FG: With Lekki Port, Nigeria to Wrest Lost Cargoes from Neighbours, Targets over $201bn in Taxes, Duties

●*As project set to create 169,972 Jobs*

Kasim Sumaina and **Gilbert Ekugbe**

The Minister of Information, Alhaji Lai Mohammed, has said the Lekki Deep Sea Port when completed would make Nigeria regain the maritime business that it lost to ports in Togo, Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana.

According to the Minister, it would also be a big boost for Nigeria in its quest to take advantage of the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA).

The minister who said this

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NCC Issues 5G Licence to MTN, Mafab Communications... Page 6

THISDAY

TRUTH & REASON

Thursday 5 May, 2022
Vol 27. No 9886. Price: N250

www.thisdaylive.com



Seated: L-R: Dr Herbert Wigwe, Mrs Ofovwe Aig-Imoukhuede, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, Mr Aigboje Aig-Imoukhuede, Dr Dere Awosika. Standing: L-R: Professor Attahiru Jega, Dr Omobola Johnson, Mr A B Mahmoud, Mrs Yemisi Ayeni, Mr Ernest Ebi, Mrs Fola Laoye, Mr Olusegun Adeniyi, Professor Enase Okonedo, Dr Uzodinma Iweala, at the inaugural meeting of the Leadership Council of the Aig-Imoukhuede Foundation in Lagos... recently

Guterres: UN Committed to Peaceful Nigeria

●*Wants attackers of Global Body's Building in 2011 Prosecuted*

Deji Elumoye and **Michael Olugbode** in Abuja

United Nations (UN) Secretary-General Antonio Guterres says the intergovernmental organisation remains

Continued on page 10

With over N30bn from Sale of Forms, APC Gets Firepower for 2023 Elections

●*Funds may put party in vantage position against opposition*

Iyobosa Uwugiaren and **Adedayo Akinwale** in Abuja

A conservative estimate by THISDAY has shown that the All Progressives Congress (APC) may rake in over N30 billion from the sale of nomination and expression of interest forms, giving the ruling party enormous firepower to face the 2023 general election.

"With a huge war chest expected from sale of forms, the ruling party will have a commanding advantage in the field if the resources are properly deployed," a political analyst, who preferred anonymity, told THISDAY last night.

The presidential nomination form in APC goes for N100 million; the governorship form is sold for N50 million; Senate, N20 million; House of Representatives, N10 million; and House of Assembly, N2 million.

A rundown on the expected revenue from the electoral process shows APC may generate over N2.3 billion from the sale of presidential forms; N2.8 billion from the sale of governorship

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Meter Asset Provider Begins Monthly Distribution of 100,000 Meters in Abuja... Page 10



UN'S $1.1 BILLION HUMANITARIAN AID TO NIGERIA...

United Nations Secretary General, Antonio Guterres (L) with President Muhammadu Buhari, during his visit to the Presidential Villa, Abuja... yesterday

PHOTO: GODWIN OMOIGUI



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FAYEMI FOR PRESIDENT...

L-R: Chieftain of the All Progressives Congress (APC), Mr. Shuaibu Lawan; Senator Ibikunle Amosun, Deputy Governor Ekiti State, Bisi Egbeyemi; Presidential Aspirant, Dr. Kayode Fayemi, and wife, Bisi Fayemi, during Fayemi's declaration to contest for the president in Abuja...yesterday PHOTO: ENOCK REUBEN

Push for First Oil: Experts Urge FG to Provide Bailout Funds for Marginal Oil Field Awardees

Say cost of bidding, signature bonus too expensive, erode commerciality of assets

Peter Uzoho

As the 2020 marginal oil field awardees currently struggle to raise fund to commence the development of their respective assets and eventually hit first oil production, some industry experts have advised the federal government to consider providing intervention funds for cash-strapped companies.

The experts said the excessive cost of participation during the marginal field bid round and the expensive signature bonus they were asked to pay have eroded the commerciality of the assets, making it difficult for them to raise fund to proceed to drilling after one year of issuing them award certificates.

Speaking at the Arbiterz marginal oil field conference in Lagos, with the topic, "From License to Oil: Fundraising for Marginal Fields," the Subsurface Manager, Energy and Mineral Resources Limited (EMR), Mr. Collins Ibekwe, said the government should consider providing bailout funds to the companies either in form of returning the signature bonuses or through any other form of financial assistance to them.

Ibekwe explained that his call for bailout fund for the awardees was based on the fact that there had been instances where government had to intervene to help businesses that were going through financial difficulties just to help them recover and continue to contribute to the nation's economy.

He maintained that such intervention was needed for the current marginal oil field awardees to enable the companies have fund to proceed to drilling and help to achieve the nation's aspiration of increasing oil production to three million barrels per day, raise the reserves to 40 million barrels and in turn boost government's revenue and job creation.

Expressing pessimism about the companies achieving first oil quick enough, as recorded by a couple of the 2003 awardees, Ibekwe maintained that such government financial intervention was necessary to enable the companies recover from the huge burden they were made to suffer by paying the outrageous $125,000 as marginal fields bid round participation fee and the exorbitant $5 million to $40 million for signature bonus per oil field.

Ibekwe lamented that the government's charges for the 2020 marginal field bid round participation and signature bonus were astronomically higher than the fees paid by companies during the 2003 bid round and even the fees that were to be paid by companies in the botched 2013 marginal oil field bid round.

He argued that the components of the 2020 bid process including the financial, regulatory, legal, international and other components were designed to essentially make the process very expensive for the bidders, saying the expensive nature of the bid process has eroded the commerciality of the assets.

The 2020 marginal oil field bid round started in June 2020 and by May, 2021, 161 companies were shortlisted as winners of the 57 marginal fields put on offer.

In May, 2021, the then industry regulator and organisers of the 2020 marginal field bid exercise, the defunct Department of Petroleum Resources (DPR), which has been replaced by the Nigerian Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission (NUPRC), presented award certificates to 80 of the awardees.

DPR had put the total value of the 57 marginal oil fields at not less than $500 million, having pegged the bid participation fee at $125,000 per company and between $5 million and $40 million as the signature bonus per field.

However, the NUPRC had disclosed that 80 per cent of the awardees had complied in terms of payment while closed to 90 per cent of the companies had complied in forming the Special Purpose Vehicles (SPVs).

The commission had also disclosed that the marginal oil fields awarded to 33 companies had been revoked following their inability to meet the 45 days deadline required to pay the signature bonus for the fields.

But in his intervention on how to make the marginal field licenses to producing oil, Ibekwe said, "My opinion is this: If we have to be truthful to ourselves, then we have to look at this holistically -think outside the box. What really should be done? Because I think those who put the process together were not long-term-focused. I think they were too short-term focused.

"But it should not be too late to say, let's reverse this process. Let's return this money; because to be honest with you, you may say, okay, my interest is to raise money for government. But really, is that an optimal expectation? Should it not be better for our expectation to be: let's grow new businesses; let's grow these marginal fields and have many new indigenous operators that are capable.

Also contributing at the session, Chief Executive Officer, Tritekk Consulting Limited and former Geoscience Business Manager, France, Schlumberger, Mr. Ayodele Fasakin, who equally observed that the signature bonus for the marginal fields was too expensive, adding that the NUPRC should be an active partner to the point of ensuring that operators secure funding to proceed to first oil rather than being interested in raising revenue for government.

In his remarks, Chief Executive Officer, NUPRC, Gbenga Komolafe, who was represented by the commission's Head of Basinal Assessment and Lease Administration, Mr. Edu Iyang, said the commission had engaged awardees to resolve issues arising from the 2020 marginal field award and had also concluded drafting of model licence document, which he said was critical for issuing the Petroleum Prospecting Licences (PPL) to the awardees.

OPEC Forecasts 240m Barrels Emergency Stock by October

Insists cartel has no control over current market non-fundamentals

Emmanuel Addeh in Abuja

The Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) yesterday said with all current market dynamics at play, the global oil supply market could have as much as 240 million barrels of emergency crude oil in the next six months.

It came against the backdrop of pressure from the United States and its allies on the organisation to ramp up global supply and indications that the cartel would supply plan unchanged during its meeting today.

Speaking at the opening of the 62nd meeting of the Joint Technical Committee (JTC), meant to review oil market developments ahead of the conference, OPEC Secretary General, Dr. Sanusi Barkindo, maintained that the current non-fundamentals driving oil prices were beyond the body's control.

Sanusi noted that the Covid-19 pandemic clearly remained with the world as had been evident most recently with lockdowns across China, with its impact on transportation fuels and petrochemical feedstock.

He further highlighted the implications and the possible far-reaching consequences of the conflict between Russia and Ukraine which he said had compounded the uncertainties, leading to further economic volatility and elevated risk premiums for oil.

"The crises we face are causing huge volatility, with daily price swings of more than $5/b occurring on 13 occasions across March and April.

"I must point out, however, that the non-fundamental factors are elements that we as producers have no control over. What we can do is what we have always done – and that is to continue collaborating through DoC actions to help support market stability and economic growth," he stated.

Recalling the month of April 2020, Barkindo described it as perhaps the darkest and most sudden downturn in the history of the oil industry when global oil demand dropped by more than 20 million barrels a day (mb/d), and industries and populations locked down.

The Nigerian-born Barkindo reiterated that from the oil market perspective, what was clear was that Russia's oil and other liquids exports of more than 7 mb/d cannot be made up from elsewhere. "The spare capacity just does not exist," he stated. The statement was not unconnected to the demand from the West that Russia oil and gas should be cut off.

He urged global leaders to continue to support the type of multilateralism exhibited in the deal that returned some semblance of stability to the market in 2020 to ensure an unhindered, stable and secure flow of energy to the whole world.

According to him, the events and challenges the world currently face were fluid and constantly evolving, promising that OPEC will continue to monitor events.

Barkindo added that the assessment for 2022 had dropped from 4.2 per cent to 3.9 per cent taking into account the implications of the conflict in Ukraine, as well as the ongoing effects of the pandemic.

"Global oil demand growth for 2021 remains similar to last month, at 5.7 mb/d, but 2022 growth has been revised down by 0.5 mb/d to stand at 3.7 mb/d. This mostly reflects the downward revision in world economic growth," he stressed.

He confirmed that the latest data showed that OPEC production conformity levels reached 157 per cent in March, and stand at 113 per cent overall since May 2020.

"As of March 2022, participating countries were producing 2.37 mb more on a daily basis than in August of 2021. Some countries continue to produce under their agreed levels, with the shortfall at 1.45 mb/d in March," Barkindo said.

He urged members to be cognisant that commitments for the emergency release of oil stocks from International Energy Agency (IEA) members, amount to 120 million barrels to be released over a six-month period.

"The US has agreed to contribute about 60 million barrels to this, part of a larger drawdown from its Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR) announced on 31 March.

Continued online

NNPC: Nigeria Faced with Energy Insecurity, Hydrocarbons Revenue Optimisation Challenges

Emmanuel Addeh in Abuja

The Nigerian National Petroleum Company (NNPC) Limited has said Nigeria was facing significant challenges in ensuring energy security for the country as well as maximising the country's revenues from its hydrocarbon resources.

The Chairman of the company's board, Mrs. Margery Okadigbo, speaking at the ongoing Offshore Technology Conference (OTC) in Texas, United States, with the theme: "Energy transition and the future of Africa," further posited that Nigeria requires significant investments in the oil and gas sector to accelerate the country's energy transition plan.

The country is still battling with providing basic electricity for majority of its citizens occasioned in part by the non-availability of gas, while it continues to import all its petroleum products.

In addition, despite the skyrocketing international oil prices, Nigeria has not been able to optimise its revenues due to the inability to meet its Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) quota as well as huge petrol subsidy payment totalling N4 trillion this year.

None of the country's refineries currently functions, prompting massive importation of the needed fuels with the associated foreign exchange leakages.

On the transition programme to cleaner fuels, during the recently-concluded COP26 summit in Glasgow, President Muhammadu Buhari pledged that Nigeria would cut its carbon emissions and reach net-zero by 2060, 10 years behind more developed nations.

Speaking at the conference, the recently appointed NNPC chairman explained that achieving and sustaining a carbon neutral economy requires inclusive policy actions that guarantee access to finance and low carbon technology.

Okadigbo added that the increasing social and environmental pressures on many energy companies had raised questions about the role of oil and gas in a changing energy economy, and the position of the companies in the societies in which they operate.

According to her, as world leaders and businesses join the global solidarity against climate change and reduction of carbon emissions, the NNPC Ltd has been taken some strides in lowering it's carbon footprint, sustaining energy security and driving prosperity in Nigeria.

"This is the topic that we have taken up in different energy fora and is consistent to our multi-layer consideration on the future of oil and gas and our transition plans.

NEWS



OSHIOMHOLE FOR PRESIDENT...

L-R: All Progressives Congress (APC) Presidential Aspirant, Adams Oshiomhole; Senator Alimikhena Francis and Deputy Majority Leader, House of Representatives, Peter Akpatason, during Oshiomhole's official declaration for president 2023 in Abuja ...yesterday

PHOTO: ENOCK REUBEN

NCC Issues 5G Licence to MTN, Mafab Communications

Operators to roll out network in August

Emma Okonji

The Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) has confirmed the issuance of final letters of award of the Fifth Generation (5G) Spectrum Licences to MTN and Mafab Communications, winners of the 3.5 gigahertz (GHz) spectrum auction conducted by the Commission on December 13, 2021.

With the issuance of the licence, both operators are set for 5G network rollout anytime soon.

The CEO of MTN, Mr. Karl Toriola, had penultimate week, said the telecoms company had commenced 5G infrastructure rollout on its existing network nationwide and would roll out 5G services by next quarter of the year.

The Management of NCC, led by its Executive Vice Chairman, Prof. Umar Danbatta, confirmed the issuance of 5G licence to the Board of Commissioners at the Board's special meeting, which took place on Wednesday, April 20 and Thursday, April 21, 2022 where they considered update from management on the status of the spectrum auction.

A statement issued by NCC yesterday and signed by its Director, Public Affairs, Dr. Ikechukwu Adinde, read: "With the issuance of the final letters of awards of 5G spectrum and in line with the 5G auction's Information Memorandum (IM), the two licensees are now expected to accelerate deployment of 5G network that will usher Nigeria into a more robust Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) and a more digitised Nigerian economy among the comity of nations.

"In line with the terms and conditions of the 5G licence, the licensees are expected to commence rollout of 5G services, effective from August 24, 2022."

The statement further added: "The 5G network, when deployed, will bring a lot of benefits and opportunities that will engender accelerated growth and smart living in the country.

"The technology is also expected to bring substantial network improvements, including higher connection speed, mobility and capacity, as well as low-latency capabilities."

Following a transparent and credible auction of 3.5GHz on December 13, 2021, the National Frequency Management Council (NFMC), chaired by the Minister of Communications and Digital Economy, Dr. Isa Ibrahim Pantami, had, on February 22, 2022, officially handed over the spectrum allocation for 5G deployment as well as the federal government-approved National Policy on 5G to the Commission.

Subsequently, the Commission had on February 24, 2022, confirmed the full payment of $273.6 million each by the two spectrum winners, in addition to spectrum assignment fee paid by MTN, for the 5G spectrum licence.

The NCC is optimistic that effective implementation of the National Policy on 5G would accelerate the actualisation of the national targets in the Nigerian National Broadband Plan (NNBP) 2020-2025, the National Digital Economy Policy and Strategy (NDEPS) 2020-2030, as well as other sectoral policies designed to enhance Nigeria's digital transformation.

While the licensees are expected to meet the timetable regarding their 5G network rollout obligations, the NCC has called for the collective efforts and support of the private-sector and government towards transforming every aspect of the nation's economy through 5G, which it said, would herald greater transformation than what the nation witnessed with the 1G, 2G, 3G and 4G.

At 50,000 Basis Points, Stock Market Hits over 13-year High

Kayode Tokede

The Nigerian Exchange Limited (NGX) opened the holiday- shortened week to extend gains from last week as the All-Share Index crossed the 50,000 basis points psychological mark, the highest point since August 06, 2008.

Precisely, the NGX All-Share Index rose by 487.47 basis points or 0.98 per cent to close at 50,126.41 basis points, from 49,638.94 basis points last week to hit over 13-year historical high.

According to the NGX statistics, investors' buy interests in BUA Cement which appreciated by 8.16 per cent, alongside consumer goods, Okomu Oil that also gained 10 per cent and Nigerian Breweries that rose by 9.98 per cent, were the major drivers of the stock market yesterday.

Consequently, the stock market in its year-to-date (YTD) return rose to 17.35 per cent, while market capitalisation gained N263 billion to close at N27.02 trillion from N26.761 trillion the market closed before the two-day holiday.

Commenting on the bullish market performance, the Vice President, Highcap securities Limited, Mr. David Adnori attributed the psychological growth to impressive corporate earnings for first quarter ended March 31, 2022 and hike in global oil price.

He added that foreign investors have renewed their interest in stocks on the bourse with strong fundamentals.

Speaking also, analyst at PAC Holdings, Mr. Wole Adeyeye, said: "There are some foreign investors' interest in some multinational companies like Guinness Nigeria Plc that has hits N100 per share. So, some investors that could not buy Guinness Nigeria are moving to Nigerian Breweries, among other stocks on the NGX."

He added that: "Foreign and local investors are taking advantage of undervalued stocks and the first quarter corporate earnings are fundamentals driving investors buy interest on the NGX."

However, the market sentiment, as measured by market breadth closed positive as 31 stocks gained, relative to 27 losers. Okomu Oil and Wema Bank recorded the highest price gain of 10 per cent each to close at N161.70 and N3.85 respectively, per share.

Nigerian Breweries followed with a gain 9.98 per cent to close at N62.80, while Eterna and Presco appreciated by 9.97 per cent each to close at N6.62 and N157.70 respectively, per share.

On the other hand, Oando led the losers' chart by 10 per cent to close at N5.67, per share. Trans-Nationwide Express followed with a decline of 9.88 per cent to close at 73 kobo, while AXA Mansard Insurance depreciated by 7.79 per cent to close at N2.25, per share.

Ikeja Hotel declined by 7.14 per cent to close at N1.30, while Cutix depreciated by 6.15 per cent to close at N2.29, per share.

However, the total volume of trades decreased by 89.55 per cent to 669.299 million units, valued at N5.989 billion, and exchanged in 7,251 deals.

Transactions in the shares of Union Bank of Nigeria (UBA) topped the activity chart with 263.647 million shares valued at N166.099 million.

Transnational Corporation of Nigeria (Transcorp) followed with 74.058 million shares worth N86.724 million, while AIICO Insurance traded 31.031 million shares valued at N24.721 million.

Chams traded 28.926 million shares valued at N66.531 million, while Access Holdings transacted 23.805 million shares worth N229.513 million.

According to analysts InvestmentOne Research, "The equities market closed on a bullish note today due to the gains recorded in the Consumer Goods and Industrial sectors.

"Going forward, we expect investor's sentiments to be swayed by the search for real positive returns and developments in the interest rate space. We reiterate that this may be a great period to pick up some quality names with a medium to long-term investment horizon."

FG Hopeful of Return of 96 Benin Artefacts from Cologne

Olawale Ajimotokan in Abuja

Nigeria's Ambassador to Germany, Mr. Yusuf Tuggar has said the federal government was confident that the 96 Benin artefacts that were looted by the British Colonial masters about 125 years ago, and domiciled in Cologne, Germany would be returned to the country.

Tuggar, gave the assurance at the, 'I Miss You Exhibition' at Rautenstrauch-Joest Museum, Cologne attended by the city's Deputy Mayor, Andreas Wolter, the Director of the museum, Nannete Snoep, the Chairman Edo United, Cologne, Samuel Egharevba and art historian Professor Peju Layiwola.

He said the raison d'etre of the Benin artefacts could only be fully appreciated if they are returned to their source of origin for better understanding.

The Nigerian ambassador said the return of the Benin Bronzes would catalyse the colonial healing process like no other before, because of the exceptional nature of how the cultural items were looted.

"Now imagine, if you will, that the Reliquary of the Three Magi were to be stolen at gunpoint and the emptiness that would be created in the soul of this proud city.

"Make no mistake, the traditions and ceremonies in which many of the Benin objects played a central role have continued without them, often with poor substitutes. And this, answers one of the questions posed in the invitation: Who Misses Them?" he said.

He derided the colonial government for using weapons to sack and pillage Benin, killing its citizens and even taking pictures with the looted items, comparing the action to modern equivalent of sending a postcard back home.

"Even the Oba of Benin was not spared; he was taken away the same way the Bronzes were. It is our fervent hope, that the return would also become a salubrious genesis for a re-examination of the teleology of museums as a whole, particularly ethnological and archaeological museums that could do with ontological adjustments in the 21st century," he said.

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NEWS



COURTESY VISIT TO MR GOVERNOR...

L-R: Managing Director/CEO, Lotus Bank Limited, Mrs. Kafilat Araoye in a discussion with Lagos State Governor, Mr. Babajide Sanwo-Olu, during a courtesy visit by the management team of the Bank, at Lagos House, Marina,... yesterday

Protesters Storm PDP, APC over Delay on Zoning, Insist Power Must Go South

●*Opposition party ignores protesters* ●*We've not taken a position yet, ruling party insists*

Chuks Okocha and **Adedayo Akinwale** in Abuja

A group of protesters, largely from a group by name, the Concerned Nigeria Citizens, yesterday, barricaded entrances to the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and the All Progressive Congress (APC) secretariat gates, insisting that power must shift to the southern part of the country after President Muhammadu Buhari's eight years in office.

The protesters that stormed the PDP national secretariat at about 11 am carried several placards on why the Nigeria's presidency must shift to south in 2023.

Although at the PDP national secretariat, known as the Wadata Plaza, no official of the party accorded them any audience, they thereafter proceeded to the Blantyre office of the APC, where the National Publicity Secretary, Mr. Felix Morka, told them the ruling party was yet to take a position.

At the PDP office in Wuse Zone 6, vehicular movement was disrupted due to the large presence of the protesters as motorists had to take alternate routes to navigate out of the traffic confusion.

Before departing the PDP office, leader of the group, Femi Odabinu, presented a letter to the national chairman, Dr. Iyorchia Ayu, in absentia.

According to the letter, which read in parts, the Concerned Nigeria Citizen stated, "This letter becomes imperative, in the wake of the National questions that have begun to emerge, on the zoning of the Presidential ticket of your party, ahead of the forthcoming 2023 Presidential election, in our country and presentation of zoning committee report expected to be laid today.

"We are seriously concerned as patriotic Nigerians, that just a few days to the presidential primaries of your party, the party is yet to intimate Nigerians about its decision, in respect of where it is zoning the Presidential ticket to.

"Recall, that the rotation of power in Nigeria, goes beyond mere aspiration of political parties, but also a tool, towards ensuring national unity and stability, and in this regard, candidates from the southern Nigeria, must be allowed to occupy the position of president in the country come 2023.

"We also wish to remind you, that the established convention is that power must rotate between the North and the South. Hence a president of northern extraction follows that of Southern extraction and vice versa. Any consideration outside of this is foul and may destabilise the polity.

"It is only fair, that after President Muhammadu Buhari, power must come to the south. Any argument against this is inimical to the unity and stability of our nation.

"It is equitable that once the above stands and power is conceded to the south, we will not only be respecting this established convention of power rotation, but we will also be contributing to the dire need, to restore stability and national cohesion, back into our polity.

"It is the turn of the southern part of the country to produce the next president, and we believe that your party, should have no difficulty in coming out with a categorical declaration, on this very important issue, in the next few days.

"This must be done without delay. The principle of federal character is enshrined in the 1999 Constitution, as amended. Remember, there won't be PDP if there is no country called Nigeria. Let us put Nigeria first in our resolutions.

"While wishing you the best as we move towards the general election, we wish to restate that nothing other than the rotation of power to the South, shall be acceptable to us, and our people," the letter to the two leading political parties stated.

But the APC National Publicity Secretary, Mr. Felix Morka, who addressed the protesters, reiterated the party has not taken a decision on zoning and promised that the party would ensure fairness to all Nigerians.

Meanwhile, one of the disqualified PDP presidential aspirants, Dr. Nwadukwu Anakwenze, yesterday, appeared before the party's Presidential Appeal Committee, headed by the National Chairman, Ayu.

Anakwenze, who arrived the PDP national secretariat at about 11.20 pm, went to committee meeting room, which took place at the NWC office.

He was disqualified by the Senator David Mark presidential screening committee, last Saturday, for failure to meet the criteria set for presidential aspirants of the party

The second presidential aspirant of the party that was disqualified, Cosmos Ndukwe, was knocked out because he took the party to court to compel rotation of the office of the presidential candidate of the PDP as contained in article 37 of the PDP constitution.

Anakwenze, however, came out with loads of files with him at about 1.40pmn and refused to comment on whether or not he had been cleared.

Lagos is Financially Credible, Says Sanwo-Olu

●*Assures that state will never default on loan repayment responsibilities*

Lagos State Governor, Mr. Babajide Sanwo-Olu, yesterday said the state remains a financially credible government to financial institutions.

Sanwo-Olu stressed that Lagos State had never defaulted in terms of repayment and other responsibilities.

Sanwo-Olu said this yesterday, when the management of Parallex Bank Limited led by its Managing Director, Olufemi Bakre, paid him a courtesy visit.

He said Lagos State government was open to doing business with any financial institutions, adding that his administration would continue to encourage all players without giving anyone unnecessary advantage.

Sanwo-Olu was quoted in a statement to have said his government was service-driven based on the administration's commitments to the citizens by improving quality of lives, providing security of lives and properties and providing a friendly and conducive environment for businesses to thrive.

"We are open to doing additional businesses with any of the financial institutions. Lagos will continue to be a major player in the public sector space and we are very disciplined because we never default on all our responsibilities in terms of repayment and others. So, I am very sure that we are a credible creditor to banks," he said.

Sanwo-Olu also received the management of the LOTUS Bank Limited led by its Managing Director, Kafilat Olaoye, during a courtesy visit at the Lagos House, Marina.

Speaking during the courtesy visit, Sanwo-Olu said his administration was embarking on developmental projects in different parts of the state to create value for residents of Lagos State.

He said Lagos State government would continue to collaborate with partners and stakeholders in the private sector who want to contribute to the growth and development of the state.

In his address, the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Parallex Bank Limited, Olufemi Bakre commended the Sanwo-Olu-led administration's giant strides in Lagos State, noting that the incumbent government's performance was visible in the area of transportation, health, making Lagos 21st Century economy, information and technology, security and governance.

He said his bank was ready to partner with the government to finance some State developmental projects like the Fourth Mainland Bridge.

The Managing Director of LOTUS Bank Limited, Kafilat Olaoye, who said her organisation was ready to partner with the state government in developmental projects, said Sanwo-Olu had done a lot in the last three years and deserved a second term in office based on the recent endorsement of the governor for reelection in 2023.

Payments of Helicopter Landing Fee Begins May 9

Kasim Sumaina in Abuja

Aviation stakeholders have disclosed that the collection of helicopter landing charges in the country would begin on May 9.

Also, it was gathered that stakeholders in the sub-sector and helicopter operators have been briefed on the concessionaire's mandate and informed of the planned collection of landing fees.

The body and Helicopter Services Operators in Nigeria, met yesterday, at the Port Harcourt International Airport, Omagwa, to deliberate with the management of Naebi Dynamic Concepts Limited, the concessionaire empowered by the Federal government of Nigeria to collect Helicopter landing charges as well as monitoring and surveillance of Helicopter movements in the country.

The Managing Director of the firm, Mr. Stanley Chike, in a brief interview with THISDAY, confirmed that the collection of Helicopter landing charges would begin on the 9th of May, 2022.

Chike noted: "Stakeholders would kindly recall that, the date of collection as stated, comes 90 days, after the inauguration of the consortium precisely on the 4th of February, 2022."

2023: PDP Updates Timetable, Schedule of Activities

Chuks Okocha in Abuja

The National Working Committee (NWC) of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), has announced an update of the party's timetable and schedule of activities for the 2023 general election.

The updates are as follow: Local Government Area (LGA) congress to elect one national delegate per LGA and one person living with disability in the 774 local government areas onTuesday, May 10, 2022.

The party also updated the State House of Assembly (State Constituency Congress) for Wednesday, May 18, 2022, while the House of Representatives primaries for Friday, May 20, 2022

Consequently, the primaries for Senatorial District is now billed to hold on Saturday, May 21, 2022, while that of governorship is for Monday, May 23, 2022.

Buhari Shocked, Sad over Killing of Couple Soldiers by IPOB

●*Orders security agencies to apprehend perpetrators*

Deji Elumoye in Abuja

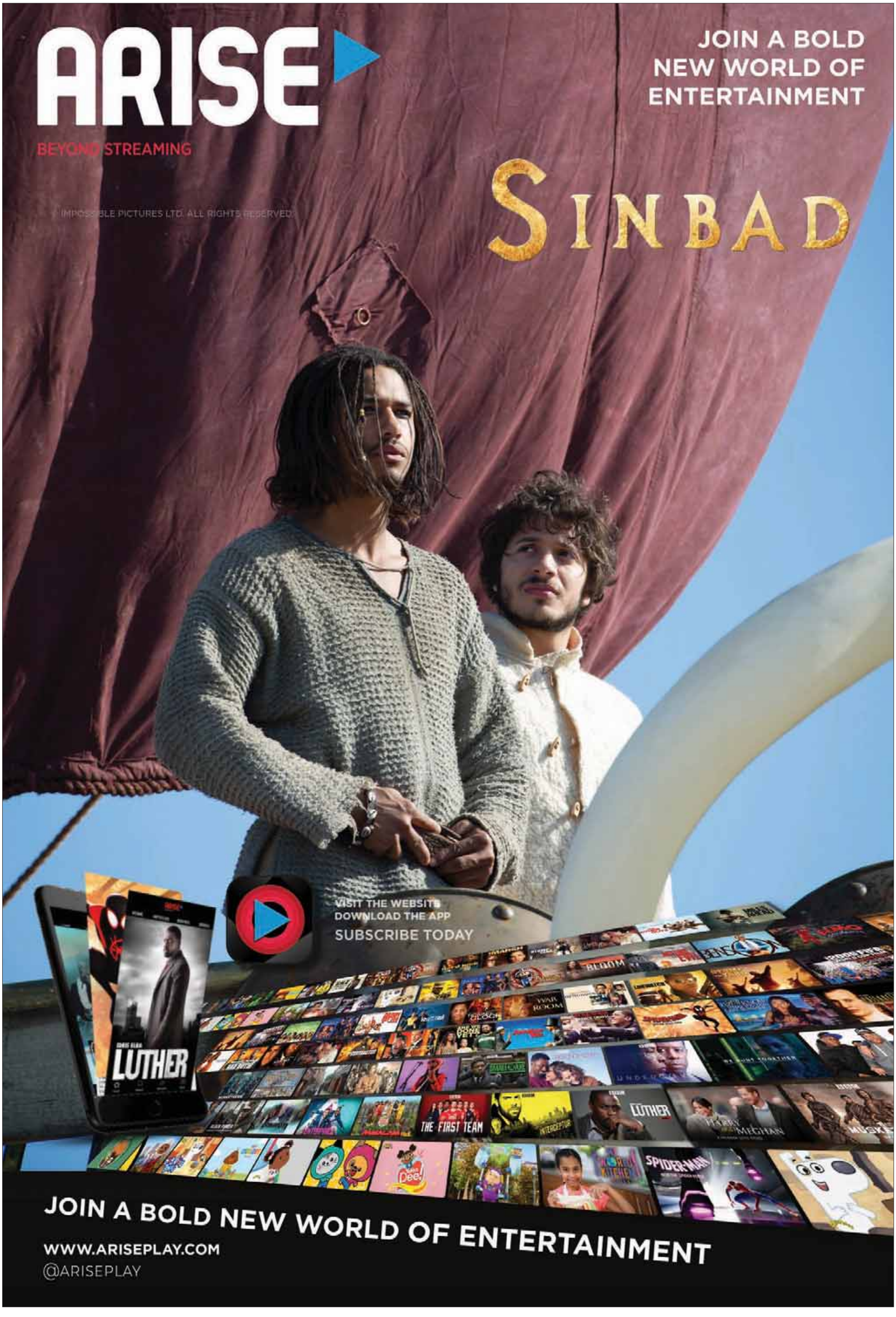
President Muhammadu Buhari, yesterday, expressed shock and sadness over the reported beheading of couple soldiers allegedly by the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) last Saturday.

The president, who condemned the barbarism of the perpetrators and similar acts of violence against law enforcement agents, described the development as alien to all cultures and civilizations.

In a release by his spokesman, Mallam Garba Shehu, President Buhari, on behalf of the government and people of Nigeria, expressed deep condolences to the Nigerian Army and the families of Master Warrant Officer Audu Linus and his partner, Private Gloria Mathew, who were beheaded after being shot by the terrorist group, IPOB, on Saturday as confirmed by the Nigerian Army.

The president, however, called on all community, regional and national leaders to "speak with one voice, to show that the entire country is one against this cruel and barbaric act of violence and this is unacceptable. Our thoughts and prayers are with the families of this sad and tragic incident."

Consequently, he has directed the military authorities and other security agencies to do their utmost in apprehending the perpetrators of these barbaric acts and bring them to justice.


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TEN

Meter Asset Provider Begins Monthly Distribution of 100,000 Meters in Abuja

Emmanuel Addeh in Abuja

To close the metering gap in the country, MOJEC International, one of the Meter Asset Providers (MAP) alongside its partners, has embarked on a nationwide monthly distribution of over 100,000 devices under the Phase 2 of the programme.

The company stated that it will also ensure customers are metered within 24-48 hours during the mobile distribution scheme within a specific community to help ensure all unmetered customers in the community are provided the assets.

It stated that all the processes including knowing the customers, surveys, to payment and installation of the devices are achieved in record time.

Group Managing Director/ Chief Executive Officer, MOJEC International, Chantelle Abdul, during the programme, said the scheme will help remove the complexities confronting consumers in getting the meters under the regular MAP process and create a convenient channel for customers to be metered.

The company launched the scheme alongside the Abuja Disco (AEDC) officials in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) in the first instance, stating that the mobile MAP exercise will be carried out nationwide in partnership with the nine Discos that it currently works with.

Abdul further stated that the scheme would save the consumers from falling prey to people extorting them with promises of assisting to obtain meters.

"Under the MAP scheme, consumers are to pay N63,061.32 for single phase meters and N117,910.69 for three-phase meters which will be refunded to them in the form of energy credit," she said.

She added that to participate, all the consumers needed to do was to register on the participating Discos' websites.

Chief Business Officer, AEDC Headquarters, Sani Usman, described the exercise as crucial, especially to the consumers who would now know exactly the amount of electricity being utilised upon having the meters installed.

According to him, the AEDC has set a distribution target of 100,000 meters per month, adding that it will be a continuous exercise until all electricity consumers within the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) are metered.

In his contribution, Regional Manager, AEDC FCT West, Chris Chime, stressed the importance of the initiative, stating that the AEDC had closed over 62,000 metering gap across the Kubwa/Suleja/Zuma axis of the FCT.

A consumer, Nnamdi Nzegwu expressed satisfaction with the mobile MAP initiative, acknowledging that meters were available and being installed within 24 hours.

He expressed optimism that more Nigerians would be encouraged to embrace the metering plan, so as to stop the menace of estimated billing and urged MOJEC and AEDC not to relent in getting more Nigerians metered.

GUTERRES: UN COMMITTED TO PEACEFUL NIGERIA

steadfast in its commitment to a peaceful Nigeria. Guterres stated this yesterday in Abuja during a two-day visit to the country.

Guterres called for the prosecution of those that attacked the UN House in Abuja on August 26, 2011, stressing that perpetrators of terrorism in Nigeria must be held to account. He said the international body dedicated to maintaining global peace and security was adopting a victim-centred approach to the fight against terrorism in the country.

Guterres, who also paid a working visit to President Muhammadu Buhari, disclosed that the UN had concluded plans to offer Nigeria an additional $351 million as part of its $1.1 billion humanitarian response scheme for the country.

Buhari, in his remarks, expressed Nigeria's gratitude to the UN and world leaders who were supporting the country in its fight against terrorism. He said the recent spotlight on Russia and Ukraine could easily distract attention from other pertinent global challenges.

The UN chief, who was on the last day of his two-day visit, laid a wreath in honour of victims of the August 26, 2011 terrorist attack on the UN House. The attack claimed the lives of 23 persons, including many UN staff and civilians.

"On that tragic day (August 26, 2011), an appalling terrorist attack on the UN House left 23 UN employees and civilians' dead and 16 injured," Guterres said. "Those staff members, who lost their lives, are heroes, who proudly served Nigerians through the UN organisations," he added.

The secretary-general stated, "We encourage all Nigerians, who have endured similar violence in their own communities. In our victim-centred approach, perpetrators must be held accountable."

Guterres thanked the Nigerian government for repairing the UN House, which had enabled the staff to return.

Speaking after meeting with the UN chief, Catholic Archbishop Emeritus of Abuja, Cardinal John Onaiyekan, told reporters that his interaction with Guterres was on how to resolve the dilemma of a country full of talented people, but facing a lot of challenges.

Onaiyekan said, "Nigerians are genuinely religious, but we see around us so much corruption and outright wickedness." He stated that it had become pertinent to interrogate how a nation could be so rich, but full of poor people; and how a nation could be full of talented people and yet hardly organised.

