAPA Floating Crude Oil Flowstation (20) oil wells; Bonga Oilfield, OML118, (202,000 barrels) daily crude oil production; Akpo Marginal Field (5) oil wells. These companies and their facilities have been on the land of Ogulagha Kingdom for several years and would be there for a long time to come.

Obi Hails Adesina's Exoneration, Backs His Second Term Bid

CHUKWUJEKWU ILOZUE
AWKA

The former governor of Anambra State and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) vice presidential candidate in the 2019 general election, Peter Obi, has hailed the exoneration of African Development Bank (AfDB) President, Dr. Akinwumi Adesina, by an Independent Review Panel set up to investigate allegations of ethical wrongdoings leveled against him.

Obi, in a statement by his media assistant, Valentine Obienyem, said

it was a welcome development which paves the way for his second term as president of the bank.

Obi said like every well-meaning Nigerian, he was very delighted at the high level of integrity on display in the clearance of AfDB president, Adesina, by the Mary Robinson-led committee, just as he threw his weight behind his second term bid.

Hailing Mary Robinson, Chairperson of the Elders, a global body of wise persons concerned with the world's wellbe-

ing, as "integrity personified", Obi said: "This clearance has finally given the 'OK' for Adesina's second tenure to continue his good work for the African continent."

It would be recalled that the Independent Review Panel was set up by the AfDB Bureau of Governors following a complaint by the United States, to review the process by which two previous organs of the bank – the Ethics Committee of the Board, and the Bureau of the Board of Governors – had previously exonerated Adesina.

109 Nigerian Migrants Return From Mali

CHIBUZOREMEJOR
ABUJA

About 109 Nigerian migrants have returned safely from Mali on a long-awaited charter flight organised by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) with the support of the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) and the European Union (EU) through its Regional Direct Assistance Fund.

A statement on Wednesday by IOM Nigeria, said the flight, the first of its kind in Nigeria since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, was the result of

sustained negotiations between the governments of Mali and Nigeria to establish a humanitarian corridor; a mechanism that has allowed over 2,200 stranded migrants return safely and voluntarily throughout West Africa amid border closures.

"Humanitarian corridors are a much-needed alternative for thousands of stranded migrants who would otherwise remain in their countries of transit or destination with limited access to basic services," said Saskia Kok, IOM Programme Manager, Migrant Protection and Assistance, in Nigeria.

"Our duty now is to provide these returnees with

all the necessary support to ensure their successful reintegration back home."

The statement explained that before the pandemic, Nigerians stranded in Mali had been able to return within 30 days.

"In recent months, however, their wait has been prolonged owing to the border closures announced by governments to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Prior to departure, the returnees—including 12 pregnant women and new mothers tested negative for SARS-CoV-2 and received hygiene kits containing face masks and other protective gear," the statement said.

'Obaseki, Treasure That Must Be Preserved At All Cost'

FRANCIS ONOIRIBHOLO
BENIN

Mrs Betsy Obaseki, wife of the governor of Edo State, Senator Stella Omu and Iyom Josephine Anenih, both PDP Board of Trustees (BoT) members, have described Gov. Godwin Obaseki as a treasure that must be preserved at all cost.

The three notable PDP women, who made the assertions while inaugurating the women's wing of the PDP Edo State Campaign

Council, said Obaseki had demonstrated that politics was for the development of both human and infrastructure.

Mrs. Obaseki said it was high time politicians saw politics as an opportunity to add value to the lives of the people to enhance their standard of living, rather a means to exploit for self enrichment.

The Edo First Lady urged women to rise up as things had become different and politics in Nigeria was changing.

She said in the midst of

women she was not just interested in politics, rather her interest was on how politics would deliver to Nigerians the results desired from politics.

"Some People play politics for their personal gains, they think only of their stomachs, only of themselves. Politics is changing in Nigeria whether we like it or not.

"The decent and patriotic ones are more in numbers. Those supporting good governance and this government are more in number; they just happen to be decent."

Congratulations

To The
People's
Governor,
DD1

@

66



On behalf of the executive and the entire ALGON Family, I wish to Felicitate with his Excellency, The Executive Governor of Taraba State **ARC. DARIUS DICKSON ISHAKU** as he clocked 66 today.

At 66, you have written your name in Gold as evidenced in your Developmental strides in the State, ranging from Health Sector, Educational Sector, Provision of portable Water, Infrastructural Development going on in the state.

Sir, you have made us proud at 66, we the family of ALGON Taraba State heartily Congratulate you as you mark your day today, we wish you good Health, Long Life and Prosperity.



We also say thank you for providing an enabling ground for free and fair election that brought us onboard to serve as your foot soldiers at the grassroots, your passion for the people at the grassroots is unquantifiable

We celebrate you at 66, Ta'a Ndola, God bless and keep you for Tarabans and indeed Nigerians. Amen

Signed

Hon. Bala Sungbadu Bako
ALGON Chairman, Taraba State

Celebrating

Arc. Darius Dickson Ishaku, FNIA, FNITP



@66

The management and entire staff of Government House, Jalingo, heartily rejoices and congratulates His Excellency, Arc. Darius Dickson Ishaku, FNIA, FNITP, the Executive Governor of Taraba State on this occasion of your 66th Birthday today.

We join the good and peace loving people of Taraba State to celebrate this special moment in your life and may God grant you the grace, strength, good health and the wisdom to lift Taraba State to an enviable height.

As we celebrate your new age, we pray that God will grant you what it takes to move Taraba State into one of the States with a focus and enormous potential to excel as exemplified your past and present commitment to the development of the State.

We wish you many more achievements in the years to come in your social contract with the people of Taraba State through the provision of democratic dividends on this auspicious day. Once again, happy birthday, your Excellency.

CHINDO AUDU
Permanent Secretary,
Government House Administration

Our View

Eid-El-Kabir 2020 Amid COVID-19

For the first time in living memory, the Muslim World is celebrating the very important festival of the ram, otherwise known as Eid-el-Kabir, in a very subdued way prompted by the Coronavirus pandemic. This fact, however, can only deepen the significance of the occasion rather than diminish it. Importantly, the festival remains a key reminder of God's mercy to mankind, and the need for people, especially Muslims, to devote their lives to serving God.

11

Quote Of The Day

"Edo people cannot trust the APC and Oshiomhole because the latter had during the 2016 Edo governorship election disparaged and publicly campaigned against the APC candidate (Ize-Iyamu). He cannot be trusted. He has come out again to beg Edo people for forgiveness, which is another ploy to deceive the people. Oshiomhole cannot now say he regretted supporting, Mr. Godwin Obaseki during the 2016 election and canvassing support for the APC candidate. He told the people in 2016 to reject Ize Iyamu and he has suddenly become his favourite candidate for the September 19 governorship election."

- Chief Chris Nehikhare, PDP Publicity Secretary in Edo State.

Nobody Should Attempt Playing Games With Edo Election – Obaseki

Governor Godwin Obaseki of Edo state, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) candidate in the September 19 governorship election, speaks with journalists on latest developments in the state, why he is seeking reelection and other issues. **TEMIDAYO AKINSUYI** brings the excerpts:

In this part of the world, having a good candidate and programme is not a guarantee for victory. Besides, the Edo people in the Diaspora will not vote during the election. Don't you think you need to play the Nigerian politics than the politics itself?

What happens is this-Nigerian kind of politics is one that is created. You know there are different motives for different things. It is election time now and I begin to brag my own truth or story about politics, about who I am and who I am not. Today, in Edo, this is what is on ground – Edo is dearly a PDP state. It has always been. The PDP has won every national election and the APC only won local elections. So, in terms of the political configuration of the state, at best you can say it was 50-50. Who is APC? I am the state governor. And in that side, (Adams) Oshiomhole does not have control of the APC structure. But, I have it. All the local chairmen, members of the house and all the councillors. So, in terms of the political structure, I believe I have at least 75 per cent of it. So, it is now 75 per cent of APC and 50 per cent of PDP in the new configuration. So, if that can't be, I don't know what can be then. Then, come to the people, yes as politicians, we make our noises but at the end of the day, voter turnout is very low in Nigeria because for most people, 'what is my own I don't have any business with it and I don't have a stake except what you give me for me to go and vote because after that I won't see you. There is very limited connection between the people and the government. So, why go and vote? Why participating? Only politicians participate in the political system'.

What we have done in Edo in the last four years is remarkable. It is by providing services to people. You now begin to feel a connection with government. I have 300,000 children in my school system. I spend an average of about N16,000 on each of them on Edo Best. The parents, who are poor, are seeing a difference in their children. The teachers are now calling, giving their pupils training. So, the parents of the 300,000 children don't matter? They see a connection with the government and they are getting something now. So, would they just allow it walk away? Would they now not participate? I tell them that if I am not there, those children will not get these services anymore because they will take the money. What about the pensioners? What about the civil servants who knew what their situation was before now? You think they will just keep quiet and allow? Look, in Edo today, I have what is called Ward Development Committees, where in every ward,



Obaseki

there are 17 or more than men and women who live there and consider themselves as a committee.

You have maybe a priest, a native doctor, a teacher, a retired teacher, a retired nurse and so many others. People just live in the community, meet regularly and I have asked them to talk about and bring up issues because the local governments are not strong. So, they do let me know what their priorities are. And I have them across the state. And the amount of digital penetration is amazing. What about my school-based management committees? So, you have those committees that are very very active and alive. My own view though in all of these is that if all don't matter in the political system and these guys have enough instrument of arms to come and rig out the majority, then it is unfortunate for the system. But, I can assure you that Nigeria will never be the same because Edo is not in one extreme. And with the crisis and tension in the country, anything that sparks in Edo, only God knows the effect.

So, I hope and pray that people are sensible enough to know that with the level of digital penetration; with the effect of COVID-19, we must now begin to think and think properly. I am now in PDP. It is not like heydays. There is a structure at the moment. Do they want to retain me in government house? I believe so. Do the people who are in APC want me to still be there? I believe so. So, who are these opposition? The opposition is that tiny army of Oshiomhole's boys, not major political players of repute.

Do you think you are capable of challenging taming politics of violence because those boys you just talked about have a role to play on that Election Day?

We will not talk about that. Nobody has monopoly of violence. You know you don't want to go that way. With Edo coming into PDP, the South-South is full completely. Even if I don't have the capacity for thug-gery, I have enough neighbours and brothers.

We know about the usage of federal might and the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to win elections. So, the question is will the votes count?

Well, that is what we are saying today that if we want this democracy to survive, don't play games with Edo's election because the moments are different. This is not a general election. It is a sole day election. So, everybody will be watching and looking. And if we need anything in Nigeria today, we need a smack of credibility. So, I don't believe people in Abuja are that dumb and crazy not to understand the danger and the crisis we will face if they don't allow the votes count and they want to militarize the election. And in any case, the feedback is why should they do it? It is not like I willingly left APC, right? APC donated Edo to PDP. Oshiomhole donated Edo to PDP. So, would they now come and fight and quarrel with us? No. They should rather fight with the man who decided to give away seven states.

You saw what they did in Imo and that of the Kogi. How prepared are you?

What I am saying is that as a governor of a state, it is not my style to begin to talk about violence and all of that. But, I want to say that they should be sensible not to try it because unlike other states Edo is in the middle of the country and any crisis in Edo today will have a major effect on other states in the country. And we are ready for it. Our style is not to propagate about it but they want to.

Before you left the APC, you visited President Muhammadu Buhari. What were your interactions with him?

I think for me everybody was shocked and even the president don't know they would do that. The President did not believe Oshiomhole would do that. The President is not a man that talks much but expects everybody to be reasonable. Every time I have interaction with him, he says people should do their work. So, I am not sure he believes that they would have got to that extent. I am not surprised, therefore, that after I left those reactions followed.

Your opponents have been saying that you have nothing on ground, including your certificate. We would like you to

react to that?

I think it is about the press really because someone who comes out in Nigeria and tells a very obvious lie and you are listening and say okay. I mean, how can you even talk about my certificate when the university that issued it has come out itself to say that this person graduated this year and the person is saying he has issues with my certificate? So, what do you want me to do? He said I have done nothing and that there is nothing on ground. A few of you have come and you have seen what is on ground. But, they are saying nothing is on ground. All the teacher's union are saying well done for transforming education in Nigeria. But, they are saying we have done nothing. You see it is the old politics- just tell the lie tell the lie. But, this country is different now. It is about us getting stakeholders on the table. This democracy is now 21 years. A child that was born in 1995 is how old today? So, that old politics of just go and tell a lie and continue to repeat the lie in the age of technology is uncalled for.

I am sure a lot know the underlying changes that have occurred in Nigeria. People are not stupid and foolish. They may not say anything because they say let me manage my life and so, it doesn't matter. Now, it matters because of COVID-19. If you look at that young man or young woman who used to run after vehicles to sell to chinchin, today, he is not anymore. And you think the person will just sit down? It can't happen. We should be very careful about this country. See the incident of I cannot breathe in America despite its development. They are choking the whole population. Now, it matters we should very active. So, I am not saying take my words for it but look at the evidence. And if I didn't do the things we did to remove the choke on the place, people would not have come back and invest there. And it is those investments that are creating the opportunity that are creating the job. We have four Chinese companies. In fact, when we came in, they were two. Now, they are four and two more are coming. Everything in this room today can be manufactured in Edo. We have glass, ceramic tiles, doors, sanitary fittings because we have electricity-we are an electricity hub.

Why is your slogan 'Edo no be Lagos'?

The reason why the slogan "Edo no be Lagos" was when Oshiomhole's boys started the nonsense in Abuja, they said they were going to give me the Ambode's. So, that is why they said it happened with (former Governor Akinwunmi) Ambode in Lagos, but not in Edo.

Our View

VISION

To be Nigeria's First Truly Independent National Quality Newspaper

OUR MISSION

To produce a quality, vibrant and viable newspaper that will inform and form the nation's present and aspiring political, business, economic and cultural leadership; challenge and inspire the nation's journalists to advance and defend the public good; and deliver superior value to all stakeholders.

EDITORIAL POLICY

We shall be independent on all matters, but shall never be neutral on any matter, especially those concerning the well-being of Nigerians.

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Eid-el-Kabir 2020 Amid COVID-19

For the first time in living memory, the Muslim World is celebrating the very important festival of the ram, otherwise known as Eid-el-Kabir, in a very subdued way prompted by the Coronavirus pandemic. This fact, however, can only deepen the significance of the occasion rather than diminish it. Importantly, the festival remains a key reminder of God's mercy to mankind, and the need for people, especially Muslims, to devote their lives to serving God.

Given reports that the last global pandemic comparable to the Coronavirus happened perhaps more than 100 years ago, hardly is there anyone who can remember whether or not such pandemic adversely affected religious occasions such as Eid-el-Kabir. This year, as it happened in the celebration of the Eid-el-Fitri two months ago, there will be no congregational prayers in many places. And where government permits such, it will be observed under strict rules and supervision contrary to the usual routine.

Significantly too, the performance of hajj, or the holy pilgrimage to Mecca in Saudi Arabia, which is a strong pillar of Islam, is conspicuously missing, again for the first time in human memory. The Coronavirus pandemic has foreclosed the desire of about two

million prospective pilgrims that yearly perform the ritual, just before the Eid. It is understood that only about 1,000 pilgrims have been allowed for the hajj this year all over the world.

To many Muslims, the fact of COVID-19 should only add to the sobriety naturally required for the Eid, much against the looseness with which most Nigerians are given while devouring sallah meat. Many do not remember that but for the mercy of God in substituting Prophet Ibrahim's son with a ram at the point of sacrifice, Muslims would have been apprehensive of the occasion rather than look forward to it. No father will be excited to sacrifice his son, not even for God.

Prophet Ibrahim (May Allah's peace be upon him) certainly wasn't excited when he saw repeated visions of God asking him to sacrifice Ishmael to him. But he was prepared to totally obey his creator, and would have sacrificed the son if God had not shown his merciful disposition at the last minute, by providing a ram in place of Ishmael for the sacrifice. The Eid is a reminder to all human beings of God's infinite mercy, which has sustained human existence over the years.

The great lesson of the period therefore is to praise and supplicate God at all times for his mercy and blessings; and to

reciprocate by worshipping him as the only person worthy of worship, as well as to obey all his commandments. Muslims are expected to manifest this injunction by freely felicitating with their neighbours and giving food and other forms of assistance to the less privileged.

Those who can afford to buy rams or cows in this austere time should remember to share it in accordance with Islamic dictates of allocating portions to the family, to friends and neighbours; and to the needy and the poor. This itself is in strong fulfilment of the purpose of having, which is to be able to give to those who lack.

Rather than engage in unbridled merriment, Muslims are enjoined to observe the Eid with utmost moderation and fear of Allah. This spirit, if truly embraced by both leaders and followers at all times, will provide an enduring foundation for national development of country and its people. The absence of the spirit of give-and-take in Nigeria, manifested in the preponderance of massive corruption ravaging the land, is largely responsible for the siege-like state of its existence.

It is a pity that for 10 years running, Nigerians have been embattled with the crisis of Boko Haram, banditry, senseless killings and destruction, as well as

armed robbery and kidnapping. Yet every year, government allocates huge resources - human and financial - to check the vices; but due to the absence of sincerity and honesty, some people seem to thrive in making the impasse everlasting, not minding the great cost to human lives and properties.

Clearly, God has been faithful to mankind particularly to Nigerians, but Nigerian leaders have not been faithful to the masses, using them merely as pawns in political power play. Otherwise, there should be no place for the corruption being daily exposed, whereby leaders siphon or mismanage public funds meant to uplift millions of very poor, hungry and homeless citizens. With the abundance of natural resources, there should be no place for the crass underdevelopment afflicting the country.

The Eid-el-Kabir presents an opportunity for a rekindled spirit of sacrifice, piety, love, faith, obedience, good neighbourliness, charity and all other positive practices that leave no room for hatred, wickedness and greed that permeate the society presently. It is an opportunity to rethink, fear God, submit to his will and follow his commandments.

We wish all Nigerians a rewarding Eid-el-Adha.

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Southern Kaduna: The Growing Evil Of Silence

FRANCIS ABAYOMI

"What is left of a country where women widely went naked, wailing for husbands and children because they are no more. Southern Kaduna cruel murder"
— Olajuyigbe Gbenro

The above is culled from a Facebook post by a citizen whose regular catchy phrases; scathing depiction of the tragicomedy that has now become a peculiar feature of state of affairs in Nigeria I have come to admire in the last one month. My response to the said post triggered the title of this piece.

How Nigeria got to this sorry state is not an issue to warrant dissipation of energy as the Chicken has indeed come home to roost. But pretending that the prevailing evil of silence will not hurt sooner than later should however come across as deeply worrisome. Perhaps, to have imagined that a consistent pogrom will continue unabated for over three years in Southern Kaduna is to have prepared the minds of citizens for the eventuality of failure of leadership that now confounds.

Few days ago, chief of Army Staff, General Tukur Buratai alerted Nigerians and in clear terms as to where responsibility to protect lives and property now resides. How could we possibly have imagined that Nigerians will one day be confounded with the charge of having to live with the horror of armed attacks, banditry and terrorism until and unless the very victims of the assault are willing to put a stop the very evil that stares them in the face? How terrible can the audacity of failure pass across as refrain for denial! Where exactly do we go from here!

There should no longer be pretense about the egregious failure of leadership that looms large

if not already manifesting. The increasing for-tresses of ungoverned spaces which are picturesque of a sinking sovereign State are all pointers to how the Nigerian state totters in the precipice.

The dreadful images of bloodletting from war-torn countries decades ago are now here with us on a daily basis. Curiously, statistics of horror in some countries contending with full scale civil war dwarfs the growing civilian fatalities from terrorism and banditry in Nigeria. Regrettably, we simply carry on as though nothing happens; so long the political elite entertain us with the buffoonery of their intra-class war which now finds some ready and plausible rationalizations in anti-corruption politics through which monumental sleaze is entrenched in greater momentum than hitherto seen or anticipated.

However, much more disturbing than the evil which defenseless Nigerians daily sleep with and wake up to in their communities is the growing evil of silence that has seized the society at an unusual time in history. Three months to 2019 presidential election, I had an impromptu engagement with a cab driver in Lagos who turned out to be well educated and enlightened but more importantly a concerned stakeholder in the seemingly intractable violent conflict in Southern Kaduna. He was initially taken aback by the curious attention I paid to a sticker of SOKAPU (Southern Kaduna Peoples Union) which adorned a rather conspicuous space below his car dashboard.

I was prompted by the sticker to begin a talk with him as soon as we began the intra-city trip. So you know about SOKAPU, he intoned. Yes, hope things are calming down over there now I responded. The grim details of the carnage and despair alluded to through the encounter left a huge picture in my mind regarding our collective failure to as citizens

of supposed sane clime to call out those who cheapen our humanity through denial and if not implicit collaboration.

The level to which we have reduced humanism through conspiracy of silence can only pass across as horrendous considering the several incidences of bloodletting that have rendered communities across the country desolate. Sadly, these communities today remain as vulnerable to unmitigated attacks by marauders who seem to be perpetually at large even when the horror they wreck almost on daily basis reminds us of their terrifying presence.

The conspiracy of silence which inexorably boils down to reinforcing act of evil tells how much we have failed humanity in our immediate space within the sovereignty that binds us as a people. Yet, we pretend to be worthy partakers in the global voices for equity and justice. The looming culture of hypocrisy and denial should readily alert us to the sensibleness we took for granted in the days of military rule. For, in the obviously saner clime that Nigeria was in the dark days of the jackboots, we still managed to connect voices; even if muffled in denouncing evil and in condemning perpetrators and willing collaborators.

In spite of the throes we bore under unelected usurpers of instrument of governance, we were saner enough to demand responsibility and modicum of accountability from those who occupy seats of power. I recalled how popular voices picked holes in Ibrahim Babangida's description of Zango Kataf riot as "civilian equivalence of coup attempt" justifiably perceived as smokescreen for unleashing terror. We never invested iota of hope in the ability of military regime to live up to the responsibility of deploying instrument of the state to imbue stable polity, yet popular voices were influential enough to at least hold government

accountable for the sake of humanity.

We now live in a new Nigeria where bereaved and desolate half-naked women of Southern Kaduna appear no longer worthy of empathy of their fellow citizens. We have been wired to accept vivid images of women and children mowed down in in cold-blood as just another passing phase for a country whose facile unity must endure at all cost and at whatever havoc wrecked on innocent citizens. We have been bruised and blackmailed to accept that raising a finger against the government of the day is akin to treason. Shockingly, the government appears now comfortable with spewing extenuating circumstances that serve its penchant for denial and abdication of responsibility.

It would appear we have been coerced to accept that the government of the day owes us no responsibility to guarantee the security of lives and property as the first and most important condition for the legitimacy of authority the exercise over the rest of us citizens. Where exactly are we headed as people and as a country? What could be more disconcerting than the foretold warning handed down by a key official of government months ago to the effect that the choice to live or die is entirely that of the people to make if they dare assert legitimacy over their ancestral land. And as if messages which glaringly attest to official denials of responsibility are not sufficient and telling enough, it may as well be that we are just waking up to more startling realities of abdication of leadership as citizens' rights to security of lives and property may be reduced to petty buck-passing and intra-class accusations and counter accusations while cold-blooded murderers reign supreme in our midst in continuation of brazen impunity.

Abayomi, a public affairs commentator wrote in from Lagos

Between Community Policing And Restructuring

JEROME-MARIO UTOMI

There are in the words of the sage, important limits to human relations, knowledge, awareness, and technological state, economic and financial resource availability, social and cultural exposures. Political and Socioeconomic problems which are the product of human actions and reactions are not static. They change with time and place. What is a social or political problem in one society may be a norm in another. And what is rejected or frowned at today may be accepted tomorrow.