The priest laid the problem at the door of the government.

Onaiyekan said he told the UN secretary-general that Nigerians "are not satisfied with how far the rulers are dealing with the issues concerning us, the issue of poverty, the issue of insecurity, and the issues of social services. The government tells us they are doing their best and we say that their best is not good enough. We believe we can do better."

On the lingering herders-farmers' crisis, the Cardinal regretted the failure of the federal government to address the issue of armed herdsmen in the last 10 years, saying this is perpetuating the displacement of farmers.

He said, "It seems the displacement is becoming permanent and the herders are taking over the farmlands and the government still claims they have no way of bringing things back to normalcy. The result is that farmers can no longer farm and we are facing the prospects of famine, because the parts of Nigeria that used to produce a lot of food, many of them can no longer farm."

A Professor of Law at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Joy Ngozi Ezeilo, who also met the UN chief with her group, said, "We discussed the problems and the status of women in Nigeria and how he can help us to hold our elected officials to account, especially, when it comes to gender parity and women participation in politics."

During his meeting with Buhari, Guterres said following his visit to Borno State on Tuesday, "I came out of Borno with the sense that Nigeria is able to defeat this threat.

"We are very active in support of the humanitarian efforts of the Nigerian government and that is why we have called for an additional $351 million as part of the overall $1.1 billion for humanitarian response plan for Nigeria.

"But despite all they have seen and endured, the people I met remain hopeful and committed to returning to their communities and resuming their lives.

"To that end, I welcome the establishment of the Presidential Committee on the Repatriation, Return and Resettlement of Displaced Persons in the North-east.

"This spirit of hope amidst hardship – and solidarity in struggle – was also at the centre of my discussions with the presidency today."

The secretary-general said discussions with Buhari also touched on laying the groundwork for peaceful and democratic elections in the country next year, and the full participation of Nigerian women and young people.

While speaking with newsmen, Guterres stated that measures to address security challenges in the country, Lake Chad, and the Sahel, including the UN Integrated Strategy for the Sahel, were discussed during his meeting with Buhari.

According to him, "We also discussed the government's measures to address security challenges across the country. I want to extend my deepest condolences to the victims of the appalling attacks in Plateau State two and a half weeks ago. It's a tragic reminder of terrorism scourge across West Africa and the Sahel.

"Another reason why the United Nations is committed to supporting national and regional efforts to combat terrorism, violent extremism, organised crimes and the root causes, such as poverty, exclusion and food insecurity. This includes the UN's integrated strategy for the Sahel."

Guterres thanked Buhari for supporting the Multinational Joint Task Force and the Lake Chad Basin Commission, and promised more commitment from the UN on COVID-19 vaccination, vulnerability of countries to global warming, global food crisis response, and reform of the UN Security Council.

"I thanked President Buhari for his unwavering support of the Multinational Joint Task Force and the Lake Chad Basin Commission. And we also discussed the other challenges that, of course, Nigeria is facing today. Nigeria was, like all African countries, victim of the unequal recovery from COVID-19," he added.

The UN secretary-general said the war in Ukraine would make things worse with regard to global food, energy and financial systems.

He said, "Our analysis indicates that the war in Ukraine is only making things worse, setting in motion a three-dimensional crisis that is devastating global food, energy and financial systems for the developing countries.

"That is why in the earliest days of this war, I established the Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance, involving all UN agencies and international financial institutions.

"The steering committee is chaired by the Deputy Secretary-General that you know very well, Amina Mohammed, and the group has developed concrete recommendations in three areas.

"One, we need to ensure a steady flow of food and energy through open markets by lifting all unnecessary export restrictions, directing surpluses and reserves to those in need, and keeping a lid on food prices to calm our market volatility.

"But let me be clear, there is really no true solution to the problem of global food security without bringing back the agricultural production of Ukraine and the food and fertiliser production of Russia and Belarus into world markets, despite the war. I'm determined to do everything to facilitate a dialogue that can help achieve this objective.

"Two, on energy, countries must resist hoarding, and release strategic stockpiles and additional reserves to countries in need, while accelerating the deployment of renewable energy.

"And, three, international financial institutions need to urgently increase liquidity and fiscal space and improve existing debt relief mechanisms, so governments can now not only avoid default, but they can invest in their people, especially in universal social protection at this moment of rising prices.

"The United Nations presented concrete proposals during the spring meetings of the World Bank and the IMF, ranging from the mobilisation of the various funds and instruments that already exist – but are not sufficiently implemented – to a much stronger use and redistribution of special drawing rights, as well as effective debt relief measures."

Guterres, who was in Borno State on Tuesday, said what he saw was a departure from the picture of hopelessness and despair that had been painted, adding, "People exuded hope."

He stated, "Yesterday (Tuesday), I visited Maiduguri, where the United Nations is supporting the internally displaced. I was deeply moved by their stories and struggles.

"These include the struggles with hunger, with the World Food Programme projecting 4.1 million people in the North-east of Nigeria to be food insecure in the upcoming lean season.

"Yesterday, I had the opportunity to visit Borno State and I must confess I arrived in Borno with the impression caused by so many years in which I was hearing stories about how dramatic the situation was, so terrible. The suffering of the people, how impossible to control the terrorist activities, a sense of despair.

"But the Borno I met yesterday was the Borno of hope and I saw an enlightened policy, aiming not only at defeating militarily the terrorists, but at addressing the root causes of terrorism.

"I saw the governor committed to re-establish the confidence between the people in the government, committed to provide the people in their different villages around the state the capacity to protect themselves.

"Committed to create conditions for the return of the displaced, but also for the reintegration of those that have abandoned Boko Haram, that have finally discovered that terrorism is a crime against humanity and the crime against God's will and that now need support to reintegrate into society, and that support I could witness in the visit I made.

"That's why yesterday I appealed strongly to the international community to fully support what is being done in Borno State, to make sure that the hope that I saw can be transformed into a reality of peace and prosperity for everybody.

"And I believe Nigeria and its people have a big role to play in shaping solutions to the global crisis engulfing our world."

Earlier, Buhari noted that the country and the African continent were already concerned that the attention on Russia and Ukraine could crowd out other global issues. He added that the visit of the UN chief clearly showed that "the world has not forgotten us."

According to Buhari, terrorism remains a threat to global peace, security and progress, with many killed, and millions displaced by the insurgents.

He added, "When we assumed office, the North-east was the major security problem we inherited in 2015, but we have been able to make people understand that you cannot kill people and shout 'Allahu Akbar,' (God is great!).

"It is either you don't know what you are saying or you are simply stupid. God is a God of justice, so you cannot kill people and say God is great. Luckily, the people understood our message and it has made great impact."

Buhari told his visitor that the government had started a gradual, but steady, process of resettlement and reintegration, where citizens were encouraged to return to their farms, businesses and other pursuits in life.

The president thanked the secretary general for the maiden visit to Nigeria.

FG: WITH LEKKI PORT, NIGERIA TO WREST LOST CARGOES FROM NEIGHBOURS, TARGETS OVER $201BN IN TAXES, DUTIES

during a tour of the Lekki Deep Sea Port, also estimated that over $201 billion in taxes, royalties and duties would be generated for the Nigerian government when the port commences operations in the fourth quarter of 2022.

He said the aggregate impact of the Lekki Deep Sea Port put at $361 billion in 45 years would be over 200 times the cost of building the port.

According to him, the deep sea port would be a game changer because of the impact it would have on the nation's economy when completed.

"The investment is huge - $1.53 billion on fixed assets and $800 million dollars on construction. In addition, it will create 169,972 jobs and bring revenues totalling $201 billion to state and federal governments through taxes, royalties and duties.

"The direct and induced business revenue impact is estimated at $158 billion in addition to a qualitative impact on manufacturing, trade and commercial services sector," he added.

Speaking further, the minister said: "The Lekki Deep Sea Port, a build, own, operate and transfer concern, is a massive project, a game changer and a pace setter. It is the deepest sea port in Nigeria and West Africa, and that in itself is a unique advantage.

"A major advantage we have to leverage is transshipment. With this port, Nigeria will become a transshipment hub and the revenue we are currently losing to our neighboring countries will come here and that is big," he said.

"As you know, this project is being done in phases. Phase one has reached 89 per cent and will be completed in September this year. The facilities here are first class. We have seven ships to shore cranes and 21 RTG cranes.

"No port in Nigeria currently has this. The excellent equipment is why this port can do 18,000 twenty-foot equivalent unit (teu), which is more than four times the number that can currently be handled by our other ports," he averred.

Responding, the Managing Director, Lekki Deep Sea Port, Du Ruogang, said the port would change the economic landscape of Nigeria and West Africa at large.

He said the Lekki port would soon become a central hub for the West African region.

Also, the Executive Secretary, Nigerian Shippers Council, (NSC), Emmanuel Jime, described the port as a game changer for the Nigerian economy, but stressed the need for critical infrastructure to be developed to ease evacuation of cargoes out of the port.

"We need to map out modalities on how we can evacuate cargoes out of the port so that we do not have a replica of Apapa and Tin Can ports," he said.

"This visit is the second we are making to this area within a month, coming after our trip to the Dangote Petroleum Refinery and Petrochemicals as well as the Dangote Fertilizer on April 3rd 2022," he added.

WITH OVER N30BN FROM SALE OF FORMS, APC GETS FIREPOWER FOR 2023 ELECTIONS

forms; and roughly N6.54 billion from the sale of senatorial forms. The party could make about N10.8 billion from the sale of forms to a minimum of three House of Representatives aspirants from each of the country's 360 federal constituencies. And it could generate about N7.93 billion from the sale of forms to a minimum of four aspirants vying for each of the 991 House of Assembly seats across the country.

THISDAY arrived at these estimates looking at the number of likely contestants in the various categories of elective offices.

So far, 23 presidential aspirants have indicated interest in the presidency under the ruling party and APC is expected to generate N2.3 billion from the sale of presidential forms. As more contenders join the race or drop out of the race, the figures would either go up or come down.

With governorship elections holding in 28 states next year, THISDAY estimated that there would be at least two aspirants from each of the states, and at N50 million per aspirant, the party stood to rake in N2.8 billion.

For the Senate, there are 109 senatorial seats in the country, and with at least three aspirants from each senatorial district, and forms going for N20 million, the party may rake in N6.54 billion. The 360 House of Representatives seats, with an estimated three aspirants per federal constituency, and the form going for N10 million, give the party about N10.8 billion.

In addition, with an estimated four people picking nomination forms to contest in the primary election for each of the 991 House of Assembly seats, at N2 million per form, APC is likely to rake in N7.93 billion.

Those that have either indicated interest in contesting the APC presidential primaries or picked their forms include the vice president, Professor Yemi Osinbajo, Asiwaju Bola Tinubu, Governor Kayode Fayemi of Ekiti State, Governor Yahaya Bello of Kogi State, Governor David Umahi of Ebonyi State, Governor Muhammed Abubakar of Jigawa State, Governor Ben Ayade of Cross River State, Senator Rochas Okorocha, and former Senate President Ken Nnamani.

Others are former National Chairman of APC, Adams Oshiohmole; former Governor of Ogun State, Senator Ibikunle Amosun; Minister of Transportation, Rt. Hon. Chibuike Amaechi; Minister of Labour and Employment, Dr. Chris Ngige; Minister of Science and Technology, Dr, Ogbonnaya Onu; Minister of Niger Delta, Senator Godswill Akpabio; Senate President, Dr. Ahmed Lawan; Minister of State for Education, Chukwuemeka Nwajiuba; Gbenga Olawepo; Ihechukwu Dallas; Chima Usman; Tein Jack Rich; and Pastor Tunde Bakare.

Political analysts believe with

Continued on page 43

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Summary of Financial Statements For the Year Ended 31 December 2021

Consolidated statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income

	Notes	Group 31 December 2021 N'000	Group 31 December 2020 N'000	Company 31 December 2021 N'000	Company 31 December 2020 N'000
Revenue	6	82,107,987	58,715,576	82,197,987	58,715,576
Cost of sales	7.1	(77,933,580)	(53,207,683)	(78,192,664)	(53,363,485)
Gross profit		**4,264,407**	**5,507,893**	**4,005,323**	**5,352,091**
Selling and distribution expenses	7.2	(235,660)	(142,115)	(233,988)	(140,105)
General and administrative expenses	7.3	(4,233,926)	(3,915,938)	(3,954,891)	(3,684,441)
Other income	11	231,632	424,626	230,146	423,395
Foreign exchange gain/(loss)	12.1	210,012	(354,058)	210,012	(354,058)
Operating profit		**236,465**	**1,520,408**	**256,635**	**1,596,882**
Finance income	12	9,091	29,356	9,091	29,356
Finance cost	13	(1,181,971)	(1,001,618)	(1,180,555)	(1,001,618)
(Loss)/profit before tax		**(936,415)**	**548,146**	**(914,829)**	**624,620**
Taxation	14	(163,717)	392,896	(163,717)	392,896
(Loss)/profit for the year		**(1,100,132)**	**941,042**	**(1,078,546)**	**1,017,516**
Other comprehensive income net of tax		-	-	-	-
Total comprehensive (loss)/income for the year		**(1,100,132)**	**941,042**	**(1,078,546)**	**1,017,516**
(Loss)/profit for the year attributable to:					
– Owners of the parent		(1,100,128)	941,057	(1,078,546)	1,017,516
– Non-controlling interests		(4)	(15)	-	-
		(1,100,132)	941,042	(1,078,546)	1,017,516
Other comprehensive (loss)/income attributable to:					
– Owners of the parent		(1,100,128)	941,057	(1,078,546)	1,017,516
– Non-controlling interests		(4)	(15)	-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year		**(1,100,132)**	**941,042**	**(1,078,546)**	**1,017,516**
(Loss)/Earnings per share:					
Basic	28	(0.84)	0.72	(0.83)	0.78
Diluted	28	(0.84)	0.72	(0.83)	0.78

The accompanying notes form an integral part of these financial statements

Consolidated and separate statement of financial position

	Notes	Group 31 December 2021 N'000	Group 31 December 2020 N'000	Company 31 December 2021 N'000	Company 31 December 2020 N'000
Non-current assets					
Property, plant and equipment	15	12,401,291	11,398,386	11,779,193	10,823,488
Intangible assets	15	64,451	76,244	64,451	76,244
Right of Use	16	2,065,088	2,046,208	2,065,088	2,046,208
Other investments	18.2	625,382	569,382	625,382	569,382
Investment in subsidiaries	18.1	-	-	50,990	50,990
		15,156,212	14,090,220	14,585,104	13,566,312
Current assets					
Inventories	20	12,037,556	6,899,708	12,019,495	6,858,012
Trade and other receivables	21	12,367,813	12,612,734	12,960,126	13,228,041
Prepayments	17	94,560	108,609	94,233	106,657
Cash and bank balances	22	6,426,159	2,056,285	6,422,003	2,033,293
		30,926,088	21,677,336	31,495,857	22,226,003
Total assets		**46,082,300**	**35,767,556**	**46,080,961**	**35,792,315**
Non-current liabilities					
Borrowings	23	1,060,374	448,738	1,060,374	448,738
Lease Liability	26	147,664	213,274	147,664	213,274
Deferred tax liability	19	951,211	1,161,333	992,212	1,202,334
Decommissioning liability	24	170,866	131,878	157,020	119,963
		2,330,115	**1,955,223**	**2,357,270**	**1,984,309**
Current liabilities					
Trade and other payables	25	11,329,921	8,291,448	11,292,725	8,294,213
Borrowings	23	20,056,872	12,050,514	20,051,081	12,050,514
Tax payable	14.3	247,017	121,450	246,220	120,653
		31,633,810	**20,463,412**	**31,590,026**	**20,465,380**
Total liabilities		**33,963,925**	**22,418,635**	**33,947,296**	**22,449,689**
Equity attributable to shareholders					
Share capital	27	652,072	652,072	652,072	652,072
Share premium	27	5,796,053	5,796,053	5,796,053	5,796,053
Retained earnings		5,670,208	6,900,750	5,685,540	6,894,501
		12,118,333	13,348,875	12,133,665	13,342,626
Non -controlling interest		42	46	-	-
Total equity		**12,118,375**	**13,348,921**	**12,133,665**	**13,342,626**
Total equity and liabilities		**46,082,300**	**35,767,556**	**46,080,961**	**35,792,315**

The financial statements were approved by the board of directors and authorized for issue on 30th March, 2022. They were signed on its behalf by:

Nnamdi Obiagwu
Ag. Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer
FRC/2020/IODN/003/00000022059

Abudukerimu Sule
Chief Financial Officer

Gabriel Ogbechie
Chairman

The accompanying notes form an integral part of these financial statements
* Waiver has been obtained from the Financial Reporting Council of Nigeria to allow the officers to sign the Financial Statements

Summary of Financial Statements For First Quarter Ended 31st March 2022

Consolidated statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income for first quarter ended 31st March 2022

	Notes	Group 31 March 2022 N'000	Group 31 March 2021 N'000	Company 31 March 2022 N'000	Company 31 March 2021 N'000
Revenue	6	26,823,002	14,389,978	26,779,338	14,461,577
Cost of sales	7.1	(24,522,387)	(13,007,247)	(24,522,367)	(13,172,451)
Gross profit		**2,300,615**	**1,382,731**	**2,256,971**	**1,289,126**
Selling and distribution expenses	7.2	(33,491)	(36,931)	(33,491)	(36,257)
General and administrative expenses	7.3	(1,103,056)	(795,197)	(1,035,953)	(739,328)
Other income	11	40,703	113,262	40,663	112,772
Foreign exchange gain / (Loss)	12.1	-	-	-	-
Operating profit		**1,204,771**	**663,865**	**1,228,190**	**626,313**
Finance income	12	22,424	-	22,424	-
Finance cost	13	(215,616)	(289,669)	(215,616)	(289,660)
(Loss)/Profit before tax		**1,011,579**	**374,196**	**1,034,998**	**336,653**
Taxation	14	(134,115)	(119,743)	(133,897)	(107,729)
(Loss)/Profit for the year		**877,464**	**254,453**	**901,101**	**228,924**
Other comprehensive income net of tax		-	-	-	-
Total comprehensive (loss)/income for the year		**877,464**	**254,453**	**901,101**	**228,924**
(Loss)/profit for the year attributable to:					
– Owners of the parent		877,468	254,446	901,101	228,924
– Non-controlling interests		(5)	8	-	-
		877,464	254,453	901,101	228,924
Other comprehensive (loss)/income attributable to:					
– Owners of the parent		877,468	254,468	901,101	228,924
– Non-controlling interests		(5)	(15)	-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year		877,464	254,453	901,101	228,924
Earnings per share:					
Basic	28	0.67	0.20	0.69	0.18
Diluted	28	0.67	0.20	0.69	0.18

The accompanying notes form an integral part of these financial statements

Consolidated and separate statement of financial position

	Notes	Group 31 March 2022 N'000	Group 31 December 2021 N'000	Company 31 March 2022 N'000	Company 31 December 2021 N'000
Non-current assets					
Property, plant and equipment	15	12,366,377	12,401,291	11,750,885	11,779,193
Intangible assets	15	58,945	64,451	58,945	64,451
Right of Use	16	1,965,192	2,065,088	1,965,192	2,065,088
Other investments	18.2	625,382	625,382	625,382	625,382
Investment in subsidiaries	18.1	-	-	50,990	50,990
		15,015,896	15,156,212	14,451,394	14,585,104
Current assets					
Inventories	20	9,246,131	12,037,556	9,217,771	12,019,495
Trade and other receivables	21	12,802,684	12,367,815	13,422,128	12,960,123
Prepayments	17	107,548	94,560	120,165	94,233
Cash and bank balances	22	11,941,273	6,426,159	11,937,077	6,422,003
		34,097,636	30,926,090	34,697,141	31,495,854
Total assets		**49,113,532**	**46,082,304**	**49,148,537**	**46,080,958**
Non-current liabilities					
Borrowings	23	1,060,374	1,060,374	1,060,374	1,060,374
Lease Liability	26	147,664	147,664	147,664	147,664
Deferred tax liability	19	951,211	951,211	992,212	992,212
Decomissioning liability	24	170,866	170,866	157,020	157,020
		2,330,115	**2,330,115**	**2,357,270**	**2,357,270**
Current liabilities					
Trade and other payables	25	18,172,770	11,329,921	18,147,649	11,292,725
Borrowings	23	17,233,673	20,056,872	17,228,736	20,051,081
Tax payable	14.3	381,132	247,017	380,117	246,220
		33,787,575	**31,633,810**	**33,756,502**	**31,590,026**
Total liabilities		**36,117,690**	**33,963,925**	**36,113,772**	**33,947,296**
Equity attributable to shareholders					
Share capital	27	652,072	652,072	652,072	652,072
Share premium	27	5,796,053	5,796,053	5,796,053	5,796,053
Retained earnings		6,547,676	5,670,208	6,586,641	5,685,540
		12,995,801	12,118,333	13,034,766	12,133,665
Non -controlling interest		38	46	-	-
Total equity		**12,995,839**	**12,118,379**	**13,034,765**	**12,133,665**
Total equity and liabilities		**49,113,532**	**46,082,304**	**49,148,537**	**46,080,958**

The financial statements were approved by the board of directors and authorised for issue on 28th April, 2022. They were signed on its behalf by:

Benjamin Nwaezeige
Ag. Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer
FRC/2022/PRO/DIR/003/23332

Abudukerimu Sule
Chief Financial Officer
FRC/2022/PRO/ICAN/001/00000023899

The complete information on the 2021 Audited and First Quarter 2022 Unaudited Financial Statement can be found on the company's website **www.eternaplc.com**

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PUBLIC NOTICE

INVITATION TO STAKEHOLDERS' CONSULTATION ON EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES

In line with its mandate as enshrined in Section 4 of the Nigerian Communications Act (NCA), 2003 to ensure the management and administration of frequency spectrum for the communications sector as well as to provide an enabling environment for the growth and development of the telecoms industry in Nigeria, the Nigerian Communications Commission invites the general public to the Annual Industry Stakeholders' Forum on emerging technologies.

The Stakeholders' Consultative Forum for the year 2022 with theme: **Regulatory Roadmap for IoT Ecosystem in Nigeria** is scheduled to hold as follows:

Date:	Monday, 9th May 2022
Venue:	Sheraton Hotel, Ikeja, Lagos
Time:	9:00 am prompt

The Forum will feature paper presentations by seasoned and experienced local and international industry professionals.

We look forward to welcoming you at the event.

Signed:
Dr. Ikechukwu Adinde
Director, Public Affairs

NCC
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COMMUNICATIONS
COMMISSION

Nigerian Communications Commission
Plot 423 Aguiyi Ironsi Street, Maitama, Abuja,
Tel: +234-9-461-7000-29 Fax: +234-9-461-7514
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Katchey Company Limited
on the
Commissioning of the
Katchey Laboratories,
and Groundbreaking
of the Katchey Complex
Over the last 20 years, we have watched very closely Katchey's consistent passion and support for the development of excellence in science and technology in Nigeria. We are very delighted to see the remarkable progress being made with the commissioning of the Laboratory and groundbreaking of the Katchey Complex.
Waltersmith is glad to be associated with you and we wish you greater successes ahead!

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Plot 174 Adetokunbo Ademola Crescent, PMB 5170 Wuse, Abuja
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PRESS RELEASE

PFAs Comply with N5 Billion Minimum Regulatory Capital Requirement

The National Pension Commission (PenCom) is pleased to inform all stakeholders and the general public that as at 27 April 2022, all Pension Fund Administrators (PFAs) have complied with the Commission's directive for the increase of the Minimum Regulatory Capital (Shareholders' Fund) from N1 billion to N5 billion.

The Commission had approved the recapitalisation exercise for the PFAs with a 12-month transition period from 27 April 2021 to 27 April 2022. The exercise became expedient as the value of pension fund assets under management and custody had grown exponentially by 244 percent, from N3 trillion in 2012 (when the previous recapitalisation was done) to N12.29 trillion (as at December 31, 2020). The sustained growth in assets implies greater fiduciary responsibilities that require more operational capacity by the PFAs. The urgent need to ramp up PFAs capacity to manage the increasing number of registered contributors and value of pension fund assets under management led to the recapitalisation exercise.

The Commission approved the acquisition of Investment One Pension Managers, First Guarantee Pension Limited, IEI-Anchor Pension Managers Limited and AIICO Pension Managers Limited. The merger between Tangerine Pensions Limited and APT Pension Funds Managers Limited and subsequent change of name of the merged entity to Tangerine APT Pensions Limited was also approved.

With the conclusion of the recapitalisation exercise, stakeholders, particularly RSA holders, should expect increased effectiveness and efficiency as well as improved service delivery from PFAs.

SIGNED: MANAGEMENT

@_pencom_

PenCom YouTube channel

Glorious Transition



Late Mr Uzo Eneli

We Commiserate with the Eneli's over the loss of thier Son, brother and father Mr Uzo Eneli. May his gentle soul rest in perfect peace Amen.

We Lost An Icon

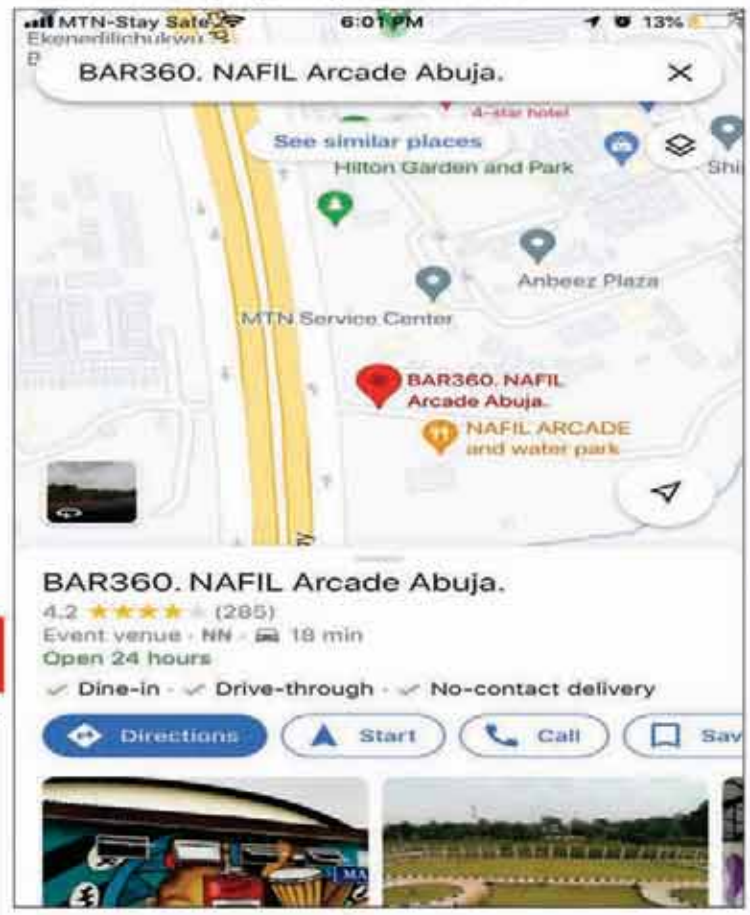
Mr Uzo Eneli

Feb. 5, 1971 - April 22, 2022

May His Soul Rest in Peace

Venue: Nafil Event Center Abuja zone 5.

Bellow is the google map to the Venue



SERVICE OF SONGS
Friday 6 of May 2022.
From 4pm to 6pm.

FUNERAL SERVICE.
Saturday 7 of May 2022.
Starts at 10am .
Interment follows immediately at gudu cemetery Abuja.

The Burial will be streaming live on YouTube. The link for those that will not be able to attend is:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBCqluS9wsvQCS0ImFckCxg

Signed: Friends of Uzo Eneli

1. Bimbo Adegboye
2. Nnamdi Nzerue
3. Adetunji Okupe
4. Linda Oare
5. Yakman Wuyep
6. Babatunde Adeboye
7. Jolly Cole
8. Lochan Wuyep
9. Obi Obiora
10. Edoro Abebe
11. Deji Adegboye
12. Uche Ukeje
13. Anyim Ude
14. Murphy Francis
15. Mohammed Aminu
16. Olusegun Akerele
17. Obodoechina Asika
18. Adonis Olisa
19. Adebayo Adetunji
20. Valentine Eluojo Aneke
21. Jolaoso Adebowale Akintunde
22. Asiodu Chike
23. Ude Chikezie Onyeka
24. Yvonne Bozimo- Umah
25. Ibrahim Miller.

POLITICS

Group Politics Editor NSEOBONG OKON-EKONG
Email nseobong.okonekong@thisdaylive.com (08114495324 **SMS ONLY**)

Biggs: APC Has Come to Stay in Plateau

In this interview with **Seriki Adinoyi**, a frontline gubernatorial aspirant of the All Progressive Congress in Plateau State and a seasoned technocrat, Mr. Sunday Biggs has assured that despite internal crisis, no opposition can root out APC in Plateau State in 2023

What political experience do you have for the assignment ahead of you?

I have been within the corridor of government for the past 23 years, having served in different capacities. I believe I have gained the requisite experience to add value to governance and take Plateau to the next level.

As a civil servant do you think you will be able to cope with all the intrigues associated with politics?

I have spent the better part of my life in the Government House working closely with politicians; I know their ways and sentiments. I am a technocrat who has lived much of his life within a political environment, and that has impacted on me as well.

Working in the Government House with governors, I am not like other civil servants close at an official closing hour. From 1999 to date, I have been interacting with them, so I know the demands of the job.

What will you do differently from what others have done if eventually elected as Governor of Plateau State?

I am different from them; I have a different mentality and experience. So, Plateau people should expect something different from me. Having served closely with three different administrations and understudied the various Governors, since 1999, one would expect me to have learnt a lot from them.

I have worked with Re-engineered administration of Chief Joshua Dariye; I have worked with Redemption administration of Senator Jonah Jang, and now with the Rescue administration of Rt. Hon Simon Lalong. So, I have requisite capacity and experience to take Plateau to a greater height.

I have seen the strength and weaknesses of each of the administrations. I will pick and put together all their strengths to better the lot of the state.

My administration will pick those virtues that are good and continue with them, and for those that cannot impact the people effectively, we would see how to polish them.

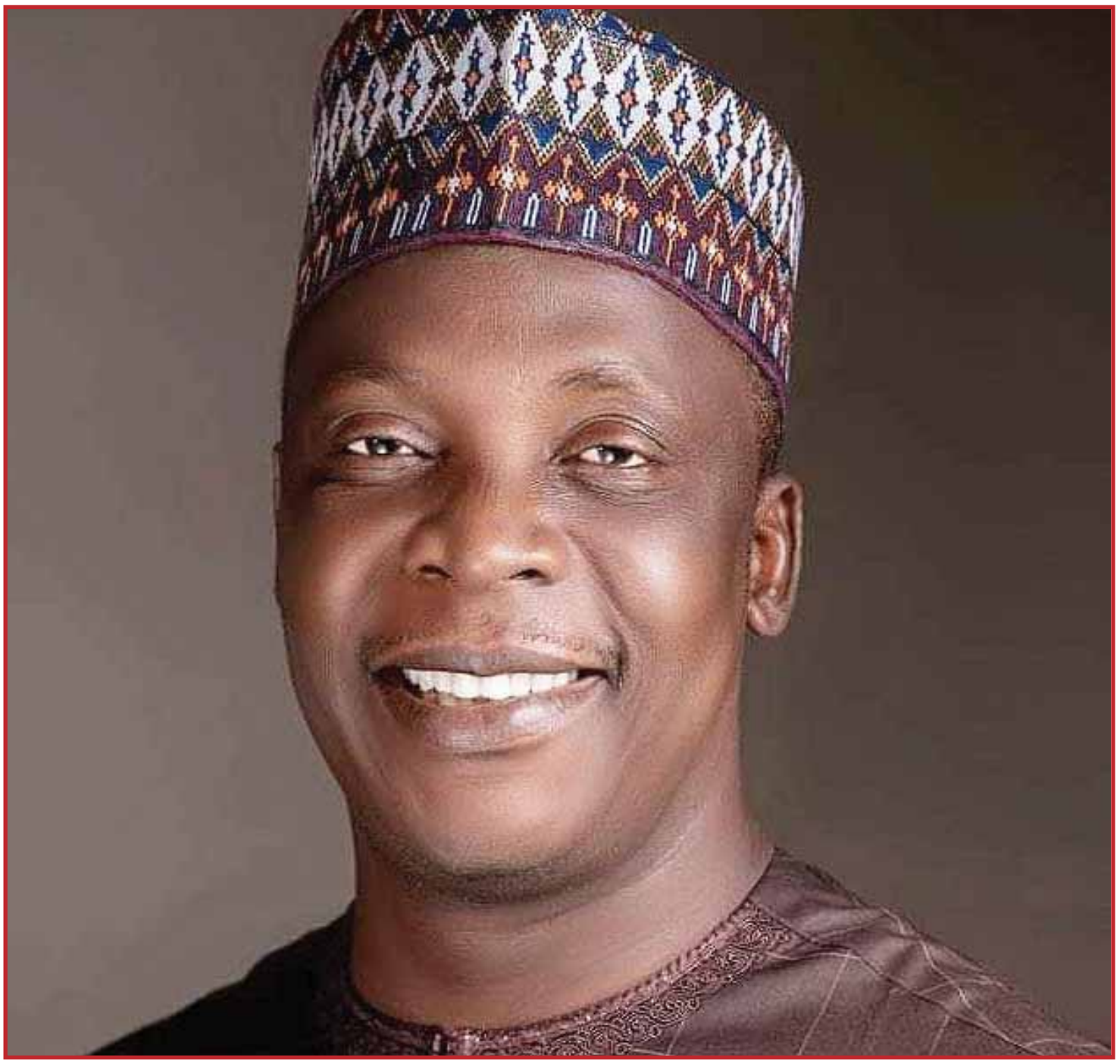
So, our package is going to be different. You can see there is a youth renaissance in the polity of Plateau State. So, for the 'Big Things Coming', which is our slogan, it is a movement that will galvanize all age groups, particularly the young generation.

The youths have taken up my project upon themselves seeing that I am one of them; they want to see a youth on that seat of power in Plateau come 2023. The youths occupy a special place in our agenda because without them there will be no future; their energy is needed in every sector of the society. If the youths are given attention, and their energy is properly packaged and harnessed, it will not be misplaced into social vices

In your local government, there are several aspirants on the platform of your party, the APC jostling for the same ticket. How are you managing your relationship with them, is there a possibility of consensus?

We are very mindful that the seat is reserved for one person, and in my party, the All Progressive Congress, and my local government, Mangu Local Government Area, we are seven at the moment, including the Deputy Governor, His Excellency, Professor Sonnie Tyoden. But I can tell you that all of us are in talking terms with one another, trying to see how we can build consensus among ourselves.

We wouldn't want this opportunity to pass us by as a people. Like we always say, there should be civility in the way we conduct ourselves. At the end of the day, we would rally around whoever emerges at the primaries to guarantee victory at the polls. It is not a do or die affairs; we are brothers and conscious of the fact that at the end of the day, it is only one person that will pick the ticket and fly the flag of the party.



Biggs

We are trying to ensure that APC retains government in Plateau State in 2023, and the person comes from amongst us. The APC in Plateau State is a disciplined party; those at the helms of its affairs have done a lot to reposition it and built strong internal democracy, and party members are conscious of this, hence there is no internal bickering.

What your assessment of the zoning arrangement in Plateau State?

It is a perfect system and arrangement that has stabilized the polity of our state. Right now, ninety nine percent of those contesting are from the Plateau Central zone, the other zones are conscious of this, and no one is coming out. It is a political understanding among the three senatorial zones in the state, and it has not been circumvented for any reason. We thank our leaders for this.

Do you have fresh agenda to complement the existing one on ground?

We are living in a situation where there are global challenges, particularly, the global economic meltdown. This has forced many to begin to think outside the box so that we can impact something new on the lives of our people.

If given the opportunity to govern the state, we have to address issues based on the circumstance we find ourselves in Plateau State. We pray that things improve but if it doesn't, we need to think outside the box because of the lean resources available.

The era of bogus programmes is long gone; we have to streamline to see how we can prioritize what will benefit the state in the short run, and also see what we can do in both the medium and long terms. We have to focus on peace and security; we know our recent history and we need to consolidate on the peace on the ground at the moment. This is very crucial to the progress and development of the State.

The Peace Building Agency put in place by the incumbent governor, which is the first of its kind in Nigeria has done a lot in terms of peace building. The Agency will be strengthened and further encouraged to do more. We shall build bridges across every divide and reinforce the existing unity among diverse ethnic and religious groups on the Plateau.

Youths form the bulk of your supporters, what programme do you have for them?

One of the problems facing all the states in Nigeria presently is unemployment among the youths. There are two issues here; those that are employable and those that are not employable. We shall bring up a programme that would address these two issues. It is not about white-collar jobs anymore, but entrepreneurship. As I said earlier, they cannot be neglected; they shall be given special attention.

The Peace Building Agency put in place by the incumbent governor, which is the first of its kind in Nigeria has done a lot in terms of peace building. The Agency will be strengthened and further encouraged to do more. We shall build bridges across every divide and reinforce the existing unity among diverse ethnic and religious groups on the Plateau

NOTE: Interested readers should continue in the online edition on www.thisdaylive.com

Arise: Fayemi Best Presidential Candidate from South-west

In this interview with **Adedayo Akinwale**, an All Progressives Congress senatorial aspirant for Ekiti North, Senator Ayo Arise, said Ekiti State Governor, Dr. Kayode Fayemi is the best presidential candidate from the South-west in 2023. Excerpts:



Fayemi



Arise

The APC has unveiled the time table for presidential convention and other primaries; N100 million for presidential nomination fee, N50m for Governorship; N20 million for Senate; N10 million for House of Representatives and Nigerians are saying the fees for the form for Presidency appalling; that politics is being heavily monetized. What is your take on that?

I believe that is to ensure that only serious aspirants are entertained. From experience, most people who obtained forms in the past, particularly those with deep pockets, they ended up buying forms for several people with the hope that they might have to go into some arrangement of consensus and their surrogate candidates will not be the ones voted or one of those machinations on the consensus. So, that is fairly eliminated because N50 million is not peanuts to pay as a fee for governorship aspiration and ditto N100 million is not a cheap money to go and recruit very unserious aspirants who already are aware that they do not have the wherewithal to run an election. So, I believe on that note, that is the major reason why the party decided to use the fee as a deterrent to those with such tendencies to put the high figures and this can only be met by very serious candidates.

But some observers have said that the party has automatically given undue advantage to money-bags politicians and shut out those that have the qualities to rule this country but they do not have the money. What do you have to say?

Leadership is not zoned to people who have ideas but do not have the money. Because there is nobody who wants to be a president, even those coming out now that have not paid their dues in one aspect or the other. If you have ideas you should probably not be poor. A person like Bill Gates is not running for the president of any nation but you look at it that at the age of 21 he had become a billionaire. So if you have good ideas and you are brilliant, it is likely that that brilliance would have shown in your prosperity because you can't just be a brilliant man and be a poor man. There is nobody who wants to become president that does not have an idea. Whether the idea is to better the interest of the society as we view it or not is a different issue and different debate all together. I mean look at all of them running, if it is the person who has ideas comes in, he would come with a lot of money because his ideas have been able to translate into prosperity. It is not for everybody and that is the way I look at it. And there is no society that will say they are zoning the presidency to those who have ideas but have no money. If you have ideas always start from the local government to the State House of Assembly to the House of Representatives and Senate, maybe from the Senate to governor or vice versa and to the presidency. So, those opportunities are there, you can start at your own level. It is not actually a discriminatory thing.

About the Presidency, your party has a lot of aspirants, those that could be referred to as contenders and pretenders. What do you think should be the central message amongst the aspirants because already many of them have started attacking personalities?

You have several people running. Everybody is coming out with one credential or the other and for me, I know that my governor is coming, he is going to run may be he has not launched his campaign and so my reasons that makes me feel he is the most qualified centres on one; his age is a big advantage; his experience is a big advantage; his antecedents is also a big advantage and of course, when you talk of academic qualifications you know we have a Professor running, the Vice President. Now, beyond that Dr Kayode Fayemi got a Ph.D from Kings College, Professor Osinbajo got a Ph.D from the University of London. They both attended University of Lagos, may be Professor Osinbajo for his LL.B, Dr Kayode Fayemi for his Masters. So you look at the two, if it is academic qualification, the two of them are super brain. Now, when you talk of experience, Dr Kayode Fayemi has been governor of Ekiti State twice, he had been the Minister of Solid Minerals. We can see the changes that he made when he was in the solid minerals sector. So, in terms of federal position, state position, he has served at the top executive management level but he has never been president. In the last two, three years, he has been the Chairman of the Nigerian Governors Forum; he has been exposed to all the problems and the challenges each and every governor is facing and he understands the problems of the grassroots through these interactions with his colleagues as well. I know he is capable and besides, he has been abroad as well. He lived in England for many years before coming here (Nigeria), he has been at the centre of the National Democratic Coalition (NADECO) struggle as a young man. So, he understands the politics of this country. Again, when we look at our South-west as a block, don't forget that the South-west we have the Ijebu/Egba people, we have the Lagosians, we have Ekiti and we have the Oyos. So for us if you look at it, those who have always enjoyed this power that are each other's throats. If they agree fine, but we believe it should be an open field. But for me, I will be more than happy to see the candidate emerge from the Ekiti axis, so that we too we will have that sense of belonging. Most of the presidents that have come from Yoruba are from Lagos axis. This time, we will be appealing that they should look at their brother and say it is time for you to go and taste this thing.

By the understanding in the APC, the presidential candidate is expected to emerge from the South since the North has taken the slot of national chairman. Do you support the move to micro-zone to the South-east?

Ordinarily if the APC has been a strong party in the South-east, my response would have been different. But the danger here is that the party isn't prepared to take that gamble because the majority of the South-east is mostly PDP. So, if the PDP zones presidency to the South-east and APC zones it there, then the chances are higher that the PDP will knock us off there because we do not have a base there. So why would we want to take the risk and leave your base where you are almost sure that you will win the election and get votes from the catchment. Ordinarily, if you are to choose based on the logic on the ground, the South-east should have a good shot at it. If it has been well planned and managed it should be going to the South-east but the fear of the known is also there.

You have been in the Senate before, you were Chairman Senate Committee on privatisation. Why do you want to return to the Senate?

You begin to have influence or a standing when you come back as a ranking Senator. As a ranking Senator, you stand a chance of becoming either the leader or the deputy or the president. All the positions in leadership are now open more or less and you can contest for and hold. So, because most of the time some things are zoned to regions just as the presidency is more or less been zoned to the south. Whatever is zoned to the South-west, I will certainly be able to make a bid for it and that will give a better voice to champion the interest of my people.

The first four years of my stay there, I was fortunate enough to influence the location of a federal university in my local government which is in my senatorial district. And that same senatorial district, now has the main campus of the university and it has about three faculties in another local government within my senatorial district.

My focus in going to the Senate is about service. It is about the benefits to my people, less of my personal benefit. And I have told them, the only way I can be strong enough to have any influence is to be, not only a ranking Senator but be in the ruling party and have a good voice to lobby my people for whatever I want to influence to go to my senatorial district. I have looked at that.

The second reason is that I am still not too old to go and be in the Senate because I believe I now have more experience and I have been following up on things going on in the Senate. I have my own opinions and about how things can be done properly for the good of our country and I intend to pursue that through legislative means.

NOTE: Interested readers should continue in the online edition on www.thisdaylive.com

Dr Kayode Fayemi has been governor of Ekiti State twice, he had been the Minister of Solid Minerals. We can see the changes that he made when he was in the solid minerals sector. So, in terms of federal position, state position, he has served at the top executive management level but he has never been president. In the last two, three years, he has been the Chairman of the Nigerian Governors Forum; he has been exposed to all the problems and the challenges each and every governor is facing and he understands the problems of the grassroots through these interactions with his colleagues as well

FEATURES

Group Features Editor: Chiemelie Ezeobi
Email chiemelie.ezeobi@thisdaylive.com, Tel: 07010510430

Azeez Amida: Working Globally to Support Career Professionals, Brands, Entrepreneurs

Azeez Amida is a Nigerian business executive working globally to support career professionals, entrepreneurs, and corporate brands with cutting-edge growth strategies. As an under-40 CEO, Amida has over 18 years of professional experience cutting across four countries and 12 industries including Telecommunications, FMCG, Healthcare, Investment Banking, Private equity, financial advisory among others. Until recently, he was the CEO of IHS Rwanda where he led the company to become the fastest-growing operations in 13 markets and structured deals to guarantee a three-year worth of double-digit growth. Although he currently consults for multiple companies including acting as a consulting Chief Growth and Operations Officer for Merit Telecoms in Nigeria, he is the author of the soon-to-released book, EPE Principle: understanding the opportunity cycle. In this interview with **Mary Nnah,** the alumnus of the IE Business School, Spain, and a member of the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants, shares his drive to impact

You have had a lot of interesting high-profile roles and you've lived and worked in different parts of Africa and other parts of the world. How did you get here? What was the path that led you to where you are now?

The first thing is luck. I always like to emphasise this a lot. A few people took interest in my actions in my career and helped me move up the ladder. It would have been easy for me to just sit here and tell you I worked hard. But that would be an injustice to the thousands of men and women who were my co-workers and also putting in the hours. I got lucky. Sometimes not very lucky and that can be very disappointing.

The second thing is people. I have always been lucky to have a team of people that give 1000 per cent and understand and accept me and my shortcomings. These things seem subtle to say but they matter a lot to your succeeding in any role.

What does success mean to you? What's your formula for being successful?

Success to me is a personal journey. The important factor is the peace you feel. I am not going to say having money does not necessarily mean success. I have never had super amounts of money so I cannot tell you if riches and wealth are the same. All I can tell you is I have gone from having literally zero naira to my name to having some and the important factor in both situations is the peace I feel.

To some people having more money just make them happy. For me, making an impact and seeing how what I do impacts the lives of people around me is success and this is the primary driver of my daily stride.

On the formula to success, I always believe there is no formula cast in stone. There are however a few factors that I consider important for me to be successful.

First is understanding yourself and your limitations. I always try not to hire people that are like me. I hire someone that can do something I can't do. One of my most successful hires were two ladies back in 2015. It was a role that required a lot of numeric strength but she had a lot of administration.

Everyone would ask me why I hired her and I would say it is because she fills a gap I cannot – administration. These ladies would go into a heavy problem situation, and everyone would come out laughing. I learned so much from them in those many years. If you cannot hire to fill your weakness, you will always have a blindside.

The second is understanding your stakeholders including superiors and peers. I have seen the best ideas in this world get suppressed because egos were bruised. You have to always maintain a sense of humility balanced with the opinions of your superiors and peers.

By doing this, people will be free to talk and listen to you. This goes a long way. I am not saying you should "suck up" to people. Respect doesn't require you to do that. Just be respectful and when people have opinions that are better than yours, acknowledge them. You must understand that everyone has an ego. Not just you.

Can you share a turning point moment in your professional career that really made you the leader you are today?

I started working in this company back then almost the same time as the founding CEO, who had been on an MBA before then. At that point, I had no clue what the business is about. It was a new industry and I was just catching up on things. I recall being sent an information request by him and the CTO and I didn't have it handy. I couldn't answer the question appropriately and the next email I got from the CEO at midnight was a one-liner: "you are not on top of this job, Amida."



Azeez Amida

I gave him a call immediately. He was shocked that I was still awake at midnight, much more, than I was calling him at that time. We spent the next five minutes talking and as scared as I was, I recall telling him: "I am good at my job. I got poached to come work for you so you will need to give me some time to catch up. I know how to deliver results but if you don't allow me to learn, I will be running in futility." There was a long silence. When he spoke he requested that I meet him in his office the next day.

I got to his office, and he walked me through his dreams for my unit and said to me, I need you to be up to speed in the next two weeks. The rest was history from there.

As a trailblazing growth expert who has helped set up structures and processes that propelled businesses, what have you observed about the startup scene in Africa, especially now?

As a startup, it is important to understand the resources available to you. Most problems that startups run into can be solved by approaching a few professionals for help. I have had to advise friends on strategies without charging a dime. It is because they spoke up. You have to speak up when you are not clear on the way forward.

Go to forums, ask questions. Sometimes, call friends and ask them if they know anyone that can help, you will be surprised how much help is out there.

Secondly, don't get carried away with the success. Starting with an idea doesn't necessarily mean it has to be that idea. Companies change. Many companies have changed. So would yours. You have to understand this and evolve with the world. There is no point holding on to an idea the world has moved away from. And with the way technology is these days, things can change rather quickly. Startups need to understand this.

Finally, it is important to understand the addressable market. Many times, an idea that is meant to fill a need may only have an addressable market of 5million people. If you are still setting a 10x growth when you are at 4million users, you are in for frustration.

The corporate world has changed a lot in the past few years. CEOs are responding to broader stakeholder demands and speaking up on social and political issues. What does good leadership look like in this multi-stakeholder world?

I always believe beyond all the need to speak out, the important factor is to be sincere and fair. It is easy for anyone to criticize but as a leader, I have seen many times when people judge what they don't understand. This is not right. It is important for leaders to act as agents of setting records straight by helping others see perspectives they would normally not see.

There are challenges that someone who hasn't walked that lonely road of leadership may not be able to see. This is where leaders come in. They need to speak up in a manner that gives direction. Criticism has to come with direction otherwise it's just another opinion.

The end of the 1st quarter of 2022 is here, how would you say the year is looking like for you? Any new projects you're working on that you can share?

I am currently working on a book called EPE Principle: understanding the opportunity cycle. EPE stands for Enter Perform and Exit. It is a book borne out of a decade of research. It showcases the principles I used in moving from Egbeda to being the CEO of a multi-million-dollar company. It is on issues like corporate politics, how to identify opportunities, the role people play in your career and how to make the best of it, and finally, how to know when it's time to walk away and how to prepare for it. It is scheduled to be launched early second quarter.bI am also putting finishing touches to setting up my foundation focused on helping underprivileged Nigerians with Education, Clean Water, and Health. I am a strong believer in the fact that you don't have to have it all before you start giving back to society. I grew up in Egbeda and schooled in Ipaja. I have seen many of my friends that were extremely brilliant but didn't get as lucky as I succumbed to poverty. Some dropped out after secondary school because their parents couldn't continue to afford their education.

There are stories out there that go beyond "I used to sleep in my car ten years ago." Some families don't even have access to enough space for two people to lay down. That is one of my main missions going forward.

Finally, I am also consulting for several small to medium-sized organisations around structures, growth, and financing. The aim is to start helping start-ups and medium-sized companies understand what it takes to build high-performance organisations.

"It is easy for anyone to criticize but as a leader, I have seen many times when people judge what they don't understand. This is not right. It is important for leaders to act as agents of setting records straight by helping others see perspectives they would normally not see"

THISDAY #THISISNIGERIA



–Seun Onigbinde

N4tn Fuel Subsidy: Where to Draw a Line



Ten years ago, thousands of Nigerian youths protested on the streets of major cities. Joining the global #Occupyprotests, the #OccupyNigeria protests zoomed in on one key topic: the removal of fuel subsidy. At the time, rather than a blatant removal of the subsidy, I felt that the government needed to earn the trust of the people by first addressing its abuse of public resources. We had government spending frivolously and wanting to add more burden on citizens; I felt that was not right. We needed to fight it.

Since then, I have lost count of how many times I changed my mind on the issue of fuel subsidy removal. As a civil society leader who had been asked to seek penance for being loud-mouthed during the #OccupyNigeria movement, my opinion swings wildly. In 2012, we were confident that the Goodluck Jonathan government had no right to inflict more pain on Nigerians. This still stands – no government should inflict pain on its people. However, recent revelations show that our resistance to the subsidy removal is no longer tenable. We need to adjust our perspectives

What has changed in ten years? Nothing. We still run a bloated public service that has not sought to prune itself. We still have a government that does not feel the pain of most Nigerians. We still have a system where funds are not delivering the services they were earmarked for. For instance, the refineries have received billions but still don't work. Today, Nigerians even seem to live in dire conditions with rising inflation which weakens their earning power.

The first time I changed my hardline position on total subsidy removal was after the realisation that the federal government under Goodluck Jonathan deducted $10.85bn from the Excess Crude Account (ECA) to fund fuel subsidy between 2011 and 2014 (see image above). I realised that no matter the conviction, the position to keep subsidy was no longer tenable. In the same period that Nigeria took $10.85bn from ECA, FG only invested N3.2tn (~$15bn) on capital projects.

I did not fight the removal of subsidy when it was still drawn from the Consolidated Revenue Fund or taken at source by NNPC. However, since 2012, I realised we were taking from our savings to bloat consumption filled with inaccurate numbers. No one could tell the exact barrels of fuel being consumed by Nigerians daily. Neither could anyone ascertain how many barrels were being exported. That was when I told myself, this can't be right. If I bring this down to an individual level, how does this make sense? I mean how does it mean well to eat your future savings today?

In 2019, the 14th Emir of Kano, Muhammadu Sanusi II, invited 'Yemi Adamolekun and I to witness the marvellous Kano Durbar. We broke into conversations about the country, and of course, the fuel subsidy removal came up. His Highness used this analogy which is also a question: how do you "eat" your children's school fees? He typically referred to the country's wild consumption of cheap fuel we think we are fully entitled to when we do not have the resources for such outlay.

It was bizarre to learn that if Nigeria isn't going to take from savings nor ask CBN to print more money to meet subsidy payments, Nigeria would tap into the Eurobond receipts and pay for fuel subsidy. Where is the rationality in this? We are taking intergenerational debt for our immediate consumption? This is ludicrous in my view.

In another breath, I have been an ardent advocate of keeping subsidy considering how a spike in transport costs would bring cost-push inflation and more anguish on Nigerians. I don't believe that NNPC's Direct Sales Direct Purchase is squeaky clean nor do I accept that our consumption numbers aren't inflated. I also accept that cheap crude flows to our borders at industrial scale. However, I still persist that in the two windows of recessions in the current administration, removal of subsidy that would spike general price level can't be the right decision. It must be situated in a context. As discussed with friends, President Buhari had a "policy window" to yank it off but he prevaricated in this early honeymoon days. No perfect time has been in sight since then. It is sad that President Buhari received approval of N4tn for fuel subsidy in 2022, an amount that his government won't invest in infrastructure or education within the fiscal year. What gives now?

First, I am 100% against any cost that would require us to use debt to fund subsidy. It is not rational in any context except for political expediency. The answer lies in the removal of fuel subsidy but we must be methodical with it. We can't remove subsidies in our current state. We might raise the price levels with a significant burden on Nigerians.

The short-term thinking is to fully remove it and start cash payments to vulnerable Nigerians. However, we can't do this with our lack of credible and comprehensive social register. We can use the window to ensure every Nigerian gets their NIN and files taxes to ascertain income brackets; reconcile with income levels using BVN; create a credible social register and also provide subsidies for cheap mass transit in urban centres. Is this not how we gradually build the fundamental plank of social contract that engenders trust in the long run and weans off from the mindset of living off oil – a gradual myth as oil can no longer serve us?

Why can't we raise the price levels to what the country can afford or is this the price of political expediency? We can't continue on this paradigm and expect things to change. We are lost in the noise of the election cycle and the N4tn bill is the price to pay. The pragmatic thing was for the government to halve the subsidy while it works on a credible social register to provide support for Nigerians. But, are we ready for such hard decisions in a pre-election year? Is this the curse of democracy?

My hope is that the next president will harvest their honeymoon and yank off the subsidy before the political expediency comes to the fore again. We have to be methodical with the palliatives by ensuring it gets to the most vulnerable Nigerians.

Once we have a social register that nearly leaves no one behind, it is better we take off this humongous bill that has eaten not only into our savings but kept us in debt. At a N4tn cost, that our measly revenues do not provide us the latitude for, the current argument for subsidy is over.

It is only about the methods and how to mitigate impact on the poor that should be in conversation now. Anything else that the Federal Government might be doing right now is just a quiet sleepwalk into disaster.

•Oluseun Onigbinde is the co-founder and Global Director of BudgIT, a Nigerian civic startup

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FOREIGN DESK

COMPILED BY BAYO AKINLOYE

EU Proposes Ban on Russian Oil, Bank Sanctions

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen unveiled a new package of sanctions that includes a ban on all Russian oil, with crude oil imports stopping within six months and imports of refined products by the end of the year.

The package must be unanimously approved by EU members.

"Let's be clear, it will not be easy because some member states are strongly dependent on Russian oil, but we simply have to do it," von der Leyen told the European Parliament.

She said the phased approach would allow EU members to find alternatives to Russian imports and blunt negative effects on the global energy markets, helping to maximize pressure on Russia while minimizing collateral economic damage.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has pushed for more extensive European actions to cut off imports of Russian energy and said earlier this week that a new EU package "should include clear steps to block Russia's revenues from energy resources."

The proposed EU sanctions also include removing Russia's biggest bank, Sberbank, from the international SWIFT transaction and messaging system and listing high-ranking military officers "who committed war crimes in Bucha and those responsible for the inhuman siege of Mariupol."



North Korea Launches Probable Ballistic Missile

North Korea launched a ballistic missile Wednesday, Japan and South Korea reported, the latest in a series of tests that have upset the North's neighbours and drawn firm condemnation from the United States.

South Korea's military said North Korea fired the ballistic missile from the Sunan area near Pyongyang. That is the location of North Korea's main international airport, from where several recent launches have originated.

The missile flew for about 470 kilometres, reaching a maximum altitude of about 780 kilometres, according to a statement from South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff. Japan provided similar numbers.

Those figures suggest it was not a long-range launch. No further details were available. North Korea typically does not announce its launches until the following day in state media.

The test comes days before a new South Korean president takes office. Yoon Suk-yeol, a conservative former chief prosecutor, has vowed a tougher approach to Pyongyang.

In its statement, the South Korean military called the launch a "serious threat to the peace and stability of the international community, as well as the Korean Peninsula."

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said the launch "absolutely cannot be condoned," according to Japan's Kyodo news agency.

Fiji: US Can Seize Russian Superyacht

A judge in Fiji has ruled that US authorities can seize a Russian-owned superyacht — but has put a hold on his order until at least Friday while defence lawyers mount a challenge.

The yacht Amadea — worth $325 million — had earlier been stopped from leaving the South Pacific nation because of its links to Russia. That order will stand, for now, preventing US authorities from taking the yacht to Hawaii or elsewhere.

A question remains over which of two Russian oligarchs really owns the Amadea, with only one of them facing sanctions. There are also questions about how far US jurisdiction extends into Fiji.

Suva High Court Justice Deepthi Amaratunga on Tuesday granted an order allowing the US to seize the superyacht after the US had earlier filed a warrant. But the judge has also allowed for a pause while defence lawyers put together their challenge.

The judge's next decision in the case will come on Friday when he will decide whether to continue to put a hold on the yacht's seizure pending a formal appeal by the defence.

The US Justice Department in March announced the creation of a team of federal agents and prosecutors to pursue wealthy Russians or those aiding Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

At Least 20 Dead in Ugandan Bus Crash

At least 20 people have been killed in a bus crash in western Uganda, Ugandan police said. Among the dead are at least seven children.

The crash happened Wednesday when the bus, which was travelling from Fort Portal to the Ugandan capital, Kampala, veered off a highway and into a tea estate.

The accident happened around 10:30 a.m. local time, two kilometres from Fort Portal.

There has been no information about what caused the crash.

Several photos of the incident were posted on social media and showed emergency responders trying to free people from the wreckage.

Former Leader of Independent Belarus Dies

Stanislav Shushkevich, the first leader of an independent Belarus and one of the signatories of the accords that formally dissolved the Soviet Union, has died at the age of 87.

His wife Irina told Agence France-Presse that Shushkevich passed away Tuesday in the capital Minsk. He had been hospitalized in intensive care last month after contracting COVID-19.

The former electrical engineer was serving as interim chairman of the Supreme Soviet, or parliament, of what was then known as Byelorussia when the country voted to secede from the Soviet Union in September 1991, one month after the failed coup to remove then-Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev from power. Shushkevich was elected permanent chairman of the Supreme Soviet on September 18.

Nearly three months later, on December 8, Shushkevich met then-Russian President Boris Yeltsin and then-President Leonid Kravchuk at a resort in western Belarus and co-signed the Belavezha Accords, which ended the Soviet Union's existence after nearly 70 years while creating the Commonwealth of Independent States.

French Left Agrees on Coalition Deal to Tackle Macron

France's Socialist Party and the hard-left La France Insoumise (LFI) party reached an agreement in principle on Wednesday to form an alliance for June's parliamentary election.

The coalition pact, which the Greens and Communists agreed to earlier this week, is an attempt to deprive Macron of a majority in parliament in the June 12-19 vote and block his pro-business agenda after he was re-elected president in April.

"We can and will beat Emmanuel Macron, and we can do it with a majority to govern for a radical program," LFI lawmaker Adrien Quatennens told Franceinfo radio.

If the agreement between the LFI and the Socialists is confirmed, the French left will be united for the first time in 20 years.

The deal was shaped under the leadership of LFI's firebrand chief Jean-Luc Melenchon, who broke from the Socialist Party in 2008 after failing to dilute its pro-European Union stance. He wants to "disobey" the bloc's rules on budget and competition issues and challenge its free-market principles.

A source in the Socialist Party (said that there was agreement on who would run in what constituency and on overall strategy but that negotiators still needed to finalize details of the joint programme itself.

Beijing Shuts Down Subway Stations to Slow COVID-19 Spread

Authorities in Beijing have shut down dozens of subway stations as part of their efforts to slow the spread of COVID-19.

The Chinese capital announced Wednesday that it was closing more than 40 subway stations, amounting to about 10% of its system, along with hundreds of bus routes.

Beijing has been on alert since mid-April after 10 middle school students tested positive for COVID-19, sparking widespread panic buying of groceries and other supplies in anticipation of a possible citywide lockdown similar to the one imposed on the financial hub of Shanghai. Authorities have begun a mass testing campaign for most of its 21 million residents while shutting down schools and businesses, including such venues as gyms and theatres.

Residential buildings in neighbourhoods deemed high-risk have also been locked down, leaving streets nearly deserted. Residents in some neighbourhoods were already urged to work from home.

According to a state-run Xinhua news agency, China's national health commission reported 353 confirmed COVID-19 cases on the mainland on Tuesday, including 260 in Shanghai. Five thousand seventy-five asymptomatic cases were reported on the mainland, including 4,722 in Shanghai.

South Africa Urges Aspen to Keep COVID-19 Vaccine Plant Open

South African health officials are urging COVID-19 vaccine manufacturer Aspen to keep its plant in the Eastern Cape province open.

This follows a Reuters article quoting Aspen's senior director saying they may have to shut down as there have been no orders for their rebranded COVID vaccine.

In March, a South African-owned subsidiary of pharmaceutical giant Aspen struck a deal with an American company, Johnson & Johnson, to package, price, sell and distribute its vaccine in Africa.

This vaccine was rebranded as Aspenovax.

The move was hailed by many as there had been much concern about Africa's reliance on imported vaccines which were often costly and at times in short supply.

But there have been no orders for Aspenovax. South Africa's National Health Department Spokesperson Foster Mohale said the lack of orders is due to low vaccination rates not only at home but globally.

"Vaccine hesitancy is one of the factors which contribute to these low vaccination rates or demand for more vaccines which also affect the production. Because obviously, we understand that they are in a business," he said. "They can't keep on producing vaccines when they know that the demand for vaccines is very low. So, we understand the situation where they are, and we sympathize with them."

Mohale said, for now, South Africa has enough vaccines.

Transfer of US-Procured Afghan Helicopters to Ukraine Underway

The United States is giving Ukraine 16 Mi-17 helicopters that Washington had procured for Afghanistan, a US government agency charged with monitoring Afghan events said Wednesday.

The Department of Defense (DOD) notified Congress in January that it intended to give the Ukrainian government five of the Russian-built helicopters, which had been undergoing maintenance at a Ukrainian facility.

"Ukraine accepted these excess defence articles on March 11," the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) noted in its quarterly report submitted to US lawmakers this week.

The report added, "In mid-April, President (Joe) Biden announced a military assistance package to Ukraine that included an additional 11 Mi-17 helicopters that had been scheduled for Afghanistan."

Mi-17s are mostly used to carry troops and military equipment. Ukraine is one of the former Soviet Union republics which hosts production and repair facilities for the helicopters.

In its report this week, the SIGAR also confirmed reports that the fall of the Western-backed Afghan government last August gave the country's new Taliban rulers access to more than $7 billion worth of US Department of Defense equipment.

"DOD estimates that $7.12 billion worth of ANDSF equipment remained in Afghanistan in varying states of repair when US forces withdrew in August 2021," the report said about the US-trained and funded former Afghan National Defence and Security Forces.

OPINION

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Despite distractions, the Ogun State government is delivering social services to the people, writes ***ISMAIL RASHEED***



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ODEBIYI AND MEANINGFUL REPRESENTATION IN PARLIAMENT

Tolu Odebiyi has done remarkably well for his people, writes ***TUNJI OLAJIDE***



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EDWARD OLUSOLA SANU: FAREWELL TO A SCHOLAR- DIPLOMAT

EJEVIOME ELOHO OTOBO *pays tribute to Sanu, an intellectual and seasoned diplomat*



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Fortune favours the brave, writes ***MONDAY PHILIPS EKPE***



FROM CHIBOK TO SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY FLORIDA

Check out this list: Muhammadu Buhari, Yemi Osinbajo, Atiku Abubakar. Bola Tinubu. Abdullahi Adamu. Iyorchia Ayu. Aminu Tambuwal. Rochas Okorocha. Anyim Anyim. Lydia Pogu. Nyesom Wike. Yahaya Bello. Chris Ngige. Peter Obi. Bukola Saraki. Rotimi Amaechi… Clearly, Miss Pogu is the odd name here, not only because it represents the only female in the pack, but that she alone is relatively unknown, not directly involved in the growing drama of the nation's transition of political power, arguably the most animated aspect of our national life at the moment.

The temptation to always focus on those in high political positions cannot be wished away easily but, then, for anyone desirous of genuine inspiration, the activities within our current political space do not really offer anything new. The challenges of this country are mounting but one does not have to be very discerning to know that nothing has changed in the disposition and conduct of our politicians. While Nigeria's political, economic, social and cultural components are literally gasping for breath, not much has happened to give hope to the citizenry. In the midst of this frustrating and despondent domestic atmosphere, away from our shores in far-away United States, a speech by a grateful young Nigerian is not only worth celebrating but can also be identified as a true lampstand.

Pogu was one of the students of the Government Girls Secondary School Chibok in Borno State who were abducted in April 2014 by Boko Haram gunmen but miraculously escaped to safety. Together with her cousin, Joy Bishara, who was also set to suffer a cruel fate in the hands of the insurgents, they travelled to the US and were later admitted into the Southeastern University in Lakeland, where they both bagged Bachelor's degrees in 2021. Last week, Pogu had the honour of speaking at the university's graduation ceremony on behalf of the graduating students as she obtained a Master's degree in Human Services Administration.

Far above the accustomed, ubiquitous public political promises and pronouncements, I find the young lady's speech more relevant to the present travails of my compatriots, most especially the younger generation. Her words: "My journey is an example of God's love, grace and faithfulness. I was born and raised up in Borno State in a small village called Chibok. Some of you might have known my story but I love sharing my story because it shows that God works everything for my good…. When I was in that truck (used by the terrorists to convey the abductees), I heard a voice that said, 'Jump out of the truck' but another one said I 'shouldn't jump out of the truck.' I took a step of faith to jump out with my friend. I knew it was God; I knew God didn't want me to stay in that truck….

"I thought all my dreams had changed but God had a different plan for me. After the warning from Boko Haram that they didn't want any girl to go to school because, according to them, it was 'haram,' I began to live in fear…. Boko Haram told us that school was a taboo for women and warned us that if we went back to school, they would come for us. Because of what happened and what Boko Haram told us, I got so scared to go back to school again. I told my parents that I would rather stay with them at home and suffer than go back to school again…"

How thankful or ungrateful can one be in her shoes? Eight years after that ugly incident in which the then federal government lived in denial for weeks, over 100, representing more than one third of the girls, are still in captivity, in various physical and psychological states. Many have since been forced into marrying their predators. About 164 of them have been reunited with their families while nursing different kinds of trauma. Some have died. Many have become disenchanted with existence altogether. Some have picked up the pieces of their lives and are forging ahead somehow. To successfully flee those devastating experiences is one huge feat; moving on to achieve lofty goals like obtaining higher certificates is even more fulfilling. I think too that the significance of the ordeal and odyssey of Pogu and Bishara transcends a personal level.

We must not ignore the manifest themes of their story that make them ready models who deserve respect and emulation. One, they personify the "grass to grace" narrative, a familiar plot both in real life and acting. By cooperating with support structures like the Jubilee Campaign, a Virginia, US, based human rights organisation, they have proved that one's background is not the ultimate decider of what one eventually becomes. Acknowledging the role of Divinity the way Pogu did in the presence of that august audience would surely be thrilling to most Nigerians who have ensured that the name of God, at least, is not in short supply in their land.

They, youths in particular, must, however, keep tab on one specific detail in Pogu's narration: "I heard a voice that said, 'Jump out of the truck!' " She took a chance when it presented itself. Being alive is a risk already. Now that we are here, too much caution or hesitation cannot then be a virtue. Carefully weighing your options is one thing; to be weighed down by indecision or fear is purely another thing. Sadly, the latter has kept many people away from attaining even low-hanging heights. Life is about taking steps at the right time. History shows that there exists a strong link between bold leaps and winning big.

If dread had incapacitated those ladies in the truck that fateful night, they would have ended up in the less fancied categories of their remaining colleagues. The accolades that have followed Pogu's talk around the world would simply not have been. Before laurels come the will to stand out, to do the impossible, to defeat self-doubt and dare to conquer. As Professor Wole Soyinka declares in The Man Died, "A man can only grasp at his authentic being through confrontation with the vicissitudes of life." Stepping onto that podium in the State of Florida, US at the end of her graduate schooling, years after escaping likely conscription into the harem of those conscienceless men of the desert and forest, was not just a product of luck. It was a salute to personal resilience and an environment programmed for excellence.

Equally noteworthy is the attitude of Pogu and Bishara to their native country. As first-hand victims of our failing systems, we will understand if they are bitter towards it. Instead, they have even expressed a desire to return home someday to contribute to its development. Not so fast, girls, someone should kindly tell them. They remind me of a former Super Eagles player, Victor Moses, whose parents were killed in one of the senseless ethno-religious conflicts here but he put all that behind him to play for the nation. Oftentimes, Nigerians confuse their underperforming leaders with the fatherland and transfer their anger to the latter. The testimony of our Chibok ambassadors and the way they have navigated their tortuous journey to fruition tend to signify that there might yet be a positive light for Nigeria after all. ■

Carefully weighing your options is one thing; to be weighed down by indecision or fear is purely another thing. Sadly, the latter has kept many people away from attaining even low-hanging heights

Dr Ekpe
is a member of THISDAY Editorial Board

Despite distractions, the Ogun State government is delivering social services to the people, writes ISMAIL RASHEED

ABIODUN: PUSHING THE BOUNDARIES

Homer's Iliad, a vast volume of works that essentially underpin Greek mythology may date back to the 8th century BCE, but there are still numerous tropes in the classic tales seemingly written for contemporary times. Indeed, there appears to be a tale from Greek mythology for whatever hubris and shenanigans seen in Nigeria's politics today.

For a while now, I have struggled to make sense of an unrelenting smear campaign targeting the Ogun State governor, Prince



Dapo Abiodun. Each time I tried to fathom what the motive could be, the more perplexed I got.

However, given that such plots almost always tend to unravel, I reckon that the Myth of Sisyphus somewhat explains this mindless muckraking.

Sisyphus was a legendary king of Ephyra (later known as Corinth) eternally condemned to roll a heavy rock up a hill, only to have it roll down as it nears the top, whereupon the task is repeated.

In trying to situate the rage against the Ogun State governor, it's important to view it in the context of the peculiar hurdle he had to scale in 2019 to secure his party's ticket and, ultimately, the governorship. To supporters of the All Progressives Congress in Ogun State, Abiodun may have seemed like the heir apparent on account of his political pedigree and immense contribution to the party. But the incumbent had some other ideas. Abiodun prevailed nonetheless.

If the party's ticket secured in spite of the then incumbent's well-known aversion felt like an ego-bruising humbling, Abiodun's eventual defeat of that preferred candidate - corralled as it were into a rival party and supported openly by the incumbent - was even more so.

So, what's the fuss about seeing one's candidate lose an election? The answer is simple: nowhere else do egos come as big as they are in politics. Also, hell apparently has no fury like a chastened godfather knocked off their perch, and denied the sense of entitlement to which they had grown accustomed. The humiliation has to be requited somehow. Therein lies the roots of the pull-Dapo Abiodun-down-at-all-cost project.

But when an obsession is fuelled by malice, hate and envy, truth is often the first casualty. And, as history shows, pursuits built on falsehood falter inevitably. From the doctoring of interviews to suit a sinister agenda to suborning hacks to write slanderous stories and instigating a desperate plot to disqualify Abiodun from the party primary over spurious allegations, the task to malign Governor Abiodun is akin to rolling a huge boulder up a hill. Like Sisyphus' futile bid, the attempts have mostly come to nought.

Peeved by these egregious attempts to assail Governor Abiodun's reputation, a social and democracy advocacy group, Movement for Democratic Progress (MDP), recently urged the national leadership of the APC to call a former governor and senator representing Ogun Central in the state, Ibikunle Amosun, to order over what it called his series of anti-party activities in the state. A statement issued by the group's Secretary, Adeyemi Ige, claimed the former governor was behind the crisis in Ogun State's APC, noting that his aim was to sow discord in the party and disaffection towards the governor.

While it is common knowledge that there is no love lost between the Ogun State governor and his predecessor, it is unlikely the latter would acknowledge any role in the grand plot. But such disavowal will be a hard sell, given his utterly reprehensible spawning of his own party's candidate (Abiodun) in the 2015 governorship election.

The MDP's statement referenced earlier is particularly instructive: "Amosun, having sponsored a governorship candidate against the same party on which platform he contested and won a senatorial seat, was suspended from APC in 2015 but hurriedly pardoned. Despite this pardon, however, he has been making moves to destabilize Ogun APC after it became apparent that he had lost out in the power game."