But, often always, inability to manage such differences and changing times by nations has at different times and places led to obstacle in relationships; misconceptions on politics, security and economic issues. Corruption, insecurity, community policing and restructuring are some of the typical and topical political and socioeconomic problems that have in recent years dominated not just the public space but the nation's national discourse.

Take insecurity as an example, the nation is in dire state of strait. And as a response, individuals, groups have proffered solutions to the security threats in the country. Take as an illustration, while applauding the launch of the Western Nigeria Security Network (WNSN), codenamed Amotekun. An initiative of the Southwest governors- adjudged by well meaning Nigerians as a perfect way of bringing "policing arrangement close to the people in their various communities, the Social and Economic Justice Advocacy (SEJA)-a Lagos Based non-governmental group, a while ago, in conjunction with other prominent Nigerians, also called on President Muhammadu Buhari to create quasi—military outfits devoid of ethnic colourations. Noting that states should create their out security outfits but be supervised by the federal police. It should not be regional. If it becomes regional, you will begin to see ethnic and tribal colourations. The states should employ and fund it under the supervision of

the States Commissioner of police.

Such creations the group added should be given specific mandates to deal with criminal elements in the country. They should be equipped with communication tools while being supervised by the Nigerian Police Force. Again, industrialisation of the country will help to draw the youth out of criminal intentions,

The concern over security and effective policing recently resurfaced as the Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIG) in charge of South West Geo-political Zone, Leye Oyeade, during his familiarisation tour of Oyo State Police Command, recently, advised officers to key into the community policing initiative in order to reduce crime in the country. The DIG said that it was only community policing that would help to reduce crime to the barest minimum level in the country.

Perfectly a well structured position. The police Boss' position becomes even more appreciated when one remembers that he is not alone in this line of argument.

This admonition becomes even more appreciated when one remembers that about two years ago, President Buhari while he played host to the traditional rulers from the Northern part of the country led by the Sultan of Sokoto, His Eminence, Alhaji Muhammadu Sa'ad Abubakar III, at the Presidential Villa, Abuja, Mr President going by reports stated that; the ongoing reform of the Police would include recruitment of more hands, cultivation of stronger local intelligence and networking with communities, traditional rulers and adequate training. This in specific terms he added will include recruiting more police officers from their local government areas, where they would then be stationed in the best traditions of policing worldwide. Working with the state governments; we intend to improve the equipping of the police force with advanced technology and equipment that can facilitate their work.

From the attributes of his speech, he did not only underline the importance of such arrangement but underscores the virtues and

advantages of recruiting more police officers from their local government areas, where they would then be stationed in the best traditions of policing worldwide.

Precisely, this form of security architecture and community policing was amazingly the part of what the pro-state police and nations' restructuring advocates demanded for—particularly as it was obvious that the vast majority of states can afford to equip their officers with the sophisticated security gadgets Mr. President listed above.

"We can restructure within one Nigeria context." Governor Abdullahi Ganduje of Kano State does not favour restructuring as "panacea to the nation's current socio-economic woes"; rather he prefers restructuring of "the national mindsets" aimed at returning Nigeria to "the path of progress."

In view of the above, I am tempted to ask; why can't the Federal Government allow and support the creation of state police where the state Commissioner of Police will be answerable to the state governor.

To further support the argument, if objective analysis can replace emotional discussion regarding state police/restructuring, one thing will definitely stand out; Nigeria has a choice, to restructure by plan or by default. As has been argued at different times and places, a planned restructuring will be collaborative, systematic, and redesign Nigeria, yet keep it whole while a default restructuring will on its parts happen, certainly not by choice, but definitely like an uncontrolled experiment with attendant risks and indefinite outcomes.

To further arrive at the answer, there are in my views, no federal police or state police models, but there are fundamental differences between the two. While cultural and geographical homogeneity which are strong factors and advantages of state policing are lost in federal policing, state police depend on these factors and more such as historical and friendship to keep the society orderly and without anarchy. This values no doubt makes a productive policing without disorder. And it is my belief that

state governments have the capacity to fulfil this obligation.

Separate from the above position, there is no alternative to having the country restructured. The reasons are not far-fetched.

First, President Buhari in his campaign in 2015, promised to "Initiate action to amend the Nigerian Constitution with a view to devolving powers, duties, and responsibilities to states in order to entrench true Federalism and the Federal spirit."

To further refresh our minds on this topic, what the masses are saying and wanting in my understanding is that the padding of the second schedule of the exclusive legislative list, of our 1999 constitution with sixty-eight (68) items has made Abuja suffer 'political obesity' and need to shed some weight via power devolution.

What the people are saying is that the over blotted exclusive list has made our nation to currently stand in an inverted pyramid shape with more power concentrated at the top and the base not formidable enough making collapse inevitable if urgent and fundamental steps are not taken.

What the proponents of restructuring are saying is that majority of the items are too trivial for the Federal Government to handle and should serve the greater good of the people if left in the hands of both the state and the local government. This is the hub of the masses expectation.

Items such as; Police and some government security services, mines and minerals; including oil fields, oil mining geological surveys, control of parks, stamp duties, public holidays, taxation of incomes, profits and capital gains, and insurance among others to my mind should find their ways back to the states and the local councils.

Restructuring the nation will no doubt take care of community policing.

Jerome-Mario Utomi is with the Social and Economic Justice Advocacy (SEJA)-a Lagos Based Non-Governmental Organization.

Oil Prices Rise On U.S. Crude Inventory Increase

Oil prices rose yesterday after an industry report showed that crude inventories in the United States increased against expectations, giving the market a boost amid record increases of coronavirus infections in the U.S. and elsewhere.

Brent crude was up by 24 cents, or 0.6 per cent, at \$43.46 a barrel after dropping 0.4 per cent on Tuesday, while then U.S. oil gained 14 cents, or 0.3 per cent, to \$41.18 a barrel, having

dropped 1.4 per cent in the previous session.

Inventories of crude oil in the U.S. dropped by 6.8 million barrels last week to 531 million barrels, data from industry group the American Petroleum Institute showed on Tuesday.

Analysts' expectations were for an increase of 357,000 barrels. U.S. government data is due Wednesday.

"This should temporarily alleviate some concerns about ongoing demand

distress," Stephen Innes, chief global markets strategist at AxiCorp said in a note.

The raging COVID-19 pandemic is keeping alive concerns about falling fuel demand causing an oversupplied market as record numbers of infections are reported globally, including the U.S., the world's biggest consumer of oil.

Four U.S. states reported one-day records for coronavirus deaths on

Tuesday and cases in Texas passed the 400,000 mark.

Attempts to provide relief amid the outbreak were in disarray as Republicans in the U.S. disagreed over their own plan for providing \$1 trillion in new coronavirus aid on Tuesday.

In Hong Kong, the government on Wednesday warned the city is on the edge of a large-scale coronavirus outbreak and urged people to stay indoors as much as possible.

CRUDE OIL Prices			
WTI CRUDE	51.59	-1.00	-1.90%
BRENT CRUDE	60.48	-1.20	-1.95%
MARS US 2 days	55.29	-1.00	-1.78%
OPEC BASKET	59.48	+1.24	+2.13%
URALS	59.32	+0.52	+0.88%
LOUISIANA LIGHT	59.22	+0.33	+0.56%
BONNY LIGHT	61.65	-0.73	-1.17%
MEXICAN BASKET	52.40	+0.79	+1.53%
NATURAL GAS	2.945	+0.132	+4.69%

DAILY INDEPENDENT Business

THURSDAY, JULY 30, 2020

f /Independentngr @independentngr www.independent.ng

- 19

• 'Nuclear Energy Can Boost Nigeria's Power Generation'

• How New Stamp Regime Will Affect Tenancy In Abuja, Suburb

- 20

13

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State Govts Committed To Cultural Devt In Nigeria - NCAC Boss

OLUSEGUN KOIKI LAGOS

The Director-General of the National Council for Arts and Culture (NCAC), Otunba Olusegun Runsewe, has said that state governments in Nigeria are committed to the development of culture in the country.

Runsewe stated this in Abuja yesterday when four State governors; Kogi, Plateau, Gombe and Abia donated office accommodations to the council.

Runsewe emphasised that the donations by these State governments have shown their commitments to the growth of culture in the country and charged other governors in the country to emulate the quartet.

Runsewe said that with the presence of the council's offices in these states, the opportunity has been opened for the NCAC to directly network with the state governments and drive the process of development of arts and culture in the states.

He expressed that it was pertinent for the council to work with the State governments for the exploration and development of the vast potential in the culture sector.

COMMODITIES				CURRENCIES			RATES		MARKETS				
BRENT	US\$43.67	COFFEE	US\$111.4		CBN	Parallel Market	MPR	12.5%	FMDQ - NIBOR			NSE	
GOLD	US\$1946.9	SUGAR	US\$11.93	USD	361	475			0/N	1.6667	-0.08	ASI	24,693.73
COCOA	US\$2352.00	N. GAS	US\$1.818	POUND	464	585	INFLATION	12.56%	1M	4.8441	-0.95	CAP	N12.881trn
				EURO	422	540			3M	5.0329	-1.05		
									6M	5.6236	-1.07		

COVID-19: FG Allays Fear Of Economic Doom Predictions By International Bodies

CHIBUZOR EMEJOR ABUJA

The Federal Government yesterday said it has put up policies designed to make Nigeria to come out of effects of COVID-19 strong, against the predictions of economic doom by some international organisations.

Otunba Adeniyi Adebayo, Minister Of Industry, Trade and Investment stated this in Abuja while giving awards to the members of the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) of the Committee on Sustainable Production and Delivery of Essential Commodities during COVID-19.

Adebayo also revealed that the

• Pledges Support To Manufacturing Sector To Boost Productivity

Federal Government would give more support to the manufacturing sector and other key sectors of the economy to boost their productivity.

It would be recalled that EOC was responsible in monitoring the live status of transportation and delivery of essential goods during the period of interstate travel ban through which government was able to reduce difficulties that were faced by manufacturers, transporters and distributors of essential commodities.

The minister, who seized the opportunity to commend the Committee for effectively discharging their mandate, said based on feedbacks received during the exercise, it is

now imperative that Nigeria has the capacity some of the products it needed.

According to him, "For the first time in our nation, we all have to come together to tackle the vulnerability that the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed us.

"As you acknowledge, the lock down that we have instituted to curb the spread of the virus resulted in a number of casualties across board as jobs were lost and supply was disrupted and led to shortfall in movement of goods and services.

"Our manufacturing sector continues to be key focus as our economy continues to grow. From the market intelligence findings, more

than ever before, we need to boost local production of key commodities required.

"Therefore, moving forward, our efforts as a response team at the Federal Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment has been recognised and we have been mandated to lead the Presidential Taskforce responsible to deliver increased capacity in local manufacturing."

Also speaking, Ambassador Mariam katagum, Minister of State for Industry, Trade and Investment, said the pandemic had created a consciousness among Nigerians on the need for all stakeholders to look inward in solving the economic challenges.

Lalong Signs 2020 Revised Budget Of N122.8bn Into Law

ONOJA AUDU JOS

Plateau state Governor Simon Lalong has signed into law, Plateau state revised 2020 budget of N122.8 billion for this fiscal year.

Governor Lalong while signing the Budget yesterday at Government House Jos, said his government was forced to revise the state budget mid-way into its implementation because COVID-19 has changed virtually every facet of the lives of the people of the state.

He said demands for funds to carry out statutory responsibilities and also respond to the challenges of the corona virus pandemic made his government to engage in various cost-cutting measures to enable them manage the lean resources efficiently and also try to fulfill "our most basic responsibilities of providing services to their citizens".

Lalong added that the revised state budget consists of N42.8 billion for cap-

ital expenditure and N79.9 billion for recurrent expenditure.

He reiterated the commitment of his government towards working through this challenging period to effectively apply available resources to the most critical areas that will benefit his people of Plateau and to bequeath a lasting legacy for beloved people of his State.

It would be recalled that Lalong Government had signed into law the Plateau State 2020 Appropriation Bill on December 23, 2019 tagged "budget of Rescue and infrastructural Consolidation which had showed an aggregate expenditure of N177,340,521,177.00 only.

The budget was fashioned in line with the implementation of his Rescue Administration's Three-Pillar Policy of Peace, Security and Good Governance; Infrastructural Development; and Sustainable Economic Rebirth, but had barely begun its implementation when the corona virus pandemic hit the world and eventually landed on the state with devastating impact on the state economy.



Adebayo Adeniyi, National Sales Director, Dangote Cement Plc (left); Ojediran Kayode, a winner (middle), and Funmi Sanni, Marketing Director, Dangote Cement Plc, during the presentation of N1 million to the winner in the ongoing Dangote Cement 'Bag of Goodies 2, Consumer Promo in Ibadan, Oyo State, on Tuesday.

NCC Gives Reasons For Revising Complaint Categories, Service Level Agreements

The Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) said it undertook a revision of the framework stipulating the processes for resolving consumer complaints arising from service delivery by telecoms operator in order to achieve greater effectiveness in the sector and to strengthen protection of telecoms consumers and other stakeholders.

Tagged: 'Complaints Categories and Service Level Agreements (CC/SLA)', the framework was revised by the Commission in November,

2019 at a programme attended by representatives of telecoms operators, consumers and other consumer rights advocacy groups in the country.

"The 2019 review of the CC/SLA, in collaboration with operators and other stakeholders, was essentially to strengthen effective and prompt resolutions of consumers complaints by reviewing the timelines, broaden and streamline complaint categories and establishing applicable sanctions on operators that fail to meet the timelines stated for resolving issues related to services de-

livery to their consumers," the Executive Vice Chairman (EVC) of NCC, Prof. Umar Danbatta, said.

In the reviewed CC/SLA, with respect to the broad category of Quality of Service and Quality of Experience (QoS and QoE) in the data segment, when a telecom subscriber experiences fluctuation in service, such as instability in Internet services, the subscriber shall be contacted by the service provider within four hours of reporting the incident and the disruption shall be re-

stored within 72 hours.

If the matter is escalated to the Commission, the consumer is expected to receive a feedback within two hours, while the Commission ensures the issue is resolved within 48 hours. Additionally, the subscriber shall be offered an apology, and the expiry date of his data bundle shall be extended by the number of days the disruption lasted.

Under the broad category, 'Billing', complaints connected to any unexplained change in account balance resulting in a drop in balance, due to overcharging subscriber's account for calls, Short Messaging Services (SMS) and Multimedia Messaging Service (MMS), shall be resolved by the operator within 24 hours.

Also, under the new CC/SLAs that have now come into force, in the case of Sales Promotion and Advertisement, when a subscriber does not receive (within stipulated



Prof Umar Danbatta, NCC EVC

time) bonus or incentives won during promotions, the service provider shall resolve the matter within 12 hours of receiving the complaints, instead of 24 hours as stipulated in the hitherto existing categorisation and agreement.

Similarly, in the expansive category of Call Centre/Customer Care, the NCC agreed with stakeholders that when a subscriber is unable to connect to Call Center or Service Provider Help Line, the matter shall be treated by the Service Provider within four hours of receiving the report.

On matters connected to

faulty terminals, such as defective devices that stifle a subscriber's ability to use phones, modems, routers and related devices appropriately, the Commission said such incidents shall be resolved based on Terms and Conditions for all devices.

The EVC added that the CC/SLA document, which is available on the Commission's website, contains 17 broad categories and about 90 subcategories. He enjoined all stakeholders, particularly the telecom consumers, to create the time to study the document in order to understand their rights and privileges.

Airtel, Dynamiss Partner To Subsidise Online Education For Nigerian Schools

In an effort to accelerate and deepen the growth of online education in Nigeria, leading telecoms operator, Airtel Nigeria, has announced a partnership with Dynamiss, an Educational Technology company, to subsidise data and mobile Internet for all Nigerian schools and students using the Dynamiss Learning Management Systems.

Under the partnership, both organisations are collaborating to ensure that Data access for educational purposes on any of the platforms provided by Dynamiss will now be subsidised and made more affordable for schools and young Nigerians.

Specifically, customers of Airtel Nigeria who access the Dynamiss platforms will now enjoy up to 50% discount on data/mobile Internet charges effective immediately.

This discount also applies to schools, students and even parents on the Airtel network

who use any of the educational platforms provided by Dynamiss.

Valerie Sodeinde, COO of Dynamiss, commenting on the new initiative, said that, "the discounted data from Airtel is a key game changer for the adoption of Online/Digital education by most schools in Nigeria.

"What Airtel is demonstrating with this particular initiative is a commitment to support education despite the unrelenting threat posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. As many more schools have now developed an appreciation for an online educational system, parents, teachers and schools will most certainly benefit from this very affordable data plan. This decisive initiative by Airtel is a positive response that will be welcome by educators and students alike."

Whilst Online Education platforms cannot fully replace conventional schools' they now constitute a whole new way of learning in the

21st century. In recent months since the COVID-19 pandemic struck, Microsoft has recorded that more than 350 million subscribers now use its educational platforms and this number continues to increase daily across the globe.

Dynamiss, a Microsoft Partner Organisation, is one of the nation's foremost Educational Technology companies and is currently providing Learning Management Systems (LMS), Virtual Robotics, Virtual Laboratories, Secure Examination Portals and Certified Online Training for Teachers on Digital Education Tools, for a variety of schools across the nation.

In collaboration with Microsoft and in a bid to help schools adopt digital technology rapidly, Dynamiss is currently giving every school in Nigeria its Dynamiss Learning Management LP365 System completely free till the start of September 2020.

LG Electronics (LG), global leader in consumer electronics has upgraded its Life's Good with LG Wash, Free Wash Center in Ogba, Ikeja, suburb of Lagos, with new sets of commercial washers and dryers for efficient free service delivery to families in the community and beyond.

The major part of the upgrading is the introduction of the company's commercial Washing Machine-Giant C Pro, developed to add value to its teeming customers.

Officially launched in 2018, the free laundry service was targeted at alleviating shortage of water and power supply in the area, for residents to efficiently carry out their laundry activities.

The laundry cabin is equipped with state-of-the-art facilities to effectively take care of laundry needs

LG Upgrades Ogba Life's Good With LG Wash Free Wash Centre

of up to 50 local families each day, with laundry needs at no cost.

LG constructed the facility, which included the installation of a constantly replenished water tank, uninterrupted power supply, washing machines, dryers, air conditioners and sufficient supply of detergents and laundry bags to cater for the laundry needs of the people.

The newly added set of commercial washing machines/dryers will not only improve the living conditions, as well as support the daily washing needs of people in the area, but will also save time, because of its high efficiency advantage, says Mr. Hari Elluru, Head of Corporate Marketing Division, LG Electronics West Africa.

LG commercial washing machine called the Giant C Pro which has an easy installation process accompanied with high efficiency and performance, is the ideal commercial laundry product to save costs and get owners /users ahead of their competitors in the laundry business.

"It has Adaptable Controls that provide the space saving and convenience without compromising capacity while retaining easy to reach controls. The controls are always at a convenient height and are versatile enough to match your needs," said Elluru.

After Lagos, two free laundry centres have been launched in Port Harcourt, River State and Kano State.

Celebrating a Visionary Leader Gov. DDI @ 66



The Accountant General of Taraba State and the entire Staff heartily congratulate his Excellency, the Executive Governor of Taraba State **Arc. DARIUS DICKSON ISHAKU** on his 66th birthday.

At 66, your achievement in life speaks volume as evidenced in the area of Health, Education, provision of portable water and above all improvement in the internally generated revenue in the state.

I wish you good health, God guidance, long life and prosperity.

Hon. Aminu Kotolo
Accountant General
Taraba State

IT-Telecom

MTN Nigeria Explores Rural Connectivity, Backhaul To Boost Earnings

MTN Nigeria is looking at improved pricing, increased focus on rural connectivity and backhaul in its network in the longer term to make up for an anticipated drop in its earnings, according to a statement from the telecommunications services provider.

Company Secretary Uto Ukpanah said the drop follows an amendment to a service agreement in place with tower services provider IHS.

The change in the agreement, which has been in place since 2014 when MTN

Nigeria chose to sell its passive infrastructure (including towers) to IHS, entails expanding the scope of their current service to include focusing more on rural connectivity and fibre deployment.

IHS stated that the renegotiation of certain terms of the tower rental agreements will also see the amendment of their currency conversion provision for tower services.

The overall effect of the changes is expected to set the indicator of the profitability of Nigeria's leading telco back by a slight margin.

The anticipated EBITDA

margin drop of about 0.4pp will come mainly from the reference rates for conversions to naira being moved from the Central Bank of Nigeria rate to the Nigerian Autonomous Foreign Exchange Rate (NAFEX) though there'll be additional cost to be incurred for the infrastructure changes too.

Both MTN Nigeria and IHS declined to comment further on the situation.

Another telecommunications services provider Airtel reportedly cited the devalued rate of naira to US dollar as eating into its

earnings - though still profitable Y-o-Y - but gave no indication of any negative impact on future earnings.

Meanwhile, the confusion over the lack of a unified foreign exchange rate policy by the Nigerian apex bank has been raised as a concern of late.

While the West African country's government said recently it seeks to unify the rates in a year, coupled with the aftermath effect of the global COVID-19 pandemic, the extent to which the falling value of the country's currency will affect the telecom sector may still be too early to determine.

Glo Delights Customers With More Data

Globacom has announced an immediate increment in the volume of data for its subscribers buying or renewing Glo data bundles.

The operator in a press statement, said extra data will now be available to all its subscribers who purchase any of its data plans.

The statement said any new customer who purchases a daily data plan of N50 will get additional data value of 18MB making a total of 50MB as against the former data value of 32MB. The bonus includes 5MB of data useable at night between the hours of 12 midnight and 5am.

Any Glo subscriber, who purchases a daily data plan of N100 will now get 150MB which will include 35mb of night data value. In the

same vein, subscribers who go for the N500 data plan valid for 14 days will now get 1.35 GB of data instead of the 1GB they used to receive up till now.

A night time bonus of 550MB is part of the new package.

Subscribers who go for the N1, 000 monthly data plan will receive a whopping 2.9 GB inclusive of 1 GB of data useable only at night. There are other data bundle options up to N20, 000. For instance, 12GB of data has been added to the N20, 000, bringing the total to 138GB instead of the erstwhile 115GB.

The company stated that its data offers are currently the best at the market both in terms of the price points and the quality of the data service.



Trainees at the closing ceremony of five-day training on Office Automation and Technopreneurship organized by the National Information Technology Development Agency for persons living with various forms of disabilities in Kano recently.

The median edition of the Sectoral Forum organised by Association of Telecommunication Companies of Nigeria (ATCON) under the theme: "Meeting the Interests of Government, Consumers and Telecom & ICT Companies in the Era of COVID-19 and Post COVID-19 Pandemic for Digital Economy Development", has received a boost, as the Minister for Communications and Digital Economy, Dr. Isa Ali Ibrahim Pantami, has confirmed his availability to present a principal keynote address on theme of the Forum with special focus on the Ministry's Policy Directions.

Also, Prof Umar Garba

Pantami, Others Set For ATCON's Forum On Telecom, ICT Consumer's Need In COVID-19 Era

Danbatta, Executive Vice Chairman/CEO of Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) and Mr Kashifu Inuwa Abdullahi, Director General, National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA) would constitute the panelists from the government establishments and they will be making presentations on the theme of the event with special focus on what the Commission's and Agency's are doing in respect of consumers.