Equally instructive is how dignified Governor Abiodun has remained in the face of these scurrilous attacks. The repudiation he has chosen is not just silence; it is a silence that would rather let his accomplishments in office speak for him. There is no rebuke that stings deeper than constantly notching a better governance index which reveals, in very stark details, the inadequacies of one's transducers, especially where they happen to be one's own predecessor. Indeed, on the strength of his performance, Governor Abiodun is everything the former governor could not be - a visionary.

Despite being the state that shares a common boundary with Lagos, the socio-economic benefits that ought to accrue from this proximity had barely ever been utilized by Ogun State. Abiodun grasped quite early that the daily cross-boundary migration arising from this proximity makes a seamless transport system expedient. The Ogun State Multi-modal Transportation Master Plan conceived by his administration was meant to address that.

The multi-modal transportation master plan incorporates road (the mass transit bus shuttle's pilot project was launched recently), rail, water, and air transport components. The vision is to create an interface in a way that each transport mode doesn't just exist in isolation, but complement one another in a somewhat unbroken chain for both intra- and inter-state commute.

With regard to rail transport, Ogun State has leveraged the benefits of its proximity to Lagos to strike an agreement that would see the ongoing rail project developed by the latter extended to the former. Essentially, the 37-kilometre Red Line (scheduled for completion in December this year) which runs from Marina, in Lagos, would extend to Ijoko and Kajola, both boundary communities in Ogun State's Ifo Local Government Area. ■

Rasheed
writes from Abeokuta

__RINSOLA ABIOLA__ argues that issues of women representation in politics and governance should be backed by laws and policies



2023: AS WOMEN ASPIRE

In what has been hailed as a truly progressive application of constitutional power, in April 2022, Governor Dapo Abiodun of Ogun State signed an executive order aimed at securing 35% affirmative action for women in politics and governance.

Previously, in December 2021, Governor Abdulrahman Abdulrazaq of Kwara State assented to the Kwara State Political Offices (Gender Composition) Bill, a law which requires any administration in the state to ensure that women occupy at least 35% of appointive positions.

While the governor, in setting up his cabinet, exceeded the stated benchmark, the law was borne of the need to preserve the gains recorded in women's mainstreaming in Kwara by ensuring that subsequent administrations would also prioritise women's adequate representation.

Also in April, in a watershed moment in our democratic history, the Federal High Court delivered the landmark judgment on a suit

Without enabling policies which are respected and thus adhered to, women will continue to aspire in large numbers but fail to be on the ballot

instituted by the Women in Politics Forum (WiPF), the Nigerian Women's Trust Fund (NWTF) and other women's groups, ordering the federal government to comply with its own National Gender Policy by allotting 35% of appointive positions in the public sector to women.

Ekiti had, several years prior in 2013, enacted the Gender and Equal Opportunity law; embedded within it is a provision for 35% affirmative action for women in appointive positions.

Women's hopes had been dashed in March when, while voting on constitution amendment bills, the National Assembly rejected crucial gender bills including proposed legislation seeking affirmative action. Hope was once again offered when the House of Representatives, led by a progressive politician, Rt. Hon. Femi Gbajabiamila, rescinded its decision on some of the bills and pledged that they would be reconsidered. Gender advocates have sustained the pressure in a bid to make sure parliament votes in favour of women's rights this time around.

While the court judgment in favour of affirmative action and the recent indications from states like Kwara and Ogun offer hope for the future, it is also key for political parties to outline feasible and actionable plans towards closing the gender gap. There are different pathways to power and as we seek enhanced inclusion in appointive roles, we must also seek adequate representation through the ballot.

The two major political parties, the governing All Progressives Congress (APC) and the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), are in a race for the presidency in 2023.

While both parties have made concessions on the cost of nomination forms, with the APC especially waiving the cost of nomination forms for women aspirants, it is also key that they go a step further by introducing policies which will make women's mainstreaming an inevitable outcome of their internal processes.

How? By borrowing a leaf from Ogun, Kwara and Ekiti, which incidentally are all APC states, and implementing a similar policy which will see to it that women transition from being aspirants to emerging as candidates.

As both parties' national conventions have proven, simply lowering or even waiving the cost of nomination forms is not enough to make sure women occupy leadership positions in significant numbers. At the end of both conventions, women occupied just two positions in the national leadership of the APC and one in the PDP. Underrepresentation of this magnitude is antithetical to equity.

Without enabling policies which are respected and thus adhered to, women will continue to aspire in large numbers but fail to be on the ballot.

Supporters of the PDP are quick to mention that the party has provisions for affirmative action in its constitution, but the reality has been rather different. At the height of the PDP's gender sensitivity, the cabinet of Dr. Goodluck Jonathan had a good number of women holding key positions, but this did not extend to the majority of PDP states. If this clause truly does exist, then the party is clearly not abiding by it as there is nothing to prove that women occupy up to 35% of appointive positions across PDP states, or that women candidates on the platform of the PDP have proportionate representation.

In 2007, Nigeria recorded the highest level of women's representation at the National Assembly with nine women in the Senate and 27 in the House of Representatives, cumulatively constituting just 7.68% of the federal parliament. These numbers, poor as they are, have since declined rapidly and if deliberate steps are not taken to correct the underrepresentation, then the situation will further worsen.

The adequate representation of women should not depend on the magnanimity of the men occupying positions and should, instead, be protected by laws and policies at the federal level and in our respective states and political parties.

Therefore, as we approach the primaries in both parties, political parties must deal with women in good faith by going beyond concessions on the cost of nomination forms and implementing a workable affirmative action policy.

A good place to start could be, for instance, to ensure that in state constituencies split into two, at least one of the candidates is female and no less than a third of all constituencies in each state has a female candidate. A similar policy can be extended to the House of Representatives and the Senate.

A firm commitment must also be extracted from political parties and presidential aspirants that they will comply with the recent ruling on 35% affirmative action, as their seeming silence on the matter is rather suspect. ■

Abiola
is a communications specialist and youth and gender advocate. She worked as a Special Assistant to the former speaker of the House of Representatives, Rt. Hon. Yakubu Dogara, and was appointed to the Board of Trustees of the APC

Tolu Odebiyi has done remarkably well for his people, writes TUNJI OLAJIDE

ODEBIYI AND MEANINGFUL REPRESENTATION IN PARLIAMENT

This is the season of politics. It can be felt in the air as political parties and aspirants mount campaigns across the length and breadth of the country seeking the support of the electorate for various elective positions. In the next couple of weeks, all the political parties will be conducting their primaries with a view to nominating candidates to fly their flags in the various positions that are up for grabs in the coming elections which have been scheduled by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) for next year.

The positions include the President, Governorship, Senate, House of



Representatives, and State Houses of Assembly. Many incumbents at various levels are seeking to be returned while others are fresh candidates who are mounting a challenge to upstage the incumbents. The elections, however, are going to be a hard nut to crack especially for the new entrants in the race who have to contend with some incumbents that have put up stellar performance in office.

One of such persons is Senator Tolu Odebiyi who is representing Ogun West in the National Assembly. He is currently the Acting Chairman and substantive Vice Chairman of the prestigious Senate Committee on Federal Capital Territory (FCT). He also serves in other important and strategic Senate Committees like Marine Transport and Agriculture. As a first timer in the Senate, having been elected in 2019, he has done commendably well in his representation of the good people of Ogun West in Ogun State.

Given his political pedigree, people are hardly surprised at the quality representation he has put up since he arrived the Senate in 2019. Senator Tolu Odebiyi comes from a family with strong political traditions and deep intellectual foundation. His late father, Chief Jonathan Odebiyi was a household name in the country during the Second Republic. He was not only a major force in the leading opposition party, Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN), led by the late sage, Chief Obafemi Awolowo. He was the UPN leader in the Senate. He made a lot of impact in the politics of that era.

Senator Tolu Odebiyi`s mother, Madam Kemi Odebiyi, on the other hand, served as a Member of the election management body in Nigeria, Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC). With such solid political pedigree, it is hardly surprising where Tolu is coming from.

The distinguished Senator from Ogun West has effectively prepared himself for the political challenges of the moment and the future. Odebiyi attended the famous Government College, Ibadan, where he obtained his West African School Certificate (WASC). In search of the golden proverbial Golden Fleece, he went to Wentworth Institute of Technology, Boston and University of Massachusetts, all in the United States of America, where he graduated with a Bachelor`s Degree in Building Construction and Engineering Technology.

He has made strong impact within the short period he has served in politics. Senator Tolu Odebiyi served as the Chief of Staff to the Governor, Senator Ibikunle Amosun. He resigned in 2019 to contest for the Ogun West Senatorial seat which he won with a very wide margin.

Within the Senate, Tolu Odebiyi has shown energy and drive. He has done quite a lot to improve the fortunes of his constituents back home in Ogun West and the whole of Yewa land. He has been able to impact profoundly on his constituency through major initiatives in education, health, infrastructure, skills acquisition, human capital development, youth and women empowerment and other social services.

In the area of education, he has instituted a scholarship scheme through which he has uplifted many indigent students at various levels, including those in tertiary institutions. He has also provided the students with hundreds of laptops, in addition to the construction and equipping of many classroom blocks and ICT Centres in different parts of Ogun West.

In the field of health, Senator Odebiyi has taken it upon himself to give free medical test and treatment to his people. This is in addition to the annual medical outreaches and awareness programmes he organizes in Ogun State on common health ailments such as diabetes and hypertension.

Senator Odebiyi has made profound impact in the area of youth and women empowerment. Hundreds of his constituents, including the youths and women have been empowered with skills that make them wealth creators. Not long ago, he distributed 92 nos 2.5 KVA generators to his constituents in Ado/Ota, Imeko Afon, Ipokia, Yewa North and Yewa South. This is in addition to several sewing and grinding machines he shared out to beneficiaries in Ogun West to enable them earn a living.

Odebiyi has also done very well in the area of water supply to the people. For instance, he has provided functional boreholes in places like Madoga, Idosa, Igbogila, Idofoi, Iwoye, Pahayi, Araromi, Agoro, Ileji, Oke Padre, Alari, Ohunbe, Moro, Ado-Odo/Ota, Imeko Afon, Ipokia, Yewa North and Yewa South.

Given his strong belief in human capital development, Senator Odebiyi has influenced, through recommendations, the employment of youths into various Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) such as the Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA), Abuja; Agricultural Research and Management Training Institute (ARMTI), Ilorin; The National Assembly, NIRSAL; and Nigerian Financial Intelligence Unit (NFIU), just to mention but a few.

Within this period in the Senate, Odebiyi has sponsored several Bills and Motions which have far-reaching impact not only in his Ogun West constituency but also in the entire polity. One of such Bills which has been passed by both the Senate and House of Representatives and awaiting presidential assent is: "A Bill for an Act to establish the National Institute for Border Studies, Imeko, Ogun State, to provide for teaching, research, instruction and training of students in Border Management and other related matters.

Olajide
writes from Ilaro, Ogun State



EJEVIOME ELOHO OTOBO
pays tribute to Sanu, an intellectual and seasoned diplomat

EDWARD OLUSOLA SANU: FAREWELL TO A SCHOLAR- DIPLOMAT

Edward Olusola Oladokun Sanu who passed on 21 March 2022 –three days to his 92nd birthday—will be laid to rest today in Ibadan. He was one of Nigeria's scholar-diplomats and highly respected Ambassadors. He dedicated nearly five decades of his life to national public service. Our paths first crossed in Beijing in January 1981, when I was posted to the Embassy of Nigeria in China. He was then the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to the People's Republic of China. Before I arrived in China, colleagues at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who knew him very well, had intimated me that he was one of Nigeria's most seasoned diplomats: gentle, generous, capable, savvy, articulate, and an intellectual. He lived up to that reputation in my interactions with him.

Within the first week of my arrival at the Embassy, he called me to his office to discuss both my experience in previous diplomatic postings and to ascertain my area of interest in terms of the work of the Embassy in China. This meeting was actually designed to "size me up" regarding the depth of my diplomatic experience and substantive knowledge. Two days later, he called me again to his office and said that he has decided to assign me to the political affairs desk at the Embassy. Ambassador Sanu was also concurrently accredited to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) and Socialist Republic of Vietnam. My assignment to the political affairs portfolio meant that I would be called upon from time to time to accompany him on his visits to those two countries.

Almost three weeks after informing me of my assignment, he indicated that I would accompany him and his wife on a visit to North Korea. This was the first time in the early years of my diplomatic career that I would accompany an ambassador and his wife on a mission to another country. After our trip to Pyongyang, I prepared the mission report and submitted it for Ambassador Sanu's review and approval. He was very impressed with the quality of report. Subsequently, I prepared another report on the host country, which he also adjudged as being of very high quality. A mutual admiration and respect developed between both of us. From

In one of his most important opinion essays that he penned for The Guardian, titled 'Nigeria's 50 Years of Nationhood: Looking Back in Anger' published on 23 January, 2011, he opined that 'Nigeria has always shied away from solving the myriad national issues facing the country'. That assessment still has great resonance

then on, our friendship was forged.

Our working together in China did not last long. Ambassador Sanu was posted from China to Australia after I spent a year with him. Before leaving Beijing for Canberra, he asked whether I would like to be posted to Canberra to continue working with him. I declined, explaining that I had decided to go for my graduate studies and moving to Australia would disrupt that plan, since I wanted to accomplish that goal before a certain age. Whereupon, he asked where I wanted to do my graduate studies: I told him Harvard and he remarked that I was "very brave", referring to the university's highly competitive admission process. He did his graduate studies at, and earned



double masters' degrees, from Harvard. I used the opportunity to put him on notice that he would be among the three persons (as required by Harvard), who will write one of the recommendations that will accompany my application for admission. He indicated that he would be pleased to do so. When the time came to submit my application, I contacted him and he obliged. After I received my letter of admission and informed him about it, he was very excited –even more than me.

Ambassador Sanu was held in high esteem by both his peers and the political leaders with who he worked. This was reflected in the series of important diplomatic postings at the Ambassadorial level that he had. He served as Nigeria's Ambassador of Nigeria to Ethiopia; to Belgium and the European Union; to United States of America with concurrent accreditation to Mexico; to China with concurrent accreditation to Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) and Socialist Republic of Vietnam; and to Australia (as High Commissioner). He is one of the very few Nigerian Ambassadors, and, possibly the only one, who has served at Ambassadorial level in the five continents of the world.

In his long and distinguished diplomatic career, Ambassador Sanu led or participated in several important multilateral negotiations. Three stand out. He was the Chief Negotiator for the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Countries for the Lomé I Convention with the then European Economic Community (pre-cursor of the European Union). In 1964, he was nominated by then United Nations Secretary General, U Thant, to represent Africa on the Committee of '10 Wisemen' on the reform of the United Nations system. In 1986, he was appointed by then United Nations Secretary General, Javier Perez de Cuellar, to the Group of 18 Eminent Persons to undertake a wide-range review of the Administrative Functioning and Effectiveness of the United Nations. The two United Nations-related appointments were an acknowledgement of his well-recognised expertise in United Nations administrative and budgetary processes.

Ambassador Ejeviome Eloho Otobo
is Non-Resident Senior Fellow in Peacebuilding and Global Economic Policy, Global Governance Institute, Brussels, Belgium.

Editor, Editorial Page **PETER ISHAKA**
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EDITORIAL

THE SENATE AND MULTICHOICE

Business entities should not be forced into an uncompetitive price fixing



Due to constant upward price adjustments by MultiChoice, the House of Representations almost heckled the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) into effecting a pay-as-you-go model in the pay TV sector in 2020. The recent inauguration of a seven-member ad-hoc committee by the Senate to investigate the same pay television company over announced increase in subscription fees across all bouquets for its DStv and GOtv services is therefore consistent with attempts over the years to cut the service provider to size. Already, Senate has directed the company to revert to the old tariffs and adopt a 'pay-per-view' model that will allow full enjoyment of its services in view of Nigeria's epileptic power supply situation.

Although we do not believe that the Senate should usurp regulatory powers, the anger expressed by the lawmakers who obviously rely on the services of MultiChoice is understandable. But MultiChoice, like every other company in Nigeria, is not operating in a vacuum. The prevailing grim economic conditions have impacted businesses negatively and have compelled many of them to adjust prices. It is the same economic conditions that made airlines operating in the country to hike their fares that is affecting MultiChoice and every other business. Even in the United States, United Kingdom and other western countries, bills for consumer cable and satellite TV are on the rise due to increase in programming acquisition costs.

Besides Multichoice, (operators of DStv and GOtv which arguably controls the largest chunk of the market), the pay Tv segment of the broadcast industry has other players like Startimes, DaarSat, ConSaat, Kwese TV and TSTV. They have their own challenges. Already, exchange rate instability, policy inconsistency, poor electricity, dearth of infrastructure as well as regulatory and security issues have combined to make the Nigerian business climate unfriendly. Therefore, care must be taken not to scare away the few remaining businesses from our shores.

While the National Assembly should continue to actively monitor, oversight all sectors of the economy and intervene where necessary, especially where regulators falter, it is imperative that its actions be guided by the overall national interest. We understand that for a long time, many Nigerians have been clamouring for the pay Tv providers to migrate to pay per view module as against the mandatory monthly subscription. In many parts of the world, the pay Tv system operates based on pay-as-you-go. The message from the Senate is that service providers in Nigeria should begin to consider that transition in the interest of their consumers.

However, the pay-per-view model of subscription against the month-to-month prepaid model presently in place which the Senate and indeed many Nigerians demand does not come cheap. Indeed, it is an add-on feature that enables a viewer to separately pay to watch individual events via private telecast. This means the subscriber pays for each individual show in addition to what is paid for pay television packages. Last year, the House of Representatives announced that it was working on a pay-per-view bill, which would end "indiscriminate price increase" by pay television operators. The House apparently ran into a brick wall as the move was abandoned.

We agree that Nigerians are currently experiencing unprecedented hardship and suffering. They deserve the sturdiest protection they can get against what seems like a steady descent into penury, as they face the sharpest decrease in their standard of living. There is therefore no doubt that the current price hike by MultiChoice will further add to their pains. But the way to tackle the problem is not to muscle business entities into an uncompetitive price fixing model that ignores current economic realities. Authorities in Nigeria should concentrate their efforts on how to revamp the economy.

The prevailing grim economic conditions have impacted businesses negatively and have compelled many of them to adjust prices

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Letters to the Editor

Letters in response to specific publications in THISDAY should be brief (150-300 words) and straight to the point. Interested readers may send such letters along with their contact details to **opinion@thisdaylive.com.** We also welcome comments and opinions on topical local, national and international issues provided they are well-written and should also not be longer than (750-1000 words). They should be sent to **opinion@thisdaylive.com** along with photograph, email address and phone numbers of the writer.

LETTERS

NIGERIAN DEMOCRACY IS FOR THE RICH

Recently, political parties in the country, in preparation for the 2023 general elections pegged the price of nomination forms beyond the reach of ordinary and many competent Nigerians who wish to contest the elections. The outrageous cost of forms has become the topic of discussion in a country where high rate of income inequality takes a toll. It has also come at a time after President Muhammadu Buhari had signed the "not too young to run bill" into law which would pave the way for active participation of Nigerians youths into the country's politics. The ruling party's price tag for presidential candidate goes for N100million while the lowest which is the state house of assembly costs N2milion. The same with PDP which pegged its price for presidential form at N40million and state house of assembly at N750,000. What many Nigerians failed to understand is: why are the political parties increasing the cost of forms at a period of worsening economic crisis, hunger and squalor? In 2015, President Buhari complained that he did not have enough money to buy his nomination form which cost N27.5million. The president was able to purchase the form through crowdfunding and other donations.

If Buhari as former military head of state in 2015 could not buy his party's form, one is confused on how a poorly paid retired public servant who is passionate to serve could do it. For instance, even the vice president, Yemi Osinbajo who shows interest and wants to contest will have to cough out his salaries for many years. Sadly, one is surprised, why under Buhari's watch, APC wants to shut out other Nigerians from exercising their constitutional responsibility on the basis of being poor. Under APC, politics has become the exclusive preserve of the mighty and wealthy members of society. Election does not stop at the purchase of forms; aspirants have to contend with other expenses such as party's primaries which usually go to the highest bidders. With the monetisation of politics in the country, there is tendency corruption will increase astronomically. The politicians, if elected would have to first recover their money, before attending to other campaign promises.

Besides, the monetization of our democracy by APC which came to power under the pretext of change mantra is unfortunate. The party which parades itself as pro-poor should have set a good standard for other political parties to follow. President Buhari rode to power under three key campaign promises viz: Fighting corruption, fixing the economy and tackling insecurity. Corruption which remains the bane of the country's growth and development can be tackled with strong institutions and competent leadership. We have Nigerians of timber and calibre who are ready to join partisan politics to change the country for good. However, the new development in our political parties will become a cog in the wheel of their ambitions. It will scare, disenfranchise and push them back from the political scene.

The late American President, Abraham Lincoln, defines democracy as the government of the people by the people and for the people. Democracy is a not government of the few. The system involves widespread participation of the masses in decision making process. In Nigeria, democracy means different things to the poor segment of the population. The masses are relegated and turned to mere voters during elections. After new leadership emerges, the dividends of democracy become elusive.

Ibrahim Mustapha,
Pambegua, Kaduna State

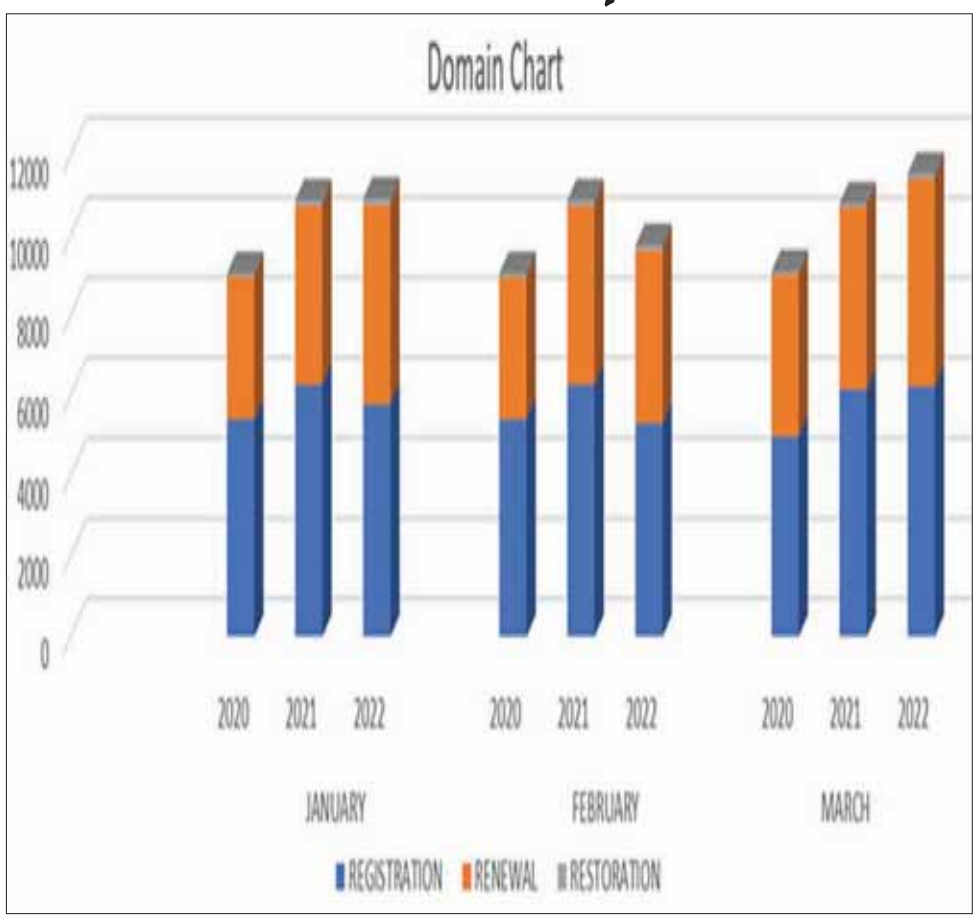
BUSINESSWORLD

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RATES AS AT MAY 4, 2022

MONEY MARKET		REPO		S & P INDEX		S & P INDEX		EXCHANGE RATE
OPR	6.50%	CALL	10.75%	INDEX LEVEL	610.44%	1/4 TO DATE	-1.31%	N416.75/1 US DOLLAR*
OVERNIGHT	7.17%	1-MONTH	9.66%	1-DAY	0.03%	YEAR TO DATE	7.13%	*AS AT LAST FRIDAY
		3-MONTH	1028%	MONTH-TO-DATE	-1.31%			

Nigeria's Active Domain Names Slide in One Year from 180,763 in 2021 to 178,739 in 2022



DOMAIN COUNT AT A GLANCE

	JANUARY			FEBRUARY			MARCH		
DESCRIPTION	2020	2021	2022	2020	2021	2022	2020	2021	2022
REGISTRATION	6103	6,284	5,784	6103	6,284	5,327	4987	6161	6,242
RENEWAL	4346	4,466	4,981	4346	4,466	4,312	4,034	4,559	5,190
RESTORATION	127	127	161	127	127	132	92	88	118
ACTIVE DOMAINS 3RD LEVEL	130,368	150,274	124,080	130,368	150,274	122,564	133,667	148,157	119,573
2ND LEVEL	19,743	27,956	53,999	19,743	27,956	56,191	19,998	32,606	59,166
GRAND TOTAL	150,111	178,230	178,,079	150,111	178,230	178,755	153,665	180,763	178,739

Emma Okonji

Ivn one year, Nigeria experienced a slide in her active dot ng (.ng) domain names, which is Nigeria's identity in cyberspace.

Although domain names come in three categories: Top Level Domain Name such as .com; Second Level Domain Name such as .com.ng; and Third Level Domain Name such as www.com.ng, the slide in Nigeria's active domain names was more with the third level domain names, which dropped from 148,157 domains in March 2021 to 119,573 domains in March 2022, bringing the total number of active domain names to 178,739 in March 2022, which was a drop from 180,763 domain names that were recorded in March 2021.

However, domain names registration, restoration and renewal, increased within a space of one year, even though the total number of active domain names dropped from 180,763 domains in March 2021 to 178,739 domains in March 2022.

The Nigeria Internet Registration Association (NiRA), the body in charge of managing Nigeria's country code Top Level Domain (ccTLD), the .ng, released the figures recently on its official website.

According to the figures, in 2021, new domain name registration was 6,161 and in 2022, the new domain name registration increased to 6,242.

In 2021, renewal of exiting domain names was 4,559, and in 2022, renewal of existing domain names increased to 5,190. Also in 2021, restoration of domain names reached 88, while the figure for the same restoration in 2022, increased to 118.

In spite of the increase in domain name registration, renewal and restoration from 2021 to 2022, the active domain names, especially the third level domain names, decreased from 148,157 domains in March 2021, to 119,573 domains in March 2022, while the second level domain names increased from 32,606 domains in March 2021 to 59,166 domains in March 2022.

According to the figures released by NiRA, the total active domain names in the country, however decreased from 180,763 domains in March 2021, to 178,739 domains in March 2022.

Commenting, the President of NiRA, Mr. Mohammed Rudman, told THISDAY that the slide in the active number of third level domain names, was as a result of COVID-19 pandemic, which he said, could not allow most organisations who had hitherto purchased the third level domain names, ~~to put them to effective use~~

Continued on page 28

Report: 71% of Nigerian Organisations Suffered Ransomware Attacks in 2021

Emma Okonji

A report by Sophos, a global leader in next-generation cybersecurity, has revealed that 71 per cent of Nigerian organisations were hit with ransomware in 2021, up from 22 per cent in 2020.

The annual international survey and review of real-world ransomware experiences, is called 'State of Ransomware 2022'.

The report further said 44 per cent of the organisations that had data encrypted, and were hit by ransomware, paid ransom to get their data back, even if they had other means of data recovery, such as backups.

The report summarises the impact of ransomware on 5,600 mid-sized organisations in 31 countries across Europe, the Americas, Asia-Pacific and Central Asia, the Middle East, and Africa.

Analysing the report, the Principal Research Scientist at Sophos, Chester Wisniewski, said the survey showed that globally, the proportion of victims paying the ransom continued to increase, even when they may have other options available.

"There could be several reasons for this, including incomplete backups or the desire to prevent stolen data from appearing on a public leak site. In the aftermath of a ransomware attack there is often intense pressure to get back up and running as soon as possible. Restoring encrypted data using backups can be a difficult and time-consuming

Continued on page 28

MARKET DATA AS AT WEDNESDAY, MAY 4, 2022

BONDS

DESCRIPTION	Price	Yield	Change (%)	Updated Time
12.75 27-APR-2023	106.42	6.12	1.15	April 22, 2022 ▲
14.20 14-MAR-2024	111.52	7.54	0.05	April 22, 2022 ▲
13.53 23-MAR-2025	110.84	9.20	0.00	April 08, 2022 —
12.50 22-JAN-2026	105.46	10.68	0.00	April 08, 2022 —
16.2884 17-MAR-2027	120.08	10.89	0.31	April 08, 2022 —

BILLS

MATURITY	Dis-count	Yield	Change (%)	Updated Time
NTB 12-May-22	289,00	289,00	0.00	April 22, 2022 —
NTB 9-Jun-22	304,00	305,00	0.00	April 22, 2022 —
NTB 14-Jul-22	323,00	325,00	0.00	April 22, 2022 —
NTB 11-Aug-22	350,00	354,00	0.00	April 22, 2022 —
NTB 8-Sep-22	348,00	353,00	-0.08	April 22, 2022 ▼

CPs

MATURITY	Discount	Yield	Change (%)	Updated Time
UNCP CP VI 2-MAY-22	8.62	8.64	0.00	April 22, 2022 —
NEVE CP I 24-MAY-22	16.44	16.68	0.00	April 22, 2022 —
DANC CP II 25-MAY-22	8.56	8.63	0.08	April 22, 2022 —
TRBH CP V 26-JUL-22	11.51	11.86	0.30	April 22, 2022 —
FSDH CP VI 1-AUG-22	8.12	8.30	-0.01	April 22, 2022 ▼

OTC FX FUTURES

CONTRACT TENOR (MONTH)	Contract	Current Rate (₦/$)	Updated Time
1	NGUS APR 27 2022	427.24	April 22, 2022
2	NGUS MAY 25 2022	428.93	April 22, 2022
3	NGUS JUN 29 2022	430.63	April 22, 2022
4	NGUS JUL 27 2022	432.32	April 22, 2022
5	NGUS AUG 31 2022	434.02	April 22, 2022

Yusuf: Businesses Require More Resilience in 2022 and Beyond

Managing Partner at Verraki, a business and technology solutions firm, Mr. Niyi Yusuf, speaks on Verraki's latest report and the need for business leaders to focus on growth, digital strategy, ecosystem partnerships and talent management, in order to remain competitive, among other issues. **Emma Okonji** presents the excerpts:

Can you tell us about Verraki's latest report on 'Trends and Leadership Priorities for 2022'?

As you are aware, the world has changed dramatically over the last decade. The COVID-19 pandemic and early adaptation and experimentation of digital-oriented service delivery models has brought necessary shifts in business thinking. The operating environment has equally become increasingly challenging, particularly for Nigerian businesses, with worsening insecurity, inflation, FX shortages, to mention a few. This is in addition to the changes that digitisation, innovation and technology has brought to the operating environment of businesses globally. Verraki Research put together the report: 'Trends and Leadership Priorities for 2022 – What Matters Most?', to highlight how businesses leaders can navigate these emerging challenges in the short to medium term. Indeed, we are again at that time in societal evolution when business leaders need to step back, take a breath, and consider how best to reignite growth sustainably. Some other priority areas for leaders as highlighted in the report include a robust digital strategy, ecosystem partnerships, digital talents, resilient supply chains and a working customer experience strategy.

How do you think businesses in Nigeria can reignite growth, given the present circumstances?

As of Friday 15 Apr 2022, Nigeria had only about 2,600 active cases of COVID-19, and the tempo of the economy has picked up significantly. The pandemic phase appears to be ending, unless a significant and more severe new variant of the virus emerges. Therefore, this is the best time for businesses to re-strategise and ensure that current business model, priorities and goals are aligned with their long-term growth ambitions. To reignite growth, it is important to first appreciate where one is coming from as well as the peculiarities of the present moment. For most organisations, the pandemic did slow the tempo of growth as they focused on survival and stabilisation, but for few others, it has been a catalyst that has supercharged their digital transformation, and growth. Given this background, the first line of action for leaders is an evaluation of the entire business model to establish and fix vulnerabilities that could have been exposed by the pandemic, or gradually embrace a new operating model where necessary.

Leaders must then embrace emerging opportunities and challenges, and deploy ambitious, bold, and action-oriented leadership to create the required momentum for competitiveness, productivity, and sustainability. It is equally important for every business leader to clearly identify, analyse and understand its market niche. The business must then position competitively within this niche by offering exceptional customer experience. A third must-have is investment in the necessary digital technology. It is almost impossible to achieve any meaningful growth in today's marketplace with obsolete digital tools, processes, and skill sets. This makes investments in digital technologies and talents non-negotiable.

What is business resilience and how important is this for leaders?

Good question. Let us reflect a bit on pre-pandemic Nigeria, when most businesses were just about to commence the implementation of their 2020 action plans. Then on February 27, 2020, the first case of the COVID-19 virus was announced, and the rest of the story is the new reality we are in today: supply chain distortions, business closures, job losses, remote work, fiscal crises, energy crises, among others. During unprecedented business disruptions and risks, some businesses struggle or fail, while some others innovate, advance, and even thrive. The difference is resilience. Business resilience is the ability of an organisation to quickly navigate unexpected disruptions while maintaining continuous business operations and safeguarding people, assets and overall brand equity. It goes beyond disaster recovery and often considers avoidance of costly downtime, reduce vulnerabilities and ring-fence business operations and market share. With rising uncertainties and technological disruptions, leaders must ensure that their businesses are wired to overcome perceived and unexpected distortions. There are few strategies that can help business leaders in this regard: accelerate digital adoption, diversify supply chains, explore untapped markets, invest in your workforce and be realistic about marketplace trends.



Yusuf

What is the best strategy for leaders pushing their businesses to align with digital disruption brought about by the pandemic?

The first and most important step is for businesses to realize that every business is a now a digital business, and that the need for digital transformation in every organisation remains existential. The pandemic accelerated digital investments, innovation, and awareness exponentially, fast forwarding digital transformation by decades. With this realisation, the leader must then institute a digital strategy that is robust and begins with the end in mind. Equally important is the institution of a digital culture that progressively and intentionally enhances the digital capabilities of the business, its people, and the broader stakeholders. Leaders must seek a realistic appreciation of vulnerabilities and opportunities, blend digital and corporate strategies, and rewire their organisation for agility. Leaders must approach digitisation comprehensively, embracing solutions that digitises operations end-to-end.

Does all digital strategy lead to a positive outcome for businesses?

Not all digital strategies are right for all businesses. A winning digital strategy is one that is uniquely suited to the organisation's vison and mission, and that facilitates sustainable value creation. Broadly speaking, strategies are designed to help businesses win in the marketplace. Strategy distinguishes a business from competitors, so that it somehow stands out and delivers unique user experience that is growth-enhancing. Therefore, it is right to say that a digital strategy must be the 'right strategy' to produce positive or desired outcomes for the business. A digital strategy should eventually lead to the creation of a concrete plan or roadmap, guided by a clear understanding of what digital means for the company. A business must also determine if it requires a digital strategy, or digital transformation as both as closely related but differ in scope. Digital transformation is more holistic, and drives change in three areas: customer experience, operational processes, and business models. A digital strategy is most relevant to changes in business models and uses technology to create the capabilities a company needs to become a digital business. That said, it is important that leaders seek for professional help to create a winning digital strategy.

How do you explain data as the new currency for any organisation?

In this new digital world, expectations and possibilities are increasing exponentially and this is made possible by data. It is said that 90 per cent of the world's data was created in the last two years, and the global volume of data doubles every two years. Much of these data consist of personal details: where people have been, what products they have bought, what movies they like, which candidates they support, and the list is nearly endless. Today, as customers continue to demand personalised experiences, the large amount of data being made available by the billions of connected devices makes it easier than ever before for businesses to meet these expectations. Indeed, data has an economic value that can be bought, sold, and traded. As a starting point, leaders must ensure that the data collection strategy is robust and addresses the immediate needs of the business in a forward-looking manner. This is because data-driven decisions are only as good as the data they are based on. To efficiently utilise the power of data, leaders must invest in good big data technologies to evaluate, process and extract insights from data. This data infrastructure can be on-premises, single-cloud, multi-cloud, and hybrid-cloud implementations. Equally important is the recruitment, training and retention of data analysts, data engineers or data scientists who will bring needed data analytics capabilities to the business and help transform data into business insights and intelligence to aid management decision. The digital age is here, and the opportunities are real, and big.

Your report mentioned ecosystem partnerships as one of the priorities leaders should focus on. How important is this?

Consider ecosystem partnerships as a network of partners a business creates and nurtures as part of its growth strategies, particularly with regards to facilitating innovation and new market opportunities. Specifically, ecosystem partners can facilitate partner-sourced/influenced revenue, access to new audiences through co-marketing, as well as help in co-development of new solutions. Ecosystem partnerships can be in the form of technology, channels, or strategic business partnerships. Let us look at an example- Stripe, a US based Fintech reportedly has 848 partners within its partner ecosystem. This includes 785 technology partners and 62 channel partners which include MySQL, Salesforce, and Google. To build ecosystem partnerships, leaders must understand who their customers are, the customer needs, their businesses address, and companies that provide solutions that address same or other needs of the customer. It may be instructive to focus on organisations that provide complementary products and services. This ensures that growth within the ecosystem is reinforcing. As technology continues to break barriers across sectors and business models, leaders must leverage the increased interconnectedness and interdependence of businesses to drive mutually reinforcing growth. Ecosystem partnerships is crucial for business resilience and innovation. When your partner wins, so do you.

Is there any other priority area you would like to highlight?

I would consider talent management and employee fulfilment as a major focus area, if not the most important. At the core of talent management are talent acquisition and onboarding, training and development, and succession planning. The way every organisation implements these goes a long way to impact business growth and resilience. Every business leader must invest in quality talents, ensure they get the right training and motivation, and create a digital-friendly and inclusive environment for career fulfilment. Leaders must accept that the workplace has changed significantly and need to provide clarity on how the organisation will operate remote and flexible work productively. Employees should be provided with the training and exposure they require to apply creativity, critical thinking and constant digital upskilling to solve complex problems. Team members need a sense of belonging and value in other to bring their best selves to the workplace.

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REPORT: 71% OF NIGERIAN ORGANISATIONS SUFFERED RANSOMWARE ATTACKS IN 2021

process, so it can be tempting to think that paying a ransom for a decryption key is a faster option. It's also an option fraught with risk. Organisations don't know what the attackers might have done, such as adding backdoors, copying passwords and more. If organisations don't thoroughly clean up the recovered data, they'll end up with all that potentially toxic material in their network and potentially exposed to a repeat attack," Wisniewski said.

According to the report, the impact of a ransomware attack could be immense. The average cost to recover from the most recent ransomware attack in 2021 was $3.43 million. It took on average one month to recover from the damage and disruption. 97 per cent of organisations said the attack had impacted their ability to operate, and 96 per cent of the victims said they had lost business and revenue because of the attack

The report further said many organisations relied on cyber insurance to help them recover from a ransomware attack and 81 per cent of mid-sized organisations had cyber insurance that covers them in the event of a ransomware attack. It said in 97 per cent of incidents, the insurer paid some or all the costs incurred

The report said 91 per cent of those with cyber insurance said their experience of getting it has changed over the last 12 months, with higher demands for cybersecurity measures, more complex or expensive policies and fewer organisations offering insurance protection

"The findings suggest we may have reached a peak in the evolutionary journey of ransomware, where attackers' greed for ever higher ransom payments is colliding head on with a hardening of the cyber insurance market as insurers increasingly seek to reduce their ransomware risk and exposure," Wisniewski said.

According to Wisniewski, "In recent years, it has become increasingly easy for cybercriminals to deploy ransomware, with almost everything available as-a-service. Again many cyber insurance providers have covered a wide range of ransomware recovery costs, including the ransom, likely contributing to ever higher ransom demands. However, the results indicate that cyber insurance is getting tougher and in the future ransomware victims may become less willing or less able to pay sky high ransoms. Sadly, this is unlikely to reduce the overall risk of a ransomware attack."

NIGERIA'S ACTIVE DOMAIN NAMES SLIDE IN ONE YEAR FROM 180,763 IN 2021 TO 178,739 IN 2022

businesses went low, when the global economy, including the Nigerian economy was locked down in 2020 and 2021 as a result of the pandemic.

"In 2020, we experienced an increase in the number of registration for country code Top Level Domain Name (ccTLD) but in 2021, the number of registration dropped because of the effect of COVID-19 pandemic. The issue is that all those that registered in 2020, could not use the domain name in that same 2020 because of the pandemic and as such they did not renew their registration in 2021 and new registration also dropped in 2021 for ccTLD," Rudman said.

He however said NiRA would populate .ng domain name in the country, through its initiative to slashed the cost of dot ng domain names by 40 per cent.

Rudman told THISDAY that the decision to reduce the cost of .ng domain names was made by the NiRA board of directors after reviewing the growth trajectory of .ng domain names across the country over the last two years.

According to Rudman, "To address the issue, NiRA decided to conduct a downward review of domain name prices on the .ng domains and a marginal reduction on .com.ng domains and others by 40 per cent. We made it public after first announcing it at the registrars' forum. The goal is to increase the number of domain names registered in the country by encouraging more people to register."

Improving Healthcare Delivery System

The recent donation of medical equipment worth over N5 million to the Lagos Island General Hospital, by Class 9A of the 1976 to 1979 Lagos State Nursing School, will improve healthcare delivery system in Lagos, writes **Oluchi Chibuzor**

45 years after graduating from the Lagos State Nursing School, Ikoyi in Lagos, the second pioneering set of the institution, known as Galean, came back to honour their Alma mater where they were taught by world class health experts.

A class of 40 students, made up of 36 females and four males have risen to the zenith of their profession with so many embracing public service, private practice and others, seeking greener pastures abroad.

The journey of what would mark a watershed as their career in nursing training began at 1 to 9 Awolowo Road Ikoyi, Lagos, Nigeria, has since seen then maintained and unbroken chord of friendship, as they have over the years, organised a monthly meeting in each other's homes.

The thought of choosing General Hospital Lagos Island as the recipient of their magnanimity, is not far-fetched, given that it is where the bedrock of their clinical training under the free sponsorship of the then Lagos state government.

In show of appreciation to the hospital, they presented two state-of the-art vital signs monitors, 20 dressing trolleys, 25 drip stands and 250 white bed sheets. Although these are essentials, "but what we have presented to the hospital cannot be compared to what the Lagos state government gave us through free nursing education", PRO of the group, Mrs. Ibidola Adeniyi, enthused.

Speaking at the occasion, the President of the Gales Club Class 9A 1976 to 1979, Omipe Sadipe, said: "The donation of some medical equipment to the hospital is in recognition of what we received from the hospital."

Sadipe said gathering at the General Hospital, Lagos, fondly called GH during their training in 1976 to 1979 reminded them of the challenges they faced.

She recalled having to fight off a Military Government effort to make them sign five year bond post training, noting that they had to mourn the loss of, "one of us who died shortly after we returned to the hostel from Yaba Psychiatric Hospital."

"These and many other challenges rather than break us individually and collectively helped in the strong bond that is waxing strong daily. The entire members of the class formed the Gales club shortly after graduation. Today, we remain one happy family.

"We the entire members of the special class of 9A set, popularly called the Bera class, of the Lagos State School of Nursing, 1-9 Awolowo Roadlkoyi represented by members here physically present, and members joining online are back home.

"We like to thank most sincerely the Lagos State Government for giving us a world standard quality nursing training. Lucky us, we enjoyed this world class quality training for free," she stated.

APPLAUSE

Sadipe expressed their special thanks to the GH Management Team noting that, "daily we appreciate the world standard clinical training impacted in us, from June 1976 July 1979.

"To all those Staff Nurses, Nursing sisters, Matrons in all the Wards, Emergency clinic, operating theatre many may not be here today that helped in our clinical training, We appreciate you, we thank you, we remain grateful. God bless you all. To the present Nursing staff and the Management Team of GH, we thank you for raising the bar of the healthcare delivery system for the people of Lagos State.

"The Director of Nursing Services, GH Nursing staff members, we like to shout it loud and clear to the world: that through our members contribution to the healthcare delivery system, what GH deposited in us has benefited Mankind in many Nigerian hospitals, corporate Health Clinics, the best hospitals, and health facilities all over the world."

Omipe Sadipe pledged that they would continue to be good ambassadors of GH wherever and to larger society, especially, "the less privileged we have made, will continue to make donations to make life more meaningful.



"We the Galean as we call ourselves, have over the years used our unity cultivated in Awolowo road and donated Equipment's and Modern day Teaching aids to our Great School. Today we have come to donate hospital items that will enhance the health care delivery system of the cornerstone of our clinical knowledge. Medical items that will be helpful in the ER room, in the Wards and the Nursing Delivery System."

RECIPROCATING WITH GALEAN WARD

Commenting on the gesture from the group, the Chief Medical Director, Lagos Island General Hospital, Dr. Ismail Ganikale, said the gift was coming at the right time; they are witnessing a deep renovation.

Harping on the significance of the medical item, Ganikale pointed out that the hospital would deploy all the gifts to increase healthcare delivery for the patients.

"We appreciate your gift and this is what we need for the new wards. If I have my way, our wards as they get renovated we will begin to name them. We are going to name one ward Galean wards and we have reasons to do it. These monitors will be in that ward, the drip stand and most of the donation will be in that ward. We will be using the ward before the end of this year. There is no accident in life, why is it at this time you people decided to come? This is the period the hospital is undergoing a complete deep renovation in the last over 100 years, "he said.

Ganikale, however, emphasised that he has always made a point that the hospital belongs to the nurses, as they spend most time with the patients, "others come and go but 24/7 the nurses are the closest to the people. Moved with nostalgia at the timeliness of the equipment, the Medical Director announced that with new wards was recently added in the ongoing renovation, the management would dedicate a ward in honour of the Class 9A set.

"So we have a Galean ward now in our Lagos Island GH and I also want to make an appeal, please do not let this spirit die. Even if it means widening it to welcome others, maybe from another class; we thank you and we appreciate it."

ESTABLISHING PARTNERSHIP

For the Public Relations Officer of the group, Mrs. Ibidola Adeniyi, handing over the donation to the hospital management pledged to adopt the newly named Galean ward as a way to foster effective collaboration between the set and the hospital community.

"We promised you that with this donation, we will keep monitoring their utilisation and adopt it as our own. We will ensure that the ward is effectively equipped adequately. Within our capacity we will intervene to keep this relationship a continuous one.

According to her, on behalf of all Galean's both home and in diaspora promise that, "our donation today is the beginning of periodic donations that we shall be making to GH.

"We shall maintain regular communication with the Director of Nursing services to know the needs of our Nursing colleagues and the GH Management team to make GH a center of Excellence in the Healthcare delivery system to our people in Lagos State."

For Ezekiel Awe, a member of the Class 9A, and the only surviving male, who flew in from Houston Texas, for the donation, admonished the GH management to frequently notify them of their immediate needs.

He said, "As a representative of those in the diaspora, we implore you to please interact with us frequently in any issues facing the hospital. Though we are working in the diaspora to make money, our mind is over here in Nigeria."

CAMPUS CLOSURE REACTION

According to Awe: "The government cannot do everything, it is when we as individuals support our healthcare system, and this is what makes the difference between there and here. This is what we are trying to introduce, so that all our formal sets and those who are following us will also emulate us.

"We are so sad that the school is no more there, but we do not know the genesis of closing the place. But we are not happy that the school is no longer there, because you cannot make reference to the school directly and that is giving us a sort of problem."

NOTE: Interested readers should continue in the online edition on **www.thisdaylive.com**

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TENDER NOTICE
CENTRAL BANK OF NIGERIA ON BEHALF OF DMO OFFERS NIGERIAN TREASURY BILLS

Notice is hereby given by the Central Bank of Nigeria on behalf of DMO that the Federal Government of Nigeria Treasury Bills of 91, 182 and 364-day tenors amounting to N1,911,900,000; N2,998,516,000 and N122,559,889,000 respectively would be issued by Dutch auction on Thursday, May 12, 2022.

All Money Market Dealers should submit bids through the CBN S4 WEB INTERFACE between 8.00 a.m. and 11.00 a.m. on Wednesday, May 11, 2022.

Each bid must be in multiple of N1,000 subject to a minimum of N50,001,000. Authorized Money Market Dealers can submit multiple bids. A bid may be for authorized Money Market Dealers own account, non–Money Market Dealers or interested members of the public. The result of the auction would be announced by 1.00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 11, 2022. The Bank reserves the right to reject any bid.

Allotment letters would be issued for successful bids on Thursday, May 12, 2022, while payment for the successful bids should be made to your account with Central Bank of Nigeria not later than 11.00 a.m. on Thursday, May 12, 2022.

The Bank reserves the right to vary the amount on offer in line with market realities prevailing as at the period of auction of the Nigerian Treasury Bills.

GOVERNMENT SECURITIES OFFICE
CENTRAL BANK OF NIGERIA
ABUJA.

For further information, please contact: 07002255226
Signed: MANAGEMENT

Examining Nigeria's Preparedness to Avert, Manage Disaster

Omolabake Fasogbon writes about how gaps in Nigerian safety policy and efforts have deepened Nigeria's vulnerability to crisis and disaster



From building collapse to fire incidence, road, sea, rail and air mishap, tanker explosion, insecurity challenge, flood and workplace accident, Nigeria has been hugely impacted by varying degrees of natural and man-induced disaster that have rubbed off negatively on human lives and national economy. For instance, a recent report by Nigerian Investment Promotion Commission (NIPC) revealed that Nigeria lost about $188 billion investment opportunities between 2017–2020, representing more than 92 per cent investment opportunities in four years.

But according to a former Director General of Lagos Chamber of Commerce of Industry (LCCI), Muda Yusuf, this is not unconnected to low level of investors' confidence, fuelled by structural problems of infrastructure and worsening security situation, amid other uncertainties in the country.

Lives lost to disaster and emergency in the country are immeasurable even as reports described Nigeria as the third most dangerous place to live in the world with regards to safety and security, after South Africa and Brazil. According to media report, between 2019 and 2021, Nigeria recorded no fewer than 68 fire outbreak resulting in 79 deaths which the Federal Fire Service (FFS) identified electrical spark as the major cause of most outbreaks. Reports by Brookings also put Nigeria as number one in the frequency and intensity of building collapse in Africa.

The report further identify that no fewer than 6000 households were displaced by building collapse with property worth of $3.2 trillion forfeited. Unfortunately, these are just a tip of numerous havocs that have wrecked families, livelihood and the country at large due to what experts describe as weak safety management systems, policy failure as well as negligence on the part of safety regulators.

To safety experts, quite a number of these disasters, especially man-induced ones can be averted and if not averted, effects can be mitigated should the horse be put before the cart with regards to operational risk management.

According to Managing Director of Safety Consultants and Solutions Provider (SCSP), Anthonia Beri, inspite of the frequency of disaster and accompanying loss, Nigeria has not really shown genuine commitment in addressing menace.

She noted that technical and process safety, which focuses on the prevention of fire, explosions, and accidental discharge at process facilities was still at a low ebb in Nigeria.

Beri stated that the implementation of process safety was necessary in all sectors of the economy, particularly in work place where occupational hazards has it reached its apex.

According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), one worker dies every 15 seconds worldwide, 6,000 die daily and more than two million die annually from work-related accidents and diseases.

NIGERIA'S SAFETY POLICY

In 2006, Nigeria developed a national policy on Occupational Safety and Health. This was not until after agitations by stakeholders became intense. The policy aimed to facilitate the enhancement of occupational safety and health performance in all sectors of the economy and ensure that employees' rights protection is consistent with regional and international standards. The policy also led to the establishment of the Occupational Safety and Health Department, whose primary objective is to ensure the safety and health of workers in Nigeria.

Some of its functions include monitoring compliance with the national occupational safety and health policies, inspection of workspaces, provision of safety and health training, creating awareness of occupational safety and health through campaigns.

In 2020, the national safety policy was reviewed to align with present realities.

Between 2006 when the safety policy was developed and now, Nigeria has been a victim of a number of high profile disasters, many of which it is believed could be averted if proactive measures were prioritised. This imbalance has continued to generate concerns from stakeholders as to the effectiveness and strengths of the policy.

The Executive Director, Strategy, Safety Advocacy and Empowerment Foundation, Jamiu Badmos feels Nigeria policy on safety were more of reactive than proactive.

Corroborating Badmos submission, Beri who is also a safety expert affirmed that Nigeria was rather good at reacting to occurrences, adding that it has failed to learn from past mistakes.

She noted that a general assessment of Nigeria's performance in the area of life, environmental, security and fire safety revealed that the country has greatly retrogressed.

Referring to the warning by Building Collapse Prevention Guild, BCPG, that there are more 36,000 houses waiting to collapse in the country, Beri feared that there were ill preparations on the part of concerned authorities to avert the looming tragedy.

She stressed that investment in safety must be prioritised, adding that in addition to deficient safety policy, breach in standards were most responsible for major and recurring disaster.

She identified other gaps such as communication imbalance among safety experts, dearth of safety experts, human error and poor funding as factors fuelling disaster in the country.

She said, "Safety is not the responsibility of one. It is the differences in communication and understanding sometimes that opens with a detrimental impact on general organisational safety and operations. Clear stipulations of roles and assignments within stakeholders without a defined consensus can be a limiting factor in technical process safety attainment as regulations vary greatly between jurisdictions.

"Besides, it is anticipated that by 2022, there will be a deficit of safety professionals by 10%. This has started manifesting already, which is as a result of retiring boom of the experienced old workforce and the shortage of the undesiring upcoming ones. This generational gap is creating a workforce imbalance in the safety sector.

"The core requirement for operational excellence is proactive risk mitigation for continuity and profitability. Safety is everyone's business, while it is exclusive preserve of regulators like the Standard Organisation of Nigeria (SON) and National Council for Occupational Safety and health (NCOSH), to ensure safety standards are met. I must say that not being prepared to confront accidental occurrence are largely responsible for the country's underperformance, as we keep reinvesting in disaster, thereby, shifting away from focus."

Again, affirming Beri's stance is a research report by CMC Connect BCW, which exposed organisations' poor preparations against crisis.

The study carried out on over 200 business owners and employees revealed that between the second and third quarters of 2020, 27 per cent of businesses suffered major impact from COVID-19 with only 9.9 per cent of respondents having a crisis management plan in place, while 59 per cent never had a crisis management plan before the COVID-19 pandemic."

Reacting to the report, Group Managing Director of CMC Connect (Perception Managers), Mr. Yomi-Badejo-Okusanya said, "crisis preparedness presents an opportunity to rebuild trust and gain customer loyalty. Many organisations have bounced back from major crisis to dominate the industry. Meaning that, crisis by itself is not an end but could be taken advantage of if planned for. This is where your crisis preparedness comes in, requiring skill and expertise in managing and maintaining propriety in the middle a storm."

DEREGULATING SAFETY INDUSTRY FOR EFFECTIVENESS

Amid scary figure and depth of damage due to emergency occurrences inspite of existing safety plans, there have been continuous stakeholders' moves for a changed narratives.

ILO estimates that occupational accidents and diseases result in annual four percent loss in global Gross Domestic Product (GDP) or about $2.8 trillion in direct and indirect cost of injuries and diseases.

Beri said, "There have been many tragic incidents, which have resulted in fatalities as well as asset, environmental, and reputational damage. While standards have improved since then and much works been done, particularly in inherently safer design and management systems, catastrophic incidents are still happening and will continue to do so until efforts are improved on tackle them head on."

She added that in recent times, a rapid evolution in the complexity of processes and facilities has triggered high profile risks within the safety industry.

She noted that unlike several developed and industrialised countries that observe strict application of regulations and standards to process safety, more prominent today is risk – based approach.

Beri opined for a deregulation of the safety industry for an all-round impactful safety efforts.

She explained, "This is where the private sector and wealthy individuals come to play. A deregulation of the safety industry to woo investors through sound and economic viable policies that are affordable and effective will boost investment confidence into the sector."

According to her, deregulating safety activities would equally take care of every other challenge limiting safety efforts such as, breach of standards, funding and human errors.

Beri also identified the need for continuous training of not just safety experts but every individual.

She posited, "There is an urgent need for frequent training and updating on technical process safety activities to keep abreast of changing practices and develop a technically sound workforce that will minimize human errors and promote safety. Safety experts must deliberately pull up younger professionals and mould them as future assets. Also, schools should include reformed safety curriculum in their programmes to attract students that will be thought with practical modern tools."

"We need to enlighten stakeholders and teach them what we call Lessons Learnt from Incidents (LFI). A layman should be educated on how to avoid accidents. For instance, in situations with market fires, teach the market traders what to do to protect themselves. If a building collapses, we should educate people on what to do to protect themselves"

Oke: Engineering Stands Will Sustain Businesses, Infrastructures in Nigeria

The President, Association for Consulting Engineering In Nigeria, Fatai Ajibade Oke, in this interview with **Raheem Akingbolu**, speaks on the need for repositioning of the engineering profession to bridge the gap in the infrastructural deficit for a robust economy in Nigeria.

Can you please speak on ACEN and its relationship with FIDIC?

ACEN is the registered body of registered consulting engineers in Nigeria. I won't say all of us because some people are not yet part of ACEN. ACEN started in 1971 that was why last year we celebrated the 50th anniversary of ACEN but it was not incorporated until 1972. From 1972 to 1979 members were attending the FIDIC activities as observers and finally in 1979 they joined FIDIC and I think you know that FIDIC is called the International Federation of Consulting Engineers. Actually it is called the Federation of International Engineers Consultant. FIDIC itself had interest in ACEN. ACEN had quite a lot of interest in its members. That is why we do some training and what we want to do is to make sure that ACEN is the ultimate business choice for consulting engineering in Nigeria.

We want to have strong membership and we are already on the path to that now. We want to give our members equal opportunities and make sure that they are technically up there, so they must be competent and they must have integrity. We want our members to give clients maximum value for their investment. Unfortunately that is a job which we have to double up on. Double up on the fact that the perception of an average person in this country is that when you get a consultant it is an additional cost which shouldn't be. We tell you the best way to achieve your aim. We tell you the best way to ensure that whatever you are looking for, you get the maximum value for it. If you don't follow us, in the long run, the problem will wait for you. So, ACEN is a body of consulting engineers and we have over the years built up a reputation for ourselves and we have made it a little bit tough for people to come in because we just don't want to have anybody joining us so if you are part of us, we must be able to say this guy that is wearing the ACEN lapel or the FIDIC lapel is somebody that can be trusted on the job. So that in a nutshell is ACEN.

Before you became a member and after you became a member of FIDIC, what will you say are the major achievements that you can point to?

Let me say that we have been able to join FIDIC right from the inception of ACEN because FIDIC is international, FIDIC is worldwide, in fact the conditions of service of FIDIC is the standard we use, even now in Nigeria and one of the things we do is that we train people on the condition of service. We train people on the FIDIC ways of doing things now. That's why even before we joined, we have been attending as observers but at that time we can say that is more or less the formative stage of ACEN. So, ACEN joined with her forefathers/ forerunners and became immediately active. We joined FIDIC, hitting the ground running. So, the benefit is that we belong to a world class of people that show that when you are a member of ACEN, you are a member of FIDIC and you are accepted anywhere in the world as somebody that can be trusted in consulting engineering. FIDIC has gone into a stage where every government in the world recognises FIDIC and they also try as much as possible to influence their members' associations, so that every member of the association also is recognised by the government. We are getting to that stage in Nigeria. So FIDIC has given us a background of reliability of what we think is good for the profession; engineering in general, consulting engineering in particular.

Can you link this to the infrastructure deficit in Nigeria. Why do you think this has persisted over the years despite all the effort?

Let me tell you one thing, the infrastructure we got at independence was peanuts. Let me give you one example, we were using narrow gauge then and that time other societies were using the wider gauge. We were using the steam boiler rim engines then, whereas at that time other societies had gone past diesel, they were already using electricity. Today we have gone into diesel and we shall soon go into electric engines and the road we even have now is standard gauge though there are wider gauges than that and the wider the gauges are, the better.

The infrastructure gap in this country is so high that we have to catch up and the whole world is always moving forward on infrastructure. In other countries, as they are getting 'A' in one line, they are expanding it to another. We inherited low infrastructure, not only low, our roads at that time were so narrow such that when a vehicle wants to meet another vehicle, one side of the vehicle will be in the bush and the other will be on the road. But now, even our highways are wide enough. We are now having expressways. So, these are things that we continue to develop and we can never hit all the infrastructure. Then we also have maintenance problems. Some of the times when we allow things to degenerate to a very bad extent, to correct them becomes an issue. I have a background in maintenance engineering, I was a chief engineer for nine years so I know that for you not to have a crisis at hand, you must be on top of checking what the machines need. So we must have good maintenance and if we do that we will not need to go back to what we have done, we need to move forward. And then, use our people, use our men, use Nigerians. Anybody from outside cannot solve our problem for us, we have to solve our problems by ourselves.



Oke

Having highlighted some of the challenges, what are you doing to tackle those challenges?

What we have been doing silently is to get all the professionals in the big industries to cooperate with each other and we have involved them in our functions. We have also taken part in their functions as well. So we need to bring ourselves together and collaborate with all professional bodies be it architects, quantity surveyors, estate surveyors, town planners, etc. We will work together and by the time we are strong, we will be in the position to tell the government what we think is wrong. We are doing advocacy, we are training people even in government, we are training our own people also, we are training people generally to make sure that what we call infrastructure, people understand it and stay by it. In fact we had a very good contract with ICRC, that is the Infrastructural Constitutional Regulatory body and in 2019 it came to give our members some lectures, but unfortunately in 2020 we couldn't continue because of COVID, but we are picking it up now. So, we will train our people on how to interpret concessions, we train our people on how to advise and once we get to that level of advice and people listen, then we will be in the position to actually pick up.

Tell us about this 28th edition of the FIDIC infrastructure conference, the aims and objectives, the purpose of the conference.

Like every conference of FIDIC, like every AGM of ACEN, like every business, the aim is to educate. Educate, sharpen the blade. We are trying to sharpen all our people in Africa this time. We have about twenty two different sessions and all talking about different things even up to the effect of covid on infrastructure development and it has always been the aim of all our conferences; that people know the technicality then the entrepreneurship that are required to make sure that they are useful for the society and for the world at large. So this 28th edition is the third time we are hosting it in Nigeria. We hosted it in 1998 and in 2004 and we are hosting it again. This year's edition will be a physical and virtual event, so it is a hybrid event. We are also getting the government involved so that the government will be part of it. What we do and our perspectives can help shape the way they think, so we want to open up and make sure that whatever we are talking about and everything we are thinking of is for the betterment of Africa in general, Nigeria in particular. This year's edition is the 3rd in the series.

For your association to be hosting it the third time, it means you are like major players in bringing that conference to reality. How has that journey been from the very first edition to this 28th edition of the conference?

Our Alumnus are the backbone of FIDIC Africa. They didn't call it FIDIC Africa at that time, they called it GAMA. GAMA is the Group of Africa Member Association of FIDIC so we call it FIDIC Africa. We have a very strong presence in GAMA and we were part of the leadership of those who formed GAMA. I can tell you that the first female chairman of GAMA was our past president Doyin Adetiba and she is the mother of Kemi Adetiba. She was our own first female president in 2006/2007 and she became the first female chairman because the president belongs only to FIDIC while other members are chairman. Consequently, we have chairmen in other continents. She was the first and so far the only woman chairman of FIDIC Africa. It started with about five or so member countries and right now we have about 18 countries but we want to expand it because it is mainly the anglophone countries that are members. We have only about two to three francophones so we want to expand to francophones countries. We don't have member representation in Benin republic and Cameroon and they are so close to us. We have in Ghana of course.

As a major stakeholder of Infrastructure in Nigeria, how can ACEN collaborate with the government to help solve the problem of infrastructure?

Well, collaboration with the government is going on. It has not gotten to where it should be but we are collaborating. You recall, during the twenty one story building collapse, an ACEN member, our immediate past president, was engaged by the government to lead the investigation. Our members work in collaboration with the Lagos State government on all the building collapse cases, so they get us involved in such things. When the issue of the bridge came up, we were the first to examine it and verified that there was no cause for alarm. All these things are collaboration. I can tell you that Lagos state government is collaborating seriously with FIDIC very strongly and I am very proud because gone are the days when we thought that it was only the entertainers that were the main interest but the government is now engaging more with the technical experts. We collaborate at the level of investigations, consultation on projects and discussion on issues.

Governors and ministers now attend our conferences. In fact, we are cooperating further than that because we are also involved in providing information to the legislative unit of government, so our collaboration is in several directions and levels. However, we are not where we want to be yet. Recall the Order Five of President Muhammed Buhari, which says that anything that is below a certain bridge category should be domiciled in this country. It is right but it is still not yet fully followed and even if it is fully followed, it is still not a law. So, we are advocating for things like these to become law as well. Even the upcoming conference is part of advocacy.

You seem to lay more emphasis on state level. Does it mean your operations are mostly recognised in states?

The recognition is far more at the Federal level. It is the states that are just coming on board. The reason why Lagos state is collaborating with us is because they are our host. The first two conferences were in Abuja. However, we have done so many projects in Lagos and the collaboration is quite encouraging so we have promised that we will sing the song of the state and of course of some Federal ministries. We have regular engagements with the Federal Ministry of Resources, the Ministry of Science, Technology and Renovation.

How much money do you think is needed to bridge that infrastructure gap?

About Ten to Eleven trillion dollars because we have so many things to do and that's why I always say that Nigerian Engineers don't have any reason to be poor because if they are really being used for infrastructure development and they place themselves in the right position for the development of infrastructures a lot can be achieved for our infrastructure. I will give you an example of myself, I have four children and two of them are in the medical line while two are Engineers. For the Engineers, one of them is working in the bank while the other one is into supply chain management. Nobody wants to be an engineer because it is seen as a poor man's job, which shouldn't be. That gap is there but it is not something we can fill in the short term.

So Public Private Partnership has been identified as one of the ways to address infrastructure gap. Is ACEN in support of this, and are they embracing this also?

We fully support this, but not as it is done now. As it is done now, there is no proper monitoring. The person to monitor must be an engineer but most of the time that is not the case, so we have this issue to deal with. Now, recall I told you that we are in touch with ICRC. We have had two different training sessions like the basic and the intermediate training sessions but we couldn't hold the advanced training session because of the covid pandemic in 2020. Part of what things like these do for us is enable us to interpret, advise and make sure that people follow the right rulings on PPP. Apart from that, we have the ultimate aim of making sure that our members grow large enough to be able to handle PPP. We should be able to handle it. We are interested in PPP but we are not interested in the way it is done now.

In terms of your objective as a body, where do you see yourself in five years from now?

I see us with large companies. The current largest member company will be the smallest by then. I see us having large companies, I see us collaborating with other professional bodies in Nigeria, I see us doing things that we have had to ask external parties to do for us. I see us changing the perception so that people will know that Nigerian engineers, consulting engineers, ACEN members are the right set of people.

Can you briefly speak about your professional trajectory over the years?

I am a fellow of the Nigeria Society of Engineers, I left University of Lagos in 1972, I worked at that time for Dunlop Nigeria industries as their engineer and I rose up to become the chief engineer which was the end of my professional career in Engineering there before i now moved into the office as the sales director. That was where I retired and since I cannot forget my base, I came back to engineering and I started first by doing some little generator maintenance and then I ended up going into consultancy. I was the executive secretary in 2007/2008 then I became the honorary secretary in 2008. That was when I joined ACEN as a member. I have been treasurer for three times now, I was the editor of the magazine for six years. Then I organized the AGM generally. They decided to make me the vice president and once you are the vice president, you become the president automatically. I thank them for making me the vice president.

HEALTH & LIFESTYLE

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Hope Blossoms for Hearing-impaired Women, Girls

For some hearing impaired women and girls in Rivers State, a new lease of life was recently given to them by a civil society group to acquire adequate entrepreneurial skills. **Blessing Ibunge** reports that it also shed light on the challenges faced by these women and the danger of silence in the face of harm



Cross section of some of the beneficiaries during the free entrepreneurial skills training by D-Ability Initiative, held in Port Harcourt, Rivers State

As the society laments about the increasing economic challenge which has affected many lives, for people with disabilities, especially the hearing impaired, it is usually worse as they have to also battle marginalisation and attack by the society which is supposed to protect them.

Disability could not have been caused by the people living with it, but some are born disabled while others may have been affected through health challenges after birth or accident as some have disclosed.

However, in disability there is evidence of ability as many have proven to be independent, engaged in responsible activities through which they fend for themselves and families. In as much as such kind of people exist, there are others, especially the blind and hearing impaired people who still experience challenge as the society may not understand their feelings, hence, they feel marginalised and segregated.

In another instance, blind and deaf women lament sexual violence, like rape by the men who may think no one will listen to them even when they report such incident.

Some of the hearing impaired women that spoke with THISDAY at an event to launch a free training on entrepreneurial skills for them in Port Harcourt, expressed that society does not care about what happens to them in terms of attack and other challenges.

To ameliorate this, D-Ability Initiative, a Civil Society group recently organised an entrepreneurial skills acquisition training for deaf women and girls in Rivers State.

THISDAY learned that the training which will run for about six months, was initiated by the D-Ability Initiative, with support from the European Union, and Agents for Citizen-Driven Transformation and the British Council.

Uche Micah, a hearing impaired woman and participant at the training, regretted that the society does not have any special attention for deaf people.

Miss Micah who spoke through an interpreter, said although she has been in sports where she leads the deaf women in her wing, she cannot but thank the group for the opportunity to add to her skill for improved living.

Speaking with THISDAY, she said "I am here for the fashion training for single and married hearing impaired women.

After the training I am expected to be self employed, saw cloths for people and earn some money. Presently, I am into sports and the engineer of Rivers State Deaf Association, women wing.

"I am very happy because this is the first time this kind of programme is coming specifically for the deaf women. I expect more of this training, I am very happy".

When asked how the society relates with her knowing her state of ability, Micah expressed "Generally speaking, the environment does not have any concern for the deaf, even in our families, villages and the cities, no education, or other training benefit. That is why this empowerment programme is very good for us because it is designed for us who are deaf women.

"If not for my disability challenge, I would have like to be a government staff or any other business", she expressed.

Also, a parent to one of the deaf beneficiaries, Mr Jimoh Salaudeen, commended the European Union, the Agents for Citizen-Driven Transformation, British Council and D-Ability Initiate, for the empowerment programme.

Salaudeen said: "Deaf people have been grossly marginalised. The government at all levels should intervene and see how they can improve their wellbeing.They need to be recognised in the society.

"We really need to involve the government to do something about the handicap because they have been marginalised for so long. We are not supposed to be struggling for them to be educated because not all the parents have the capacity to sponsor their children.

"Most girls were marginalised even those who can talk, people do not believe to send them to school, not to talk of those who cannot talk."

Salaudeen appreciated the group for the initiative especially the European Union, and urged them to contribute to enhance the education of the deaf gurls and women, to improve their situation.

He disclosed "My first daughter had meningitis when she was about eight months old and now she is 26 years. So I have been able to do something to support her, to make sure at least we educate her. She is in her final year in the university as I speak to you and she is doing well.

"I communicate with my daughter through text massages because I do not understand the communication signs very well and she is doing very well".

Another relative of the beneficiaries, Peace Sunabari, who came with her sister to the programme said "This programme will project the participants to be recorgnised in the society.

"Initially, it was very difficult to cope with my sister in terms of communication, but with time we started understanding each other, we understand her now even when we do not follow up with her sign language, she watch our lips and understand".

She also pleaded that "Government should support this programme because those with disabilities are really suffering. The deaf and dumb school we have in Port Harcourt here do not have boarding facility which affects those who may not afford the fund to be sending their children from rural communities down to Port Harcourt".

Meanwhile, the Executive Director of D-Ability Initiative, Dr Kingdom Nwanyanwu, who spoke during the flag-off ceremony, said the goal of the training was to improve the financial wellbeing of deaf women and girls in the state.

Nwanyanwu, explained that fashion and design, was chosen because it is a skill that allows the designer to show their creativity and also easy to start up.

Noting the challenges the deaf people face, especially the women as a result of their disability, Nwanyanwu said the training will equip them to competitively face the society without fear.

"People with disability are marginalised, but when it comes to the world of disabilities, the deaf are the most marginalised. They are the most vulnerable because they cannot express their situation. Secondly, being women and deaf makes them the most vulnerable because they face many forms of neglect.

"So when we give them the entrepreneurial skills that will enhance and bring their creativity to bear, it will bring about their financial independence."

He however, called on the government to support and partner the civil society to give a sense of belonging to people with disability.

"After this training, we are going to set up a hub, where all of them are going to work. Imagine having a hub where all the fashion designers working there are all deaf people who are creating innovative fashion designs, so that is our target. We want them to put the training into use under our supervision, so that we will achieve the aim the training in order to train other people."

"People with disability are marginalised, but when it comes to the world of disabilities, the deaf are the most marginalised. They are the most vulnerable because they cannot express their situation. Secondly, being women and deaf makes them the most vulnerable"

NEWS

Mortein Pushes Prevention as Cost-effective Way against Malaria

Ayodeji Ake

In commemoration of World Malaria Day, Mortein insecticide has identified prevention as one of the major cost-effective ways against the spread of malaria in Nigeria.

In line with the 2022 world malaria day theme "Advance Equity. Build Resilience. End Malaria", Mortein partnered the Federal Ministry of Health through National Malaria Elimination Programme (NMEP) and other stakeholders to upscale awareness, action, and sustain the commitment for the elimination of malaria in Nigeria.

World Malaria Day is an international annual event commemorated by Mortein and the Reckitt team in the quest to eradicate malaria from Nigeria, and Africa. Speaking at the press briefing in Abuja to commemorate the 2022 World Malaria Day, Marketing Director, Reckitt Sub-Saharan Africa, Mr. Tanzim Rezwan, said community engagement and collaborations are part of numerous consumer engagement activities by the company to stem the prevalence of malaria scourge in Nigeria with the Mortein's Fight to End Malaria campaign.