In a press release this week, the Executive Secretary of ATCON, Ajibola

Olude, said: "We have the following representatives from the angle of those that represent consumers in Nigeria: Prof. Chiso Ndukwe-Okafor, Executive Director, Consumer Advocacy and Empowerment Foundation (CADEF); Mrs Sola Salako Ajulo, President/Founder, Consumer Advocacy Foundation of Nigeria (CAFON); Mr. Bayo Olugbemi, FCIB, President/Chairman of Council, Chartered Institute of Bankers of Nigeria (CIBN); Prince Igho Majemite, Chairman, Industry Consumer Advisory Forum (ICAF); Chief Adeo-

lu Ogungbanjo, National President, National Association of Telecommunications Subscribers (NATCOMS); Mr Rasak Adekoya, Programme Lead, DFID Inclusion Works, Sightsavers; Comrade Moses O Igrude, Chairman, Consumer Rights Awareness Advancement And Advocacy Initiative (CRAAAI) and Prince (Amb.) Sina Bilesanmi, National President, Association of Telephone Cable Tv and Internet Subscribers of Nigeria (ATCIS) and their role is to give feedback on Telecoms and ICT Service delivery.

9mobile Crashes Call Rates With Morelife, Introduces Unbeatable Data

In a bold move to enable its customers to stay in touch with their loved ones at a much more affordable cost, Nigeria's leading telecommunications network, 9mobile, has re-launched its Morelife Complete package.

Morelife is a voice-based prepaid package that allows customers to make calls at 11k/s to all networks in Nigeria and to top international destinations including UK, USA, Canada, China, Norway, Puerto

Rico and Bangladesh with a daily access fee of only N5 billed along with the first call of the day.

Subscribers on the package, according to the Acting Director, Marketing at 9mobile, Layi Onafowokan, will further enjoy an exclusive data offer of a whopping 11GB for just N3000 and other exciting benefits!

Commenting further on the revamped offer, Onafowokan said: "we are responding to our customers'

need to stay in touch with their friends and family both locally and around the world without worrying about expensive call rates especially with the varying degrees of physical and social restrictions in place at this time.

"More than ever before, Nigerians now rely heavily on efficient and affordable telecom services to communicate with loved ones around the world. That is why we are introducing this most affordable uniform

voice call rate of 11k/sec for all local calls and select international destinations."

Onafowokan added that the MoreLife Complete package underlines 9mobile's desire to continue to offer meaningful and affordable services to its subscribers.

He disclosed that subscribers could activate the MoreLife Complete package by dialling *620*1# and get the super 11GB data offer by dialling *230*1#.

USER GUIDE

Nigeria Data Protection Regulation Act 2019 Impacts COVID-19 Contact Tracing

The Nigeria Data Protection Regulation (NDPR) Act 2019 is an important regulation that protects the security and privacy of a living Nigerian national individual personal data. Personal data within the regulation refers to any data that can identify a living person such as name, picture, video, email, address and others.

The regulation further defines a subset of personal data such as health data that will impact the individual greatly if exposed, thus more due care should be taken with these subsets of personal data called sensitive personal data.

The Nigerian government have adopted the contact tracing approach to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Contact tracing is the process of identifying, assessing, and managing people who have been exposed to COVID-19 to prevent onward transmission. When systematically applied, contact tracing will break the chains of transmission of COVID-19 and is an essential public health tool for controlling the virus.

Contact tracing for COVID-19 requires identifying people who may have been exposed to COVID-19 and following them up daily for 14 days from the last point of exposure.

The processing personal data for COVID-19 contact tracing is lawful under the Nigeria Data Protection Regulation since it is being carried out for public interest, however the principles of processing personal data still needs to adhered to.

In utilising contact tracing the government need to perform the below due diligence, to ensure the principles of processing personal data under the Nigeria

Data Protection Regulation Act 2019 is adhered to:-

Adequacy

During contact tracing only ask people for the specific information that is needed. This may include things like their name, contact details and time of arrival for example.

Transparent

During contact tracing be clear, open and honest with people about what you are doing with their personal data. Tell them why you need it and what you'll do with it.

Secure the data collected

During contact tracing you must look after the personal data you collect. That means keeping it secure on a device if you're collecting the records digitally or, for paper records, keeping the information locked away.

Do not use it for other purposes

You cannot use the personal information that you collect for contact tracing for other purposes, such as direct marketing, profiling or data analytics.

Data retention

You should not keep the personal data for longer than needed. It's important that you dispose of the data securely to reduce the risk of someone else accessing the data. Shred paper documents and permanently delete digital files from your recycle bin or back-up cloud storage, for example.

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Overview Of Markets In The Week Ended July 29

Economy

According to the National Bureau of Statistics, a total of NGN651.80 billion was generated as Value Added Tax (VAT) in H1-20. Relative to the same period from a year ago, the achieved VAT is 8.5% higher. However, at this run-rate, total VAT receipts are trailing the FGN's 2020 budget. For better context, at NGN651.8 billion over H1-20, the reported VAT is 36% lower relative to the FGN half-year target of NGN1.02 trillion in the revised 2020 budget. Meanwhile, on a quarterly breakdown, VAT receipts in Q2-20 grew marginally by 0.81% q/q to NGN327.10 billion (Q1-20: NGN324.60 billion), benefitting from the implementation of the VAT hike in February 2020, even as the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted economic activities in the period. Notably, collection rates were lower across key sectors such as Federal Ministries & Parastatals (-22.90% y/y), Building and Construction (-2.21% y/y), and Offshore Operations (-9.37% y/y). On our estimate, the FGN will face the hurdle of generating c. NGN689 billion per quarter to, at least, meet its 2020 target. The foregoing is a tall order in our view, given the low level of activities from the onset of the COVID-19 outbreak, together with the COVID relief packages for small businesses which includes VAT exemptions.

The Budget Office recently released the 2021-2023 Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) which we understand is in line with the provisions of the Fiscal Responsibility Act (FRA) 2007, a guide for the policy thrust behind the public finances of the FGN. In the document, the Nigerian economy is forecasted to contract by 4.2% y/y in 2020 (Cordros estimate: -3.4%) on the expectation that oil GDP will contract by 12.96% y/y, together with a slower contraction in non-oil GDP growth (-3.6% y/y). Beyond 2020, the economy is expected to gradually recover with GDP expected to grow by

Table 1: Macro indicators

Macro indicators (Nig)	Current	Year start	Forecast
Real GDP growth	1.87%	2.55%	-2.87% (Q2-20)
MPR	12.50%	13.50%	12.50% (Next meeting)
CPI	12.56%	11.85%	12.67% (Jul-20)
Exchange rate (USD)	NGN360.00	NGN306.00	NGN360.00 (7th Aug)
Foreign reserve (USD' bn)	35.92	36.33	35.83 (7th Aug)
Unemployment	23.10%	23.10%	*UR (Q4-18)
Brent crude oil price (USD)	43.72	66.57	42.00 (7th Aug)

*UR: Under review

Source: CBN, Bloomberg, NBS, Cordros Research estimates

3.0% y/y, 4.7% y/y, and 3.9% y/y, in 2021, 2022, and 2023, respectively. Oil revenue was also forecast to grow by c. 96% in 2021 (2020 estimate: NGN1.01 trillion) on oil production assumption of 1.86mb/d and an average oil price of USD42.00/barrel. Overall, the aggregate FGN revenue for 2021 is projected at NGN7.50 trillion, while aggregate expenditure is estimated to be NGN12.66 trillion (2020 revised budget estimate: NGN10.81 trillion), leading to a fiscal deficit of NGN5.16 trillion. On a percentage of GDP basis, the expected deficit is 3.63% of GDP, which is well above the 3% limit set by the FRA 2007. In our view, until the FGN implements strategies to unlock new revenue sources, we believe it will not be feasible to keep the deficits within the 3% target.

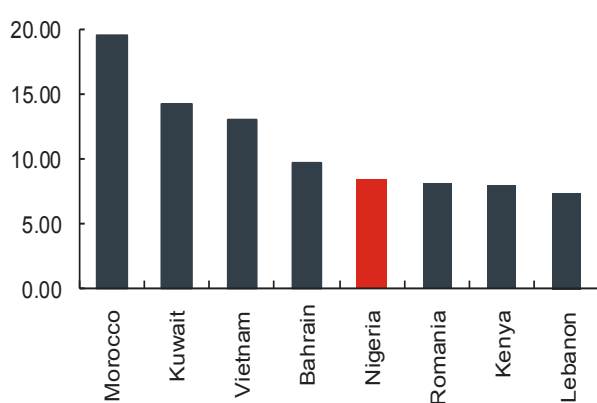
Capital markets

Equities

With negative expectations already priced in, earnings did better than expected, spurring investor interest across Cement and Tier I bank stocks and driving the market to a positive close (+0.9%) for the month of July. For the holiday-shortened trading week, the All-Share index rose 1.1% WTD to 24,693.73 points, closing in the green in 2 of 3 trading sessions, and reducing the YTD loss to -8.0%. On sectors, the Industrial Goods (+3.6%) index sustained last week's gains, with the Banking (+3.0%) index joining the leaders' list. Conversely, the Oil & Gas (-6.5%) and Consumer Goods (-0.4%) indices closed in the red. The Insurance index was flat.

Our view continues to favour cautious trading as risks remain on the horizon due to a combination of the increasing number of COVID-19 cases in Nigeria and weak economic conditions. Thus, we continue to advise investors to seek trading opportunities in only fundamentally justified stocks.

Fig 4: Trailing 12M P/E ratios (frontier market)



Source: Bloomberg, Cordros Research

Table 2: Sectoral Performance

	Previous week	Current week	w/w CHANGE	YTD Change
Banking	270.41	278.60	↑ 3.0%	↓ -21.9%
Consumer Goods	404.25	402.48	↓ -0.4%	↓ -32.1%
Industrial Goods	1106.55	1,146.73	↑ 3.6%	↑ 6.6%
Insurance	122.34	122.34	→ 0.0%	↓ -2.8%
Oil & Gas	182.2	170.34	↓ -6.5%	↓ -35.1%

Source: NSE, Cordros Research

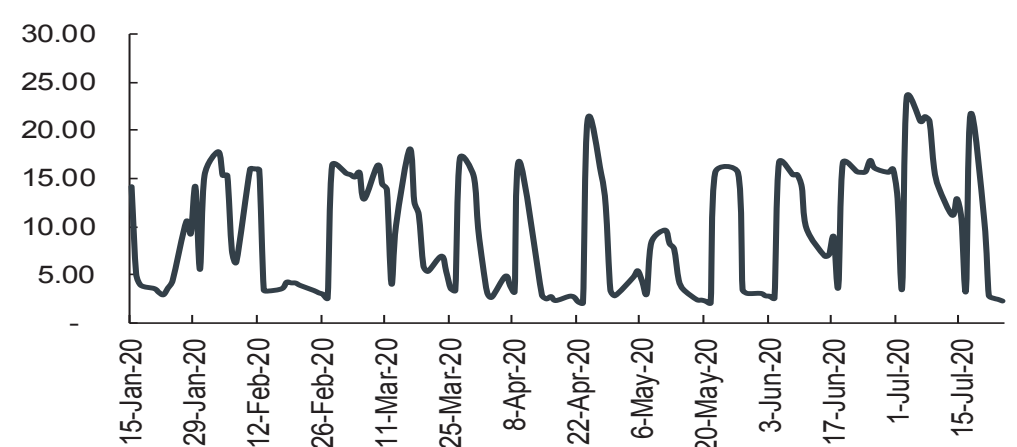
Fixed Income and Money Market

Money Market

The overnight (OVN) rate contracted 10bps, WTD, to 2.2%, as inflows from the prior week and FGN bond coupon payments (NGN49.33 billion) kept liquidity in the system afloat.

In the absence of any significant inflows to the system next week, we expect the OVN to expand, and as the CBN may mop up liquidity from the system.

Fig 5: Overnight money market rate (%)



Source: FMDQ, Cordros Research

Companies&Markets

Dangote Cement Fulfils Promo Promises, Sends N1m Alerts To Season 2 Winners

Three new millionaires yesterday had their million Naira winnings presented to them by the management of Dangote Cement Plc, in fulfilment of its promise to make one thousand people millionaires, in its on-going "Bag of Goodies: Spell Dangote and win a Million Naira Consumer Promo, which commenced barely two weeks ago.

The winners from Lagos and Oyo States received their cheques of one million naira each at presentation ceremonies witnessed by top management of Dangote Cement Plc, as well as representatives of some regulatory agencies in Nigeria.

The cheques presentation was all the more

exciting as Dangote Cement arranged for the winners to receive alerts while the ceremonies was on-going in the full glare of the public and the media.

The winners said it was like a dream when they presented their winning cards to their various redemption centres and were told they have won a million naira each.

It was a thrilling moment in Ibadan when Ojediran Kayode, a block moulder and 28-year-old Ebenezer Oloyede, a bricklayer who had since been presented with their symbolic one million naira cheque each, only for them to receive alerts for the actual payments.

For the Managing Director of Afolabi Adefi-

la Block Industry, a winner based in Lagos, the one million naira was an answer to his prayers.

"I didn't even think I will be a millionaire through this promo. I have been keeping the promo cards found inside the bags of Dangote Cement at the onset of the 'Season 2 Promo'.

"I never really took it serious until a colleague came to request that I sell letter 'G' to him at the rate of N60,000. I jokingly told him to pay N200,000. To my utmost surprise, he was ready to pay the N200,000 for a promo card with letter 'G'. So, that was what prompted me to take all my cards to the nearest redemption centre and I was told I had won one million," he enthused.

Polaris Bank Partners Facebook To Build Capacity For SMEs

Polaris Bank has partnered with Facebook to provide free digital marketing training to Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Nigeria.

The Bank explained that this move is intended to equip SMEs who are focused on leveraging social media tools to drive business and sales.

According to Mrs. Adebimpe Ihekuna, the Bank's Group Head, Products & Market Development, "This partnership is part of Polaris Bank's non-financial offerings to SMEs in their bid to scale to the next level"

"As an enterprise positioned to meet the challenges of the digital age, especially in the era of COVID-19, we want to assist as many SMEs as we can to ensure they remain relevant in their line of business," she stressed.

This virtual training is scheduled for August 3-7, 2020 and will hold for five days with a maximum of 2 modules daily, at different time intervals (i.e. morning and afternoon) while a repeat session will hold the following week for the next set of SMEs who were not accommodated in the first week.

Participants will among other things, learn how to find new customers and build business communities using digital tools. They will also be exposed to strategies to grow their business internationally, build an online business presence with Facebook, use WhatsApp to grow their business, learn how to create Facebook Ads, and scale advertising with Ads Manager and unearth tools to drive their business.

FBN Holdings Records 56% Profit In H1 2020

FBN Holdings has announced its unaudited first half year results for 2020, recording 56 per cent growth when compared to the same period last year.

The 56 per cent growth indicated N49.5 billion profit for the six months ended June 30, 2020.

Mr. U.K. Eke, the Group Managing Director, FBN Holdings, described the H1 result as impressive despite the difficult operating environment in the country.

He said: "The H1 2020 financial results are impressive and reconfirm our consistent focus on enhanced shareholder value. Despite the difficult operating environment, the H1 results

demonstrate our resilience and capacity to deliver on long-term ambitions."

Eke explained that the 56.3 per cent year-on-year growth in profit after tax for the period was a testament to the strength of the organisation's continual delivery of exceptional services to the company's customers in these unprecedented times.

He noted that the company had been able to achieve this feat by leveraging its agent banking network, innovative e-banking capabilities, and operational efficiency utilising technology.

According to him, the company during the quarter, successfully divested from the underwriting (insurance) businesses to focus on its

banking operations and expressed optimism that this would enhance greater value to its stakeholders and strengthen the group's resolve to consolidate its leadership of the banking sector.

He added: "Following the divestment, FBN Holdings injected Tier 1 capital into FirstBank, effectively increasing its CAR to 16.5 per cent. This provides a comfortable buffer against regulatory requirements with the potential to support any emerging business opportunities.

"Looking ahead, we remain cautious, but we are confident that our business is fundamentally strong to withstand any future challenge towards enhanced performance."

Market Note

CONTINUED FROM P.16

Treasury Bills

Trading in the Treasury bills secondary market was bullish, on the back of the still buoyant system liquidity. Thus, the average yield across all instruments contracted by 29bps to 3.5%. Across the segments, average yield at the OMO segment contracted by 41bps to 4.2% whereas they expanded slightly by 1bp to 1.7% at the NTB segment, as market participants shifted focus to this week's PMA. At the PMA, the CBN offered to investors maturing bills worth NGN265.95 billion. The auction closed with the CBN rolling over NGN49.84 billion of the 91-day, NGN54.59 billion of the 182-day and NGN161.52 billion of the 364-day – at respective stop rates of 1.20% (previously 1.30%), 1.50% (previously 1.80%), and 3.40% (previously 3.35%).

For next week, the tight liquidity expected in the system should cause reduced demand for instruments in the space.

Bond

The Treasury bonds secondary market continued to trade with bullish sentiments, as the healthy liquidity in the system sustained local participation, and as investors reinvested coupon payments. Consequently, average yield contracted by 20bps to 7.1%. Across the curve, yield contracted at the short (-30bps) and mid (-44bps) segments, as investors demanded the MAR-2024 (-66bps) and MAR-2027 (-125bps) bonds, respectively, while they expanded at the long (+6bps) end, following sell-off of the JUL-2034 (+31bps) bond.

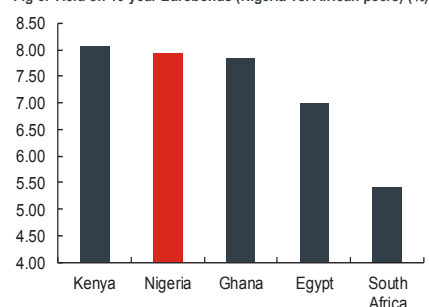
We expect investors to continue to cherry-pick attractive yields, notwithstanding the expected strain in system liquidity.

Foreign Exchange

The CBN's foreign reserves sustained its descent as FX outflows continue to outpace inflows, thus dipping by USD59.86 million w/w to USD35.92 billion. Consequently, the naira appreciated marginally against the US dollar by 0.06% w/w to NGN389.25/USD at the I&E window but weakened by 0.7% to NGN475.00/USD at the parallel market. In the forwards market, the naira appreciated against the US dollar across the 1-month (+0.2% to NGN390.47/USD), 3-month (+0.4% to NGN393.45/USD), 6-month (+0.4% to NGN398.7/USD) and 1-year (+1.5% to NGN412/USD) contracts.

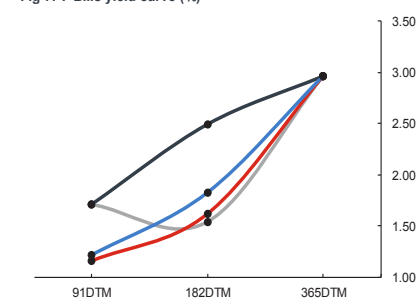
Despite the CBN's stronger commitment towards exchange rate unification, we still see legroom for the currency to depreciate further, at least towards its REER derived fair value. Our prognosis is hinged on (1) the widening current account (CA) position, (2) currency mispricing, which could induce speculative attacks on the naira, and (3) the resumption of FX sales to the BDC segment of the market which should place an additional layer of pressure on the reserves as the CBN funds the backlog of unmet FX demand.

Fig 6: Yield on 10-year Eurobonds (Nigeria vs. African peers) (%)



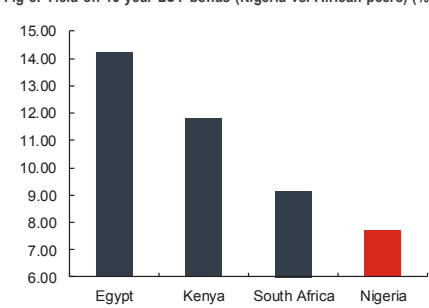
Source: Bloomberg, Cordros Research

Fig 7: T-Bills yield curve (%)



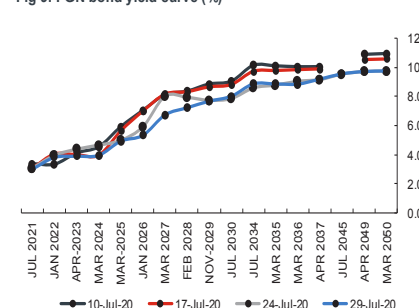
Source: FMDQ, Cordros Research

Fig 8: Yield on 10-year LCY bonds (Nigeria vs. African peers) (%)



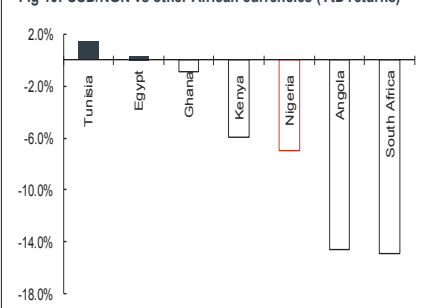
Source: Bloomberg, Cordros Research

Fig 9: FGN bond yield curve (%)



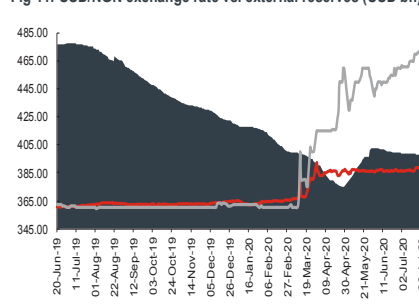
Source: FMDQ, Cordros Research

Fig 10: USD/NGN vs other African currencies (YTD returns)



Source: Bloomberg, Cordros Research

Fig 11: USD/NGN exchange rate vs. external reserves (USD'bn)



Source: FMDQ, CBN, aboki FX, Cordros Research

Insurance & Pension

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NAICOM, Shippers Council Propose Inter-Agency C'ttee To Ease Cost Of Doing Business At Seaports

The National Insurance Commission (NAICOM), in its bid to deepen insurance penetration, has proposed an interagency committee with the Nigerian Shippers Council (NSC) on how best to collaborate in the development of maritime and insurance sectors.

The collaboration, according to NAICOM, would see the two agencies work together to introduce insurance cover for containers at both inside and outside the seaports and in addition reduce the cost of doing business at the nation's seaports.

Mr Olorundare Thomas, Commissioner for Insurance, who disclosed the development in Abuja when the Council's delegation visited the management of NAICOM expressed willingness to collaborate with NSC to make insurance significant in the maritime sector.

Thomas commended the NSC for bringing up creative ideas that would deepen the market of the Commission in the maritime industry.

"As far as I can remember, this will mark one of the few times that any of



our stakeholders will come with developmental ideas that will enhance the thought of the Commission on how to deepen the market and make insurance relevant to our daily living.

"When it comes to trading, marine is in the frontline and insurance itself move with trading, insurance started with marine insurance largely before fire, but marine is quite critical in the history of insurance development.

"With what we have gone through in the country and globally, we need to take insurance more seriously than ever; than what we have done in the past.

"I have listened to you and I have taken note, these are things we must collaborate and work together as agencies of government.

"It is important for us, what we are getting from marine business is not consistent with transaction in the marine sector in terms of contribution to insurance penetration.

"It is almost insignificant but as an economy, we know that is not the true reflection of what is happening in the Marine Sector and I am happy for your creative ideas," he said.

Thomas, however, said that the commission would look into establishing a committee with both agencies to factor out the modalities on how insurance can be factored in at the Ports to reduce cost of business.

Hassan Bello, Executive Secretary of NSC, responding explained that the two agencies would also look into risk management at the various Ports to ease business.