He said the partnership with the Federal Government, which has been ongoing for years, demonstrates the company's commitment to malaria prevention in the country toward a healthier Nigeria.

"The fight against malaria over the years has recorded many casualties with the 2021 World Malaria Report stating that 1 of four global malaria cases occur in Nigeria, almost 65 million malaria cases occur in Nigeria annually, and an estimated 23 persons die from malaria-related issues every hour in Nigeria.

"With Mortein, our message is on prevention, seeing as the economic implication of prevention is better than treatment, especially for the high number of low-income citizens in the country.

"We have over the years partnered federal and state governments, as well as key opinion leaders and healthcare officials in a bid to drive awareness and sensitise the public on various ways to eliminate the malaria vector.

" We do this through several platforms: on-ground community engagement activities, mass media education through TV adverts, and education on digital media platforms.

"This among others is the motivation behind Mortein, a brand from the stables of Reckitt Nigeria, who is also championing the fight against malaria.

" At Reckitt, we are driven by our purpose to protect, heal and nurture in the relentless pursuit of a cleaner and healthier world," he said.

Mortein, as a leading global insecticide brand, initiated its "Fight to End Malaria" campaign to empower our consumers with knowledge and provide access to expert solutions to rid themselves of vector-causing malaria, the mosquito."

In his address at the event, the Minister of Health, Dr. Osagie Ehanire, reinforced the need for increased investments in malaria programmes by governments, the private sector, and individuals towards achieving full coverage of malaria services that ensures that all in need have access to malaria preventive and treatment services towards achieving a malaria-free country.

He said: "for a malaria-free Nigeria let each of us play our parts because every effort counts."

BCG Celebrates World Health Day, Cleans Up Oniru Beach



L-R: Pharm. Lawrence Ekhator (ACPN chairman, Lagos State); Dr. Obadere Peter (Co-founder, Digital Encode Limited); Pharm. Adetutu Afolabi (MD/CEO Wellness Healthcare Group and Founder, Pharmacentre); Prof. Cyril Usifo (Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria National President); Pharm. Victor Gbenga Afolabi (CEO Hazon Holdings); Dr. (Mrs) Ukamaka Okafor (Director, Pharmacists Council of Nigeria, Lagos State) and Pharm. Iyiola Gbolagade (Chairman, PSN, Lagos State Chapter)

Leading global management consulting firm, Boston Consulting Group (BCG) Nigeria, has raised awareness for the environmental, health and climate impact of improper waste disposal in drainages, rivers, seas and ocean.

One of its activities in raising this awareness was a beach clean-up exercise done in partnership with Recyclan, a multinational recycling company and HB Imagino, a recycling supply chain consultant, to reduce the level of plastic waste pollution and create jobs for women in the sorting and plastic waste collection process.

BCG Nigeria employees, while demonstrating the collective responsibility of making the world safe and free of any health threat, picked up plastic waste and other refuse littering the shoreline of the Oniru Beach in Lagos, a popular relaxation spot and tourist destination for locals as well as foreigners.

The exercise, which was held on Thursday, April 14, 2022, was in commemoration of the World Health Day, and in line with BCG's climate action and social impact mandate.

The 2022 World Health Day themed "Our Planet, Our Health" seeks urgent actions to improve the quality of air, water and food to keep humans and the planet healthy.

The consulting firm noted that the clean up exercise will help to prevent coastal trash that has been tossed up by ocean waves from re-entering the sea, protect marine animals as well as plants and allow biodiversity to thrive.

Globally, at least 12 million metric tons of plastic leaks and accumulates in the oceans every year, killing 100,000 marine animals annually, according to UN figures1. These wastes do not decay but are transformed into micro-plastics that contaminate water and marine life, increasing the rate of cancer and greenhouse gas emissions. Tolu Oyekan, Partner and Head of BCG Nigeria, said, "We are deeply concerned about the increasing rate of pollution of our water bodies as these wastes contain dangerous chemicals that finds its way to the global food chain.

"Pollution of the marine environment threatens the health of fishes and other marine animals, food safety and quality, human health, tourism, and contributes to climate change. There is an urgent need to check indiscriminate dumping of plastic waste and other refuse in order to prevent the adverse health and environmental consequences of water pollution.

"Now is the time for everyone to work with the surrounding beach communities to keep our ocean clean and free from contaminants that will jeopardise our health and make our world dangerous to live in."

The firm pledged to continue to contribute its quota to environmental safety, sustainability and public health.

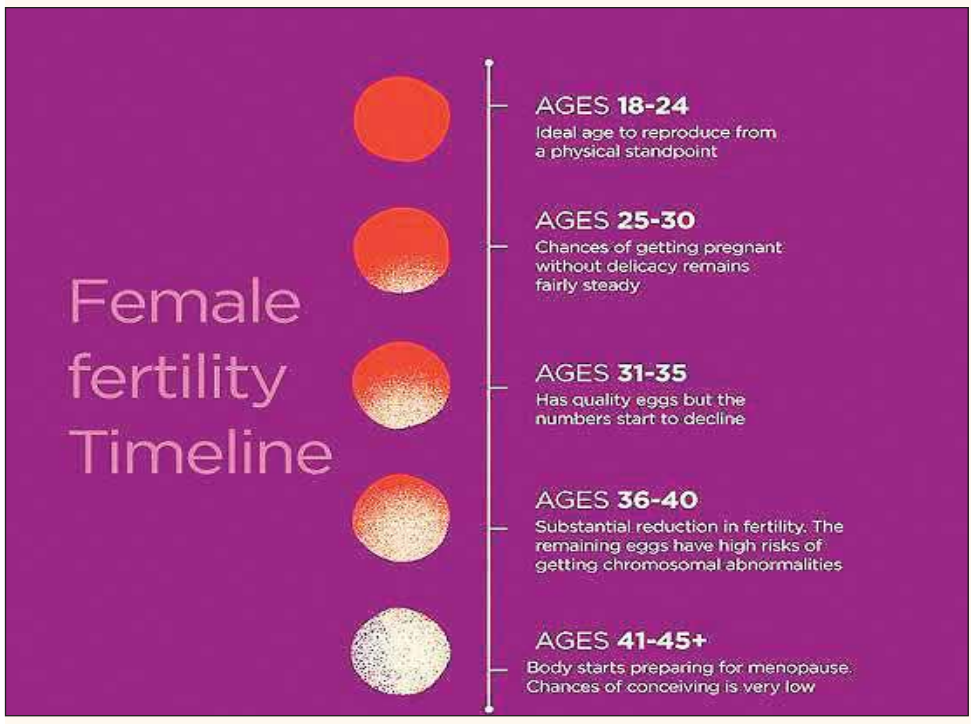
The consulting trailblazer called on individuals, communities, governments and organisations to take decisive actions to prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution, while securing a healthier community and a cleaner planet.

FERTILITY

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AGING AND FERTILITY HEALTH IN FEMALES (PART 1)



The single most important factor influencing a woman's fertility is her age. A woman is born with all of the eggs she will ever have in her life. Her eggs decline in quality and quantity as she ages. While good health increases the likelihood of becoming pregnant and having a healthy baby, it does not compensate for the effects of age on a woman's fertility.

We may feel unprepared to have a baby right now while also being concerned about not being able to become pregnant later. For these reasons, it is critical to understand how aging affects the chances of conceiving, carrying a pregnancy to term and also, the general reproductive health of a woman.

OVARIAN RESERVE

The quantity and quality of the ovarian primordial follicular reservoir is defined by ovarian reserve. In women of reproductive age, poor ovarian reserve (POR) refers to a decrease in the quantity of ovarian follicular pool. Many women in their mid to late thirties and even early forties have no difficulty conceiving. However, as we get older, our fertility declines, and many other women struggle to conceive or are unable to bring a pregnancy to term. Female fertility starts to decline steadily after the age of 30 because a woman is born with a finite amount of eggs (about 2 million eggs). Only a few hundred eggs will ovulate during a woman's reproductive lifespan, whereas the vast majority of eggs will die off due to a process known as Atresia.

QUALITY OF EGGS

A chromosomally normal egg has 23 chromosomes and when fertilized by the sperm, which also has 23 chromosomes, the resulting chromosomally normal embryo will have a total of 46 chromosomes. As a woman's ovary ages, the number of aneuploidy eggs (eggs with too few or too many chromosomes) increases. The embryo will inherit too few or too many chromosomes if it is conceived with an aneuploidy egg. The majority of aneuploidy embryos fail to implant in the uterus or result in miscarriage. Aneuploidyembryos can cause chromosomal diseases including Down syndrome and an extra copy of chromosome 21 in some cases causing developmental and intellectual delays in children if born.

DYSPAREUNIA

Dyspareunia is the term for pain experienced during intercourse. Due to lack of estrogen, sex is painful for elderly women. This hormone helps repair the vaginal lining by generating new cells and encourages the release of natural lubricants. The body produces less estrogen when a woman gets older.The vaginal lining thins, shrinks, and dries out without estrogen. It also loses its elasticity. Penetration can become uncomfortable when the tissue inside the vagina thins, and if the inside of the vagina thins enough, it might tear or bleed during sex. You may have anxiety as a result of painful sex. Anxiety diminishes lubrication even further, causing thewoman to clench her vaginal muscles during intercourse. Lubricants work by minimizing friction and thereby reducing pain. Right before having intercourse, lubricants should be apply them to your vagina or your partner's penis.You should use a water-based lubricant if you are not totally menopausal or if you and your partner use condoms. Condoms can be damaged by oil-based lubricants, making them less effective.

HOT FLASHES

A hot flash is a sudden sensation of warmth in the upper body, most commonly felt in the face, neck, and chest. It can also make you sweat. One of the most typical signs of menopause is hot flashes. They can start during perimenopause, the time leading up to menopause, and endure for seven to ten years. For different women, they happen at different times. Heart palpitations, anxiety, and stress are all possible side effects of hot flashes. It may cause sleep disturbances, resulting in weariness and mood swings noted as women get older.

EXTREME TIREDNESS

As we age, the hormones estrogen, progesterone, thyroid, and adrenal fluctuate a lot, which can have a big impact on our energy levels. This is because all of these hormones have a role in the body's cellular energy regulation. As a result, as you become older, you may find yourself drained and tired most of the time.

OSTEOPOROSIS

Women are more concerned about osteoporosis, as it is possible to lose 25% of bone density after menopause. According to a recent study, women are four times more likely than men to have the disease. Osteoporosis is a disorder that causes bones to thin, increasing the risk of fractures. The hips, wrists, and spine are the most typical locations where fractures or breaks occur. To get ahead of the disease, it is a good idea to adopt lifestyle changes and supplements, and you can talk to your doctor or a nutritionist about the best steps to take.

WEIGHT GAIN

Although it may not appear to be a health danger, a lack of weight control can lead to other, more significant illnesses. The changing hormone levels have a negative impact on a woman's metabolism, making it easy for her to gain weight. A lady with a slower metabolism is likewise more likely to lose lean tissue mass. Menopausal belly obesity can lead to more significant health problems. More fat around the stomach raises the risk of type-2 diabetes, as well as heart and other diseases

TO BE CONTINUED

mPharma Partners TytoCare for Comprehensive Telehealth to Pharmacies

Rebecca Ejifoma

TytoCare, the global health care industry's first all-in-one modular device and examination solution, has partnered mPharma to provide comprehensive telehealth for pharmacies to provide patients with enhanced remote care through in-depth, physical examinations.

mPharma is technology-driven healthcare company building Africa's largest health management organisation with a focus on making medications affordable and accessible to every African.

Since the rollout of the partnership last June, mPharma says it examined and treated over 8,000 people using TytoCare's platform, spanning 35 pharmacies across Ghana, Kenya, Uganda, Zambia, and Nigeria. The CEO and Co-Founder of mPharma, Gregory Rockson, told newsmen that as a continent with a deficit of 2.4 million nurses and doctors, digital health solutions remain key in solving Africa's primary healthcare challenges.

Hence, the partnership with TytoCare helps them bridge the gap in the primary healthcare space in Africa. He added, "We have seamlessly implemented our virtual doctor consultation programme, mutti doctor, recording over 8,000 consultations across our partner mutti pharmacies since we launched last year."

Rockson highlighted mPharma's vision to make affordable healthcare accessible to every African. Their primary care strategy focused on ensuring that community pharmacies become primary healthcare providers.

With this, the CEO emphasised: "Our TytoCare partnership allows us to leverage modern technology to offer life-saving care to hard-to-reach areas and people who need it most."

"On average," Rockson noted, "patients can wait two to three hours to see a doctor at public hospitals and one hour in private hospitals."

He cited a recent mPharma survey, which reveals that over 90 per cent of patients visiting the company's mutti doctor locations have a virtual consultation with a doctor within 10 minutes. "In the coming months mPharma plans to expand its mutti doctor locations, powered by TytoCare, across Africa."

The CEO and Co-Founder of TytoCare, Dedi Gilad, hinted, "We've already seen great success in our partnership with mPharma, offering patients a robust, accessible, and affordable primary care experience through local pharmacies.

"mPharma is reshaping healthcare in Africa and we're proud to be their partner on this journey, enabling them to up the level of remote care they're providing with comprehensive physical examinations during virtual visits. We look forward to our continued joint success and seeing more TytoPro systems in pharmacies across Africa."

According to the duo, community pharmacies play a central role in a patients' primary care journey in Africa. Through the partnership, mPharma says it is reimagining the community pharmacy as more than just a place where patients fill prescriptions.

Clearline Partners Greenlife Pharmaceutical against Malaria in Lagos Community



Medical team of Clearline HMO in Bariga Ilaje community

Rebecca Ejifoma

Clearline HMO in partnership with Greenlife Pharmaceuticals recently took an anti-malaria sensitisation campaign to residents of Bariga Ilaje community in Lagos.

This was to cushion the impact of mosquito bites in line with this year's World Malaria Day.

Some of the messages of the awareness talks centered on the best way to prevent malaria while participants were given insecticide treated nets, insecticides and anti-malaria drugs.

In the words of the GM, Stakeholders Management & Contact Centre of ClearlineHMO, Mrs. Chidinma Chigbo, seeing that the community is sandwiched by water, their team enlightened residents on the best way to reduce the storage of malaria.

With this year's World Malaria Day theme, "Harness Innovation to Reduce the Malaria Disease Burden and Save Lives", Chigbo acknowledged prevention of malaria as paramount in the reduction of malaria.

She added: "Ilaje Bariga is a riverine area and a suburb, so we are here to sensitise the inhabitants on what causes malaria and how to prevent it going forward."

The GM listed stagnant water, ditches or clogged drainages in their environments can breed mosquitoes, especially anopheles, the carrier of the disease.

Meanwhile, the Area Manager, Greenlife Pharmaceuticals Limited, Dr. Wilfred Okolie, recommended therapeutic options for communities in Lagos State and Nigeria after she cited that Nigeria has a greater percentage of malaria cases.

Nigeria is said to suffer the world's greatest malaria burden. According to World Malaria Report in 2020, an estimated 76 per cent of Nigeria's population are at risk of malaria by living in high transmission areas. And Nigeria accounts for 27 per cent of malaria cases worldwide and the highest number of deaths due to malaria in 2019.

Hence, Okolie harped on the need for early treatment of malaria. "It goes a long way to prevent complications, especially in children.

"For us at Greenlife, we have contributed much to the fight against malaria through the provision of therapeutic options."

On his part, the Baale of the community, Kayode Ayetua, a high chief, commended Clearline for the initiative. "Malaria is a disease in Nigeria and Africa. It is great to have Clearline come assist us in the fight against the disease.

"As the baale, I ensure I bought in this organisation and other NGOs. We have been doing this for three years in the Ilaje Bariga community," he recalled.

Neonatal Mortality: Health Experts Call for National Respiratory Support Plan

Esther Akinsola

Nigeria has one of the highest infant and neonatal death rates in the world, several research has shown.

Therefore, in a strong push to effect needed change, participants at the maiden Obijackson Women and Children Hospital (OWCH) funded Newborn Respiratory Support Workshop called for immediate adoption of a national neonatal respiratory support policy and plan in Nigeria.

The new-born healthcare practitioners in attendance included doctors and nurses from the South-east and South-south regions of the country.

According to the policy adoption they are strongly advocating for, it would drastically reduce neonatal mortality and morbidity responsible for 59.1 deaths per 1, 000 live births in infants before the age of one and over 35 per 1,000 live births for new-born deaths in the country.

The OWCH Head of Hospital Services, Dr. Ikechukwu Okonkwo, bemoaned that most of the neonatal deaths are from preventable causes.

"Improving respiratory support for our most vulnerable population will significantly impact the three leading causes of neonatal and infant deaths; preterm birth, intra partum related events, and infections."

Okonkwo also acknowledged that new-born respiratory support workshop was done in collaboration with its national and international partners to train medical practitioners on how to save the lives of babies.

As the lead knowledge expert at the workshop, he provided evidence-based, state of the art hands-on training and practical knowledge to participants in various aspects of new-born and infant care including specialised transport of the critically ill baby.

Don't Accept Philip Morris COVID-19 Vaccine, CAPPA Cautions Nigerian Government

Sunday Ehigiator

The Corporate Accountability and Public Participation Africa (CAPPA), has cautioned the Nigerian government against accepting the Medicago COVID-19 vaccine (Covifenz), which the World Health Organisation (WHO) was yet to approve.

In a recent statement signed by CAPPA Executive Director, Akinbode Oluwafemi, he said the WHO refused to approve the Medicago vaccine because Morris was a major shareholder in the pharmaceutical company.

Public health groups across the globe including in Canada support the WHO decision and have called on the Canadian government to find a suitable investor to replace Philip Morris in the company's shareholding.

Medicago has equally signaled that it is seeking alternative investors and wants the Canadian and Quebec governments to help facilitate such a transition. Unfortunately, the transition has not happened.

CAPPA maintained that as a signatory to the WHO's first public health treaty - the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO-FCTC) Nigeria should remain committed to its obligations including Article 5.3 which advised parties to insulate their public health policy from the vested and commercial interests of the tobacco industry.

Guidelines for implementing this obligation make clear that the tobacco industry should not be a partner in any initiative linked to setting or implementing public health policies, given that its interests are in direct conflict with public health goals.

Oluwafemi noted that "in as much as we appreciate the Canadian government for supplying Covid-19 Vaccines to Nigeria, we urge our government to be circumspect and ensure the product is not the Philip Morris funded Covifend.

"An industry that kills its customers and the rest of us who are exposed to tobacco via secondhand smoke cannot lead the way in solving either the tobacco menace or the coronavirus pandemic."

He explained that Philip Morris is primarily a manufacturer of lethal products and continues to actively oppose smoking reduction measures across the globe including in Nigeria where its executives through well-publicized articles promote heated tobacco products as a less harmful alternative to cigarettes despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary.

Through an initiative called the Conrad Nigeria Challenge, Philip Morris-funded Foundation for Smoke-free World (FSFW) supports young people in the education sector who are subtly

29 Communities in Oguta LGA in Imo Reaffirm FGM Abandonment

Amby Uneze in Owerri

As the world goes against the practice of female genital mutilation (FGM), 29 communities in Oguta Local Government of Imo State have reiterated their firm decision to abandon the illegal act especially as the country launches the 'Movement for Good to end Female Genital Mutilation'.

The event which was organised within the context of the United Nations Population Fund and United Nations Children's Fund (UNFPA/UNICEF) Joint Programme on the Elimination of FGM in five focus states (Oyo, Osun, Ekiti, Ebonyi and Imo) and was co-led by the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and the Federal Ministry of Health ensures that the prevalence of FGM is stopped.

The Movement For Good is a whole-of-society and a community-led initiative that will initially target five million - adolescent girls and boys, women, men, traditional birth attendants, community health workers (CHEWS), CSOs, faith-based groups, traditional and community leaders, youth and women-led groups, government and justice sector actors - to pledge towards supporting the elimination of the practice and mobilising local action using the #Act2endFGM.

In line with the Imo State Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Prohibition Law No. 6 of 2017, the communities in the local government area have publicly declared the abandonment of the practice of FGM and warned those who intended to go back to the practice should be prosecuted.

Again, in an apparent move to stem the high prevalence rate of female genital mutilation in Imo State, UNFPA-UNICEF also trained over 106 women leaders as Community Based Child Protection Committee (CBCPC) and Community Surveillance Team (CST).

Reason for the training indicated that considering the important role women play in the upkeep of the girl child in the society as well as their influence in ensuring the abolition of the female genital mutilation in their various communities, the essence of target group such as CBCPC and the women's association as the community surveillance team (CST) became necessary.

Their traditional rulers, president-generals, women and youth leaders, and religious leaders while answering questions on the issue publicly re-stated their collective resolutions of abandonment of FGM in all the communities under them.

The Chairman and Secretary of Oguta Council of Traditional Rulers, Eze F.C. Okafor and Eze Albanus Ozuruoha respectively, said female genital mutilation has ceased to be a culture and tradition of the people of all the villages and communities in the local government area.

A Naval Boost to Healthcare Services

Chiemelie Ezeobi reports that given the perennial shortage of operational healthcare centres, the recent upgrading and extension of the Nigerian Navy Sickbay in Okokomaiko with support from the Naval Officers' Wives Association, is a boost to healthcare, especially for personnel and the host community



The National President Naval Officers' Wives Association Hajia Aisha Nana Gambo cutting the commissioning tape with FOC West and Commander, NNRH Ojo

When the Nigerian Navy built a sick bay at Okokomaiko in Lagos, its primary mandate was to ensure that personnel and their families' healthcare needs are adequately catered for.

Under the current Chief of Naval Staff (CNS), Admiral Awwal Gambo, this has evolved to an expansion of objective to provide the best healthcare services possible in the country and beyond.

Recently the sick bay got a boost with the remodelling of the building comprising officers' ward, children's ward and maternity extension and who best to commission this than the National President of Naval Officers' Wives Association (NOWA), Hajiya Aisha Nana Gambo.

In his welcome address, Commander Nigerian Navy Reference Hospital, Ojo,

said the complex comprises officers' ward, children's ward and a maternity extension.

He said: "In pursuit of the provision of medical services for personnel, the Nigerian Navy has built several medical facilities in different locations across the country. But, as the service continues to expand, the need for more social amenities and upgrade of some medical facilities also continue to persist.

"Hence, efforts are being constantly made to meet this demand within the limits of available resources. It is worthy of note to state that the Naval Officers' Wives Association has assisted in this regards by constantly donating some medical equipment to achieve these set objectives.

"This Nigerian Navy Sickbay Okokomaiko project is a project that was conceived two years ago. This was aimed at upgrading the sickbay and expanding its services rendered to NN personnel at Okokomaiko and its environs. The actualisation of this project has been with the assistance of the Naval Officers' Wives Association through the donation of some medical equipment.

" It is to be noted that the building was recently allocated to the Sickbay by NNS WEY and has been remodelled to fit into the operations of officers' ward, children's ward and maternity ward. I am therefore, very glad to announce to you that this journey of over two years has finally come to an end, as the project is completed and ready.

" It is hoped that the coming on stream of this project at Nigerian Navy Sickbay Okokomaiko will further enhance the provision of medical service to personnel of the Nigerian Navy in particular and Nigerian citizens in general."

In his opening remarks, Western Naval Command (WNC), Flag Officer Commanding (FOC), Rear Admiral Yakubu Wambai, who vowed that "our doors are always open; I assure you that your complaints and suggestions would be taken seriously", said although "our dream and desire to provide the best health care services possible in the country and abroad seems like a tall dream, considering the challenges the Sickbay faces in manpower, equipment and resources, but with God, all things are achievable.

"We know the Naval Authorities cannot do or provide everything based on the current realities on ground, consequently, the hospital greatly benefits from generous gifts by well-meaning groups and individuals in itching towards her goal. One group which has constantly shown they mean well for the NN Medical facilities and want them to be better than it is by contributing their quota is the Naval Officers' Wives Association.

" It is to be recalled that the President Naval Officers' Wives Association visited the Sickbay in 2021 for her familiarisation tour. During the tour she promised to donate some medical equipment required for an upgrade of NNSB Okokomaiko. This was aimed at improving the quality of care rendered at the Sickbay.

" In view of this, the NOWA President graciously donated four beds/mattresses, four bedside lockers, two patient monitors, one resuscitaire, two bedside fridges and two coloured television sets to the Sickbay in April 22. These equipment have been installed in the newly acquired building. The building has also been renovated and remodeled to fit into the operations of officers' ward, children's ward and a maternity extension.

"I therefore, make bold to state that this is further testimony to the determination of the Naval Officers' Wives Association to continuously improve on the healthcare needs of Nigerian Navy personnel and family. For this we are indeed grateful.

" We know we can always count on your support and contributions in making this sickbay, the sickbay of our dreams. I also want to use this opportunity to ask you to help us in making the sickbay better in rendering services as the new equipment become fully operational by letting us know of any lapses you notice or ways we can do some things better."

In her closing remarks, Hajiya Gambo said given the perennial shortage of operational healthcare Centres in Nigeria, the expansion is a major milestone not only to the Nigerian Navy, but to the nation in general.

She said: "Being healthy is one of the basic necessities of human existence. The great Mahatma Gandhi once said "Health is real wealth and not pieces of gold and silver".

"Without good health, the Nigerian Navy would not be able to act upon the mandate. Which is to protect the territorial integrity of Nigeria. Hence, the commitment to provide better health care for its personnel by building hospitals and sickbays.

" As a home-keeper and mother, I identify with this maxim. Conscious of this fact, I commend the efforts of the Nigerian Navy in the provision of adequate and appropriate medical facilities for naval families and members of the immediate communities.

"I observe with deep satisfaction that despite competing demands on limited resources, the Chief of the Naval Staff Vice Admiral Awwal Zubairu Gambo (Admiralty Medal) my ever supportive husband, has made concrete efforts at addressing the medical challenges in the service. What we are witnessing today is a reflection of these efforts.

"It is therefore a privilege for me to have commissioned these wards. It is anticipated that this milestone will further solve the medical shortfalls being experienced in the Nigerian Navy barracks.

"I want to use this opportunity to commend the efforts of the Flag Officer Commanding Western Naval Command (Rear Admiral YB Wambai) and all the personnel who have directly or indirectly contributed to the actualisation of this project.

"Furthermore, I want to plead with those charged with the maintenance and administration of this facility, to kindly ensure this facility is judiciously and efficiently used to fulfill its object without bias or favoritism."

NOW YOU KNOW

Revealed: Five Types of Bacteria Linked to Aggressive Prostate Cancer

A new study has identified five types of bacteria linked to aggressive prostate cancer.

Researchers said the bacteria is common in urine and tissue samples from men with the condition.

According to the researchers, it is hoped that the findings could help pave the way for treatments that could target these bacteria and slow or prevent the development of aggressive disease.

Scientists do not yet know how people pick up the bacteria, or whether they are causing the disease.

Project lead Prof. Colin Cooper, from the University of East Anglia's (UEA) Norwich Medical School, said: "We already know of some strong associations between infections and cancer.

"For example, the presence of Helicobacter pylori bacteria in the digestive tract can lead to stomach ulcers and is associated with stomach cancer, and some types of the HPV virus can cause cervical cancer.

"We wanted to find out whether bacteria could be linked to the way prostate cancer grows and spreads."

Dr Jeremy Clark, also from UEA's Norwich Medical School, said: "While prostate cancer is responsible for a large proportion of all male cancer deaths, it is more commonly a disease men die with rather than from.

"And little is known about what causes some prostate cancers to become more aggressive than others.

"We now have evidence that certain bacteria are involved in this and are part of the puzzle."

The team worked with researchers at the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital, the Quadram Institute, and other collaborators to analyse urine or tissue samples from more than 600 patients with or without prostate cancer.

The researchers developed methods of finding the bacteria associated with aggressive prostate cancer.

Dr Rachel Hurst, first author of this work and also from UEA's Norwich Medical School, said: "We found several types of bacteria associated with aggressive prostate cancer, some of which are new types of bacteria never found before."

Two of the new bacteria species found by the team had been named after two of the study's funders, Porphyromonas bobii, after the The Bob Champion Cancer Trust, and Varibaculum prostatecancerukia, after Prostate Cancer UK.

The set of bacteria found by the team include Anaerococcus, Peptoniphilus, Porphyromonas, Fenollaria and Fusobacterium. All of the bacteria like to grow without oxygen present.

Dr Hurst said: "When any of these specific anaerobic bacteria are detected in the patient's samples, it was linked to the presence of higher grades of prostate cancer and more rapid progression to aggressive disease.

"We also identified potential biological mechanisms of how these bacteria may be linked to cancer.

"Among the things we don't yet know is how people pick up these bacteria, whether they cause the cancer, or whether a poor immune response permits the growth of the bacteria.

"But we hope that our findings and future work could lead to new treatment options that could slow or prevent aggressive prostate cancer from developing.

"Our work could also lay the foundations for new tests that use bacteria to predict the most effective treatment for each man's cancer."

The researchers also noted that many bacteria are beneficial to human life and it is not a simple matter to remove the harmful bacteria without removing the protection provided by the good bacteria. The study, published in European Urology Oncology, was funded by The Bob Champion Cancer Trust and Prostate Cancer UK.

Dr Hayley Luxton, research impact manager at Prostate Cancer UK, said: "This is an exciting discovery that has the potential to truly revolutionise treatment for men.

"We currently have no way of reliably identifying aggressive prostate cancers, and this research could help make sure men get the right treatment for them.

NEXIM Bank Secures N10.2bn, $3.25m in Loan Recovery Drive

James Emejo in Abuja

The Managing Director/Chief Executive, Nigerian Export-Import Bank (NEXIM), Mr. Abba Bello, has said the introduction of aggressive debt recovery and proactive loan measures had increased recoveries from N200 million in December 2016 to N10.2 billion and $3.25 million between January 2017 and February 2022.

The MD also said the loan recovery drive had led to the seizure of assets worth about N7 billion which are currently on the sale block. He said efforts to clean up the balance sheet as well as improvement in risk management practices had ensured that new loans granted from 2018 are performing 100 per cent, which is a major departure from the huge non-performing loans in the past.

Upon assumption of office on May 2, 2017, the new management had developed a new Strategic Plan (2018 – 2022) that was articulated towards improving operational performance, achieving the bank's mandate and contributing to meeting the objectives of the federal government under the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan.

Currently, in its fifth year of operations, Bello said the plan had contributed to the significant turnaround of the operational performance of the bank.

He told THISDAY, "Unlike the trend in the past, the bank has also engaged significantly with stakeholders, with improved relationship, manifesting in collaborative efforts towards policy intervention and increased focus on the non-oil export sector.

"Enhanced operating model through restructuring of regional offices for the bank to maintain a presence in each geo-political zone of the country for better market penetration and nationwide coverage."

The NEXIM Bank boss further disclosed that activities of the development finance institution under the Export Development Fund (EDF) had led to the processing of 442 Applications worth N461 billion and $43.69 million, out of which N214.65 billion had been approved while N153.03 billion had been disbursed to 101 beneficiaries, as well as approvals totaling N55.85 billion which were undergoing the pre-disbursement process.

He said so far, $492.97 million and €1.17 million, translating into N196.32 billion, have been received as export proceeds from projects that have repatriated their income, while others are yet to complete the transaction circle.



L-R: Managing Director, SellyFak Energy Services, Stanley Fagbule; MD/CEO, Niger Delta Exploration & Production Plc (NDEP), Gbite Falade; Executive Director, Torxen Energy Resources Ltd, Chuks Onwunali, and Principal, Lelaw Barristers & Solicitors, Afolabi Elebiju, at the Arbiterz Conference - 'From License To Oil: Fundraising For Marginal Fields' in Lagos...recently.

Plateau Harmonizes Revenue Collection to Address Multiple Taxation

Seriki Adinoyi in Jos

Plateau State Internal Revenue Services (PSIRS) has initiated a process of integration and harmonisation of revenues from all revenue generating points, with a view to blocking leakages, addressing multiple taxation and growing the state's revenue base.

This was the submission of the Chairman of the Revenue Harmonization Sub-committee, Mr. Ibrahim Puri, who was represented by the Commissioner for Lands, Survey and Town Planning, Mr. Yakubu Dati at the second edition of the harmonization sub-committee meeting in Jos.

He said that the purpose of the meeting was to harmonize fees as the government has realized that in order to promote the ease of doing business and growth of industries in the state, there is need to address the problem of multiple taxation.

Puri said, "We have received several complaints of multiple charges from different organizations, and we feel there is need to address them so it can fall in one category, so that at the end of the day, it will reduce the tax on the tax payers and also make it easier for people and businesses to strive.

"For taxation to be pleasing, there is need to harmonise the tax system. We are also introducing technology into the area of tax collection, such that payment can be made directly to the Service instead of cash payment which to prevent leakages.

"We also intend to liaise with the local governments so we can come together, collect tax and agree on the sharing formula because there is a lot of revenue that is being lost daily because there is no structure to collect those revenues. So the state is coming up with the structure to assist in collecting the revenue to reduce and eliminate the issue of multiple taxation and demands on one organization or business entity."

He said that this encourage tax payers and promote ease of doing business in the state.

Responding, business owners at the meeting hailed the state government and the revenue service, noting that the development encourage them to do more in terms of paying up their taxes, knowing that government has their interest at heart.

Access Bank Promotes 800 Employees

Kayode Tokede

Access Bank Plc, has announced the promotion of 800 employees following a transparent and robust performance management review in line with global best practices.

This announcement comes as the financial giant shores up its transition to a Holding Company (Holdco) starting May 1st, 2022.

The bank in a statement explained that its consistent growth over the years has been due to the immeasurable effort and sacrifice of its employees.

According to the bank, "The beneficiaries of this wholescale performance review exercise spanned the Bank's senior, middle, and junior management levels even as the management strives to continuously put employees in the best position to grow and be successful in today's highly competitive work environment.

"Over the years, Access Bank has demonstrated that employee performance and rewards remain a critical pillar of the Bank's business operations. The Bank has consistently provided adequate resources to deepen core job skills while entrenching a culture of high performance amongst employees.

"The Bank's penchant for rewarding high performance is particularly highlighted by the annual CEO Awards, one of the programs under it's 'We Clap Initiative' which is designed to support the development of a culture of excellence as well as motivate employees and teams for superior performance."

Recently, Access Bank was named the best institution to work in Nigeria by global professional network company, LinkedIn, having assessed data across seven pillars that serve as identifiers of career progression, namely: the ability to advance, skills growth, company stability, external opportunity, company affinity, gender diversity and spread of educational backgrounds.

Wema Bank's ALAT Hits 1m Accounts in One Day

In yet another first-of-its-kind move that further affirmed its trailblazer position in the banking industry, Africa's first Digital Bank, ALAT By Wema, unveiled its #BeAudacious campaign, as part of activities commemorating its 5th anniversary.

The #BeAudacious campaign, which was led by the Brand Ambassador and one of Africa's leading music icons, Davido saw ALAT By Wema target the opening of one million new accounts in a 24-hour period that was also an attempt at putting Nigeria into the Guinness Book of World Records for another first, in the financial services sector.

The disruptive initiative, the bank said in a statement, quickly went viral and had the global audience shaken, "as financial analysts, marketers, brand specialists, social and lifestyle influencers across social media platforms engaged in various discussions regarding the unprecedented move that was executed with Guinness World Record officials as observers.

"Apart from the attempt at the world record, the #BeAudacious campaign was also a reward scheme to appreciate customers and Nigerians for their unwavering loyalty and brand affinity to ALAT By Wema in the five years of its existence. Thus, participants in the bold 24-hour move got rewarded with amazing prizes, including data and airtime.

"Unknowing to the public, the #BeAudacious campaign had started 2 days earlier on April 29 when mysterious Red Boxes with visible QR Codes sprang up in different parts of the country, with an invitation to the public to take the bold step and scan the QR codes with the #SpotTheRedBoxes and win delightful freebies.

MARKET INDICATORS

MONEY AND CREDIT STATISTICS (MILLION NAIRA)

	JANUARY 2021
Money Supply (M3)	38,779,455.43
-- CBN Bills Held by Money Holding Sectors	1,039,129.55
Money Supply (M2)	37,740,325.88
-- Quasi Money	21,779,302.69
-- Narrow Money (M1)	15,961,023.19
---- Currency Outside Banks	2,364,871.13
---- Demand Deposits	13,596,152.06
Net Foreign Assets (NFA)	7,414,275.50
Net Domestic Assets(NDA)	31,365,179.93
-- Net Domestic Credit (NDC)	42,916,586.63
---- Credit to Government (Net)	12,304,773.44
---- Memo: Credit to Govt. (Net) less FMA	0.00
---- Memo: Fed. and Mirror Accounts (FMA)	0.00
---- Credit to Private Sector (CPS)	30,611,813.19
--Other Assets Net	3,892,112.74
Reserve Money (Base Money	13,264,585.14
--Currency in Circulation	2,831,167.19
--Banks Reserves	10,433,417.96
--Special Intervention Reserves	317,234.17

• Source - CBN

Money Market Indicators (in Percentage)

Month	March 2018
Inter-Bank Call Rate	15.16
Minimum Rediscount Rate (MRR)	
Monetary Policy Rate (MPR)	14.00
Treasury Bill Rate	11.84
Savings Deposit Rate	4.07
1 Month Deposit Rate	8.82
3 Months Deposit Rate	9.72
6 Months Deposit Rate	10.93
12 Months Deposit Rate	10.21
Prime Lending rate	17.35
Maximum Lending Rate	31.55

• Monetary Policy Rate - 13%

OPEC DAILY BASKET PRICE AS AT FRIDAY APRIL 29, 2022

The price of OPEC basket of thirteen crudes stood at $105.33 a barrel on Wednesday, compared with $102.94 the previous day, according to OPEC Secretariat calculations. The OPEC Reference Basket of Crudes (ORB) is made up of the following: Saharan Blend (Algeria), Girassol (Angola), Djeno (Congo), Zafiro (Equatorial Guinea), Rabi Light (Gabon), Iran Heavy (Islamic Republic of Iran), Basra Light (Iraq), Kuwait Export (Kuwait), Es Sider (Libya), Bonny Light (Nigeria), Arab Light (Saudi Arabia), Murban (UAE) and Merey (Venezuela).