According to Bello, insurance

should be viewed from various areas of policies involving goods on transit, accidents, loss, damages in order to move away from religious sentiments that everything happened for a reason.

He explained that containers deposit at the ports is about N150,000 to N200,000 on each container which runs into billions of Naira thereby making supply costly.

Explaining further, Bello said this was because most of the containers could not be returned within the expected date due to the nature of the roads.

"As part of our functions as ports regulator, we have our eyes on the cost of doing business in Nigeria. So, in the ease of doing business and the cost of doing business, we want to make our ports competitive, we have to moderate the cost.

"One of the costs is Insurance deposits that shippers pay for taking the containers out of the port.

"The containers are the assets of the shipping companies, they must be returned in perfect condition. If the containers are not returned, the deposit is not refunded.

"When you return the containers in good time, you collect your deposit back.

"However, that is not as simple as that, access to the port maybe difficult and if a container is not returned within a certain time limit, they could be a problem, one loses his deposit or part of the deposit and so the shippers have to forgo the deposit.

"Sometimes the shipping company, even when the containers are returned they don't pay the deposit in good time and that is money lost.

"So what we are saying is, there are lot of issues like that, that we could have the insurance company come to take care of," Bello said.

He said that the insurance company could come in to make sure the containers are covered at a lesser cost, to reduce some of the challenges faced by the shippers.

He said: "We want policy on the participation of insurance in container regime, there is policy on goods in transit of course, and we want the policies to cover most of the risk that shippers, freight forwarders incurred including demurrage and rent.

The Governor of Benue State, Samuel Ortom said he has approached the Federal Government to seek intervention in a view to paying the outstanding pension liability amounting to N40billion to pensioners in the state.

The Governor, who made this known through a press statement signed by Terver Akase, his media aide further said that his administration met a pension liability of over N70billion but has managed to reduce it to about N40billion.

The governor's reaction came on the heels of the planned protest by a group called Benue Renaissance Network (BRN) who has vowed to take the protest to presidency, the National Assembly and the Governors' forum but

Benue State Govt Seeks FG's Intervention In N40bn Pension Liability

the governor while calling for intervention said as much as he recognises the right to freedom of speech and expression of individual or group but it would be right their actions or inaction premised on an informed position.

The statement reads; "we read a statement accredited to a non-descript group which calls itself BRN where it said it would impress on the Presidency, National Assembly and the Governors Forum to intervene in the issue of pension in Benue State

"The Ortom administration has domesticated the pension law

in the state which is a sure way to ending the problem of accumulated pensions and gratuities. The group must also appreciate the fact that the government is constrained by the inadequacy of funds to be able to clear the outstanding pensions and gratuities.

"It was in his earnest bid to address the pension matters that the government had to write to the federal government to enable him tackle the challenge. The governor's request is currently processed by the Central Bank of Nigeria as directed by the President Muhammadu Buhari.

"The Federal Government is

aware that the issue of pension in Benue state is not a deliberate attempt to deny retirees of their entitlements. The government at the Centre is aware that Ortom is genuinely concerned and worried about the matter and has requested for an intervention of Mr. President to enable him clear the outstanding pension and gratuity.

We wish to however, correct the wrong impression created by the group that pensioners who staged protest last year at the Benue Peoples House were beaten by thugs. No one manhandled the pensioners," the statement noted.

COVID-19: Anchor Insurance Donates Medical Wares To A'Ibom Govt

Anchor Insurance Company Limited has donated 150 cartons of facemask, 30 cartons of hand gloves and 45 cartons of hand sanitisers to the Akwa Ibom State Government, in support of the fight against COVID-19 pandemic in the state.

Dr Elijah Akpan, Chairman, Board of Directors of the company, who led the company's delegation presented the items to the State Government in Uyo, the capital of Akwa Ibom State recently.

Dr Akpan lauded Governor Udom Emmanuel for the huge investment in the health sector and also praised the efforts of COVID-19 Management Committee headed by the Secretary to the State Government, Dr Emmanuel Ekuwem, in curtailing the spread of the deadly virus in Akwa Ibom.

Akpan, who is also the Chairman of Akwa Ibom Investment Corporation (AKICORP), said the donation was one of the company's ways of reciprocating the benevolence of the state government to the company.

According to him, "Anchor Insurance Company is 60 per cent owned by the Akwa Ibom State Government with over 70 per cent of its workforce being indigenes of the state.

Receiving the items on behalf of the state government, the Secretary to the State Government, Dr Emmanuel Ekuwem, described Akwa Ibom State Government as one of the primary promoters of Anchor Insurance, and thanked the company for the kind gesture.

He noted that, the donation was a demonstration of the respect and values the company attached to human lives.

African Alliance Grows GPW By 41%

African Alliance Insurance PLC has reported a 41per cent rise in her Gross Premium Written (GPW) according to its 2019 financial statement.

The details of the statement showed that the 60-year-old company recorded N7.29billion premium in 2019 against N5.17billion in 2018 representing a 41per cent growth year on year while its life fund grew by 16per cent from N38.99billion to N45.33billion in the same period under review.

According to the firm, the increase in both premium generated and the life fund lend credence to the company's strong customer base, continued acceptance as well as a robust sales drive across both retail and corporate lines of business.

The firm demonstrated relentless commitment to its teeming consumers by paying claims totalling N9.

36billion as against N8.78billion the previous year; a 7per cent increase year-on-year rise.

While speaking to the financials, Olabisi Adekola, the Executive Director, Finance, credited the increased revenue to shrewd underwriting and better communication of the value of insurance to the retail market.

"We have grown our retail business to become much more profitable and have supported their sales efforts with targeted communication both above the line and below the line. Unfortunately, while we obviously made more sales, we paid much more claims which impacted negatively on our balance sheet," She said.

"The bulk of our claims were in annuity the business of which has been affected by our operating environment vis-à-vis the average market rate and limited investment vehicles.

We all know annuity business is basically about hedging assets against contract liabilities, so when the market forces are unfavourable, returns on investment will be affected too."

She further expressed confidence in the firm's ability to turn the bend going by its corporate strategy.

"Our strategy has been to keep growing our market share via aggressive sales drive, adoption of digital technology and capital injection. We own viable assets home and abroad which we are certain would aid our quest to capitalize. Indeed, our recapitalisation plans is key to our bounce-back strategy," she said.

African Alliance Insurance PLC is one of Nigeria's oldest insurers having been established in 1960. The firm pioneered the sales and marketing of takafal insurance in the Nigerian insurance market and has presence pan-Nigeria.



Funmi Omo, MD/CEO, African Alliance Insurance



Power

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The Federal Government has set a target to achieve 25,000 to 30,000 Megawatts of electricity. How feasible is this target?

President Buhari's vision for 24/7 power supply in Nigeria, has culminated in the inauguration of the Presidential Power Initiative Project (PPI) which is a power infrastructure upgrade and modernisation programme agreed to by the Nigerian Government and Siemens A.G. of Germany, with the support of the German Government.

Nigeria and electricity giant, Siemens, have signed a power deal that will lead to the production of 25,000 megawatts of electricity by 2025.

The total costs of the project which covers some states of the Federation sum up to N5.1 trillion.

To kick start the pre-engineering and concession financing for the project, President Buhari has approved the release of funding for the first part of phase 1 of the PPI.

Likewise, works have started on the Mambilla hydro-electric power station with a capacity for providing 3,050 megawatts of power into the national grid when fully on stream.

When completed the hydro-electric power station will be the largest power generation installation in the country, and one of the largest hydro-electric power stations in Africa. At the cost of \$5.8 billion to the public purse in Nigeria, the hydro-electric project in comparison with the gas-fired power generation plants, offers good value for money.

The embedded power generation rescue measure emerged from the decision by the Federal Government to end the traditional ring fencing privileges enjoyed by the existing 10 GENCOs, and thus removes the restriction for generation of electricity to enable state governments and other private investors to engage in power generation, transmission and distribution on localised basis, invariably without recourse to the national grid.

How do you think nuclear power can boost these efforts?

Nuclear is important to sustainable energy mix and is the second largest source of low carbon electricity, after hydropower and because it can be relied on all year round, irrespective of whether the wind is blowing and the sun is shining, it surpasses the hydro-electric power on grounds of being 100% reliable for generating power all around the year.

The time is right for small modular nuclear reactors. Policymakers, the environmental community, and electricity providers are agreeing that nuclear power belongs in the mix to meet future clean energy objectives.

Are there countries using this source of power?

Twelve countries in 2018 produced at least one-quarter of their electricity from nuclear. France gets around three-quarters of its electricity from nuclear energy; Hungary, Slovakia and Ukraine get more than half from nuclear, whilst Belgium, Sweden, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Switzerland, Finland and Czech Republic get one-third or more.

South Korea normally gets more than 30 percent of its electricity from nuclear, while in the USA, UK, Spain, Romania and Russia about one-fifth of electricity is from nuclear.

Japan is used to relying on nuclear power for more than one-quarter of its electricity and is expected to return to somewhere near that level.

The relative advantages of nuclear power stations over other sources of power supply in Nigeria are as follows:

Nuclear power stations do not burn fossil fuels to produce electricity and consequently they do not produce damaging, polluting gases.

Many supporters of nuclear power production say that this type of power is environmentally friendly and clean. In a world that faces global warming they suggest that increasing the use of nuclear power is the only way of protecting the environment and preventing catastrophic climate change.

In Nigeria, virtually all the existing thermal power stations relying on gas for power generation have not been operating in their full capacity largely because of disruption in gas supply caused by pipeline vandalism in the Niger Delta Region. Likewise, the hydroelectric power stations are

'Nuclear Energy Can Boost Nigeria's Power Generation'

Mr Abayomi Olushola Falana, CEO, YF Consult Nigeria Limited, in this interview with **MOHAMMED SHOSHANYA**, highlights issues in the nation's power sector Excerpts:



Olushola Falana

very susceptible to seasonal water constraints.

Countries such as France produce approximately 90 percent of their electricity from nuclear power and lead the world in nuclear power generating technology - proving that nuclear power is an economic alternative to fossil fuel power stations.

Sharing the UK Government Experience: In just a few years - during the early 2020s - many of the UK's power stations are expected to close. If they are not replaced, there might not be enough electricity supply to meet the demands of houses and businesses.

Nuclear is a vital part of UK Government energy mix. The UK Government has provided up to £56m of funding for research and development in mini-nuclear plants.

The funding will be available over the next three years and will be used to assess the potential of designs of advanced and small modular reactors (SMRs) and accelerating their development.

Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) could unlock new generation and economic growth.

It is high time our Policy makers, decision takers and the entire populace in Nigeria realised that nuclear power is the only source to meet future clean energy objectives of Nigeria and the rest of Africa.

Nigeria must show the way as the Big Brother of the African Continent. Nigeria is the country that can provide the catalyst for this positive

Our existing on-grid power statistics is surprisingly poor with almost 200 million people

change in Africa.

And it will portray Nigeria as the African continent country example of leadership in green energy.

Above all, it remains very crucial that a factual public awareness campaign gains greater momentum. Nuclear is still the most viable option in order to stimulate the economy, despite public sentiments often being negative.

Tell us the role embedded power will play?

The embedded power projects embarked upon by the state governments is designed to stimulate private sector investment in the development of electric power generation and distribution in the state.

Under this embedded power scheme, the private operators will be able operate mini-grids to cover the localised target communities.

How much efforts have you seen in the area of energy mix by this administration?

For a long time, policy makers and decision takers in Nigeria have neglected the consideration of a comprehensive sustainable energy mix and thus, they have failed to explore very vigorously the full power supply resources.

However, their perceptions are changing gradually with some focus now on renewable energy sources including solar panels, wind, tide, and waste-to-energy projects.

Whereas, Nigeria need a more diverse and balanced energy mix, Nuclear is a vital part of our energy mix, providing low carbon power now and into the future.

As we are all aware, the world is moving towards low carbon energy which justifies the increasing need to consider the nuclear power plants as suitable sustainable energy mix.

Very astonishingly, the Federal Government has responded very poorly to our proposal to set up small and modular reactor nuclear plants in

remote locations to drive industries and mineral mining activities in the country.

Our investors are ready, willing, and financially capable to establish the nuclear power plants on condition that the Federal Government issues Sovereign Guarantees 'SG' against political risks in favour of the foreign investors.

Unfortunately, the policy makers and decision takers are unwittingly reluctant to promote the nuclear power generation in the country on grounds of their unsubstantiated fears of nuclear accidents and radiation release which have since been overcome by advanced development in technology and engineering design.

When it comes to hydro, Nigeria also has vast untapped potential.

The Federal Government has committed to completing hydro power projects including the 3,050 megawatts Mambilla project, 700-megawatts Zungeru and 30-megawatts Gurara.

There are numerous smaller hydro projects lying idle including Ikere Gorge dam, Oyan dam, Bakalori dam, Tiga dam, Challawa dam and Dowa dam, and all have huge hydro power potential.

Revamping these abandoned dams around the country will deliver close to 500-megawatts of hydro power which can serve about 700,000 people.

Some investments are currently ongoing in mini-grid space. Do you think this can stimulate generation efforts?

Our existing on-grid power statistics is surprisingly poor with almost 200 million people.

To put that in perspective, the small Caribbean twin islands nation of Trinidad and Tobago has 2,200 megawatts on their national grid for a population of 1.50 million people, equivalent to just one LGA in Lagos State.

While the problems continue to mount for Nigeria's on-grid power sector, opportunities are on the rise for companies operating in the country's mini-grid and off-grid power sector. Backed by a sound regulatory environment, strong government support from the centre, and increasing capital from investors and donors, the off-grid and/or mini-grid energy sector is fast emerging as one of Nigeria's most exciting new sectors.

With over 90 million Nigerians off the grid and another 50 million with less than six hours a day of grid power, the opportunity is enormous.

Currently, only one off-grid Company in Nigeria is a household name - LUMOS.

However, there are many more coming up behind them ranging from solar home systems to larger standalone systems to mini-grid to independent power projects (IPPs).

The Rural Electricity Agency (REA) is currently implementing multiple off-grid electrification programmes with the support of the World Bank, African Development Bank (AfDB) and the private sector, mostly through the deployment of solar power to electrify homes, communities and businesses.

The following programmes are currently being implemented: Energising Economies Initiative (EEI). This programme has been developed to support the deployment of clean and sustainable off-grid electricity solutions to economic clusters in Nigeria.

The aim of the EEI is to provide sustainable and affordable power to 1 million SMEs.

Under this EEI, the Federal Government has commissioned 3 markets across the Nigeria.

Namely are, Sura market in Lagos, Ariaria in Aba and Sabon Gari in Kano.

Energising Education Programme (EEP). The EEP is expected to provide adequate power supply of 90 MW in total to 37 Federal Universities and 7 University Teaching Hospitals across Nigeria.

Abuja Business

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How New Stamp Regime Will Affect Tenancy In Abuja, Suburb – FIRS Boss

CHIDI UGWU
ABUJA

Against fears in Abuja of possible rent increase on account of the new stamp duties on tenancy across the country, Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) has come to explain that cost of Rentage won't change much.

Explaining this, Mohammed Nami, Executive Chairman, FIRS, said that monthly or annual tenancy attracts a paltry 6 percent of the total sum.

"Again, for purpose of clarity, the 6% stamp duty rate is not chargeable across board. It is only chargeable on rent or lease agreement of above 21 years. If your rent or lease is between 7 and 21 years, the stamp duty rate is 3%. And if you pay your rent monthly or yearly, that is less than 7 years; your stamp duty rate is 0.78%. The 0.78% is the rate for most tenants like you and I who live in Suleja or Minna. If your rent is N100, 000 like you said, you only pay 0.78%, which is marginal. Of course those who live in Maitama who pay N10 million as rent will pay more at the same 0.78% because their rent is higher than our own in other parts of Abuja."

Mr. Nami allayed the fear that stamp duty would lead to rent increase, saying: "Stamp duty should not make any landlord to increase his or her rent because it is not paid by the landlord. Landlords are not our collecting agents. It is the responsibility of the tenant to pay stamp duty and you don't have to give it to your landlord."

"As a tenant, calculate 0.78% of your rent and pay that fraction at the FIRS office nearer to you or at your bank. You should then fix the stamp duty imprimatur on the ten-



Nami

ancy agreement before you sign it with your landlord. It is as simple as that," he said.

He has assured tenants across the country that the Service is working on a stamp duty palliative package for them in view of the current economic realities occasioned by COVID-19.

Mr. Nami dropped this hint on Monday during a live appearance on the popular morning show, "Your View", on TV Continental (TVC) via video link, according to a statement by Director, Communications and Liaison Department, FIRS, Abdul-lahi Ismaila Ahmad.

As part of the palliatives, the Executive Chairman hinted that stamp duty will not be collected in arrears from tenants, even as he told his interviewers that "there is never a time when taxation is convenient for everybody to pay" and enjoined Nigerians to embrace tax payment "as a patriotic duty to our dear country, Nigeria."

The Executive Chairman stated that the FIRS was aware that many taxable Nigerians and businesses in the country were going through difficulties imposed on all of us by COVID-19, hence the FIRS has consistently rolled out tax-related

palliatives to relieve them of their tax liabilities since the pandemic shut down the Nigerian and global economy.

Nami stressed that contrary to some false claims in certain quarters, stamp duty was not a creation of the current administration of President Muhammadu Buhari or the current leadership of the FIRS.

He said: "Stamp Duty dates back to colonial times in Nigeria. It has been a form of tax in Nigeria as far back as 1939 when you and I were not yet born. It was codified in our laws in 1953; that is before independence. It was consolidated in 2002, published in 2006 and further reworked into the Stamp Duty Act 2004."

He continued: "The Joint Tax Board (JTB) where states are represented consider it necessary to bring the stamp duty act to the attention of Nigerians following the recent launch of the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Audit and Recovery of Back Years Stamp Duties where the new FIRS Adhesive Stamp Duty was unveiled. As chairman of the JTB, the FIRS was mandated to enlighten Nigerians on stamp duty. That's why the FIRS published a clarification notice on the stamp duty and we shall continue to educate the public on it."

Recall that at the weekend, Coordinating Director, Tax Operations Group, FIRS, Mr. Femi Oluwaniyi, stated that "the FIRS stamp duty on rent or lease only applies to new agreements and not to renewals. If a new agreement is drawn up at renewal, that document should be stamped, just like initial agreement. If, however, the renewal terms are already in the initial agreement such that no new document is prepared but just payment of the rent for renewal, then no stamping is required."

Dignity Finance Posts Impressive Dividend Despite COVID-19

JIDE OYEKUNLE
ABUJA

Financial Services Provider, Dignity Finance and Investment Ltd, DFIL, has declared a profit after tax, PAT, of N84.45 million for the year ended December 31, 2019.

This was even as the company has approved the payment of N50 million dividends to its shareholders.

The announcement, which was made by the Chairman of the Board of Directors, Engr. Ahmed Ibrahim, at its 10th annual general meeting, AGM, represent a 150 per cent growth from the previous year's figure of N33.84 million.

Ibrahim also announced that the company's gross earnings in the year under review hit N539 million.

The above figure is N98 million more than its gross earnings of N341 million in 2018.

The meeting, which was attended by the directors, shareholders, customers and staff of the company, was held physically and virtually - in line with COVID-19 response protocols.

In his opening remarks, Ibrahim thanked the shareholders, staff, customers and directors for their trust, hard-work, commitments and resilience in the last 10 years, and for sustaining and growing the institution to its enviable position.

He particularly thanked the Managing Director, Mallam Yahaya Yusuf, for the growth trajectory which has placed the company as one of the biggest and strongest finance companies in Nigeria.

Ibrahim also announced the Board's approval of the appointment of Dr. Chijioke Ekechukwu as the incoming MD/CEO, subject to CBN's approval.

Before his appointment, Ekechukwu was a director of the company.

In his speech, Yusuf thanked the board, shareholders, staff and customers of DFIL for the confidence reposed in him by trusting his leadership with their investment.

CHIDI UGWU
ABUJA

Federal Government has explained reasons why it lifted the ban placed on a private airline, Executive Air Services Limited, which flew musician, Azeez Fashola aka Naira Marley, to Abuja to attend a concert mid-June, saying the airline has complied with conditions given.

It would be recalled that the airline had contravened the restriction placed on interstate movement and closure of airports in existence at the time.

Giving an update on the development during a Presidential Task Force briefing on COVID-19 in Abuja, Hadi Sirika, Minister of Aviation, said, "We lifted the ban on Executive Air Services Limited because they have complied substantially with all of our imposed sanctions; they've paid part of the fines, and they brought up premium plan. So, we have lifted the ban today, so, they continue to do their business."

"These sanctions are not punitive, they are things to make our industry work better and keep all of you safe."

Why We Lifted Sanction On Executive Air Services – FG

In the same development the Presidential Task Force on COVID-19 said that government was working tirelessly to establish the protocols that would guide the resumption of international air travels, especially as it relates to arrivals into the country.

Boss Mustapha, Chairman of the Task Force, who disclosed this earlier in the week at a media briefing, said all relevant Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) were collaborating to achieve this, bearing in mind the importance of international air travels to the economic development of the nation.

James Odaudu, Director, Public Affairs, Ministry of Aviation, made this known in a statement made available to newsmen in Abuja.

According to the statement, Hadi Sirika, Aviation Minister disclosed that a National Air Facilitation Committee has been established to work out the modalities for a safe resumption of international flight operations in the country.

The committee is made up of the Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN), Nigeria Custom Service (NCS), Nigerian Immigration Service (NIS), Airline Operators of Nigeria (AON), Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA), Nigerian Airspace Management Agency (NAMA), Airport Security Committee, Ground Handlers Association, Directorate of State Security Service (DSS), Freight forwarders association, the Nigeria Civil Aviation Committee and the Quarantine service.

The Minister, who lamented that aviation was one of the worst hit by COVID-19 pandemic, however noted that a quick lifting of ban of international travel without adhering to the laid down protocols would amount to disaster.

He also bemoaned the harrowing experience and downturn in the economy of Nigeria and by extension, its impact on aviation which has made it extremely difficult for many organizations to pay salaries.

FCTA Says Land Grabbers Hurting Estate, Property Business In Abuja

TOYIN ADEBAYO
ABUJA

The Federal Capital Territory Administration (FCTA) has stated that land grabbers hurting estate, property business in Abuja, and therefore, vowed to prosecute culprits.

Speaking on behalf of the administration, the Director Department of Development Control, Murkta Galadima made this known on Monday, after the pulling down illegal structures built in Lugbe, phase 5 of the Federal Capital City, (FCC).

He said the administration was going to prosecute anyone found developing a plot without valid prove of ownership.

According to him; "This is a product of land grabbing. An individual claiming to own about 149 plots fenced it, and then combines it as an estate, called Seaman. They commenced development without even valid title or approved plan; they come to site, mobilise people and begin development.

"Two weeks ago, we came and point the structures for them to remove but they failed to obey the order, and they still went on building that is why we are enforcing the action. We came this morning to clear the illegal structures.

"We removed some, but in the process they incited people within the area to stop the exercise, we are going to re-strategise and return for the exercise" he explained.

He further stated that, those behind the illegal development are not known but the department would continue to resist the illegality.

"We are going to show the erring developers that there is law and government despite their resistance we will stop them"

The Director described residents that build without legal approval by the Department of Development Control as land grabbers.

He said the department was planning Lugbe to be in conformity with the master plan of the Federal Capital City (FCC).



URHOBOPROGRESS UNION

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OYIBODE'S RASCALITY AND MISADVENTURE

The attention of the Urhobo Progress Union (UPU) has been drawn to the inauguration of a purported UPU Youth body at the hotel premises, owned by a former youth leader and politician in Udu Local Government Area, and wish to state unequivocally that:

1. The executive of the erstwhile body known as UPU Youth Wing was dissolved on Friday, the 6th of December 2019, and ceased to exist. In its place a new pan-UPU apex youth body, now known as Ukoko R' Ighele R'Urhobo is established and its National Officers have since been inaugurated by the President-General, UPU, Olorogun (Dr.) Moses Oghenerume Taiga, JP.
2. We wish to state categorically that the authentic leadership of Urhobo Youths worldwide is led by Comrade Ovie Ebireri. We are here alerting the entire Urhobo Nation, Delta State Government, Security Agencies, Corporate Organisations and other Stakeholders that we consider the rascality and purported inauguration of another youth body as unconstitutional, illegal, and an affront on the Urhobo Nation, UPU, the President-General, Urhobo Kings and all peace-loving Urhobo People worldwide.
3. We are also by this notice warning that any dealing with any other body outside the Ovie Ebireri-led youth executive is illegal and criminal. It is also a desecration, violation and total disregard of the authority of UPU, her sovereignty and leadership. Importantly, such dealing will be deemed as a move to further cause a breach of the peace and disunity in Urhobo Nation. We shall not fold our hands and watch this happen.
4. It is instructive to mention that this inauguration is a fallout of the open threat of a serving Commissioner in DESOPADEC, Hon. Vincent Oyibode, who has been fingered as brain behind this perfidy, to cause a breach of the peace in Urhoboland, when his attempt to force his favoured candidate on the UPU as President of the apex Youth body failed. Other identified co-travellers in this misadventure are persons, who lobbied for themselves or their preferred candidates to be appointed, and imposed as President of the Youth body. It is now clear that their mission was not patriotic but for self-aggrandisement.
5. We wish to also bring to the notice of the entire Urhobo Nation, Delta State Government and Security Agencies that this DESOPADEC Commissioner, whose obvious ride to newfound affluence has made him bereft of every sense of decency, respect for elders, and laws, customs and tradition of Urhobo, continues to scandalize the name of the UPU PG, Olorogun Moses Oghenerume Taiga, and spewing out falsehoods. Oyibode action is a joke carried too far, and shall be treated with all seriousness. What gave them the impudence, the temerity and the audacity to undertake this grave act of impunity and insubordination against the Urhobo Nation? We do not discountenance the possibility of a masquerade been behind the scene. But let it be stated categorically that no one should try the resolve of the UPU and the Urhobo Nation.
6. We call on the State Government, especially His Excellency, Senator Ifeanyi Arthur Okowa, Executive Governor, Delta State, to call him to order. Henceforth, the UPU will no longer tolerate the reckless use of Urhobo name as title or tag to all self-seeking groups and associations. Enough is enough of this disrespect and defilement of the word 'Urhobo.'
7. We call on Hon. Oyibode and his fellow co-travelers, including their sponsors outside Urhoboland, to call themselves to order and drop these childish shenanigans. They must note that they will be held responsible for any breach of peace and violence in Urhoboland. The full wrath of the law shall be heaped on them for any disturbance or violence traced to their divisive activities. There shall be no sacred cow. They should be careful not to be on the wrong side of history. Half a word is enough for the wise!
8. We use this medium to reiterate that the UPU, as the umbrella body of Urhobo People, is peace-loving and progressive. We welcome multinational oil companies, industries and corporate institutions to Urhoboland to give jobs to our people, especially the youths, even as we must also emphasise that Urhobo youths are well-educated, accommodating, law-abiding and industrious.
9. To the Urhobo Nation, we reiterate that we shall not be distracted and will resist any attempt to foist disorder and illegality on this sacred Union of Urhobo People, Worldwide. Our vision and mission to reposition the Urhobo Nation is clear, and we shall not disappoint your expectations.

Thank you,

Hon. Abel Oshevire,
National Publicity Secretary,
UPU.



Brands & Marketing

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Winners of various Future Creative Leaders Academy were recently at the premises of the Advertising Practitioners Council of Nigeria, longtime supporter and sponsor of the programme, to celebrate their winning with the Acting Registrar of APCON, Mrs Ijedi Iyoha, second from right.

Why Unemployment Remains Heart Of Long-Term Consumer Change – Report

DAVID AUDU
LAGOS

Two important narratives have been conflated as the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) made its way around the world this year: the devastating impact of the deadly disease on the lives of millions and their loved ones and the almost immediate effect on the global economy.

The Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) industry experienced significant and prolonged lifts in sales across most categories as COVID-19 spread and drove people into weeks of lockdown.

Their lives quickly centered on the home and the so-called “homebody economy” was born.

Sales across many categories that fed this trend remain stronger than in pre-COVID conditions- we’re eating more meals at home, spending more time in our homes and consequently, everything from paper towels to garbage bags and cleaners are in high demand.

But as countries reopen businesses, even as total global infection rates soar, the two narratives will inevitably diverge.

The global economy and the behaviours of consumers within it face escalating levels of change, though the value and volume of growth was inevitable for many fast moving consumer group categories during lockdown conditions that may not be sustainable as economic challenges overtake health concerns.

Unemployment will be a significant driver of this change. For some consumers, furloughs will turn into unemployment; for others, particularly in developing countries with informal labour markets, reliable employment may remain out of reach for years.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) expects

uncertainty on this front for years.

This week, it offered two projections for the U.K.: If there is only one wave of the virus, the OECD projects that employment in the U.K. will fall by 4.6% in 2020 and grow by only 2.1% in 2021 This would push overall unemployment to a record high of 11.7% by the end of this year.

Projections like these clearly highlight that consumers will need to recalibrate their spending habits.

In other words, we may still be eating more meals in our homes, but what we eat and how much we’re able to afford will change, and that change may last years. And it won’t just be food. Consumers will completely reassess what goes in their shopping basket.

As jobs dry up and young people are forced to stay at home with their parents for years longer than planned, the household shopping dynamic will change. We’ll see millions of new multi-generational households. People will delay marriages and having children.

In short, life will get pushed back. And so will purchases. Consumers will buy their first big-ticket items like homes, cars, even appliances, later in life.

Earlier this year, as the full impact of COVID-19 was taking hold; the Nielsen Intelligence Unit identified a rapid reshaping of consumer spending dynamics. Put simply, the polarised spending environment will include “constrained” and “insulated” spenders, each of whom will spend according to their specific scenarios.

In the early days of the pandemic, constrained spenders were newly unemployed, such as travel and hospitality workers. Insulated spenders were often retired or working in corporate roles while shifting to working from home as global movement restrictions came into play.

But as we look down a clear path of

long-term economic recession, the meaning of polarised spending is shifting. For example, insulated spenders may tighten their belts to be fiscal practical to weather the uncertain times ahead.

The COVID-19 pandemic is forcing a global recalibration of priorities for countries, businesses, and individuals. For many consumers, it will mean an ongoing recalibration of lifestyles and meaningful changes in what they expect from brands and the retailers selling them.

And that means brands and retailers will need to serve consumers differently and in the context of low confidence levels for economic recovery.

Consider the likely shift toward demand for more value for money products. On the one hand, large multi-packs may offer the best value, but they may be out of reach for people short on cash.

Cash-strapped consumers may be forced to buy smaller pack sizes, and brand loyalty across categories may fade.

Consequently, FMCG manufacturers are reassessing their portfolios to adjust. Similarly, retailers are reconsidering how to stay relevant to consumers who will have rapidly changing consideration sets.

In the past, they could have performed these kinds of assessments with relatively ample time for testing. That is no longer the case. Changing retail channels are a case in point. Online adoption has taken just weeks to get to a tipping point that would have otherwise taken years. The U.S. offers a case in point with a 4% bump.

Whatever the channel, getting assortment and pricing right will be key. So, too will packaging and brand claims. Consumers are looking for clear claims that highlight the benefit of the product. Not surprisingly, there is strong demand at all price points for products offering and health benefits, such as immunity boosting capabilities or germ-killing powers.

Amber Energy Drink Ignites Commuters With Free Bus Ride

Commuting in Lagos state can be hellish and sometimes nightmarish for residents with the ever increasing population on a daily basis.

Most traumatic is the fact that easy access to transportation has become a daily dilemma for commuters in the metropolis which is the commercial capital of Nigeria.

However, the arrival of Amber Energy drink, a premium brand on the stable of Amber Energy Drinks Ltd appears to be taking the bull by the horns in relieving Lagos commuters of the high cost of transportation along popular and identified routes through its unique Amber BRT and conventional free Bus ride initiative launched recently in the state.

For once, in the annals of commuting amidst the hustle and bustle of the city, residents commuting within the metropolis can now at selected time enjoy a smoother, easier and happier moments at no cost to their pockets courtesy of Amber Energy drink! How does this work, you may be tempted to ask.

The automatic passport gives the commuter the free access entrance into the BRT buses or the conventional popular Lagos yellow buses depending on destination for a smooth relief and jolly ride between 4pm-6pm Mondays-Friday every week at work close.

Selected bus terminals that have become the epicenter of Amber Energy drink free bus ride with fanfare are, Leventis, CMS, Oyingbo, Fadeyi, Maryland, and Ojota. (This runs Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays for BRT buses) while Oshodi, Obalende, Marina, Ojuelegba and CMS (runs Wednesdays and Fridays) for the conventional Lagos yellow buses.

At these locations and on those days, the sight to behold are the Amber Energy drink brand ambassadors beautifully clad in the branded T-shirts on black pants interacting and sharing the tickets to consumers for a rewarding and enriching “Amber Experience”.

Mrs. Sola Ijatuyi, a business woman at Marina area of Lagos expressed her joy at the BRT bus terminal at CMS, saying that she deliberately dropped her car at home to experience the free bus ride. Her words: “This is a wonderful effort by Amber Energy drink I must commend, saying that she “get double value for her money as the drink has become her favourite brand for stimulating her energy after tasting it on two previous occasions on the same route.

Speaking on the initiative, Ms. Lola Adedeji, the General Manager of Amber Energy Drink Ltd, said: “For us at Amber Energy Drinks Ltd, we have done everything possible, even what other companies cannot do to satisfy and meet our consumers’ needs and demands”.

Her words: “We have taken our time not just to study the market but also who our consumers are and what they will need, and have decided that at every step on the way, Amber will meet the needs of its consumers, so, it is so much fun and many wonders are still coming from the Amber Energy world!”.

Corroborating, Mrs. Temitope Adetiba, the General Manager’s position, Head of Sales and Marketing of Amber Energy drinks Ltd, said: “We have embarked on this BRT Bus Ride initiative to make commuting in Lagos metropolis more fun and pleasure while meeting the physical, economic and emotional needs of our teeming consumers”.

The Head of Marketing said since it was launched into the market a few weeks ago, “Amber’s cardinal marketing objective is to always win with its consumers. “We identify the gap in the market, and we lapped on it to make life more better, pleasant and nourishing for our consumers”.

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advert@independentngr.com

Call:
08060200365, 08063673279

Email:
independentadvert@gmail.com
advert@independentngr.com

Visit:

Abuja Office: Dawakin Hill Extension, Opposite First Gwarimpa Gate, Gwarimpa-Kubwa Expressway, Abuja.

Lagos Office: 8, WEMPCO Road, Ogba, Ikeja, Lagos

Asaba Office: Independent Road, Opposite Asaba International Airport, Asaba, Delta State.

Requirement for Change of Name:

Women: Marriage Certificate or Court Affidavit; **Men:** Court Affidavit

Bank Details

FIRST BANK: INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPERS LIMITED
ACCOUNT NO: 2012255355

CHANGE OF NAME

I, formerly known and addressed as **AMOSU DAIRO DEMOLA**, now wish to be known and addressed as **AMOSU ADEMOLA JOHNSON**. All former documents remain valid. General public please take note.

I, formerly known and addressed as **Miss OPAIA LUCIA CHIDERA NWE** now wish to be known, called and addressed as **MRS CHIKWEM LUCIA CHIDERA**. All former documents remain valid. General public should take note.

I, formerly known and addressed as **ALUYAH AJIRI STEPHEN** now wish to be known, called and addressed as **ALUYAH AJIRI PRAISE**. All former documents remain valid. General public should take note.

This is to confirm that I, **CHINENYE IGNATIUS EDMIE, CHINA E IGNATIUS** and **IGNATIUS ODOMIE CHINENYE** refers to one and same person, Now wish to be known and addressed as **CHINENYE IGNATIUS EDMIE**. My date of birth was wrongly written as 5th SEPTEMBER 1980 instead 7th SEPTEMBER 1980. All former documents remain valid. UBA, Banks, NIMC, Authorities concerned and General public take note.

I, formerly known and addressed as **LYNDA CHIAWOTU NWAMADI** now wish to be known, called and addressed as **LYNDA CHIAWOTU EGEGE**. All former documents remain valid. General public should take note

I formerly known as **OLAYINKA ABIODUN OLUWABUNMI** now wish to be known, called and addressed as **OLADUNJOYE ABIODUN OLUWABUNMI**. All former documents remain valid. General public should take note.

I formerly known and addressed as **OLUWAFEMI JOSHUA BABATUNDE** Now want my name to be corrected, called and addressed as **OLUWAFEMI JOSHUA OLATUNDE** and my correct date of birth is 11/nov/1986 not 11/nov/1983. All former documents remain valid. FIDELITY BANK PLC, other financial institutions, authorities concerned and public note

I FORMERLY KNOWN AND ADDRESSED AS **ADENIYI ADIJAT** NOW WISH TO BE KNOWN AND ADDRESSED AS **OLAWALE ADIJAT OMOTOKE**. ALL FORMER DOCUMENTS REMAIN VALID. AUTHORITIES CONCERNED AND GENERAL PUBLIC TAKE NOTE.

I formerly known as **MISS PAULINA IMAOBONG UMOREN**. now wish to be known, called and addressed as **MRS PAULINA UMOET TE THOMAS**. All former documents remain valid. General public should take note

I, formerly known and addressed as **OLAWUNMI TUBOSUN AYODEJI** now wish to be known and addressed as **OLAWUNMI OLATUBOSUN ONABAJO**. All former documents remain valid. General public should take note.

I formerly known and addressed as **Ajayi Odunitan**. Now wish to be known and address as **Ajayi David Owolabi**. All former documents remain valid. Banks, Authority Concerned and General public take note.

I Formerly known as **Nwodu Roseline.Chukwuadinu**. Now known as **Ani Roseline Chukwuadinu**. And my correct date of birth is 16/06/1986. NOT 16/06/1984. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

I, formerly known and addressed as **BABATUNJI OLUSEGUN OMOGBEHIN** now wish to be known, called and addressed as **DAVID OLUSEGUN OMOGBEHIN**. All former documents remain valid. General public should take note.

I, formerly known and addressed as **FESTUS OGHENETEJIRI OGBODU** now wish to be known, called and addressed as **FESTUS OGHENETEJIRI ODEH**. All former documents remain valid. General public should take note.

I, formerly known and addressed as **MISS: ELAGU OLIVIA ONYINYECHI**, now wish to be known, called and addressed as **MRS EBII OLIVIA ONYINYECHI**. All former documents remain valid. General public should take note.

I, formerly known and addressed as **KOLEOSO ABDULHAMEED OLAWALE** now wish to be known, called and addressed as **ABDULHAKEM ABDULHAMEED OLAWALE**. All former documents remain valid. General public should take note.

I formerly known and addressed as **OJETOKUN BISOLA** now wish to be known, called and addressed as **ADETUNJI BISOLA MORENIKE**. All former documents remain valid. General public should take note.

I formerly known and addressed as **ERNEST OGOCHUKWU GLORIA** now wish to be known, called and addressed as **OKEREKE. GLORIA. CHIBUOGWU**. All former documents remain valid. General public should take note.

I, formerly known, called and addressed as **MISS ABIORO OLUWAKEMI MORENIKEJI** now wish to be known, called and addressed as **MRS AKAN-AN OLUWAKEMI MORENIKEJI**.

I, formerly known, called and addressed as **ADEYEMI CECILIA SOLOMON** and **ADEYEMI CECILIA TOYIN**. Henceforth I wish to be known, called and addressed as **ADEYEMI CECILIA**. All former documents remain valid. The general public and other authorities concerned to take note.

I formerly known, called and addressed as **MISS ADELUGBA BOLA BOSEDE YEMI**, now wish to be known, called and address as **MRS OJO BOLATITO YEMI**, all documents bearing my former name remain valid. The general public should take note.

I FORMERLY KNOWN, CALLED AND ADDRESSED AS **MRS FALUYI OLUFUNKE MARY** NOW WISH TO BE KNOWN, CALLED AND ADDRESSED AS **MISS BAMIDELE FOLASHADE HANNAH**. ALL FORMER DOCUMENTS REMAIN VALID. BANKS, AUTHORITIES CONCERNED AND GENERAL PUBLIC TAKE NOTE

I, formerly known and addressed as **Dusema Okon George**, now wish to be known and addressed as **GLORY EZEKIEL DAN**. All former documents remain valid. General public please take note.

I, formerly known and addressed as **EKUNDAYO OYEWOLE OMOGBEHIN** now wish to be known, called and addressed as **TEMIDAYO OYEWOLE OMOGBEHIN**. All former documents remain valid. General public should take note.

I, formerly known and addressed as **AMAKOR EJIKE CYPRIAN** now wish to be known, called and addressed as **IHENACHO NAWUTO EJIKE CYPRIAN**. All former documents remain valid. General public should take note.

I, formerly known and addressed as **Okoh Innocent Gege and Obodoagwu Innocent**, now wish to be known and addressed as **Abiamuwe Innocent Anointed**. All former documents remain valid. Authority of Eco Bank and general public, take note.

I formerly known as **OLATONA MAKANJUOLA SAMUEL** now wish to be known, called and addressed as **OLATONA OLANREWAJU SAMUEL**. All documents remain valid. General public should take note.

I formerly known and addressed as **MISS ONYEMAECHI MAVIS CHIAKA AND ANYAIBE CHIAKA** now wish to be known, called and addressed as **MRS EJIKU MAVIS CHIAKA**. All former documents remain valid. General public should take note.

I formerly known and addressed as **IBETO CLEMENTINA NNEAMAKA** now wish to be known, called and addressed as **MRS ONYEBUCHI CLEMENTINA NNEAMAKA**. All former documents remain valid. General public should take note.

I formerly known as **MISS ESTHER JACOB MKPOYEN**. now wish to be known, called and addressed as **MRS ESTHER ETUK NATHAN**. All former documents remain valid. General public should take note.

I, formerly known, called and addressed as **PUDIE MATTHEW** now wish to be known call and addressed as **FRANCIS EFEOBOME ARMOUR**. All documents bearing former name remain valid. Relevant authorities concern and the general public please take note.

I FORMERLY KNOWN, CALLED AND ADDRESSED AS **AFOLABI ESTHER ADENIKE** BEFORE THAT I WILL LIKE TO BE KNOWN, CALLED AND ADDRESSED AS **OYINLOLA ESTHER ADENIKE**. All former documents remain valid. General public should take note.

I, formerly known as **AWOKOYA AISHAT OLAJUMOKE OREOLUWA** now wish to be known and addressed as **SOFOLA AISHAT OLAJUMOKE OREOLUWA**. All former documents remain valid. Bank and general public please take note

I FORMERLY KNOWN AND ADDRESSED AS **ALIYU ABUBAKAR** NOW WISH TO BE KNOWN AND ADDRESSED AS **ALIYU ABUBAKAR KIDO**, ALL FORMER DOCUMENTS REMAIN VALID. MY CORRECT DATE OF BIRTH IS 04/04/1993. AND IT WAS WRONGLY STATED ON MY BVN AS 02/05/1992, INSTEAD OF CORRECT DATE OF BIRTH AS 04/04/1993. UNION BANK AND OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND GENERAL PUBLIC TAKE NOTE.

I, FORMERLY KNOWN AS **CHIGBO MMESOMA. MARYANN**, NOW WISH TO BE KNOWN AND ADDRESSED AS **NWANKWO. MMESOMA MARYANN**. THAT MY CORRECT DATE OF BIRTH IS 19TH January, 1995. ALL FORMER DOCUMENTS STILL REMAIN VALID. BANKS AND GENERAL PUBLIC PLEASE TAKE NOTE.

I, FORMERLY KNOWN AS **ALI SUNDAY TOCHUKWU**, NOW WISH TO BE KNOWN AND ADDRESSED AS **ALI SUNDAY MATHEW**. THAT MY CORRECT DATE OF BIRTH IS 25TH NOVEMBER, 1987. ALL FORMER DOCUMENTS STILL REMAIN VALID. GENERAL PUBLIC PLEASE TAKE NOTE.

I formerly known and addressed as **LYNDA DAMILOLA OLABALU** now wish to be known and addressed as **LYNDA DAMILOLA ILORI**. All former documents bearing my old Name should remain valid. Banks and general public should take note.

I formerly known and addressed as **Miss Epilay Priscillia** and **Uroju Priscillia** now wish to be known and addressed as **Miss Tonfawei Priscillia**. Former documents remain valid. Nigerian Maritime University, Okerenkoko, NYSC, Benson Idahosa

I FORMERLY KNOWN AND ADDRESSED AS **AYODELE DAMILARE PRECIOUS** NOW WISH TO BE KNOWN AND ADDRESSED AS **AYODELE AYODIMEJI TIMOTH**. FORMER DOCUMENTS REMAIN VALID GENERAL PUBLIC TAKE NOTE.

I FORMERLY KNOWN AND ADDRESSED AS **OLADIRAN OLAGOKE** NOW WISH TO BE KNOWN AND ADDRESSED AS **OLADIRAN JOSEPH OLAGOKE**. FORMER DOCUMENTS REMAIN VALID. GENERAL PUBLIC TAKE NOTE.

I FORMERLY KNOWN AND ADDRESSED AS **AMOUZOU PETER BAMIDELE** NOW, WISH TO BE KNOWN AND ADDRESSED AS **AMOSU PETER BAMIDELE**. ALL FORMER DOCUMENTS REMAIN VALID. GENERAL PUBLIC TAKE NOTE.

I Formerly known and addressed as **Abada Michael Okemerhiere** now wish to be known and addressed as **Abada Michael Okijirhie**. Delsu, Union Bank, Ecobank and general public please take note.

I FORMERLY KNOWN AND ADDRESSED AS **IZUCHUKWU ANYABUIKE**. NOW WISH TO BE KNOWN AND ADDRESSED AS **ANYABUIKE AUGUSTINE IZUCHUKWU**. ALL FORMER DOCUMENTS REMAIN VALID. BANKS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC TAKE NOTE.

I FORMERLY KNOWN AND ADDRESSED AS **MISS ENYINNAYA EVANGEL OZICHI** NOW WISH TO BE KNOWN AND ADDRESSED AS **MRS EBISIKE EVANGEL OZICHI**. ALL DOCUMENTS WITH THE FORMER NAMES ARE STILL VALID. (UNTH) ITUKU/OZALLA ENUGU, BANKS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC SHOULD TAKE NOTE.

I was formerly known, called and addressed as **OGBOLU MAUREEN**. Now wish to be known, called and addressed as **ISIAH NGOZI IFECHUKWUDE**. All documents bearing my former name remain valid. General public take note.

I FORMERLY **MISS AKINYOSOLA OLANUWESI** NOW **MRS ADEYEYE OLANUWESI MARY**. ALL FORMER DOCUMENTS REMAIN VALID. CONCERNED AUTHORITIES AND GENERAL PUBLIC TAKE NOTE.