MARKET NEWS

Olusanya: Synergy-related Efficiencies Rationale Behind Flour Mills Acquisition of Honeywell

Kayode Tokede

The Group Managing Director, Flour Mills of Nigeria Plc (FMN), Mr. Boye Olusanya, has stated that synergy-related efficiencies are an important part of the rationale behind the acquisition of Honeywell Flour Mills Plc.

Olusanya who stated this during an interviewstressed that the acquisition is expected to create a long-term structural cost advantage needed to secure the prospects for both current and future employees.

FMN had obtained all requisite regulatory approvals to acquire a 71.69per cent stake in Honeywell Flour Mills Plc (HFMP), formerly a portfolio company of Honeywell Group and a 5.06per cent stake in HFMP held by First Bank of Nigeria Limited.

Given FMN's parallel negotiation for both stakes, culminating in the agreements being executed, the transaction was concluded at N4.20 being the final equity price per share.

Olusanya said: "The acquisition would create a single more resilient national champion for Nigeria, ensuring long term job preservation and create additional opportunities across stakeholder groupings who would benefit from the more than (85) years combined track record of FMN and HFMP."

He expressed the acquisition tends to increase scope to deliver product innovation to meet customers' needs and customers across the nation are to benefit from access to a wider product range, economy of scale an even stronger stream of innovation and a robust Pan Nigerian distribution network and accessing greater number of points of sale supported by enhanced customer focused sales teams.

He noted that the acquisition of HFMP by FMN is expected to combine two businesses with shared goals and create a more resilient national champion for Nigeria in the foods industry, ensuring long-term job creation and food security.

According to him, "The acquisition will bring together two trusted and entrenched brands, creating a single entity that is better positioned to benefit the growing Nigerian population and leverage opportunities stemming from the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

"Continued investment in the business by the acquisition of HFMP will further enable FMN to be a crucial provider of the continent's food needs."

PRICES FOR SECURITIES TRADED AS OF 04 /05/2022

MAIN BOARD	DEALS	MARKET PRICE	QUANTITY TRADED	VALUE TRADED (N)
FINANCIAL SERVICES				
S/N BANKING	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLU
1 ACCESS HOLDINGS PLC	341,234.17	9.60	-1.03	377 23,804
2 UNITED BANK FOR AFRICA PLC	275,305.34	8.05	-2.42	233 13,749
3 ZENITH BANK PLC	758,225.32	24.15	-1.43	462 15,848
BANKING				1,072 53,403
S/N OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLU
4 FBN HOLDINGS PLC	427,153.98	11.90	-0.83	126 4,063
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS				126 4,063
FINANCIAL SERVICES				1,198 57,466
ICT				
S/N TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLU
5 MTN NIGERIA COMMUNICATIONS PLC	4,366,043.05	214.50	-	431 1,011
TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES				431 1,011
ICT				431 1,011
INDUSTRIAL GOODS				
S/N BUILDING MATERIALS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLU
6 DANGOTE CEMENT PLC	4,982,644.37	292.40	2.36	154 1,092
7 LAFARGE AFRICA PLC.	427,661.97	26.55	-1.67	168 4,137
BUILDING MATERIALS				322 5,230
INDUSTRIAL GOODS				322 5,230
OIL AND GAS				
S/N EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLU
8 SEPLAT ENERGY PLC	706,133.47	1,200.00	-	75 159
EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION				75 159
OIL AND GAS				75 159
AGRICULTURE				
S/N CROP PRODUCTION	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
9 ELLAH LAKES PLC.	6,240.00	3.12	-	3 23,600
10 FTN COCOA PROCESSORS PLC	858.00	0.39	5.41	17 1,188,528
11 OKOMU OIL PALM PLC.	154,247.25	161.70	10.00	51 661,287
12 PRESCO PLC	157,700.00	157.70	9.97	154 3,305,875
CROP PRODUCTION				225 5,179,290
S/N LIVESTOCK/ANIMAL SPECIALTIES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
13 LIVESTOCK FEEDS PLC.	4,950.00	1.65	-5.17	27 1,411,832
LIVESTOCK/ANIMAL SPECIALTIES				27 1,411,832
AGRICULTURE				252 6,591,122
CONGLOMERATES				
S/N DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
14 JOHN HOLT PLC.	276.30	0.71	-	0 0
15 S C O A NIG. PLC.	1,260.66	1.94	-	4 22,310
16 TRANSNATIONAL CORPORATION OF NIGERIA PLC	47,151.67	1.16	-2.52	307 74,057,522
17 U A C N PLC.	34,575.56	12.00	-	51 556,606
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIES				362 74,636,438
CONGLOMERATES				362 74,636,438
CONSTRUCTION/REAL ESTATE				
S/N BUILDING CONSTRUCTION	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
18 ARBICO PLC.	152.96	1.03	-	0 0
CONSTRUCTION/REAL ESTATE				
S/N BUILDING CONSTRUCTION	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
BUILDING CONSTRUCTION				0 0
S/N INFRASTRUCTURE/HEAVY CONSTRUCTION	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
19 JULIUS BERGER NIG. PLC.	48,000.00	30.00	-1.32	81 705,547
INFRASTRUCTURE/HEAVY CONSTRUCTION				81 705,547
S/N REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
20 UPDC PLC	19,487.97	1.05	-1.87	58 4,603,366
REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT				58 4,603,366
CONSTRUCTION/REAL ESTATE				139 5,308,913
CONSUMER GOODS				
S/N AUTOMOBILES/AUTO PARTS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
21 DN TYRE & RUBBER PLC	954.53	0.20	-	0 0
AUTOMOBILES/AUTO PARTS				0 0
S/N BEVERAGES--BREWERS/DISTILLERS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
22 CHAMPION BREW. PLC.	21,687.71	2.77	9.92	80 3,398,699
23 GOLDEN GUINEA BREW. PLC.	829.98	0.81	-	0 0
24 GUINNESS NIG PLC	219,038.28	100.00	7.53	138 1,481,903
25 INTERNATIONAL BREWERIES PLC.	150,427.58	5.60	9.80	131 12,067,907
CONSUMER GOODS				
S/N BEVERAGES--BREWERS/DISTILLERS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
26 NIGERIAN BREW. PLC.	507,162.24	62.80	9.98	232 3,983,716
BEVERAGES--BREWERS/DISTILLERS				581 20,932,225
S/N FOOD PRODUCTS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
27 BUA FOODS PLC	1,071,000.00	59.50	-	23 8,937
28 DANGOTE SUGAR REFINERY PLC	196,779.43	16.20	-0.62	114 1,894,889
29 FLOUR MILLS NIG. PLC.	135,722.56	33.10	-	109 993,104
30 HONEYWELL FLOUR MILL PLC	29,183.13	3.68	-0.54	100 5,035,871
31 MULTI-TREX INTEGRATED FOODS PLC	1,340.10	0.36	-	0 0
32 N NIG. FLOUR MILLS PLC.	1,719.63	9.65	-	8 9,603
33 NASCON ALLIED INDUSTRIES PLC	34,442.70	13.00	-	29 104,704
34 UNION DICON SALT PLC.	2,446.38	8.95	-	1 250
FOOD PRODUCTS				384 8,047,358
S/N FOOD PRODUCTS--DIVERSIFIED	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
35 CADBURY NIGERIA PLC.	21,129.77	11.25	9.76	190 12,417,671
36 NESTLE NIGERIA PLC.	1,141,425.00	1,440.00	-	41 4,595
FOOD PRODUCTS--DIVERSIFIED				231 12,422,266
S/N HOUSEHOLD DURABLES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
37 NIGERIAN ENAMELWARE PLC.	1,231.72	16.20	-	0 0
38 VITAFOAM NIG PLC.	31,271.10	25.00	3.09	120 2,366,311
HOUSEHOLD DURABLES				120 2,366,311
S/N PERSONAL/HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
39 P Z CUSSONS NIGERIA PLC.	40,496.87	10.20	-	48 441,054
40 UNILEVER NIGERIA PLC.	80,430.08	14.00	2.94	100 3,637,175
PERSONAL/HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTS				148 4,078,229
CONSUMER GOODS				
CONSUMER GOODS				1,464 47,846,389
FINANCIAL SERVICES				
S/N BANKING	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
41 ECOBANK TRANSNATIONAL INCORPORATED	220,194.61	12.00	-	45 214,805
42 FIDELITY BANK PLC	107,206.75	3.70	-2.63	210 14,043,539
43 GUARANTY TRUST HOLDING COMPANY PLC	704,876.74	23.95	-0.21	403 9,673,861
44 JAIZ BANK PLC	26,251.29	0.76	2.70	50 1,577,946
45 STERLING BANK PLC.	44,625.15	1.55	0.65	58 3,211,730
46 UNION BANK NIG.PLC.	183,460.74	6.30	-0.79	37 263,647,006
47 UNITY BANK PLC	6,078.46	0.52	4.00	13 1,068,832
48 WEMA BANK PLC.	49,503.90	3.85	10.00	114 7,409,048
BANKING				930 300,846,767
S/N INSURANCE CARRIERS, BROKERS AND SERVICES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
49 AFRICAN ALLIANCE INSURANCE PLC	4,117.00	0.20	-	1 500
50 AIICO INSURANCE PLC.	27,453.96	0.75	-5.06	129 31,031,383
FINANCIAL SERVICES				
S/N INSURANCE CARRIERS, BROKERS AND SERVICES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
51 AXAMANSARD INSURANCE PLC	20,250.00	2.25	-7.79	81 8,587,565
52 CONSOLIDATED HALLMARK INSURANCE PLC	6,529.75	0.61	-	5 112,866
53 CORNERSTONE INSURANCE PLC	10,173.18	0.56	-5.08	11 3,614,560
54 CORONATION INSURANCE PLC	10,796.26	0.45	2.27	29 1,439,256
55 GOLDLINK INSURANCE PLC	909.99	0.20	-	0 0
56 GUINEA INSURANCE PLC.	1,228.00	0.20	-	0 0
57 INTERNATIONAL ENERGY INSURANCE PLC	487.95	0.38	-	0 0
58 LASACO ASSURANCE PLC.	1,870.26	1.02	-	11 228,804
59 LINKAGE ASSURANCE PLC	6,860.00	0.49	-	6 209,925
60 MUTUAL BENEFITS ASSURANCE PLC.	5,216.02	0.26	4.00	5 941,607
61 NEM INSURANCE PLC	20,216.41	4.03	-3.59	26 366,217
62 NIGER INSURANCE PLC	1,625.29	0.21	5.00	6 495,283
63 PRESTIGE ASSURANCE PLC	5,831.13	0.44	-	2 70,989
64 REGENCY ASSURANCE PLC	2,067.31	0.31	-3.12	30 18,809,106
65 SOVEREIGN TRUST INSURANCE PLC	3,068.41	0.27	-	3 30,352
66 STACO INSURANCE PLC	4,483.72	0.48	-	0 0
67 STANDARD ALLIANCE INSURANCE PLC.	2,582.21	0.20	-	0 0
68 SUNU ASSURANCES NIGERIA PLC.	1,917.56	0.33	-	0 0
69 UNIVERSAL INSURANCE PLC	3,200.00	0.20	-	0 0
70 VERITAS KAPITAL ASSURANCE PLC	3,050.67	0.22	-	3 990
INSURANCE CARRIERS, BROKERS AND SERVICES				348 65,939,403
S/N MICRO-FINANCE BANKS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
71 NPF MICROFINANCE BANK PLC	11,542.39	2.14	8.08	24 1,313,201
MICRO-FINANCE BANKS				24 1,313,201

MAIN BOARD	DEALS	MARKET PRICE	QUANTITY TRADED	VALUE TRADED (N)
FINANCIAL SERVICES				
S/N MORTGAGE CARRIERS, BROKERS AND SERVICES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
72 ABBEY MORTGAGE BANK PLC	11,473.85	1.13	0.89	4 8,795,931
73 ASO SAVINGS AND LOANS PLC	7,370.87	0.50	-	0 0
74 INFINITY TRUST MORTGAGE BANK PLC	5,296.48	1.27	-	0 0
75 RESORT SAVINGS & LOANS PLC	2,265.95	0.20	-	0 0
FINANCIAL SERVICES				
S/N MORTGAGE CARRIERS, BROKERS AND SERVICES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
76 UNION HOMES SAVINGS AND LOANS PLC.	2,949.22	3.02	-	0 0
MORTGAGE CARRIERS, BROKERS AND SERVICES				4 8,795,931
S/N OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
77 AFRICA PRUDENTIAL PLC	12,000.00	6.00	-	49 512,836
78 CUSTODIAN INVESTMENT PLC	42,055.33	7.15	-	15 62,732
79 DEAP CAPITAL MANAGEMENT & TRUST PLC	300.00	0.20	-	0 0
80 FCMB GROUP PLC.	72,279.89	3.65	-5.93	68 2,318,467
81 NIGERIAN EXCHANGE GROUP	46,844.16	23.85	-0.83	111 9,687,712
82 ROYAL EXCHANGE PLC.	4,991.01	0.97	-3.00	23 2,430,011
83 STANBIC IBTC HOLDINGS PLC	472,282.55	36.45	2.68	59 5,660,636
84 UNITED CAPITAL PLC	80,700.00	13.45	0.37	98 2,355,839
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS				423 23,028,233
FINANCIAL SERVICES				1,729 399,923,535
HEALTHCARE				
S/N HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
85 EKOCORP PLC.	2,886.90	5.79	-	2 5,000
HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS				2 5,000
S/N MEDICAL SUPPLIES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
86 MORISON INDUSTRIES PLC.	2,156.37	2.18	-	1 2,000
MEDICAL SUPPLIES				1 2,000
S/N PHARMACEUTICALS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
87 FIDSON HEALTHCARE PLC	18,893.79	8.96	9.94	41 871,422
88 GLAXO SMITHKLINE CONSUMER NIG. PLC.	7,055.67	5.90	0.85	46 845,051
89 MAY & BAKER NIGERIA PLC.	7,591.03	4.40	-	15 117,340
HEALTHCARE				
S/N PHARMACEUTICALS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
90 NEIMETH INTERNATIONAL PHARMACEUTICALS PLC	3,000.67	1.58	-	18 187,129
91 PHARMA-DEKO PLC.	346.91	1.60	-	5 2,100
PHARMACEUTICALS				125 2,023,042
HEALTHCARE				128 2,030,042
ICT				
S/N COMPUTER BASED SYSTEMS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
92 COURTEVILLE BUSINESS SOLUTIONS PLC	1,847.04	0.52	-3.70	8 977,716
COMPUTER BASED SYSTEMS				8 977,716
S/N COMPUTERS AND PERIPHERALS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
93 OMATEK VENTURES PLC	588.36	0.20	-	0 0
COMPUTERS AND PERIPHERALS				0 0
S/N IT SERVICES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
94 CWG PLC	2,423.83	0.96	9.09	9 2,002,779
95 NCR (NIGERIA) PLC.	430.92	3.99	-	2 600
IT SERVICES				11 2,003,379
S/N PROCESSING SYSTEMS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
96 CHAMS PLC	1,080.09	0.23	9.52	44 28,926,454
97 E-TRANZACT INTERNATIONAL PLC	19,240.24	2.90	-	9 11,034
PROCESSING SYSTEMS				53 28,937,488
S/N TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
98 AIRTEL AFRICA PLC	5,208,797.98	1,386.00	-	75 29,775
TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES				75 29,775
ICT				147 31,948,358
PRICES FOR MAIN BOARD SECURITIES				
INDUSTRIAL GOODS				
S/N BUILDING MATERIALS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
99 BERGER PAINTS PLC	2,231.64	7.70	-	23 51,589
100 BUA CEMENT PLC	2,514,428.29	74.25	8.16	88 1,182,978
INDUSTRIAL GOODS				
S/N BUILDING MATERIALS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
101 CAP PLC	17,262.88	21.90	-	17 19,593
102 MEYER PLC.	1,593.71	3.00	-	21 66,861
103 PREMIER PAINTS PLC.	1,230.00	10.00	-	0 0
BUILDING MATERIALS				149 1,321,021
S/N ELECTRONIC AND ELECTRICAL PRODUCTS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
104 AUSTIN LAZ & COMPANY PLC	2,192.12	2.03	-	0 0
105 CUTIX PLC.	8,066.85	2.29	-6.15	62 3,372,104
ELECTRONIC AND ELECTRICAL PRODUCTS				62 3,372,104
S/N PACKAGING/CONTAINERS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
106 BETA GLASS PLC.	29,098.37	58.20	-	20 38,961
107 GREIF NIGERIA PLC	232.39	5.45	-	1 172
108 TRIPPLE GEE AND COMPANY PLC.	475.16	0.96	-	1 1,100
PACKAGING/CONTAINERS				22 40,233
S/N AGRO-ALLIED & CHEMICALS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
109 NOTORE CHEMICAL IND PLC	100,754.14	62.50	-	1 6,000
AGRO-ALLIED & CHEMICALS				1 6,000
INDUSTRIAL GOODS				234 4,739,358
NATURAL RESOURCES				
S/N CHEMICALS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
110 INDUSTRIAL & MEDICAL GASES NIGERIA PLC	3,579.70	8.60	-	5 7,145
CHEMICALS				5 7,145
S/N METALS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
111 ALUMINIUM EXTRUSION IND. PLC.	1,583.68	7.20	-	1 14,938
METALS				1 14,938
NATURAL RESOURCES				
S/N MINING SERVICES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
112 MULTIVERSE MINING AND EXPLORATION PLC	980.25	0.23	-8.70	14 944,651
MINING SERVICES				14 944,651
S/N PAPER/FOREST PRODUCTS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
113 THOMAS WYATT NIG. PLC.	77.00	0.35	-	0 0
PAPER/FOREST PRODUCTS				0 0
NATURAL RESOURCES				20 966,734
OIL AND GAS				
S/N ENERGY EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
114 JAPAUL GOLD & VENTURES PLC	1,878.81	0.30	3.33	65 10,249,717
ENERGY EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES				65 10,249,717
S/N INTEGRATED OIL AND GAS SERVICES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
115 OANDO PLC	70,486.11	5.67	-10.00	130 6,825,053
INTEGRATED OIL AND GAS SERVICES				130 6,825,053
S/N PETROLEUM AND PETROLEUM PRODUCTS DISTRIBUTORS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES VOLUME
116 ARDOVA PLC	17,843.99	13.70	-	35 213,780
117 CONOIL PLC	18,181.55	26.20	-	40 162,772
118 ETERNA PLC.	8,633.44	6.62	9.97	58 1,569,797
119 MRS OIL NIGERIA PLC.	3,779.35	12.40	-	16 25,399
120 TOTALENERGIES MARKETING NIGERIA PLC	79,617.87	234.50	-	62 216,741
PETROLEUM AND PETROLEUM PRODUCTS DISTRIBUTORS				211 2,188,489
OIL AND GAS				406 19,263,259

Thursday, May 5, 2022

Thisday Afrinvest 40 Index Up 0.7%

The Thisday Afrinvest 40 advanced 0.7% to 2,253.59 index points due to buy pressure on **BUACEMENT** (+8.2%), **NB** (+10.0%), and **OKOMUOIL** (+10.0%). Cumulatively, these stocks account for 9.6% of the index.

Market Reopens on Bullish Note... ASI up 1.0%

Following the 2-day public holiday, the domestic bourse reopened on a bullish note yesterday as the NGX-ASI advanced 1.0% to close at 50,126.41 points, driven by gains in **BUACEMENT** (+8.2%), **NB** (+10.0%), and **GUINNESS** (+7.5%). Consequently, market capitalisation increased ₦262.8bn to ₦27.0tn while YTD return rose to 17.3% (previously 16.2%). Trading activity improved as volume and value traded advanced 109.6% and 28.1% respectively to 669.3m units and ₦6.0bn.

Mixed Sector Performance

Across sectors within our purview, performance was mixed as 3 indices gained while 3 lost. The Consumer and Industrial Goods indices led the gainers, up 330bps and 297bps respectively, on account of price appreciation in **NB** (+10.0%), **GUINNESS** (+7.5%), and **BUACEMENT** (+8.2%). Likewise, price uptick in CWG (+9.1%) and CHAMS (+9.5%) drove the AFR-ICT index up 0.2bp. Conversely, the Insurance index led the laggards, down 377bps, due to sell pressure on NEM (-8.4%) and MANSARD (-7.8%). Similarly, the Oil & Gas and Banking indices declined 137bps and 98bps respectively, driven by profit-taking in OANDO (-10.0%), ZENITH (-1.4%), and UBA (-2.4%).

Outlook

Investor sentiment, as measured by market breadth, weakened to 0.07x from 0.38x in the prior session as 31 stocks advanced, 27 declined while 56 closed flat. Today, we anticipate the market would extend its 9-day bullish run on the back of investors' positive reaction to earnings results.

THISDAY AFRINVEST 40 INDEX

Fundamental Performance Metrics for THISDAY AFRINVEST 40 Index

	Ticker	Current Price	Previous Price Change	Current Weighting	Price Change YTD	Price Change Index to Date	ROE	ROA	P/E	P/BV	Dividend Yield	Earnings Yield
	THISDAY AFRINVEST 40	**2253.59**	**0.69%**		**21.5%**	**125.4%**	**15.0%**	**3.5%**	**5.7x**	**0.9x**	**6.0%**	**15.9%**
1	Airtel Africa PLC	1,386.00	0.0%	39.6%	45.1%	45.1%			#N/A Field Not Applicable		1.3%	
2	MTN Nigeria Communications PLC	214.50	0.0%	7.9%	8.9%	8.9%	105.6%	13.9%	13.6x	16.7x	6.1%	7.4%
3	BUA Cement Plc	74.25	8.2%	6.7%	10.7%	10.7%	19.1%	11.2%	35.7x	6.7x	3.6%	2.8%
4	Guaranty Trust Holding Co PLC	23.95	-0.2%	5.4%	-7.9%	-7.9%	19.8%	3.2%	3.9x	0.8x	12.5%	25.4%
5	Zenith Bank PLC	24.15	-1.4%	5.1%	-4.0%	-4.0%			3.0x		12.9%	32.9%
6	Dangote Cement PLC	292.40	0.0%	4.5%	13.8%	13.8%	37.7%	16.4%	13.2x	4.8x	6.8%	7.6%
7	Nestle Nigeria PLC	1,440.00	0.0%	2.9%	-7.5%	-7.5%	112.8%	16.1%	25.0x	29.1x	3.6%	4.0%
8	FBN Holdings Plc	11.90	-0.8%	3.1%	4.4%	4.4%	8.4%	0.8%	7.0x	0.6x	3.8%	14.2%
9	Lafarge Africa PLC	26.55	-1.7%	3.2%	10.9%	10.9%	15.5%	11.1%	7.2x	1.1x	7.7%	13.9%
10	Access Holdings PLC	9.60	-1.0%	2.5%		3.2%					7.3%	
11	United Bank for Africa PLC	8.05	-2.4%	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%	15.6%	1.4%	2.3x	0.3x	12.3%	43.3%
12	Stanbic IBTC Holdings PLC	36.45	2.7%	1.5%	1.3%	1.3%	15.6%	2.1%	7.7x	1.2x	8.6%	13.0%
13	Nigerian Brew eries PLC	62.80	10.0%	1.8%	25.6%	25.6%	10.5%	3.9%	27.0x	2.7x	2.8%	3.7%
14	SEPLAT Energy PLC	1,200.00	0.0%	2.6%	84.6%	84.6%	7.5%	3.6%	12.3x	0.9x	3.6%	8.1%
15	Ecobank Transnational Inc	12.00	0.0%	1.7%	37.9%	37.9%	18.4%	1.0%	2.6x	0.5x	5.5%	38.9%
16	International Brew eries PLC	5.60	9.8%	1.1%	13.1%	13.1%	-9.9%	-3.4%		1.1x		-9.5%
17	Okomu Oil Palm PLC	161.70	10.0%	1.1%	13.9%	13.9%	43.6%	25.5%	8.4x	3.5x	4.9%	11.8%
18	Flour Mills of Nigeria PLC	33.10	0.0%	1.0%	16.8%	16.8%	15.9%	4.5%	5.1x	0.8x	5.0%	19.7%
19	Fidelity Bank PLC	3.70	-2.6%	0.8%	45.1%	45.1%	13.3%	1.2%	2.8x	0.3x	9.5%	35.6%
20	AXA Mansard Insurance PLC	2.25	-7.8%	0.5%	-3.0%	-3.0%	2.3%	0.7%	26.4x	0.6x	11.1%	3.8%
21	Dangote Sugar Refinery PLC	16.20	0.0%	0.4%	-6.9%	-6.9%	16.7%	6.6%	8.7x	1.4x	6.2%	11.5%
22	FCMB Group Plc	3.65	-5.9%	0.5%	22.1%	22.1%	10.7%	1.1%		0.3x	5.5%	
23	United Capital PLC	13.45	0.0%	0.5%	35.9%	35.9%				3.4x	11.2%	
24	Guinness Nigeria PLC	100.00	7.5%	0.8%	156.4%	156.4%	17.8%	8.1%	14.9x	2.4x	0.5%	6.7%
25	Transnational Corp of Nigeria	1.16	-2.5%	0.3%	20.8%	20.8%	11.1%	2.3%	6.2x	0.6x	1.7%	16.2%
26	Presco PLC	157.70	10.0%	0.5%	79.6%	79.6%				3.4x	0.6%	
27	NASCON Allied Industries PLC	13.00	0.0%	0.3%	-1.5%	-1.5%	18.5%	5.7%	13.1x	2.3x		7.6%
28	AIICO Insurance PLC	0.75	-5.1%	0.2%	7.1%	7.1%	14.0%	2.2%	29.7x	0.7x	2.7%	3.4%
29	TotalEnergies Marketing Nigeri	234.50	0.0%	0.2%	5.7%	5.7%	46.9%	8.1%	4.4x	1.7x	7.9%	22.8%
30	Custodian and Allied Insurance	7.15	0.0%	0.2%	-9.5%	-9.5%	19.5%	5.5%	4.2x	0.8x	7.0%	23.8%
31	Vitafoam Nigeria PLC	25.00	3.1%	0.2%	11.1%	11.1%	50.3%	19.0%	4.6x	2.3x	6.2%	21.5%
32	Unilever Nigeria PLC	14.00	2.9%	0.1%	-3.4%	-3.4%	11.2%	6.9%	16.5x	1.2x	3.7%	6.1%
33	Julius Berger Nigeria PLC	30.00	-1.3%	0.2%	34.2%	34.2%	20.7%	2.5%	5.1x	1.0x	8.3%	19.8%
34	Union Bank of Nigeria PLC	6.30	-0.8%	0.1%	6.8%	6.8%	6.1%	0.7%	9.9x	0.7x		10.1%
35	Oando PLC	5.67	-10.0%	0.1%	28.3%	28.3%	14.5%	2.6%	2.4x	0.3x		41.0%
36	Wema Bank PLC	3.85	10.0%	0.0%	434.7%	434.7%	15.6%	0.9%	14.2x	2.0x	6.2%	7.0%
37	NEM Insurance PLC	4.03	-3.6%	0.1%	-10.4%	-10.4%	21.5%	12.8%	4.2x	0.9x	5.5%	24.0%
38	Sterling Bank PLC	1.55	0.6%	0.1%	2.6%	2.6%	9.9%	0.9%	1.9x	0.3x	6.5%	52.0%
39	Notore Chemical Industries Ltd	62.50	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	-28.3%	-6.1%		2.4x		-9.5%
40	Transcorp Hotels Plc	4.95	0.0%	0.0%	-8.0%	-8.0%				0.8x	1.6%	

Top 10 Gainers

Ticker	Price	Price Chg %
CADBURY	9.35	10.0%
MULTIVERSE	0.22	10.0%
TRANSEXPR	0.89	9.9%
CAP	21.90	9.8%
SEPLAT	1200.00	9.1%
CHIPLC	0.63	8.6%
UPDC	1.04	8.3%
CUSTODIAN	7.15	8.3%
MEYER	3.00	6.8%
AIICO	0.74	5.7%

Top 10 Losers

Ticker	Price	Price Chg %
CHAMPION	2.30	-6.9%
FTNCOCOA	0.37	-5.1%
LINKASSURE	0.49	-3.9%
COURTVILLE	0.51	-3.8%
FIDELITYBK	3.62	-3.5%
RTBRISCOE	0.56	-3.4%
ETERNA	6.50	-3.3%
MAYBAKER	4.40	-2.2%
UNITYBNK	0.49	-2.0%
MANSARD	2.55	-1.2%

Top 10 Trades by Volume

Ticker	Volume	Price Chg %
FCMB	504.0	0.3%
TRANSCORP	36.2	1.7%
HONYFLOUR	25.1	0.0%
FBNH	17.0	0.8%
AIICO	16.6	5.7%
ETI	15.6	1.7%
GTCO	11.7	0.0%
UBA	11.1	0.6%
ACCESSCORP	11.0	0.5%
OANDO	10.1	-0.8%

Top 10 Trades by Value

Ticker	Value	Price Chg %
FCMB	1764.2	0.3%
MTNN	573.3	0.9%
SEPLAT	557.2	9.1%
GUINNESS	409.9	5.1%
GTCO	282.1	0.0%
NB	207.7	0.0%
FBNH	201.8	0.8%
NESTLE	188.0	0.0%
ETI	187.1	1.7%
ACCESSCORP	109.0	0.5%

Afrinvest West Africa Limited

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MARKET NEWS

FUND MANAGERS ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIA

A Mutual fund (Unit Trust) is an investment vehicle managed by a SEC (Securities and Exchange Commission) registered Fund Manager. Investors with similar objectives buy units of the Fund so that the Fund Manager can buy securities that willl generate their desired return.

An ETF (Exchange Traded Fund) is a type of fund which owns the assets (shares of stock, bonds, oil futures, gold bars, foreign currency, etc.) and divides ownership of those assets into shares. Investors can buy these 'shares' on the floor of the Nigerian Stock Exchange.

A REIT (Real Estate Investment Trust) is an investment vehicle that allows both small and large investors to part-own real estate ventures (eg. Offices, Houses, Hospitals) in proportion to their investments. The assets are divided into shares that are traded on the Nigerian Stock Exchange.

GUIDE TO DATA:
Date: All fund prices are quoted in Naira as at 29-Apr-2022, unless otherwise stated.

Offer price: The price at which units of a trust or ETF are bought by investors.
Bid Price: The price at which Investors redeem (sell) units of a trust or ETF.

Yield/Total Return: Denotes the total return an investor would have earned on his investment. Money Market Funds report Yield while others report Year- to-date Total Return.
NAV: Is value per share of the real estate assets held by a REIT on a specific date.

DAILY PRICE LIST FOR MUTUAL FUNDS, REITS and ETFS

MUTUAL FUNDS / UNIT TRUSTS

AFRINVEST ASSET MANAGEMENT LTD			aaml@afrinvest.com
Web: www.afrinvest.com; Tel: +234 818 885 6757			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
Afrinvest Equity Fund	192.83	193.98	15.51%
Afrinvest Plutus Fund	100.00	100.00	5.78%
Nigeria International Debt Fund	318.92	318.92	4.05%
Afrinvest Dollar Fund	105.23	106.38	6.66%
AIICO CAPITAL LTD			ammf@aiicocapital.com
Web: www.aiicocapital.com, Tel: +234-1-2792974			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
AIICO Money Market Fund	100.00	100.00	8.60%
AIICO Balanced Fund	3.64	3.70	2.67%
ANCHORIA ASSET MANAGEMENT LIMITED			info@anchoriaam.com
Web:www.anchoriaam.com, Tel: 08166830267; 08036814510; 08028419180			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
Anchoria Money Market	N/A	N/A	N/A
Anchoria Equity Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
Anchoria Fixed Income Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
ARM INVESTMENT MANAGERS LTD			enquiries@arminvestmentcenter.com
Web: www.arm.com.ng; Tel: 0700 CALLARM (0700 225 5276)			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
ARM Aggressive Growth Fund	21.98	22.64	8.35%
ARM Discovery Balanced Fund	497.83	512.84	10.34%
ARM Ethical Fund	41.84	43.10	7.41%
ARM Eurobond Fund ($)	1.06	1.06	-1.88%
ARM Fixed Income Fund	1.03	1.04	2.19%
ARM Money Market Fund	1.00	1.00	5.52%
AVA GLOBAL ASSET MANAGERS LIMITED			info@avacapitalgroup.com
Web: www.avacapitalgroup.com; Tel 08069294653			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
AVA GAM Fixed Income Dollar Fund	104.95	104.95	7.83%
AVA GAM Fixed Income Dollar Naira	1,099.95	1,099.95	10.00%
AXA MANSARD INVESTMENTS LIMITED			investmentcare@axamansard.com
Web: www.axamansard.com; Tel: +2341-4488482			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
AXA Mansard Equity Income Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
AXA Mansard Money Market Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
CAPITAL EXPRESS ASSET AND TRUST LIMITED			info@capitalexpressassetandtrust.com
Web: www.capitalexpressassetandtrust.com; Tel: +234 803 307 5048			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
CEAT Fixed Income Fund	2.11	2.11	8.01%
Capital Express Balanced Fund(Formerly: Union Trustees Mixed Fund)	2.34	2.39	25.74%
CAPITALTRUST INVESTMENTS AND ASSET MANAGEMENT LIMITED			halalfif@capitaltrustnigeria.com
Web: www.capitaltrustnigeria.com; Tel: 08061458806			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
Capitaltrust Halal Fixed Income Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
CARDINALSTONE ASSET MANAGEMENT LIMITED			mutualfunds@cardinalstone.com
Web: www.cardinalstoneassetmanagement.com; Tel: +234 (1) 710 0433 4			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
CardinalStone Fixed Income Alpha Fund	1.04	1.04	2.81%
CHAPELHILL DENHAM MANAGEMENT LTD			investmentmanagement@chapelhilldenham.com
Web: www.chapelhilldenham.com, Tel: +234 461 0691			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
Chapelhill Denham Money Market Fund	100.00	100.00	7.01%
Paramount Equity Fund	20.13	20.51	15.45%
Women's Investment Fund	153.10	154.92	7.79%
CORDROS ASSET MANAGEMENT LIMITED			assetmgtteam@cordros.com
Web: www.cordros.com, Tel: 019036947			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
Cordros Money Market Fund	100.00	100.00	5.85%
Cordros Milestone Fund	135.07	135.97	8.36%
Cordros Dollar Fund ($)	109.01	109.01	4.68%
CORONATION ASSETS MANAGEMENT			investment@coronationam.com
Web:www.coronationam.com, Tel: 012366215			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
Coronation Money Market Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
Coronation Balanced Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
Coronation Fixed Income Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
EDC FUNDS MANAGEMENT LIMITED			mutualfundng@ecobank.com
Web: www.ecobank.com Tel: 012265281			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
EDC Nigeria Money Market Fund Class A	100.00	100.00	4.47%
EDC Nigeria Money Market Fund Class B	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	5.39%
EDC Nigeria Fixed Income Fund	1,149.86	1,159.64	-1.40%
EMERGING AFRICA ASSET MANAGEMENT LIMITED			assetmanagement@emergingafricafroup.com
Web:www.emergingafricagroup.com/emerging-africa-asset-management-limited/, Tel: 08039492594			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
Emerging Africa Money Market Fund	1.00	1.00	8.35%
Emerging Africa Bond Fund	1.03	1.03	7.17%
Emerging Africa Balanced Diversity Fund	1.06	1.06	16.64%
Emerging Africa Eurobond Fund	102.12	102.12	4.06%
FBNQUEST ASSETS MANAGEMENT LIMITED			invest@fbnquest.com
Web: www.fbnquest.com/asset-management; Tel: +234-81 0082 0082			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
FBN Bond Fund	1445.95	1445.95	10.27%
FBN Balanced Fund	192.88	194.25	10.06%
FBN Halal Fund	119.19	119.19	9.20%
FBN Money Market Fund	100.00	100.00	6.21%
FBN Dollar Fund (Retail)	123.56	123.56	4.57%
FBN Nigeria Smart Beta Equity Fund	168.46	170.69	10.69%
FCMB ASSET MANAGEMENT LIMITED			fcmbamhelpdesk@fcmb.com
Web: www.fcmbassetmanagement.com; Tel: +234 1 462 2596			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
Legacy Money Market Fund	1.00	1.00	5.36%
Legacy Debt Fund	3.98	3.98	-0.57%
Legacy Equity Fund	1.89	1.93	8.80%
Legacy USD Bond Fund	1.22	1.22	1.27%
FSDH ASSET MANAGEMENT LTD			coralfunds@fsdhgroup.com
Web: www.fsdhaml.com; Tel: 01-270 4884-5; 01-280 9740-1			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
Coral Balanced Fund	4,150.13	4,216.40	20.74%
Coral Income Fund	3,537.83	3,537.83	6.14%
Coral Money Market Fund	100.00	100.00	6.05%
FSDH Dollar Fund	1.10	1.10	3.59%
INVESTMENT ONE FUNDS MANAGEMENT LTD			enquiries@investment-one.com
Web: www.investment-one.com; Tel: +234 812 992 1045,+234 1 448 8888			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
Abacus Money Market Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
Vantage Balanced Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
Vantage Guaranteed Income Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
Kedari Investment Fund (KIF)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Vantage Equity Income Fund (VEIF) - June Year End	N/A	N/A	N/A
Vantage Dollar Fund (VDF) - June Year End	N/A	N/A	N/A
LOTUS CAPITAL LTD			fincon@lotuscapitallimited.com
Web: www.lotuscapitallimited.com; Tel: +234 1-291 4626 / +234 1-291 4624			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
Lotus Halal Investment Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
Lotus Halal Fixed Income Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
MERISTEM WEALTH MANAGEMENT LTD			info@meristemwealth.com
Web: http://www.meristemwealth.com/funds/ ; Tel: +234 1-4488260			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
Meristem Equity Market Fund	13.78	13.85	16.76%
Meristem Money Market Fund	10.00	10.00	8.25%
NORRENBERGER INVESTMENT AND CAPITAL MANAGEMENT LIMITED			enquiries@norrenberger.com
Web: www.norrenberger.com, Tel: +234 (0) 908 781 2026			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
Norrenberger Islamic Fund (NIF)	101.16	101.16	4.62%
Norrenberger Money Market Fund (NMMF)	100.00	100.00	7.87%
PAC ASSET MANAGEMENT LTD			info@pacassetmanagement.com
Web: www.pacassetmanagement.com/mutualfunds; Tel: +234 1 271 8632			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
PACAM Balanced Fund	1.71	1.74	6.71%
PACAM Fixed Income Fund	11.69	11.71	4.57%
PACAM Money Market Fund	10.00	10.00	6.73%
PACAM Equity Fund	1.55	1.56	9.48%
PACAM EuroBond Fund	116.03	118.78	0.82%
SCM CAPITAL LIMITED			info@scmcapitalng.com
Web: www.scmcapitalng.com; Tel: +234 1-280 2226,+234 1- 280 2227			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
SCM Capital Frontier Fund	133.72	136.55	6.38%
SFS CAPITAL NIGERIA LTD			investments@sfsnigeria.com
Web: www.sfsnigeria.com, Tel: +234 (01) 2801400			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
SFS Fixed Income Fund	1.02	1.02	9.25%
STANBIC IBTC ASSET MANAGEMENT LTD			assetmanagement@stanbicibtc.com
Web: www.stanbicibtcassetmanagement.com; Tel: +234 1 280 1266; 0700 MUTUALFUNDS			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
Stanbic IBTC Balanced Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
Stanbic IBTC Bond Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
Stanbic IBTC Ethical Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
Stanbic IBTC Guaranteed Investment Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
Stanbic IBTC Iman Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
Stanbic IBTC Money Market Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
Stanbic IBTC Nigerian Equity Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
Stanbic IBTC Dollar Fund (USD)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Stanbic IBTC Shariah Fixed Income Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
Stanbic IBTC Enhanced Short-Term Fixed Income Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
UNITED CAPITAL ASSET MANAGEMENT LTD			unitedcapitalplcgroup.com
Web: www.unitedcapitalplcgroup.com; Tel: +234 01-6317876			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
United Capital Equity Fund	0.99	1.01	6.13%
United Capital Balanced Fund	1.44	1.46	5.69%
United Capital Wealth for Women Fund	1.18	1.19	8.24%
United Capital Sukuk Fund	1.10	1.10	2.44%
United Capital Fixed Income Fund	2.00	2.00	2.21%
United Capital Eurobond Fund	124.27	124.27	1.74%
United Capital Money Market Fund	1.00	1.00	5.57%
QUANTUM ZENITH ASSET MANAGEMENT & INVESTMENTS LTD			service@quantumzenithasset.com.ng
Web: www.quantumzenith.com.ng; Tel: +234 1-2784219			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
Zenith Balanced Strategy Fund	13.79	13.93	4.61%
Zenith ESG Impact Fund	16.01	16.19	9.58%
Zenith Income Fund	22.53	22.53	2.34%
Zenith Money Market Fund	1.00	1.00	5.13%
VETIVA FUND MANAGERS LTD			funds@vetiva.com
Web: www.vetiva.com; Tel: +234 1 453 0697			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
Vetiva Banking Exchange Traded Fund	4.30	4.40	7.08%
Vetiva Consumer Goods Exchange Traded Fund	6.13	6.23	4.89%
Vetiva Griffin 30 Exchange Traded Fund	19.10	19.30	7.98%
Vetiva Money Market Fund	1.00	1.00	5.21%
Vetiva Industrial Goods Exchange Traded Fund	21.75	21.95	8.81%
Vetiva S&P Nigeria Sovereign Bond Exchange Traded Fund	166.84	168.84	5.72%