I, **MRS OGOKE PHINA IKECHI** hereby officially add my omitted name **IKECHI** to make up my full name as required. All my former document names/identity cards remain valid, Access Bank / other banks and the general public take note.

FAMILY CHANGE OF NAME

We, family of **MR IKECHUKWU ANTHONY MICHAEL** of Umuedem village, Akili Ogidi, in Ogbaru LGA, Anambra state, wish to change our family surname from former **NWAOHA** to **IKECHUKWU**. That we were formerly known as: (1) **MR NWAOHA IKECHUKWU ANTHONY**, (2) **MRS NWAOHA NKECHI EDITH**, (3) **NWAOHA ONYEDIKACHUKWU MICHAEL**, (4) **NWAOHA EBUBECHUKWU EMMANUELLA**, (5) **NWAOHA IFEANYICHUKWU. SAMUEL** respectively. That henceforth, we are known and addressed as: (1) **MR IKECHUKWU ANTHONY MICHAEL**, (2) **MRS IKECHUKWU NKECHI EDITH**, (3) **IKECHUKWU ONYEDIKACHUKWU. MICHAEL**, (4) **IKECHUKWU EBUBECHUKWU EMMANUELLA**, (5) **IKECHUKWU IFEANYICHUKWU. SAMUEL**, respectively. All our for documents remain valid. General public take note.

I, FORMERLY KNOWN AS **NNOLUM ONYINYECHUKWU. FAITH**, NOW WISH TO BE KNOWN AND ADDRESSED AS **NNAEMEKA ONYINYECHUKWU FAITH**. THAT MY CORRECT DATE BIRTH IS 28TH MARCH, 1985. ALL FORMER DOCUMENTS STILL REMAIN VALID. GENERAL PUBLIC PLEASE TAKE NOTE.

I formerly known as **AMAEACHI MARIAM**, now wish to be known as **OKORO VIVIAN NDIDI**. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

I formerly known, called and addressed as **ENAUHGE TREASURE AKPEVWE** now wish to be known and addressed as **ENAUHGE TREASURE JOY**. All former documents remain valid. General public, banks and all concerns institutions should please take note.z

I FORMERLY KNOWN AND ADDRESSED AS **OYETUNJI MUJIDAT SADE** NOW WISH TO BE KNOWN AND ADDRESSED AS **OYETUNJI IFEOLUWA FOLA**. ALL FORMER DOCUMENTS REMAIN VALID. GENERAL PUBLIC TAKE NOTE.

I FORMERLY KNOWN AND ADDRESSED AS **ADEYANJU VERONICA OLAYEMI** NOW WISH TO BE KNOWN AND ADDRESSED AS **OLAROTIMI VERONICA OSUNYEMI**. FORMER DOCUMENTS REMAIN VALID. GENERAL PUBLIC TAKE NOTE

I, formerly known and addressed as **Mallum Mutah Achi** now wish to be known and addressed as **David Markus Achi**. All former documents remain valid. General public please note.

Correction of Name: I formerly and addressed as **IYISANMI YETUNDE EDNA**, now wish to be known and addressed as **IYISANMI YETUNDE EDINAN**. All former documents remain valid. Banks and general public take note.

I, formerly known and addressed as **MAMA PATIENCE NONYE** now wish to be known and addressed as **MAMAH PATIENCE NONYE**. My correct date of birth 03/03/1975. BANK'S and general public take note.

I formerly known as **AMANDA PETERSON CHIGOZIE** now wish to be known and addressed as **IKEANYI AMANDA CHIGOZIE**. All former documents remain valid. Banks and general public take note.

I, formerly known and address as **AMOS BOGOMOWERI MENSAH**, now wish to be called **SPIFF BOGOMOWERI MENSAH**. All others documents remain valid. General public please take note

I FORMERLY **ADEYEMI OLUBUNMI ABOSEDE** NOW **AJAYI OLUBUNMI MOYOFADÉ**. ALL FORMER DOCUMENTS REMAIN VALID. CONCERNED AUTHORITIES AND GENERAL PUBLIC TAKE NOTE.

I, **OKAFORCHUKWU EMEKA COLLINS** hereby officially add my omitted name **CHUKWU** to make up my full name as required, **OKAFORCHUKWU EMEKA COLLINS**. All my former document names/identity cards remain valid. FCMB Bank / other banks and the general public take note.

I, FORMERLY KNOWN AS **NWAEJIOGU. IFEANYI EMMANUEL**, NOW WISH TO BE KNOWN AND ADDRESSED AS **ONWUAMAEZE. IFEANYI. EMMANUEL**. ALL FORMER DOCUMENTS STILL REMAIN VALID. GENERAL PUBLIC PLEASE TAKE NOTE.

I, FORMERLY KNOWN AS **OKONKWO. SUNDAY OBUKWELI**, NOW WISH TO BE KNOWN AND ADDRESSED AS **ANYANTI HENRY EMENA**. ALL FORMER DOCUMENTS STILL REMAIN VALID. BANKS AND GENERAL PUBLIC PLEASE TAKE NOTE.

I, FORMERLY KNOWN AS **EMENCHETA. ROSELINE. UKAMAKA**, NOW WISH TO BE KNOWN AND ADDRESSED AS **CHIDOZIE ROSELINE UKAMAKA**. THAT MY CORRECT DATE OF BIRTH IS 7TH MARCH, 1993. ALL FORMER DOCUMENTS STILL REMAIN VALID. GENERAL PUBLIC PLEASE TAKE NOTE.

I formerly known as **OJIAKO NKECHINYERE REGINA** now wish to be known as **ALUMONA NKECHINYERE REGINA**. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

I formerly known and addressed as **Raseed Wasiu Sunday** now wish to be known and addressed as **Rasheed Wasiu Sunday** and my date of birth was wrongly written as 02 july 1982 instead of 06 june 1997. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

I, AZEEZ RUKAYAT FALILAT IS THE SAME PERSON BEARING **AZEEZ RUKAYAT BIBITAYO** NOW WISH TO BE KNOWN AND ADDRESSED AS **BOLARINWA RUKAYAT BIBITAYO** ALL FORMER DOCUMENT REMAIN VALID GENERAL PUBLIC TAKE.

I formerly known and addressed as **OLAOYE BABATUNDE YUNUS** now wish to be known, called and addressed as **LASISI BABATUNDE OLAOYE**. And my correct Date of Birth is 24/04/1965 and not 23/04/1964. All former documents remain valid. Banks, authority concerned and general public take note.

I FORMERLY KNOWN AS **OLADEPO ABIMBOLA GRACE** NOW WISH TO BE KNOWN AS **OYEYODE OLADEPO ABIMBOLA**. ALL DOCUMENTS BEARING MY FORMER NAME REMAIN VALID. Authorities concerned & General Public take note

CONFIRMATION OF NAME: The names **OGEH OGHENEYOME BLESSED PRINCE** and **OGEH OGHENEYOME BLESSED**. Belonging to one and the same person now I wish to be known, called and addressed as **OGEH OGHENEYOME BLESSED** and my correct Date of Birth is 15th February, 1986. All former documents remain valid banks and the general public take note.

I, formerly known and addressed as **EZE CELESTINA NEBEUWA** now wish to be known and addressed as **EKWUEME CELESTINA NEBEUWA**. My correct date of birth 04/05/1986, BANK'S and general public take note.

I Formerly known as **OBI CHUKWUEMEKA STEPHEN** Now wish to be known and addressed as **OBI CHUKWUEMEKA SALVATION**. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

I, formerly known and addressed as **TAMUNODIEPIRINYE CHARLES GREEN** and **CHARLES GIBSON GREEN**, now wish to be known and addressed as **TAMUNODIEPIRINYE GIBSON GREEN**. All former documents remain valid. General public should please take note.

THAT OMOLAYO MARY. I., **ATOROSE DEBORAH KEMI** REFER TO SAME PERSON AS **OMOLAYO MARY IGE** AND MY CORRECT DATE OF BIRTH IS 6/1/1991 NOT 20/8/1996. HENCEFORTH, I AM **OMOLAYO MARY IGE** BORN ON 6/1/1991. ALL FORMER DOCUMENTS REMAIN VALID. CONCERNED AUTHORITIES, WEMA BANK AND GENERAL PUBLIC TAKE NOTE.

I formerly known as **ABDUL-QUADRI AYELABOLA YUSUF**. I now want to be known called and addressed as **JUMAH YUSUF**. All former documents remain valid. General public should take note.

Obituary



NDANYONMONG Xavier Cosmas

The Board, Management and Staff of **INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPERS LTD** regret to announce the untimely death of our colleague **NDANYONMONG XAVIER COSMAS** which sad event occurred on June 19, 2020.

His remains will be laid to rest today July 30, 2020 in Lagos.

He is survived by mother, wife, uncle, brothers and children.

May his gentle soul rest in peace.

News

Aare Hassan Joins Race To Replace Osinowo In Senate

SEYI TAIWO-OGUNTUASE
LAGOS

Aare Oladotun Hassan, a legal practitioner, technocrat and human rights activist, has made known his plans to join the race to replace the late Bayo Osinowo at the Lagos-East Senatorial District under the People Democratic Party (PDP).

Hassan, while speaking with Daily Independent on his core vision and legislative programmes, said that it is most important to note that the Lagos-East Senatorial District deserves a well-experienced and passionately committed representative at the 9th Senate to complete the term of the late Osinowo.

He said that he would devise a mutually-agreed feedback interface platform with the good people of districts in view of the five local government areas that made up the Lagos-East Senatorial District.

Hassan said that he has garnered a lot of experience in the past to move the district forward adding that with his experience as a legal practitioner, he believes he is still the best choice for the position.

ECOWS Ex-Scribe Distributes Palliatives To Orphans Whose Parents Died Of Covid-19

BISI ADESOYE
ILESÀ

A former Economic Community of West African State (ECOWAS) statistician, Dr. Lade Adepaju, at Ife-Idan Town Hall distributed N50,000 each to 10 orphans whose parents died of COVID-19 in Osun State and 1,000 face masks to participants who witnessed the occasion.

The beneficiaries whose ages are 15 years and above are secondary school students, who have withdrawn from their respective schools across the state as they lost their bread winners.

While speaking at the ceremony, Dr. Adepaju said the orphans would learn a trade that would sustain them for the rest of their lives.

Eid-El-Kabir: NSCDC Deploys 3,000 Personnel In Abuja, 1000 In Osun

TOYIN ADEBAYO,
GBENGA FATUROTÌ
ABUJA, OSOGBO

In order to ensure that the Muslim faithful observe this year's Eid-el-Kabir celebrations in a peaceful and safe atmosphere, the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Command of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) has deployed 3,000 personnel to the nooks and crannies of Abuja.

The Commandant, FCT Command of the Corps, Patrick Ukpan, said the personnel were drawn from all the

units of the Command, to beef up security throughout the festivity in the nation's capital.

He noted that the NSCDC is carrying out such proactive measures in collaboration with other sister-agencies to ensure that criminal elements do not have the freedom to operate during the holidays.

According to him: "The 3,000 NSCDC personnel will be deployed to various places within the FCT. Like we know that the recreational centres have been shut, so we don't expect people to gather in any entertainment centre. "But the personnel de-

ployed will be on ground to conduct motorised and foot patrols, and some placed at strategic locations in the Territory, so that they would be visible, and to enable residents go about their lawful activities during the period.

"So we want to assure FCT residents that they should go about their lawful activities without fear. And we shall abide by the pronounced COVID-19 guidelines and directives, because the pandemic is real.

"And I want to advise that residents should be careful, as regards to the established COVID-19 safety protocol, to avoid unnecessary move-

ment during the period."

Furthermore, the FCT-NSCDC boss, who disclosed that the operational order is out, charged personnel to be vigilant and courteous in the performance of their duty.

Also, Osun State Command of NSCDC has assured to deployed no fewer than 1,000 personnel to provide adequate security during and after the Eid-el-Kabir celebration.

The personnel are to man key areas of economic importance but not limited to critical national infrastructure.

The state Commandant,

Oguntuase, Adeyinka Kingsley (CC), however, admonished that Muslim faithful should observe the social distancing and COVID-19 guidelines in their various homes and public gatherings to curb the pandemic in the state and the nation at large.

He advised that Muslims should adhere to government's directive that prayers should be observed in their various mosques. He assured that personnel will go round to ensure strict compliance.

The Commandant also emphasised that strange movements and suspicious lurking around should be promptly reported to the Corps or other security agencies for immediate action. The divisional offices at the local government and council development areas are available to entertain any complaint.

RAJI ADEBAYO
IBADAN

Campaign for Democratic and Workers Rights (CDWR), Oyo State chapter, has urged the management of an Ibadan-based company, GX Foods, to as a matter of urgency, recall all the staff who were unjustly sacked by the company.

CDWR Coordinator, Abiodun Bamigboye, made this appeal while addressing a press conference in Ibadan.

Bamigboye described

CDWR Demands Justice, Payment Of Entitlement To Sacked Workers In Ibadan

the act of forcing workers to resign or be sacked by the general manager of the company, Babatunde Arowosegbe, as unhealthy labour practice.

He alleged that 15 workers were asked to resign while two were dismissed by the company in June this year.

Bamigboye appealed to the general public to pre-

vail on the management of the company to reverse the dismissal and pay the sacked workers their entitlement and benefits.

According to him, "Being the text of the press conference organised by the Campaign for Democratic and Workers' Rights, Oyo State chapter, to bring to the attention of the general public to the termi-

nation of over 15 workers without payment of their entitlements and benefits and the dismissal of two workers without giving room for fair hearing by the Babatunde Arowosegbe-led management of GX Foods Limited. Poor workers are dismissed without fair hearing and sacked without payment of entitlements and benefits.

LAPO Empowers 50,723 Beneficiaries With Maternal, Child Health Sensitisation

FRANCIS ONOIRIBHOLO
BENIN

Lift Above Poverty Organisation (LAPO) has in the first half of 2020 empowered no fewer than 50,723 beneficiaries with maternal, child health sensitisation that

improved the health and well-being of the women and children.

Dr. Ayobami Honestus Obadiora, Acting Executive Director, who disclosed this at a strategic review meeting with senior management staff, stated that the beneficiaries were sensitised on fam-

ily planning, antenatal care, child nutrition with counselling and referral services.

The organisation equally carried out health outreach at Iyekogba community in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State during the period, reaching 1,236 vulnerable community

members with free treatment and referral services. The executive director expressed worry that a high percentage of women in Nigeria are vulnerable to illnesses, disability and even death due to lack of access to comprehensive health services. This situation, he said, has made the country one of the highest in maternal mortality rates among developing nations.

OLORUNDARE ENIMOLA
LAGOS

The Ota Diamond Lions Club has welcomed a new president to administer the affairs of the club for the next administrative year 2020/2021. Lion Mustapha Ajelara, while delivering his acceptance speech as the incoming president of

Ajelara Emerges President Of Ota Diamond Lions Club

the Ota Diamond Lions Club for the current year 2020/2021, declared his desire to position the chapter on a higher pedestal than he met it.

Ajelara said, "I decided to join the club when I discovered similarity between my desires to help the needy with that of Lions club. I was also

fascinated, when some years back, our leaders had a goal to make Ota Diamond Lions Club the best club in the district in five years time, and it was achieved.

"Since then, we are yet to set another goal, and that is why we will be setting another major goal now. And the target

is to get ODLC profiled at Lions International Convention in five years' time. Our theme of 'impacting service through diversity' this year, will help us lay a strong foundation for the fulfillment of that goal for incoming presidents and leaders of ODLC," Ajelara asserted.

PUBLIC NOTICE

THE FINAL SAY GOSPEL CHURCH OF GOD

THIS IS TO INFORM THE GENERAL PUBLIC THAT THE ABOVE NAMED HAS APPLIED FOR REGISTRATION TO CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMISSION UNDER PART 'C' OF THE COMPANIES AND ALLIED MATTERS ACT NO. 10F 1990

TRUSTEES

- (1) FAITH ODADAYERUE
- (2) EXCEL ODADAYERUE

AIMS/OBJECTIVES

TO PREACH AND TEACH THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST

ANY OBJECTIONS TO THE REGISTRATION SHOULD BE FORWARDED TO THE REGISTRAR GENERAL CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMISSION, PLOT 420 TIGRIS CRESCENT OFF AGUIYI IRONSI STREET, MAITAMA ABUJA WITHIN 28 DAYS OF THIS PUBLICATION

SIGNED PASTOR JOSEPH ODADAYERUE

PUBLIC NOTICE

WARFARE TABERNACLE OF FIRE MISSION

This is to inform the general public that the above named FORUM has applied to the Corporate Affairs Commission for registration under part 'C' of the Companies and Allied matters Act 1990.

THE TRUSTEES ARE:

- (1) Pastor: ALA JENNIFER WOINKURO YINNING- PRESIDENT
- (2) Pastor: IGBIKIMINACHIN ELIOT KALIO- VICE PRESIDENT
- (3) Pastor: GBARAKAH ALL WELL DORNANE - SECRETARY
- (4) ERNEST EPELESEITIMA - MEMBER

AIMS & OBJECTIVES:

- (1) TO PREACH THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST TO THE WHOLE NATIONS
- (2) TO REDEEM LOST SOULS BACK TO GOD.
- (3) TO HELP THE LESS PRIVILEGED IN THE SOCIETY.

Any objection to this registration should be forwarded to the Registrar-General, Corporate Affairs Commission, Plot 420, Tigris Crescent, Off Aguiyi Ironsi Street, Maitama, Abuja within 28 days of this publication.

Signed: - ALA JENNIFER WOINKURO YINNING
PRESIDENT

My correct name is **AKINOLA PELUMI MICHAEL** and not **KAYODE ADEYANJU**. Now wished to be known and addressed as **AKINOLA PELUMI MICHAEL**. All former documents remain valid. Banks and the general public take note.

LOSS OF LAND DOCUMENTS

This is to notify the general public that I, Mr Ibe Reginald Ugonna the bona fide owner of all that piece and parcel of land at Iyana Amechi Awkunanaw Enugu in Enugu South Local government Area bounded by Survey beacon nos. CG50503, EN 4647F, CG 50500, BR113 and EN4646F, whose instrument the "DEED OF ASSIGNMENTS" is registered with the Ministry of Lands as No.60 at page No.60 in Volume 1402

That the said original deed of assignment was in possession of my Dad before his demise and that is missing/lost hence this publication has become necessary for record purposes and for avoidance of doubt, All efforts to get the documents prove abortive. If found please contact the Ministry of Lands and Urban Development Enugu State.

FELIX UKA;
SAMSON NWAFOR
ABAKALIKI

Gunmen Attack Kogi Village, Kill Family Of 13, One Other

Unknown gunmen in the early hours of Wednesday invaded Agbudu community in Kogi-Koton-Karfe Local Government Area, killing 14 persons and injuring six.

The state Police Commissioner, Ede Ayuba, who disclosed this while briefing newsmen at the command headquarters in Lokoja, said he got the report about 2:00a.m.

Ayuba said that 13 of the slain victims were from same family.

"This morning around 2:00a.m, my Area Commander called me to report that he received information that there was an attack on Agbudu community.

"I called the SSA on Security of the Local Government in Koton-Karfe and I said that before I get there, he should mobilise his vigilante men to assist the police – the DPO and the Area Commander in the area – for them to assess the place and see what assistance they could render."

Ayuba said that the vigilance men and his men left immediately and by the time they got there, the hoodlums had carried out their operation and left.

The commissioner said he later went to the scene of crime and took part in collection of the dead bodies, adding that: "I was there and I was part

of those who picked some of the dead bodies we are talking about.

"Yes, 14 people were killed and about six others were fatally injured. The saddening thing is that out of the 14 dead bodies that were brought out, 13 were from one family.

"In that family, it is only one person that survived. His uncle, his mother, his uncle's wife, his younger brother, his senior brother's wife, his wife and all his children were killed," he said.

The commissioner said that the police had carried out some preliminary investigations and discovered that there had been

long-standing communal fued in the community.

"What I think is, there has been a long-standing communal problem around that area which we are not clearly seeing, but we know that it would not be far from it.

"Presently investigation is in progress. The only person that survived the attack is already with us and he is helping us, the chief of that place is also helping us and some other (good) spirited individuals.

"The Ohimege of Koton-Karfe, Alhaji Abdulrazaq Isa-Koto, is also helping us, the local government and all the personnel are helping us."

Gunmen Kill Four Policemen In Ebonyi Bullion Van Attack

Similarly, four policemen have been killed in Ebonyi State by gunmen who attacked a bullion van.

The victims were escorting the bullion van from Enugu to Abakaliki when the incident occurred at Ezzamgbo junction, Ohaukwu Local Government Area of the state.

The gunmen, it was gathered, tried to intercept the bullion van at the area. The armed robbers fired at the escort vehicle in a bid to intercept the van.

Four of the police officers were killed in the process while two sustained

bullet injuries.

The state Commissioner of Police, Philip Maku, confirmed the incident to our reporter.

According to him, the robbers trailed the van from Enugu State.

He said the robbers were not able to loot the van as the driver escaped the onslaught.

"They damaged one of the tires of the bullion van but the driver was able to escape with the van. They could not give chase to the van as the driver was driving towards the military checkpoint ahead", he said.

The CP said the two injured policemen have been taken to hospital for treatment while the deceased have been deposited at the mortuary.

The police boss said the police have launched man-hunt for the robbers.

FG Okays N8.64bn For Power Deal With Siemens

CONTINUED FROM P1

million (N6,940,081,465.20) offshore and N1.708 billion onshore, totalling N8,648,081,465.2 towards the counterpart funding for the power deal with Siemens AG.

The power agreement was signed by the Nigerian and German governments last year.

The Minister of Finance, Budget and National Planning, Zainab Ahmed, who gave further insight into the anticipatory payment, told State House correspondents that the memo seeking the ratification was jointly presented with her power ministry counterpart, Saleh Mamman, and that it is geared towards the counterpart funding for the bilateral agreement with the German consortium guaranteed by the German government, through Euler Hermes, to finance the implementation of the end to end grid modernisation and expansion programme of the project.

Recall that the Federal Government had, in December, 2019, allocated N61 billion for the Nigeria Electrification Roadmap which would be developed in partnership with Siemens AG.

In July 2019, the government and Siemens signed a letter of agreement on the Nigeria Electrification Roadmap after President Buhari and the German Chancellor, Angela Merkel, met on August 31, 2018, in Abuja.

Nigeria is expected to spend about €3.11 billion or N1.15 trillion across four major states. The Nigerian electrification project has three phases and it aims at achieving 25,000 megawatts of electricity in the country by 2025.

Power projects in the budget include the 3,050 megawatts Mambilla hy-

dropower plant in Taraba State, for which N2 billion counterpart-fund was set aside.

Others are the 2x60MVA 132/33kV substation at Gwaram in Jigawa State (N717 million); the 215MW power station in Kaduna (N190 million), and the Kashambilla transmission in Taraba (N506 million).

The finance minister explained that the amount was for the first phase of the three-phased project designed to include 23 transmission initiatives as well as 175 separate transformative projects.

She said: "So today, at council, we discussed the stage one of phase one of this project under Presidential Power Initiative.

"This project is designed to include 23 transmission initiatives as well as 175 separate transformative projects in the electricity distribution franchises that we have in the country.

"The project will also support the regulator, the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC), to transition towards a programme of improving metering in the electricity industry in the country.

"Let me remind us as citizens that Mr. President and his German counterpart met in Abuja on 31st August 2018 and committed to jointly increase the capacity of the Nigerian electricity grid from current capacity of 5,000 megawatts to 25,000 megawatts over a three-phased programme.

"After this meeting, an MoU was executed on the 23rd of July, 2019 between the Nigerian government and the Siemens AG, with the German government's support.

"The MoU is designed to deliver this end to end modernisation programme



Suspected kidnapers, armed robbers, car snatchers arrested in different parts of the country during their parade by the Inspector General of Police Intelligence Response Team (IRT) in Abuja on Wednesday. PHOTO: JIDE OYEKUNLE

which we call the Presidential Power Initiative.

"The objective of this Presidential Power Initiative is to address the intractable problems that have bedeviled the Nigerian power industry over a period of years.

"The project will be implemented in three phases and the subject of our memo today is phase one.

"The facility for this programme is to be sourced from the German consortium and it would be guaranteed by the German government, through Euler Hermes, covering 85 percent of the project cost, the highly concessional facility with two to three years moratorium, 12 years loan repayment period, with an interest rate of libor plus one percent to libor plus 1.2 percent.

"And also the Federal Government is to provide 15 percent counterpart funding as its contribution towards the project.

"We have a provision in

the 2020 appropriation revised for the government's counterpart funding.

"The Federal Government is taking the loan from the German government with the plan to on-lend this particular loan to the distributing network.

"So, it's a convertible loan facility to the DisCos and we will be working with the DisCos to restructure an appropriate loan agreement as soon as we are able to close out on this initial phase of the process. And council approved and ratified Mr. President's approval."

The FEC also approved the ratification of the Air Transport Agreement between Nigeria and the United States of America.

The air transport bilateral agreement is to strengthen economic, social, and cultural ties between the two countries.

The Minister of Information and Culture, Alhaji Lai Mohammed, who stood in for the Minister

of Aviation, Senator Hadi Sirika, said: "The Aviation Minister presented a memo today (Wednesday) on the approval for ratification of the air transport agreement between the Federal Government of Nigeria and the United States of America.

"The minister sought council's approval for ratification of the air transport agreement between USA and Nigeria.

"You will recall that both the United States and Nigeria are parties to the Chicago Convention on the 7th of December, 1994.

"Article 6 of the convention actually urges parties to sign an air service agreement with member states to improve social, political, and economic ties.

"The US has ratified its own and Mr. President and council graciously accepted today to also ratify this agreement.

"So, today, Mr. President signed a valid agreement of air transport service be-

tween Nigeria and the US with the attendant benefits for both countries, especially as Nigeria is working towards having its own full national airline.

"So, we will now take advantage of this air transport bilateral agreement to strengthen economic, social, and cultural ties between the two countries."

Minister of Industry, Trade and Investment, Niyi Adebayo, said council also ratified the president's approval of the Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement, signed in 2016 between Nigeria and Singapore on the one hand, and Nigeria and the Kingdom of Morocco on the other hand.

He said: "In 2016, the Attorney-General of the Federation came up with a new model of Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement and that year Nigeria signed based on that new model between

News

Rigging Edo Poll May Trigger Tragic Reactions Nationwide — Obaseki

TEMIDAYO AKINSUYI
LAGOS

Edo State governor, Godwin Obaseki, has warned that any attempt to rig the September 19 gubernatorial election in Edo State will trigger a chain of cataclysmic reactions across the country, the end of which no one can predict.

The governor, who is the candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), said Edo is in the middle of the country and any crisis in the state will have a major effect in other states of

the country.

Speaking while addressing a media parley in Lagos, the governor who also raised the alarm that the All Progressives Congress (APC) are already recruiting thugs into the state warned that nobody has monopoly of violence.

“What I am saying is that as a governor of a state, it is not my style to begin to talk about violence and all of that.

“But, I want to say that they should be sensible not to try it because unlike other states, Edo is in the middle of the country and any crisis in Edo today will

have a major effect on other states in the country. And we are ready for it. Our style is not to propagate about it but they want to.

“We will not talk about that. Nobody has monopoly of violence. You know you don’t want to go that way. With Edo coming into PDP, the South-South is full completely. Even if I don’t have the capacity for thuggery, I have enough neighbours and brothers”.

He also warned those talking about use of federal might to have a rethink, saying the people of Edo are more than ever determined to protect their votes.

“That is what we are saying today that if we want this democracy to survive, don’t play games with Edo election because the moments are different. This is not a general election. It is a sole day election.

“So, everybody will be watching and looking. And if we need anything in Nigeria today, we need a smack of credibility. So, I don’t believe people in Abuja are that dumb and crazy not to understand the danger and the crisis we will face if they don’t allow the votes count and they want to militarise the election.

“And in any case, the

feedback is why should they do it? It is not like I willingly left APC, right? APC donated Edo to PDP. Oshiomhole donated Edo to PDP. So, would they now come and fight and quarrel with us? No. They should rather fight with the man who decided to give away seven states”.

In a related development, the APC in Edo has called on Nigerians and the international community to subject to scrutiny an alleged plot by the chairman of Edo PDP Campaign Council, Governor Nyesom Wike of Rivers State, and Governor Obaseki to unleash violence in the state and disrupt the

election.

A statement released in Benin City by the chairman, Edo State APC Campaign Council, Prince John Mayaki, said that the combination of the Rivers State governor, Nyesom and Godwin Obaseki of Edo State is both ominous and revealing of the violent, underhand tactics which the PDP allegedly intends to mar the election.

He claimed that while Governor Wike is known to have mastered the art of vote-buying, rigging, ballot-box snatching, and blocking of roads to pre-

CONTINUES ON P29 →

FG Announces Dates For NECO, NABTEB, Other Exams

← CONTINUED FROM P1

of examination bodies in the country.

He said the West African Examinations Council (WAEC-SSCE) will start on August 17, 2020 while the National Business and Technical Examination Board (NABTEB) examinations will start on September 21 and end by October 15, 2020.

Other details of the schedule indicate that the Senior Secondary School Certificate Examinations (SSCE) for SS3, conducted by NECO, will start on October 5 and end on November 18, 2020.

The Basic Education Certificate Examinations (BECE) for JSS3, also conducted by NECO, will start on August 24 and end on September 7, 2020.

Furthermore, the National Common Entrance Examination (NCEE), which is a one-day NECO examination for intending applicants into Unity Colleges (JSS1), will run in-between the Senior

Secondary Certificate Examinations, i.e. on Saturday, October 17, 2020.

Registration for the NECO (SSCE), which is ongoing, will end on September 10, 2020, and there shall be no extension for the registration whatsoever.

The statement further indicated that the National Board for Arabic and Islamic Studies (NBAIS) examination will commence on Wednesday, September 23 and end by October 17, 2020.

The minister, therefore, directed all examination bodies to release details of their examination timetables in the next seven days.

Present at the meeting, which was chaired by the Minister of State for Education, were the Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Education, Sonny Echonno; Registrar, Joint Admissions Matriculations Board (JAMB), Prof. Is-haq Oloyede; Registrar, National Examinations Council (NECO), Prof.



Mike Okeme, Special Adviser to Governor, Delta State on Labour and Sevicom (left); Tobechukwu Amalu, Zonal Chairman, Petroleum and Natural Gas Senior Staff Association of Nigeria (PENGASSAN) (second left); Nicholas Okocha, former zonal chairman, PENGASSAN (second right), and Emman Amagbaduba, Commissioner for Oil and Gas, Delta State, during the association’s triennial delegates conference in Warri, Delta State on Tuesday.

PHOTO: GODDY UMUKORO

Godswill Obioma; Registrar, National Business and Technical Examination Board (NABTEB), Prof. Ifeoma Isi-ugo-Abanihe; Registrar, Na-

tional Board for Arabic and Islamic Studies (NBAIS), Dr. Raji, as well as the Acting Registrar of the West African Examinations Council (WAEC),

Dr. J.O. Oke.

For the one-day National Common Entrance Examination conducted by NECO, it is compulsory for parents

and pupils to wear face masks on the examination day, while also carrying along with them, alcohol-based sanitisers.

← CONTINUED FROM P27

Nigeria and Morocco, and Nigeria and Singapore.

“The whole idea was to grant more protection to Nigerian investors, when they invest abroad and to give Nigeria more protec-

FG Okays N8.64bn For Power Deal With Siemens

tion when other investors come into Nigeria.

“Basically, those were what we were in FEC for and the council graciously approved that Mr. Presi-

dent ratify and the Attorney-General will present to Mr. President for his ratification and the agreement will come into effect thereafter.”

Meanwhile, Minister of Environment, Mohammed Mahmoud, also confirmed that council approved a new National Forest Policy.

He said: “The old one was formulated in 2006. Why the new one? We realize that the old one is not catering for the current situation at hand.

“Forestry is a big sector of the economy. It provides a lot of employment opportunities, reduces poverty, and provides means of livelihood and foreign exchange from export of wood.”

← CONTINUED FROM P1

Leader of the caucus and House minority whip, Gideon Gwani, called on people of the area to remain vigilant and avoid massive loss of lives and property.

Gwani said the bandits usually gave information before launching attacks such as they did last weekend in Southern Kaduna where they left about 20 people dead.

“Even before these attacks that happened recently in Southern Kaduna and the one in Jama/Sanga that happened just last week, about five days ago, we got the information.

“These people, when they are coming, they even give us

Reps Expose Plans To Attack Southern Kaduna After Sallah

information: ‘we are coming’.

“We have informed the security agents. I have told my DPO to extend that information to his superiors and he has taken that information seriously as he has told me but these attacks are still going on.

“It is important to note that we also have information that they are going to attack massively and in a coordinated manner in Southern Kaduna after the Sallah break.

“We are calling on our people to be vigilant and we are asking them to do all

they can to keep themselves alive,” he said.

The lawmaker condemned the constant raiding, killing and kidnapping of people, describing the actions as unconstitutional, criminal, and inhuman, hence all hands must be on deck to checkmate the ugly scourge within the ambits of the rule of law.

He identified herdsmen and farmer clashes, forceful land grabbing by non-natives of Southern Kaduna, reprisal attacks and banditry as some of the major causes of the killings and hostilities in

the area.

According to the minority whip, “These problems can only be solved if the rule of law is allowed to take its full course.

“The rule of law entails adherence to the principles of supremacy of the law over all citizens and subjects in Nigeria, equality of all citizens and subjects before the law.

“As representatives of the people of Southern Kaduna, we hereby state unequivocally that the life of every citizen of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, regardless of ethnic, religious or ideo-

logical differences must be protected as required under Section 14(2)(b) CFRN 1999 (as amended).

“Condemn the armed attacks and killings of the people of Southern Kaduna by the armed militia groups or any group whatsoever, no matter their motive, and we condemn the justification of any attacks on our people or any reprisal attack.

“The Federal Government and the state government have both made efforts in the past to stem this ugly tide. Such efforts must be increased, it must be peo-

ple-centred, it must be more transparent and effective.

“The people of Southern Kaduna should be vigilant and law abiding and avoid taking the law into their own hands, regardless of any provocation.

“They should cooperate with law enforcement officers and report these miscreants when necessary.

“We call for the arrest, investigation, prosecution and conviction, where necessary, of these attackers so that they can desist from unleashing mayhem on the people of Southern Kaduna.”

The Minister of Transportation, Rotimi Amaechi, said the ongoing National Assembly investigation may frustrate the loan agreement between Nigeria and China to finance the Port Harcourt to Maiduguri rail project.

Amaechi, who stated this in a statement on Wednesday in Abuja, said the Chinese government had said if there are issues the negotiations will not be concluded.

"The investigation being carried out by National Assembly may frustrate the loan agreement between

NASS Probe May Frustrate Chinese Loan For Rail Projects — Amaechi

us and China on the Port Harcourt to Maiduguri rail project.

"So, if tomorrow we are unable to construct Port Harcourt to Maiduguri railway because we didn't get the loan, it is because of the investigation by NASS.

"I told the National Assembly that they can investigate but they should allow us get the loan first.

"If they stop the work

from Ibadan to Kano, it is because of the investigations, same with Lagos to Calabar railway.

"If you think there is corruption, investigate corruption. What we are saying is that we should conclude negotiation first because there is pressure affecting the Chinese government in which they are talking to us directly.

"So, for me, what is pri-

mary here should be national interest.

"We have the approval to construct the Lagos-Ibadan, Lagos-Kano and Lagos-Calabar rail lines; we are also at the point of negotiating for the loans.

"Summoning us to the National Assembly to come and address the loans would look like the government is no longer interested in the loan," he said.

On plans to repay the loans, the minister said that profit generated from the train service would be used through a special account to be opened for that purpose.

Amaechi, however, debunked insinuations that the Chinese loan was being paid directly to the Nigerian government to execute the rail projects.

"One good thing about

the loan we are collecting is that they are not paid to us, they are paid directly to the contractors who execute those projects," he explained.

On insecurity on Nigerian waterways, Amaechi said that it was time for the Federal Government to address the issues of companies making money from insecurity in the country.

He, however, said that the ministry was set to address the issue by executing the \$195 million contract meant to address the problem of insecurity on the waterways.

JOSEPH UDU
ABUJA

52-Year-Old Pastor Arrested For Kidnapping

Operatives of the Inspector General of Police Intelligence Response Team (IGP-IRT) have arrested Adetokunbo Adelopo, a 52-year-old Pentecostal pastor and general overseer of New Life Church of God, located at Lokosi Town, Shagamu Local Government Area of Ogun State.

The pastor was arrested alongside his gang members for kidnapping and detaining his victim, Job Ekpo Jonathan, a dispatch rider and an indigene of Benue State, in an underground hole in his church premises.

DCP Frank Mba, Force Spokesman, who paraded the suspect and his gang, together with other suspected criminals, on Wednesday at the IRT Office, Abuja, said a total of 35 suspects had been arrested by IRT operatives for kidnapping, armed robbery, car theft, cattle rustling, and other criminal acts.

Following this arrest, Mba

revealed that four AK-47 rifles, 361 rounds of AK-47 live ammunition, five other weapons of different makes, and one anti-tracking device were recovered from the suspects.

According to Mba, "We have a disturbing and pathetic case involving the kidnap of one Job Ekpo Jonathan, a dispatch rider with Glory Master Logistics, the major distributor of Forever Living Products.

"Job was detailed by his company to go and deliver Forever Living Products to someone who had ostensibly ordered for this product online.

"He first of all rode his bike to Ikorodu area of Lagos and eventually was directed to proceed to Sagamu, not knowing that he was walking into kidnapers' den.

"On arriving at the location, which turned out to be a church, Job was immediately taken hostage.

"This gang is run by Pastor Adetokunbo Adelopo, a 52-year-old man of God who is

the General Overseer of New Life Church of God.

"The Pastor had built a beautiful underground facility in his church premises where Job was held throughout the period he was in their captivity.

"When Job started struggling with them after they had seized him with a rope on his neck, the pastor, who is neither a doctor, nurse, nor a certified health worker, administered an anaesthesia forcefully on Job, which made him unconscious.

"Other members of the gang who actively participated in that operation are Chigozie Williams, 22 years old, from Umuahia North Local Government Area of Abia State; Linus Ugorji, 30 years old, from Ezinifiti community in Imo State, and Emmanuel Chris, 27 years of age, from Imo State.

"It is a highly diversified gang with members from different states of the federation."

The victim, Job, who nar-

rated his ordeal to newsmen, said he spent 10 days in their captivity inside an underground hole which they called Special Guest House, where he was only fed with garri, sugar and beans.

According to him, "When I got to the church to deliver the items, they suddenly put a rope around my neck from the back and I started shouting the blood of Jesus and struggling to free myself from the rope.

"All of them started shouting blood of Jesus to confuse neighbours while trying to tie my hands. When they finally brought me down, the pastor now injected me, and that was the only thing I remember.

"They were feeding me with garri, sugar, beans, coke and water. I spent about nine days in that hole and was rescued by the police on the 10th day. I had never experienced such a thing before."

While speaking with newsmen, Pastor Adetokunbo Adelopo, who said he had spent over 20 years in the ministry, also claimed to have been or-

dered in 2014 as a resident pastor with Living Faith Chapel, which he resigned from to start his ministry, New Life Church of God.

According to him, he resigned from Living Faith Chapel because he was not having time to do charity works which he enjoyed doing.

He said: "I was ordained a pastor by Bishop Abayomi in Ibadan in 2014. We do a lot of charity in my church and during this COVID-19 pandemic lockdown, I didn't have anything in my account and people were still coming for help. I don't take care of Christians alone; I do take care of Muslims too.

"We needed money to buy foodstuffs and ram for this Sallah. So, it was from there I decided to source money from this company by kidnapping their staff."

He, however, denied the involvement of Living Faith Chapel in his criminal activity, saying it had nothing to do with his present life. "I left them long ago."

Gov. Ishaku Asks For Peace As Birthday Gift At 66

JANET NYAJON AUDU
JALINGO

The governor of Taraba State, Arc. Darius Dickson Ishaku, turns 66 today, Thursday 30, and people of the state are showering encomiums on him at his birthday celebration.

But the governor is thanking God for His grace upon him and asking for lasting peace in Taraba State as a birthday gift from God.

In a telephone chat with our correspondent, the governor called on Tarabans to pray for him to achieve peace in the southern part of the state so that the crisis between the Tiv and Jukun will come to end.

Commenting on the birthday celebration, Bala Sungbadu Bako, the chairman of Ibi Local Government, who is also the Taraba State ALGON chairman, described the governor's 66th birthday as a blessing not only to the governor's family but also to all Tarabans and, indeed, Nigerians having served the nation as a minister in the ministries of Niger Delta Affairs, Environment, and Power.

He stated that at 66, Ishaku had written his name in gold as evident in the infrastructural development taking place in the state.

He said: "At 66, Ishaku has carved a niche for himself as the only governor in the North-East sub-region to embark on people-oriented projects that would change the face of Jalingo when completed.

"I am talking about the ongoing Jalingo flyover and the dualisation of Jalingo Pantinapu-NYSC road.

"When that is done, Jalingo will wear a new look. I am very happy that he clocked 66 today in good health and has made giant strides. I wish him long life and prosperity."

Rigging Edo Poll May Trigger Tragic Reactions Nationwide — Obaseki

CONTINUED FROM P28

vent voters from gaining access to polling stations, it is also true that Obaseki just as Wike has perfected intimidation tactics such as vandalisation, the de-

struction of opponent's properties, and harassment of innocent persons just to obtain power.

He said: "According to reliable data sourced from Peace Map, political vio-

lence in Rivers State steadily increased beginning in January 2015, peaking in the lead-up and aftermath of the April gubernatorial elections and this was due largely to the violent atti-

tude of Nyesom Wike, who once infamously attended a campaign event wielding a machete.

"In Edo State, we have seen the same trait. There is a persistent problem in

the violent, dishonest, and generally deplorable conduct of the rejected PDP which evidently pose a great threat to the peaceful conduct of the September 19 election."

CONTINUED FROM P1

that he did not declare his assets.

In a statement by Wahab Shittu issued on his behalf, Magu described the allegation of not declaring his assets as "gross misrepres-

CCB Plans To Arraign Magu Over Asset Declaration Violation

sentation and blatant falsehood".

A 2016 report by the DSS revealed Ibrahim Magu lives a "high-profile lifestyle".

The report revealed Magu lives in a house rented for N40 million at N20 million a year which was paid for by one retired Air Commodore Umar Mohammed.

Magu is also accused of using private jets belonging to Mohammed and going on trips with bank executives being investigated by the EFCC.

The report also revealed Magu was guilty of withholding EFCC files, obstruction of justice and sabotage by the Nigerian Police Service Commission in 2010.

Three armed robbers were on Wednesday set ablaze by angry mob in a failed bank robbery which occurred at a first generation bank in Okeho, Kajola Local Government Area of Oyo State.

It was gathered that the robbers, who were armed with AK-47 rifles and dynamite, attempted to rob the bank in Okeho but were overpowered by police and local hunters.

The Oyo State Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO), SP Olugbenga Fadeyi, con-

Three Armed Robbers Set Ablaze In Oyo Failed Bank Robbery

firmed the incident, saying the incident happened about 5pm. on Wednesday.

"At about 1658hrs, there was a bank robbery in which dare devil armed bandits who came with white 18-seater bus invaded the bank in Okeho, Kajola Local Government Area of Oyo State with an intent to rob.

"The armed robbers who gained entrance into the bank used dynamites and AK-47 rifles shots to blow the bank

security door.

"The robbery which was responded to by the Police Tactical teams and collaborative efforts of the Vigilante and hunters yielded results.

"Consequent upon this, three of the robbers who were arrested when the 18-seater bus had an accident and somersaulted, were thereafter set ablaze by the angry mob when they attempted to escape the scene of the accident.

"Immediately the Commissioner of Police, Nwachuckwu Enwonwu, got wind of the dastardly acts, he further directed that all the Police Tactical teams including the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), Mobile Police Force (PMF72) and police personnel from Okeho Area Command and nearby Divisions to be on the trail of other members of the fleeing robbers who escaped in different directions," he said.

Fadeyi said that the Commissioner of Police condemned the dastardly act and assured the people of Oyo State of the police preparedness to protect lives and property before, during and after the Sallah celebrations.

He urged the good people of the state to go about their lawful businesses without any fear of molestation or threat from any quarters, saying the police are on top of the situation.

News

Delta Trains 5697 On COVID-19 Protocols In Schools

FELIX IGBEKOYI
ASABA

In a bid to ensure adequate safety of school children from contacting the Coronavirus, 5,697 teachers from public and private schools across the 25 local government areas of Delta State have been trained on the COVID 19 protocols in schools.

The training, which was organised by the Delta State Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education, in collaboration with Ministry of Health, was aimed at ensuring that those teachers trained would in turn train others in their various schools.

Addressing the teachers during a monitoring visit to St. Patrick's College, Asaba, Oshimili South Local Government Area of Delta State, the Commissioner for Basic and Secondary Education, Chief Patrick Ukah, said that the Senator Okowa administration was irrevocably committed to safeguarding the health of residents, especially teachers and school children in the state at all times.

Ukah, who stated that the visit was informed by the need to encourage the teachers and to ascertain their level of commitment and participation in the training, said that the state government would provide critical measures to avert the spread of the Coronavirus in the wake of school resumption.

Shun Making Inciting Comments, Activist Urges Bode George

AKINWUNMI KING
LAGOS

A right activist and Convener of the Royal Peoples Platform (RPP), Dare Aladekoba, has appealed to elder statesman, Chief Bode George, to always consider the psyche of the people in his several comments to avoid being misconstrued as antagonist to the performance of those in government.

The activist in a chat with newsmen in Lagos on Wednesday, said Gero's remark about officials of the Lagos State government being non-indigenes could be misunderstood by many as direct attack on them, stressing the need for him to focus on development that would do all Lagos residents a lot of good.

Aladekoba, who said there were those he identified as 'true owners of the state', was of the conviction that utterances that could ginger all and sundry to put all hands on deck indiscriminately to move the state forwards are expected more from senior citizens in the community like Chief Bode George whose views are highly respected.

Ebonyi PDP Lauds Buhari Over Second Niger Bridge, Akanu Ibiam Airport Projects

SAMSON NWAFOR
ABAKALIKI

The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in Ebonyi State has lauded President Muhammadu Buhari for ensuring speedy construction of the Second Niger Bridge as well as the ongoing reconstruction of Akanu Ibiam International Airport, Enugu.

The PDP State Chairman, Barrister Onyekachi Nwobonyi, who disclosed this in

a chat with journalists on Wednesday in Abakaliki, said the PDP would continue to commend the Buhari federal administration in areas it has performed creditably well.

The PDP chairman said Buhari had shamed those who thought the Second Nigeria Bridge would not be realised.

On the call for the sack of Service Chiefs by the Senate, Nwobonyi said the decision was a constitutional responsibility of

the President.

"We want to appreciate Mr. President, Muhammadu Buhari, for his good works in the South-East geopolitical zone. The ongoing construction of the Second Niger Bridge is a dream come true for the people of the region.

"Some persons were thinking that the project was not real. But, the case is different now. Once that project is completed, the zone will have so much to be grateful for.

"The reconstruction of the Akanu Ibiam International Airport, Enugu, is another notable project that the zone is happy about. The pace of work is worthy of commendation and the people of the region are pleased about it.

"The sack or resignation of the Service Chiefs remains the constitutional responsibility of the President. Whenever he decides otherwise, Nigerians will know. He should be allowed to do his job."



Fatai Adegbenro, Executive Secretary/CEO, Nigerian Council of Registered Insurance Brokers (NCRIB) (right); Tunde Oguntade, Vice President/representative of President, NCRIB (middle), and Tope Adaramola, Assistant Executive Secretary, during the annual general meeting of the National Association of Insurance and Pension Correspondents in Lagos on Wednesday.

PHOTO: KINGSTON DANIEL

OYENIRAN APATA
LAGOS

Lagos Fixes August 3 For SS3, TEC3 Day, Boarding Students' Resumption

The Lagos State government has directed all the SS3 and Technical Studies (TEC3) students in both day and boarding schools in the state to resume on Monday August 3, 2020.

This is in line with the Federal Government's pronouncement directing students in exit classes across the country to resume on Tuesday, August 4, 2020 for revision classes ahead their forthcoming examinations.

This disclosure was made by the Commissioner for Education, Mrs Folasade Adefisayo, on Tuesday in her office

at Alausa, Ikeja.

According to the commissioner, "This is to allow for revision classes and adequate preparation ahead of their forthcoming West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE)."

Kayode Abayomi, Head, Public Affairs Unit, Ministry of Education quoted the commissioner as adding that the directive became imperative due to the newly announced date by West African Examination Council (WAEC) for the 2020 WASSCE which is

scheduled to commence on August 17, 2020.

"Only SS3 and Technical Study Three (TEC3) students are permitted to resume at day and boarding Schools on August 3, for revision classes and examinations," she noted.

She, therefore, enjoined all schools in the state to follow the required public health guidelines and protocols for re-opening of schools for this category of students.

She stressed that while students in SS3 and TEC 3 will have the privilege of sit-

ting for their examinations, the state government is considering the option of using first and second term exams performance or continuous assessment to promote students in other exit classes.

The commissioner revealed that various meetings had been held with the stakeholders in the education, health and safety sectors in a bid to ensure that adequate precautionary measures were put in place to ensure the safety of the students before resumption.

Awotan Dumpsite: Consultant Applauds Makinde's Plan

RAJI ADEBAYO
IBADAN

Environmental Consultant and CEO, Macpresse West Africa Limited, Idowu Salawu, has commended plans by the Oyo State government to tap into renewable energy sources, such that it will come from utilisation of land fill gas from Awotan dumpsite.

Salawu stated this on Wednesday while speaking

with newsmen on the potentials embedded in the 12.5 hectare of land where the dumpsite is located in Ibadan.

He added that revitalisation, rebuilding and reforming processes at the dumpsite, after completion, would develop Oyo State's electricity supply chain, if the state would partner with a solar energy company.

Salawu further said tapping into the renewable ener-

gy potentials of the dumpsite would be a good support for the Federal Government's off-grid power supply in the state, adding that this would bring in more electricity supply to Oyo State.

He added: "The decision to tap into the solar and landfill gas, as the end use of the dumpsite is the best decision, because the government does not have to worry itself on the Federal Government's off grid supply of electricity,

once we partner with a solar energy company."

He affirmed that the end use of the dumpsite was for it to generate electricity of One Megawatt per hectare, adding that landfill gas on the dumpsite could conveniently generate energy for electricity.

He stressed that the rehabilitation of the dumpsite was one of the prerequisites for the clean and green initiative of the state government.

Badaru Signs Revised 2020 Budget

SULE TAHIR
DUTSE

Governor Muhammadu Badaru Abubakar of Jigawa State has assented to the revised 2020 budget, with a pledge to stick to financial discipline and implementation in line with budgetary policies.

The reversed budget was reduced from N153.920billion to N124.357 billion, a drop of about N28.5billion, representing 19 per cent drop in the size of the budget.

According to him, the reduction was not peculiar to the state budget alone as it also affected the local government budget from N72.5b to now N56.2 b, a drop of about 16.33 per cent.

He stated that this was necessary to attend to other extra spending, especially as 13 per cent of the budget would be dedicated to COVID-19 pandemic, other business stipulations, among other specific spending.

Shedding more light on the budget, the finance commissioner, Hon. Babangida Umar Gantsa, said the original budget size was N103b, but was later reduced to N123.4b, amounting to the reduction of 19 per cent.

For that of local government budget, it was reduced from N72.21b to N56.21b, which was by 17 or 23 per cent of the budget size.

He attributed the revision of the budget to COVID-19 pandemic, which had affected the world economically, leading to the drop in the oil revenue, which crashed from \$27 per barrel to \$18 per barrel, which actually necessitated the revision of the budget proposals.

COVID-19: Rotary Club Of Ojodu, Distributes Palliatives

JOY ANIGBOGU
LAGOS

Rotary Club of Ojodu, in an effort to contribute to the flattening of the COVID-19 curve, has distributed palliatives to indigent women in Ojodu community, given out treated mosquito nets, even as it harps on respect for safety protocols as directed by the government.

As part of its activity for Rotary Club International Tree Planting Month, the club also presented one year, fully covered health insurance to four families and unveiled the construction of a sustainable Botanical Garden at Ojodu Junior Grammar School, among other programmes.

In his speech, Rotarian Ezenwa Opara, president of the club, said it would continue to sensitise members of the community on the need to maintain good personal hygiene, especially in the period of COVID-19 pandemic.

Sport

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Tit Bits

de Bruyne Voted Player Of The Year

Manchester City's Kelvin de Bruyne has been voted the BBC's Premier League Player of the Season beating Liverpool's trio of Jordan Henderson, Sadio Mane and Virgil van Dijk.

He won 45% of the votes to win the award. It was a vote that certainly split opinions throughout the day. The City's forward was involved in 33 goals this season.

Liverpool manager, Jurgen Klopp, won the manager of the season, while Young player of the season award was won by Trent Alexander-Arnold (Liverpool). The Surprise player of the season was Southampton Danny Ings with Women's player of the season belonging to Arsenal's Vivianne Miedema.

Inter Want To Sign Sanchez On Permanent Deal

Inter Milan want to sign Manchester United forward Alexis Sanchez on a permanent deal.

The Chile striker, 31, has impressed during his loan spell in Italy and scored his third goal in eight games during Saturday's 3-0 win at Genoa.

Sanchez was involved again on Tuesday night as Inter maintained their push to finish second in Serie A with a 2-0 win over Napoli.

Inter have not finished in Serie A's top three since 2011.

The player's United contract - thought to be around £400,000 a week - is beyond Inter's reach but Old Trafford boss Ole Gunnar Solskjaer does not want to keep the former Barcelona forward for next season.

Chelsea Focus On Chilwell

Chelsea remain focused on signing Leicester City's Ben Chilwell, but are hopeful that the left-back can put pressure on his own club to help make a move to west London more straightforward.

Leicester have so far publicly insisted the 23-year-old is not for sale and have privately rejected an approach from the Blues that would see them paid in instalments for the England international.

With the Foxes in a financially stable position despite missing out on Champions League qualification for next season, they are unwilling to accept anything less than their asking price for a player they have tied down to a contract until June 2024.

Anambra FA Elections: Baribote, Green Fault NFF Decision

AYO BADA
LAGOS

Former Vice President of the Nigeria Football Federation (NFF), Victor Baribote, has berated the decision of the NFF to annul the Anambra Football Association election held on Monday, July 27.

Baribote, who is also a former Chairman of the Nigeria Premier League (NPL), said that the presence or absence of the NFF does not validate or invalidate the state FA election.

"It is not compulsory that NFF must supervise the election of any affiliate body. The affiliate body will only communicate with the NFF that a particular FA election is duly conducted at a given time. The presence or absence of the NFF has nothing to do validity of the election.

"For instance, in the NFF Elective Congress held in Warri, there was no CAF official to monitor the election. So, this is one of the things they use in deceiving Nigerians. It is not compulsory as the regulatory, courtesy demand that the State FA puts them on notice on the date of an election. If they want to attend so be it, if they can't, it doesn't invalidate the election," said Baribote.

In the same vein, Chairman of Rivers State Football Association (RSFA) Barrister Christopher



Sen. Ifeanyi Ubah

Green said that the NFF is not in the best position to declare the Anambra FA election null and void.

Green stated that the power to declare the election legal or illegal lies with the State Electoral Committee.

In his reaction to the statement from the NFF, Green said; "Is this an official statement from the NFF? Is it an official release? Who signed it? Can I take it to the bank? Why is there no statement from the Anambra FA Electoral Committee? What right has Gusau to say the election won't stand? Is he the mouth piece of the NFF or person authorized to talk

on behalf of the body?"

"Following the statutes, Anambra FA is independent. What ought to have happened is for the Anambra FA Electoral Committee to make a statement on its position and inform the NFF who in turn would confirm. It may not be different from what has been released. The right process and procedure should be followed," stressed Green.

The Anambra State FA, we learnt, conducted their election on Monday where Dr. Ifeanyi Ubah was re-elected for the second term. However, the NFF distanced itself from the election describing it as brigandage.

...Naira Rain On Ubah After Reelection

● Senator Vows Football Revolution In State

TONY EZIMAKOR
ABUJA

Hardly had Senator Ifeanyi Ubah be re-elected as the chairman of the Anambra State Football Association that N10 million was doled out to the association in support of Uba's vow to revolutionise football in the state.

However, the election has been annulled by the Nigeria Football Federation on the premise that the electoral committee had postponed the election on the orders of the state government.

This donation meant for the massive injection of funds towards development of the game at grassroots is coming from no other, but

the grand patron of the association Prince Arthur Eze.

Speaking on his unanimous re-election for another four year term, Senator Ubah, representing Anambra South in the upper legislative chamber, said that the renewed mandate would spur him to take the game to greater height.

The proprietor of Ifeanyi Ubah FC, promised "an accelerated development of football in Anambra state with a view to providing jobs for the teeming youths.

"We all know that football, if properly managed, could be the bedrock of the state's economy. Going forward, it is going to be football revolution," he said.

"The election was well

attended by all legitimate voters of the Association that returned me as the chairman unopposed with 22 votes.

"I want to thank the participants and delegates for this exercise. The good thing is that we complied with the COVID-19 protocols," he said.

He further noted that after the election, the newly elected FA members had visited their Grand Patron, Prince Eze at his Ukpo country home, adding that the Oil Magnate, who was elated on the peaceful outcome of the FA election, donated N10 million to the state FA.

He commended Ubah for his giant efforts towards advancement of various sectors of the economy.

NPFL: Rangers Set To Meet Licensing Guidelines

AYO BADA
LAGOS

Management of Enugu Rangers FC has commenced the process of meeting with the licensing guidelines as directed by FIFA and CAF ahead of the 2020/21 Nigeria Professional Football League (NPFL) season.

Chairman of the club, Davidson Owumi said all necessary machinery has been put in place including sending letters to authorized places in order to be at least a step above other clubs.

"Letters have been sent to the Nigeria Police, Fire Service, Enugu state Emergency Agency, Enugu state Waste Management Authority and the Medical institutions for necessary in-

spection and certification of our playing facility, the Nnamdi Azikiwe stadium, Enugu.

"We want to be a step ahead of others both on and off the pitch as the new season approaches with applications sent to various agencies of the government with relevant services to the game to get prepared for the new season," he said.

It will be recalled that president of the Nigeria Football Federation (NFF), Amaju Pinnick, has said that any club that failed to meet up with standard requirement will be barred from taking part in the league next season while September or October remained the proposed month for the kick off of the new season.

Thunder Balogun, Nigeria's Greatest Footballer - Onigbinde

CHIBUIKE CHUKWU
LAGOS

Two-times chief coach of the Super Eagles, Chief Adegboye Onigbinde, has insisted that, the late Teslim 'Thunder' Balogun, remains the best footballer ever produced by Nigeria, as the Balogun family today July 30, 2020, remembers the soccer legend in his 48th year memorial, when he died in his sleep in 1972.

The former FIFA and CAF Instructor, noted that: The greatest footballer Nigeria has ever produced was Teslim 'Thunder' Balogun.

"There is no doubt about it. As a footballer, he did many things players do before his time, those of his time and after and even years to come did not do and have not been able to do with the ball.

"The greatest goal scored by any player I have seen played football was scored by 'Thunder' Balogun at the Olu Ibadan Stadium in 1968 in the match between the Nigerian national soccer team, the UK Tourists and England.

"The English players were always on him each time he received the ball. To beat the pressure off, 'Thunder' stood outside the 18-yard box with his back turned at the England goalkeeper.

"A ball was floated to him from the midfield and the English players were waiting for him to bring it down.

"But against their imagination, he staggered a bit, and in turning, he fired a shot at the goalpost, which saw the goalkeeper diving the other way while the ball

was already shaking the net," Onigbinde stated.

The former Trinidad and Tobago coach stressed that, "the story of 'Thunder' Balogun will never die. For those of us who watched him play, we saw him as Nigeria's greatest footballer."

Onigbinde noted: "He died in his sleep on July 30, 1972 at the relatively young age of 45, but the heroics of Thunder Balogun lives forever. Everybody called him Thunder Balogun but at birth he was named Teslim Akanni Balogun. His father was a cricketer.

He attained legendary status after he became the first Nigerian to play professional football in England."

Teslim played for Apapa Bombers, Marine, Railway, Plateau, Pan Bank and Dynamo all between 1944 and 1961.

"He won the FA Cup five times in seven final appearances and was the first player to score a hat-trick in the FA Cup final when he put three goals past Warri XI as Pan Bank won the 1952 final 6-1.

"In 1949, he was part of Nigeria's first national team, known as the UK Tourists team that toured the United Kingdom. After that encounter he signed for Peterborough FC, becoming the first Nigerian to play professional football in England."

Balogun also had professional stints with Holbeach and Queens Park Rangers where he played 13 times and scored 3 goals in 1956.

His playing career lasted from 1945 to 1962 and he was in the coaching crew for Nigeria to the 1968 Olympic Games where the country drew 3-3 against Brazil.

Difficult roads always lead to beautiful destinations.

—Zig Ziglar



Dele Sobowale On The Other Hand

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Note: Seldom would I return to a topic after signing off on it. But, my advocacy for OKONJO-IWEALA FOR PRESIDENT has come under attack from people who mean well for Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala without asking if this is the best thing for Nigeria. Forgive me therefore for returning so soon to it.

After Buhari, Who Else? Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala (4)

“Run, Ngozi, Run!” Obadiah Mailafia, VANGUARD, July 13, 2020.

“FG inaugurates WTO campaign team for Okonjo-Iweala.”

VANGUARD, July 24, 2020, p 24.

The July 24, 2020 report announced that “The Minister of Industry, Trade, and Industry, Richard Adebayo, inaugurated the team in Abuja “ to support Ngozi for the position of Director-General of the World Trade Organisation”. Earlier, Obadiah Mailafia, had joined the bandwagon of those urging Ngozi to run. It would not be the first time Nigerians would give “massive support” to her when vying for global posts against other contestants. I recollect when the World Bank top job was open about eight years ago (I cannot be more precise because of my health challenges which make it impossible for me to reach my archives in Oyo State). Having reached the position of one of the Managing Directors of the global bank, Nigerians thought she could be considered for the job.

I recollect asking my Fellow Nigerians to forget the idea for one simple reason well known to Ngozi and Obadiah also. When the two global institutions – World Bank and International Monetary Fund, IMF, were created at Breton Woods, USA, at the end of the Second World War, the entire world conceded the Presidency of the World Bank to the USA and the Managing Director of the IMF to Western Europe. Our agitation for Ngozi to aspire to World Bank Presidency therefore amounted to national collective folly and I said so. One fellow at the time interpreted that to mean I was not a patriotic Nigerian until I sent him a copy of the original global agreement. It was the same agreement which conferred on the US dollar the status of international reserve currency. All international trade has since then been conducted on dollar prices.

It is not clear to me if the post of the Director-General of WTO is restricted in any way according to the agreement establishing it. If there is a specific clause excluding a Nigerian or African for that matter, from vying for the job, our candidate will never clinch it. Instead, we would only once again appear to be collectively stupid. I dissociate myself from thoughtless mob action.

However, even if she is totally qualified to head WTO, I will still regard her being shunted off to WTO as a move not totally in the national interest for two reasons. First, apart from getting Ngozi another well-paid job, it is not a really powerful position and her ability to influence events in favour of Nigeria are limited. Dr Akinwunmi Adesina’s problems at the African Development Bank is a pointer to what she will face. Second, and Mailafia should understand this point. From the standpoint of comparative advantage, being President is far more useful for Nigeria than as DG-WTO. Two recent announcements by the Federal Government should prove to us why she is needed at home not Europe.

“Why we increased 2020 budget despite low

On Okonjo-Iweala And Magu



Okonjo-Iweala

revenue – Presidency”

VANGUARD, July 13, 2020, p 8.

“FEC okays 2021-23 MTEF; projects N12.66tn 2021 budget.”

PUNCH, July 16, 2020, p 19.

Any economist who cannot reach the obvious conclusion from those two reports should tear up or burn his certificate. Baldly stated, the FG told Nigerians that the debt burden will steadily increase until the end of Buhari’s tenure. By 2023 close to 70 per cent of our revenue will go into debt servicing. I know of nobody else who can step forward and help us out of the mess Buhari would have created by the time he departs other than Okonjo-Iweala.

Open Letter To Prince Arthur Eze On Okonjo-Iweala

“Only God can make an Igbo man President. We shall pray to God to find an Igbo man who has the character to help the people. I would prefer someone who has conscience; someone who will remember me. I don’t care where you come from.” Prince Arthur Eze, PUNCH, back page.

Before addressing the statement credited to Prince Eze, let me, in case he gets to read this open letter, inform him and other readers that this advocacy actually had its origin in a Northern living room. I had gone for an appointment. Just before me was an Igbo man. Our host is a powerful mobiliser of people. The three of us ended having lunch during which the conversation turned to Igbo Presidency – which our host thought is overdue. We ended with the question: who is a credible candidate? I promised to search for one. I had presented the Chairman of Air Peace and Mr Tony Elumelu before. I still regard them as good candidates. Then, I ran a projection through my computer and discovered that Nigeria’s debt burden might increase by 100 per cent in three years. Who would help us in 2023? The name Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala suggested itself. That brings me to Prince Eze’s statement which can be divided and answered in three parts.

First, I agree that “Only God can make an Igbo man President”. But, I also believe that

God helps those who help themselves. Prince would not be a billionaire if he had been sitting at home and praying. Prince Tony Momoh, ex-Minister for Information once pronounced that “Work is prayer in action.” If we want an Igbo President, we must work for it.

Second, Gowon, Obasanjo, Shagari, General Buhari in 1983, Obasanjo again, and Yar’Adua were selected by human beings, perhaps doing God’s work. The assassination of General Aguyi Ironsi, by Northern soldiers on “revenge mission” led to the selection of Gowon in 1966 – who led the country until 1975. The assassination of his successor, General Murtala Mohammed, by Colonel Dimka and a few dissidents resulted in a man-hunt organised by the Army High Command for Lt-General Olusegun Obasanjo, the most senior officer. Murtala’s second in command had run away to hide after his boss was killed. He played no role in putting down the coup attempt by Dimka. Major-General Danjuma, the Chief of Army Staff, could have installed himself as Head of State. But, the Officer and Gentleman ordered for Obasanjo to be brought from hiding to become Head of State.

Preparatory to the return to civil rule, the military lifted the prohibition on political activities. While all the other parties very quickly settled the important matter of Presidential flag-bearer, the National Party of Nigeria’s, NPN, convention was deadlocked. No declared candidate was able to gather a majority of the delegates’ votes. Suddenly, a Northern chieftain of the party got up; consulted with Alhaji Shehu Shagari and a few other leaders of the party. That was how Shagari emerged as the Presidential candidate of the NPN and the first elected President of Nigeria in 1979.

Contrary to widespread rumours, Major-General Buhari was not the leader of the December 31, 1983 coup which toppled the Shagari administration and brought him to ultimate power the first time. He was invited to lead after the coup had succeeded. This is not the time and place to name the coup plotters.

Finally, Obasanjo was in prison; he was not one of the founders of the Peoples Democratic Party, PDP, when, again, there was another return to civil rule in 1998. He was released from jail; pardoned and funded by earthly powers to take over the party. (See details in my book PDP: CORRUPTION INCORPORATED).

Ngozi was recently asked what she regards as her greatest achievement. She replied that the fact that she has a happy family is her best achievement. That should tell you she has a beautiful soul. A man would probably talk of the World Bank job or Harvard etc

I have gone to great lengths to demonstrate with Nigerian history how human beings sometimes undertake to change the course of history. I can very easily bring examples from European and American history in order to tell my brothers in Igboland one thing. A lot of times, God’s work is really done by us because the Almighty will not step down to do the work himself. Collectively and with single-minded focus, people can become game-changers – especially if they develop alliances nationwide.

“Toughness does not have to come in a pin-stripe suit.” Dianne Feinstein, TIME MAGAZINE, June 4, 1984.

Neither does fighting corruption or Boko Haram. Third, I actually believe that women are more ethical than men. I make that declaration notwithstanding the allegations made against Diezani Ojo-Madueke. For every woman in public or private top office accused, there are at least one hundred men. Furthermore, Ngozi was recently asked what she regards as her greatest achievement. She replied that the fact that she has a happy family is her best achievement. That should tell you she has a beautiful soul. A man would probably talk of the World Bank job or Harvard etc.

Finally, let me end where I started. During that meeting in the North, I asked the question: Who were the most influential Igbo people we must have on board in case we can find a credible candidate? The first name that came out of the Igbo man’s mouth was Arthur Eze. So, Prince, God might have pre-selected you to make this dream come through for Igbo people. I don’t know you but, I hope you will not fail to provide support when needed. God bless you more Sir.

Magu And Mugus (2)

“Police release Magu, Buhari suspends 12 EFCC directors.” PUNCH, July 16, 2020, p 9.

More evidence has come into the public domain since the first part of this article was written. One of them is with regard to the suspension of twelve directors of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC. Let me make just a brief comment for now – based on my gut feelings.

First, it is unlikely any of the twelve directors will ever again return to the office. Second, they will be well-advised to engage the services of the best Senior Advocates of Nigeria money can buy. This is no task for the charge-and-bail variety of lawyers. Third, they can consider running away. There are too many people coming after them. Finally, if all else fails, come clean. Don’t go down alone. Take as many other dirty officers as possible down with you. At least, that way you will help clean the system for a while – before it becomes dirty again.

Meanwhile, Nigerians need to understand the implications and repercussions of what had just happened. “I will make you shorter by a head” was how one of Great Britain’s late Queens announced that she was sending somebody to be beheaded. Buhari, by approving the suspension of Magu as well as twelve directors of the EFCC, has just decapitated the anti-graft commission. Guilty or not, they depart with a great deal of experience which their replacements will need time to acquire. It is a quantum loss to Nigeria – any way you look at it.