REITS

Fund Name	NAV Per Share	Yield / T-Rtn
SFS REIT	122.16	1.62%
Union Homes REIT	53.16	0.82%

EXCHANGE TRADED FUNDS

Fund Name	Bid Price	Offer Price	Yield / T-Rtn
Lotus Halal Equity Exchange Traded Fund	14.54	14.64	4.06%
SIAML Pension ETF 40	141.98	145.45	7.85%
Stanbic IBTC ETF 30 Fund	111.57	113.98	7.65%
MERGROWTH ETF	22.51	22.61	0.00%
MERVALUE ETF	23.02	23.12	0.00%

INFRASTRUCTURE FUND

Fund Name	NAV Per Share	Yield / T-Rtn
Chapel Hill Denham Nigeria Infrastructure Debt Fund	107.55	12.10%

The value of investments and the income from them may fall as well as rise. Past performance is a guide and not an indication of future returns. Fund prices published in this edition are also available on each fund manager's website and FMAN's website at *www.fman.com.ng.* Fund prices are supplied by the operator of the relevant fund and are published for information purposes only.

IMAGES

Photo Editor Abiodun Ajala
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L-R: Muslims faithful, Alhaji Ibrahim Adigun Osho, Alaji Tajudeen Okoya, and Dr. Akannii Bashorun, at the Sallah prayer held at Idiat Abeke Memorial Central Mosque in Lagos…recently PHOTO: MUBO PETERS



L-R: Beneficiary of anti-malarial materials, Madam Wemimo Ifayemi; Itel Marketing Director, Ms Yang Cui; another beneficiary, Miss Cecilia Ogunniran; and Itel Marketing Manager for West Africa, Mr. Oke Umurhohwo, at the Elbe Pharma and Itel Love Always Corporate Social Responsibility Initiative on the distribution of anti-malarial materials to Agboyi-Ketu community in Lagos…recently



L-R: Head of Prepaid Revenue Management and Metering, Ikeja Electric, Morenikeji Amosun; Chief Finance Officer, Mojec International, Morufu Lasisi; Group Managing Director, Mojec International, Ms. Chantelle Abdul; and Business Manager, Shomolu Business Unit, Ikeja Electric, Mrs. Ayanga Oluyemi, during the commencement of a one-day metering campaign at Shomolu, Lagos…recently



L-R: Head of DLM Corporate Communications, Chinwendu Ohakpougwu; Head of Operations, Sofri Digital Bank, Barnabas Okwudibie; Brand Ambassador, Samuel Perry (BrodaShaggi); and Managing Director, Sofri Digital Bank, Funsho Idowu, at the unveiling of Sofri Digital Bank at DLM headquarters in Ikoyi, Lagos… recently



L-R: Globacom representative, Wole Adedeji; Chairman of WAPtv, Chief Wale Adenuga; and Director-General of NTA, Mallam Yakubu Ibn Muhammed, during the media launch and premiere of the new look Village Headmaster TV series sponsored by Globacom in Abuja…recently



L-R: Senior Business Manager (SBM), Airtel Nigeria, Emmanuel Maji; Primary School Teachers of Yahaya Hamza Primary School, Hadiza Umar Ibrahim and Safiya Sani; Airtel Sales representatives, Ahmed Adegboye and Adebimpe Oyewole, during the presentation of books to students of Yahaya Hamza Primary School in commemoration of the World Book Day in Kaduna…recently



L-R: Chairman, Association of Community Pharmacists of Nigeria (ACPN), Lawrence Ekhator; Co-founder, Digital Encode Limited, Dr. Obadere Peter; Managing Director/CEO, Wellness Healthcare Group and Founder, Pharmacentre, Adetutu Afolabi; National President, Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria (PSN), Prof. Cyril Usifo; Chief Executive Officer, Hazon Holdings, Victor Gbenga Afolabi; Director, Pharmacists Council of Nigeria, Lagos State chapter, Dr. (Mrs.) Ukamaka Okafor; and Chairman, PSN, Lagos State chapter, Iyiola Gbolagade, at the launch of Pharmacentre, an online marketplace for pharma commerce by Wellness Healthcare Group in Lagos… recently



SEEKING SUPPORT FOR HIS LIFE AMBITION...

President Muhammadu Buhari (left) receives Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu at his residence in Abuja...Tuesday night

PHOTO: SUNDAY AGHAEZE

House Passes Anti-terrorism, Witness Protection, Money Laundering Bills, Others

Udora Orizu in Abuja

As part of ongoing efforts to tackle corruption and strengthen the fight against terrorism, members of the House of Representatives yesterday convened a special session and passed five Executive Bills.

The lawmakers in line with President Muhammadu Buhari's appeal, amended the existing Acts to bring them in tandem with international best practices.

The legislations included: "A Bill for an Act to Repeal the Terrorism (Prevention) Act, 2011 and Terrorism (Prevention) (Amendment) Act, 2013, and Enact the Terrorism (Prohibition and Prevention) Bill, 2022.

"A Bill for an Act to Repeal the Money Laundering (Prohibition) Act, 2011 (as amended) and Enact the Money Laundering (Prevention and Prohibition) Bill, 2022 to provide Comprehensive Legal and Institutional Framework for the Prevention and Prohibition of Money Laundering in Nigeria, Establish the Special Control Unit under the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission; and for Related Matters.

"A Bill for an Act to Provide Framework for the Support, Management and Protection of Witnesses Who Provide Information, Evidence or any other Assistance to Law Enforcement Agencies during Inquiries, Investigations or Prosecution; and for Related Matters."

Others are: "A Bill for an Act to Repeal the Public Complaints Commission Act, Cap. P37, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 and Enact the Public Complaints Commission Bill, 2022 for Establishment of the Public Complaints Commission with wide Powers to Inquire into Complaints by Members of Public concerning the Administrative actions of any Public Authority and Companies or their Officials and provide Legal Framework for making Public Interest; and for Related Matters, and A Bill for an Act to Repeal the Public Complaints Commission Act, Cap. P37, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 and Enact the Public Complaints Commission Bill, 2022 for Establishment of the Public Complaints Commission with wide Powers to Inquire into Complaints by Members of Public concerning the Administrative actions of any Public Authority and Companies or their Officials and provide Legal Framework for making Public Interest."

The passage of the bills followed the expeditious consideration and adoption of all clauses as recommended during its Committee of the Whole presided by the Deputy Speaker, Hon Idris Wase.

Presenting the bills' reports, the House Chief Whip, Hon. Tahir Monguno explained that the Anti-terrorism bill provides for an effective, unified and comprehensive legal, regulatory and institutional framework for the detection, prevention, prohibition, prosecution and punishment of acts of terrorism, terrorism financing, proliferation and financing of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in Nigeria.

According to him, all acts of terrorism are prohibited and anybody within or outside Nigeria who knowingly attempts any act of terrorism would be liable to conviction to the punishment prescribed in the bill.

For the Money Laundering Act, Monguno said the provisions makes it mandatory for banks and other financial institutions to report in writing to the Special Control Unit Against Money Laundering under the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, any single transaction or lodgment in excess of N5 million for an individual, and N10 million in the case of a corporate body.

According to the bill's draft, "It provides in Section 11(3) that any financial institution or designated non-financial business and profession that contravenes the provisions of this section commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine of not less than N250,000 and not more than N1 million for each day the contravention continues."

Section 12 prohibits the opening of numbered or anonymous accounts in fictitious names and shell banks. It provides that any person or financial institution that contravenes the provisions of Section 12 subsections (1), (2) and (3) commits and offence and is liable to imprisonment of not less than two years and not more than five years in the case of an individual; and a fine of not less than N10 million but not more than N50 million for a Financial Institution, in addition to the prosecution of the principal officers of the body, and winding up and prohibition of its constitution or incorporation.

For the Witness Protection Bill, he said the proposed legislation seeks to ensure effective and efficient administration of justice in criminal and related proceedings is not prejudiced by the unwillingness of witnesses to give evidence for fear of violence, serious injury, death or for such other reasons.

As stipulated in Clause 2(a–g) of the bill, the main objectives of the bill are to – establish legal and institutional framework to protect witnesses and related persons, with responsibilities for carrying out all administrative duties relating to witnesses and related persons, including providing temporary protection and related services; ensure that the relevant agency takes responsibility for entering into an agreement with the witness on behalf of the state.

The bill also seeks to regulate the procedure and determine the manner in which the provisions of this Bill shall be carried out; designate places to be utilised as places of safety for the purposes of the Witness Protection Programme; and ensure effective use and nationwide supervision of Witness Protection Officers of the relevant agency; ensure that adequate consideration is given to the rights of witnesses; and harmonise existing laws and policies on witness protection and management.

Briefing journalists at the end of the session, the spokesman of the House, Hon. Ben Kalu said the proposed legislation would help Nigeria fight both terrorism and corruption.

Prolonged ASUU Strike Worries Lagos First Lady

Segun James

Lagos State First Lady, Dr. Ibijoke Sanwo-Olu has made an appeal to stakeholders in the education sector to work towards resolving the prolonged industrial action embarked upon by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU).

The First Lady described the situation as a time bomb that must not be allowed to explode. Mrs. Sanwo-Olu who spoke at a special Eid-El-Fitr celebration hosted by the state's first family at the Lagos House, Alausa, Ikeja to commemorate the end of Ramadan said, "our children need to go back to school."

She added: "It is a ticking time bomb when our children sit at home doing nothing. The devil will find work for the idle hands. Our children, those in the universities, sitting down at home for two months is not a plus for us and so anytime we have the opportunity, we as parents, especially mothers, should continue speaking up.

"The federal universities are shut down as a result of the ASUU strike. We plead and plead that God will help us to resolve this issue. I don't feel comfortable that the students are at home and whatever it takes, all hands must be on deck to ensure that they go back to school."

The First Lady also admonished the youth to shun all ungodly, immoral, and bestial acts, just as she urged parents to pay closer attention to issues affecting their children.

"As we bask in the euphoria of this sacred celebration, it is also important to seize the opportunity of this spiritual exercise to admonish our children and youths to shun all ungodly, immoral, and bestial acts.

"As parents and guardians too, we must lead by example and pay closer attention to the totality of what concerns our children and wards. It is okay to intrude into their privacy and ensure that we guide them on the right path.

"More importantly, let us be their true and sincere friends so that we can earn their trust and confidence to discuss anything and everything with us. That way, we have the unique opportunity to put things right," the First Lady said.

She said beyond Ramadan, it was important for people to imbibe and sustain the principles of the holy month which among others include peace, kindness, compassion, and happy co-existence.

According to her, "The Holy Prophet held these principles in high esteem and lived His whole life around them. It is also important for us to allow all these virtues to reflect in our actions, public conduct, and interpersonal relations with everyone around us, long after Ramadan.

"This way, we will improve on the cordial relationship that exists among the various ethnic groups and adherents of different religions in our state."

The celebration was attended by dignitaries which included the Deputy Governor, Lagos State, Dr. Kadri Obafemi Hamzat, and his wife, Oluremi; other top government functionaries from the executive, legislative, and judiciary; political leaders, Islamic clerics, traditional rulers, and members of various organizations.

There was also musical entertainment by Sauti Arewa, Gawat, Alaka Twins and Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu Muslim Artist Group (ABATMAG) led by Queen Seyidat Olohungbebe.

Congestion Fueling Jailbreak, Rights Abuses in Correctional Centres, PCC Warns

Victor Ogunje in Ado Ekiti

Following incessant cases of congestion being experienced at the country's Correctional Centres, the Public Complaints Commission (PCC) has tasked the Chief Judge of Ekiti State, Justice John Adeyeye and the Nigerian Correctional Service (NCS) on the need to tame the menace.

The PCC opined that congestion of Correctional Centres, was often responsible for the twin evils of jail break and human right abuses in the Correctional Centres, especially as related to awaiting trial inmates.

The PCC Commissioner, Ekiti State office, Mr. Kayode Bamisile, said this in Ado Ekiti, yesterday, during his visit to Justice Adeyeye and the Controller, Correctional Centre, Ekiti Command, Mr. Joseph Ojo, in their respective offices.

In his submissions during the separate visits, Bamisile, said the PCC felt disturbed and was seeking partnership with stakeholders to fashion ways to curb infringement of inmates' rights and reduce incessant jailbreak that had brought opprobrium to Nigeria's image globally.

Bamisile lamented that: " Records showed that the Ekiti Correctional Centre has a total of 668 inmates, comprising 524 awaiting trials, 130 convicted, 13 on life sentences and one on death roll.

"Ordinarily, this centre shouldn't contain more than 323 inmates. Let me express here that this Commission would collaborate with relevant government functionaries to make sure that we decongest this centre," Bamisile stated.

In his response, the Chief Judge, Justice Adeyeye , hinged the preponderance of prisons' congestion in the country on poor logistics hitting the NCC, causing delay in conveying the accused persons to courts for speedy trial.

Justice Adeyeye said: "Let me appreciate the interest of the PCC in Prisons' congestion that was majorly caused by many factors, but none of the factors was the making of the Judiciary.

"The largest number of inmates at the Correctional Centres were those awaiting trials. Some cases are genuinely pended in courts, because sometimes, the accused persons would not get counsels to defend them. They must be defended based on their choices, hence, such cases would have to be adjourned.

"Again, there was no timeframe for a case to last, it may last as long as it remains unresolved. No case can be struck out at will, the procedures must be followed especially capital offences."

Justice Adeyeye added that the Judiciary visited the Ekiti Correctional Centre twice annually, to review cases of awaiting trial inmates, saying this was part of the ways judiciary had been helping in decongesting the centres.

Also, the Controller, Correctional Centre, Ekiti Command, Mr. Ojo, urged the PCC to encourage judiciary to embrace non-custodial sentencing, to decongest the various centres in the country.

Ojo added that though, the Ekiti correctional centre was already filled beyond its capacity, he restated that adequate feeding, clothing, healthcare and required rehabilitations were still being made for the inmates.

NEWS



FINAL FAREWELL TO TAMUNO'S FATHER...

L-R: Senator George Sekibo; Judith Amaechi; Minister for Transportation, Rotimi Amaechi; Nigeria's High Commissioner to Jamaica, Ambassador Maureen Tamuno, and Tonye Cole, at Tamuno's father's burial in Rivers State...recently

At Presidential Declaration, Fayemi Kicks against Consensus

Akpabio, Oshiomhole also indicate interests, unveil agenda

Adedayo Akinwale in Abuja and **Okon Bassey** in Uyo

Ahead of the May 30 presidential primary of the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC), the Governor of Ekiti State, Dr. Kayode Fayemi, yesterday, formally declared his presidential bid and immediately kicked against any consensus arrangement to elect the standard bearer of the party.

This is as the Minister for Niger Delta, Godswill Akpabio and a former National Chairman of the APC, Adams Oshiomhole, have also indicated interests in the presidency and seized the occasion to unveil their agenda for the country.

However, Fayemi, who noted that it would be better for the ruling party to choose either direct or indirect mode of primary, which he said would give party members a say in electing the standard bearer of the party, also told of how he planned to consolidate on the achievements of the APC administration, while also addressing the noticeable gaps.

"Compatriots, it is in the spirit of this abiding faith in our country and the promise of its unfinished greatness that I stand before you today, in total humility and with all sense of responsibility, to solemnly declare to all our party cadres and Nigerians at large, my decision to accept for my name to be put forward for consideration by the APC leadership and membership as the party's standard bearer in the upcoming contest for a successor to His Excellency, President Muhammadu Buhari.

"This is not a decision, which I have taken lightly. Indeed, to arrive at this point, I carried out a long and deep self-introspection with the help of close family, friends, and colleagues, including my wife and devoted partner, Erelu Bisi Fayemi. I have also traversed the length and breadth of our country to consult and explore with our esteemed elder statesmen and women, traditional rulers, a cross section of party leaders and rank and file members, and various non-partisan leaders of thought and opinion.

"After a careful consideration of where we are as a nation and the many perspectives, which are emerging about the challenges, old and new, which we must gird our loins to tackle and transcend, I am convinced that my entry into the race to bear the standard of the APC will offer our members and Nigerians the opportunity to examine competing visions for national rebirth in the best interest of our country.

"And it is on the foundation of a clear vision accompanied by a carefully thought out programme of action that I present my candidature. I do so fully convinced on the basis of what I have experienced, heard, and seen about the demands of the times and the aspirations of our people that the agenda that I am proposing for our country is one which will find favour with APC members and win resounding traction with the generality of Nigerians," Fayemi said.

On his part, Akpabio, who was governor of Akwa Ibom State, said he was coming to unite Nigeria and rescue the country from sinking and to achieve this, he said he was declaring intention to seek the nomination of his party to become the next president of the country come 2023.

Akpabio pointed out that his wealth of experience as governor, senator and as a minister qualified him to be the president of the country, promised not to allow Nigeria sink, and that, he would bring restoration, dignity, respect and succour to Nigerians.

The presidential aspirant said he would restore the days of glory experienced in Akwa Ibom to the country, stressing that as a minister some 88 road projects, which would have been abandoned were completed by contractors.

"You have heard a lot of declaration but this one is uncommon. It is not only a message of hope, positive continuity and of the Egyptians you see today, you will see no more. It is a message of restoration, of your dignity, respect in the ECOWAS region and beyond. I am determined not to let our nation sink but drink from the deep well of experiences I have from service. I seek your nomination to become your President come 2023," Akpabio said.

Also, at his declaration ceremony, Oshiomhole promised not to lament the imperfections in the country if elected the president in 2023, but put an end to the perennial strike action by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), while ensuring that the academic calendar of tertiary institutions in the country run smoothly.

Oshiomhole, who disclosed this yesterday in Abuja while declaring his interest to contest for president in 2023, stressed that going by the provisions of the country's constitution, President Muhammadu Buhari would vacate the office on May 29, 2023, hence, his decision to replace him as the president of the country.

"I stand here this afternoon for one purpose, to formally declare that, I, Adams Aliyu Oshiomhole, hereby declare with confidence my desire to contest for the office of the president of the federal Republic of Nigeria on the platform of a party that we co-founded, All Progressives Congress (APC).

"The task before us is not for us to continue to lament the imperfections in our country. The task before us is to find the courage and stand up and be counted in our determination to reposition our Country to be the giant of our continent, so that it can provide prosperity for all Nigerians," he said.

Edo, Firm Boost Capacity of Youths on Directing, Cinematography, Others

The Edo State Government through the state's skills development agency, EdoJobs has trained and graduated 26 youths on movie production and other related vocational skills.

A statement yesterday revealed that the five-day intensive training programme, aimed at creating a pool of skilled talents for job opportunities in the creative industry, was organised in partnership with a French company, LAFAAAC La Femis.

The youths were trained in digital cinematography, scripting and directing, production management, still photography, editing and sound design and production, among others.

Addressing journalists shortly after the closing ceremony of the programme, the Managing Director of EdoJobs, Mrs. Ukinebo Dare said the programme was a part of efforts to equip youths in the state with the right skillset to thrive in the creative industry.

Dare noted, "While they were on this training, they were able to shoot three short clips that they can use to advertise themselves and their skills. We are looking forward to hearing amazing new things from these Edojobbers.

"We have 26 of them that graduated today and the youngest of them is an actress officially because she acted in one of the movies and she did an amazing thing today.

"We are happy to say that our talents from young to old participated in this programme and it was a very exciting experience."

She further stated, "We started with 45 students and 26 of them are graduating today because the process is rigorous and that's a part of it. We want to see those who are the most serious because now we are going to the next stage for them to be on movie sets or a different programme that they can use to earn money.

"The smallest student here is seven years old and we are very happy that we have been able to build talent from young to old. We are proud of them."

One of the facilitators, Theo Belnou, said he was very impressed with the performance from the students throughout the training programme, hailing the government for the programme.

One of the graduating students, Precious Iyekeroretin, said her creative skill has improved from the training during the programme, noting that she was able to produce a comedy skit.

Iyekeroretin commended the state government for facilitating the programme which created an opportunity for them to enhance their creativity.

Foundation Seeks Support to Prosecute Perpetrators of Gender-based Violence

Hammed Shittu in Ilorin

As part of efforts to prevent and eliminate violence against women, a call has gone to the judiciary arm of government to prioritise the prosecution of perpetrators of gender based violence(GBV) in the country.

In this regard, they stressed the need for concerted efforts to be put in place to create special courts to entertain GBV cases in order to ensure swift dispensation of justice.

The Executive Director, Rising Child Foundation, Mrs. Taibat Hussein made the call in Ilorin, Kwara state, yesterday, during a media briefing to herald the launch of the Kwara GBV project in the state.

According to her, "Cases of GBV abound in every part of the country. In fact, due to the prevalence of violence against women and girls in Nigeria, the federal government was in 2020, forced by activists, to declare a state of emergency on GBV and was after series of cases of violence against women sparked protests on and offline."

She added, "Almost every day, we read or hear stories of victims and survivors of GBV in the media.

"From the case of Barakat Bello, a 19-year-old girl who was gang-raped and murdered in Ibadan, Oyo State, Uwa Omozuwa who was raped inside a church in Benin, Edo State and subsequently died as a result of the brutal attack, to Hiny Umoren, a 26-year-old job-seeking lady who was murdered by a man who had invited her for a job interview in Uyo, Akwa-Ibom.

"Also, recently, the Nigerian media space was awash with news of the death of a popular gospel singer, Osinachi, who reportedly died after enduring a series of physical assaults from her husband."

Hussein added that, "As part of the project of the foundation, we shall organise a broad-based training for 25 selected young ladies that will be regarded as GBV champions.

"They will be educated on GBV and its implications on the society, trained on how to use social media – majorly Twitter – to advocate GBV-related issues, and what they can do to curb the spread of GBV in their respective communities.

"At the end of the training, we will create a Kwara Gender Action Group that will comprise participants at the training.

"The group will work in local communities across Kwara to create awareness on GBV issues, track and report cases of violent abuse against women, and advocate for redress for victims and punishment for the offenders.

"Our GBV champions will also carry out sustained awareness on GBV across senior secondary schools in Kwara State while creating a pipeline for safe reportage of GBV cases."



53RD ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING...

L-R: The Honorary Treasurer of the Nigeria-Britain Association (N-BA), Mr. Sola Oyetayo; Vice President, N-BA, Mrs. Lucy Pearson; President, N-BA, Ms. Abimbola Okoya; and Honorary Secretary, Mr. Ademola Sanya, during the 53rd Annual General Meeting of the Association in Lagos...recently

Osinbajo Holds Closed Door Meeting with Ganduje after Attending Kano's Sallah Durbar

Ibrahim Shuaibu in Kano

Vice-President Yemi Osinbajo and the Governor of Kano State, Abdullahi Umar Ganduje, late Tuesday evening, held a closed door meeting at the VIP wing of Malam Aminu Kano International Airport, minutes before the vice-president's departure.

Osinbajo attended the traditional Sallah horse riding of Hawan Daushe at the Emir of Kano's palace.

The meeting lasted for about 15 minutes before the vice-president left town.

There was, however, tight security at the airport during the arrival and departure of the Osinbajo, who left Kano at about 8pm.

Osinbajo described the Hawan Daushe Sallah tradition as a fantastic spectacle, full of colour, fun and pageantry.

A visibly excited Osinbajo shared Kano's old adage that, "Kanon Dabo, Mai Dala da Goron Dutse", adding: "This is exciting and I am very happy to be here."

Daushe is practiced on the second day of Eid-el-Fitri, which is considered the most impressive, most colorful and most interesting part of the Durbar celebrations.

It is popularly referred to as "The Royal Exhibition of Garments and Regalia," with thousands of horse riders parading to portray the emirate's rich traditions.

The programme started around 4pm, when the emir left his palace in a colourful procession enroute to Kofar Arewa, Daneji, Mandawari, Galadanchi, Diso, Chiranchi, Gudindi, and Tudun Wazirchi, then back to the palace.

The emir received homage from all traditional title holders, including district heads, village heads and ward heads.

The grand event was graced by people from different states in Nigeria and many from other countries of the world, including the diplomatic community.

Atedo Peterside Endorses SDP, Says Party's Manifesto Good for Nigeria

Dike Onwuamaeze

The President of the ANAP Foundation and Founder of Stanbic IBTC, Mr. Atedo Peterside has expressed support for the Social Democratic Party (SDP).

The economist yesterday listed seven points he considered before deciding to throw his weight behind the SDP.

He listed the points to include the party's manifesto and how appropriate it was for Nigeria at this time; the quality of the party's national leadership; his own adjudged acceptability at the local/ward level of the party; the commitment and willingness of the party leadership to practise internal democracy.

In addition, he said he considered if the party's doors truly open to Nigerian youths who wish to claim their country back and if it is a place where he feels truly welcome?

In an opinion article published in THISDAY yesterday, Atedo had written that he was excited at the possibility of many more Nigerian youths getting politically active between now and the 2023 general elections and what that portends for Nigeria.

"GoNigeria is an initiative of Anap Foundation. It started at the end of 2021 with 18 Advocates drawn from the 6 geopolitical zones. GoNigeria is a non-profit, non-partisan Movement dedicated to building a new voice for young people in Nigeria. It will remain true to its ideals.

"An increasingly large number of youths have since come back to me, to say that they have registered online with the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and done their biometrics and so they expect to pick up their PVCs soon.

"Others have complained about obstacles and frustrations surrounding biometric capture (in particular) at some INEC Centres; this should be monitored and escalated as necessary. Some other youths however stress that they want to go beyond collection of PVCs and actually get involved in party politics, but outside of the All Progressives Congress (APC) and the People's Democratic Party (PDP).

"They argue that choosing between the two large political parties is akin to a choice between "the devil and the deep blue sea" (my sincere apologies to the APC/PDP members who are GoNigeria Advocates and the many other good people in APC/PDP who are themselves victims of Godfatherism).

"Most Nigerians are deeply concerned about the state of our economy (high inflation and high unemployment) and also fear for their lives on account of the worsening security situation. Sadly, the poor economy aggravates the security situation and vice versa. It is also impossible to separate economics from politics. Perhaps many of us mistakenly concentrated on the economy for too long?"

WITH OVER N30BN FROM SALE OF FORMS, APC GETS FIRE POWER FOR 2023 ELECTIONS

the ruling party raking in over N30 billion, it would be going into the election from a position of strength against the main opposition Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), which is working hard to take power from APC.

National Chairman of APC, Senator Abdullahi Adamu, recently justified the high cost of the party's nominations forms, saying the party has no regrets whatsoever fixing the presidential form for N100 million. Adamu explained that APC came up with the idea to discourage spoilers and unserious contenders from the race.

He said the party did its homework before arriving at the amount, adding that the cost has to be high because of the need to raise sufficient funds to conduct primaries and successfully prosecute the coming elections.

Adamu said the party was aware that some of the aspirants were not serious contenders but mere jesters out to cause problems.

A source told THISDAY that about 50 per cent of the presidential aspirants might have paid the mandatory fees and collected the forms, while others were believed to be looking for money to beat the deadlines.

The party had in a statement by its National Publicity Secretary, Felix Morka, extended the time for the sale of expression of interest and nomination forms for the 2023 general election to May 10 due to what an insider attributed to the "long holiday."

In a revised timetable released by the party's National Organising Secretary, Sulaiman Argungu, APC said the last day for the submission of completed forms and accompanying documents would now be May 11.

The Jigawa State governor was said to have told APC stakeholders in Dutse on Tuesday, "I will join the presidential race since everyone knows I'm a highly qualified person to do the job." He reportedly said he was pressurised to contest for the presidential office by his colleagues.

There are also indications that the Kebbi State governor, Atiku Bagudu, may declare his interest in the presidency and pick his form soon.

Aig-Imoukhuede Foundation Holds Inaugural Leadership Council Meeting

Peter Uzoho

The inaugural meeting of the Leadership Council of the Aig-Imoukhuede Foundation held recently under the chairmanship of a former President, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo.

The Aig-Imoukhuede Foundation was incorporated in 2020 to consolidate the philanthropic activities of Aigboje and Ofovwe Aig-Imoukhuede, including the activities of entities such as the Africa Initiative for Governance and the Aig-Imoukhuede Institute.

According to a statement made available to THISDAY yesterday, the meeting marked the dissolution of the former Advisory Panel of the Africa Initiative of Governance, which had been in place since 2017 and the inauguration of the new leadership council, to provide strategic direction and leadership to the board of trustees the Foundation in an advisory capacity.

Members of the Leadership Council include experts and professionals with a wealth of experience in public policy, governance, academia, journalism, and healthcare.

In addition to Obasanjo, the statement listed other council members to include Mr. Olusegun Adeniyi, Chairman, Editorial Board of THISDAY Newspapers; Dr. Akudo Anyanwu, Vice President Texas Biomedical Research Institute; Dr. Dere Awosika, former Permanent Secretary and Chairperson Access Bank Plc; Mrs. Yemisi Ayeni, former Managing Director Shell Nigeria Closed Pension Fund Administrator; and Mr. Ernest Ebi, former Deputy Governor Central Bank of Nigeria.

Others included Dr. Uzodinma Iweala, award winning author and CEO Africa Centre New York; Prof. Attahiru Jega, Emeritus Professor and former Chairman INEC; Dr. Omobola Johnson, former Minister of Communication Technology and Senior Partner TLcom Capital; Mr. Tunde Kehinde, Founder/ CEO Lidya; Mrs. Fola Laoye, Founder/ CEO Iwosan Investments Limited; Mr. Abubakar Mahmoud, Chairman NGX Exchange and Partner Dikko and Mahmoud; Dr. Andrew Nevin, Chief Economist & Partner PWC, and Mr. Ken Offori-Atta, Ghanaian Minister for Finance and Economic Planning.

Members of the council also include Prof. Enase Okonedo, Vice-Chancellor Pan Atlantic University; Dr. Zainab Usman, Director, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace Washington and Dr Jeya Wilson, former Chair, Independent Oversight Committee World Health Organisation.

Giving his opening remarks at the meeting, Obasanjo was quoted to have praised the objectives of the Foundation and the quality of people who had been called to serve on the Council.

He said: "This group is made up entirely of high achievers and I can say, without reservation, that I have never before been called to chair a group of this calibre. Such a gathering of people who have a track record of getting things done is a challenge because expectations will be high about the results that we produce. It presents an opportunity for us to work collectively to effect real change that will benefit our nation."

Chairman of the Aig-Imoukhuede Foundation, Aigboje Aig-Imoukhuede, expressed appreciation to members of the Leadership Council for their presence at the inaugural meeting and their support of the work of the Foundation.

He added: "Our theory of change is that an efficient and effective public sector will lead to a better Nigeria, with better socio-economic outcomes for all citizens. We are therefore committed to working with the civil service, supporting its reform efforts with funding and technical assistance and building the capacity of the public sector workforce. We also seek to achieve improved access to quality primary healthcare."

Also present at the meeting were Mrs. Ofovwe Aig-Imoukhuede, the Executive Vice- Chair of the Aig-Imoukhuede Foundation and Dr. Herbert Wigwe, Trustee of the Aig-Imoukhuede Foundation and Group Managing Director, Access Holdings Plc.

The Chairman of the Foundation further shared its vision to create a public sector that would be an enabler for the country's growth and development and discussed the impact that the Foundation entities have started to make on the country.

This included funding and driving the development of the Federal Civil Service Strategy and Implementation Plan (FCSSIP) 2017-2020, which outlined the country's civil service reform priorities and providing technical assistance for the development of the successor plan, which would run until 2025.

"The Foundation has also been supporting some of the key priority areas identified in the plans including digitalising the work of the civil service. The digitalisation of the Office of the Head of the Civil Service, is being funded by the Aig-Imoukhuede Foundation and will be completed by the first quarter of 2023.

NEWS

Igbo 'll Feel Not Wanted in Nigeria if 2023 Presidency Eludes them, Say Elders

Onyebuchi Ezigbo in Abuja

Elders from the South East zone, under the auspices of the Igbo Elders Consultative Forum (IECF), has said that the Igbos will feel greatly marginalised and denied of their citizenship right if the presidency of the country eludes the Igbos in 2023 election.

The elders warned that Nigeria risks unimaginable social, economic and political consequences and that the Igbos may be forced to seek comfort outside of the country.

The council also warned against attempt to sabotage the Igbo interest by any Igbo politician, no matter how highly place, saying that the Igbo elders will publicly pronounce a curse on such a person and unborn generation.

Speaking at a press conference in Abuja yesterday, former governor of Anambra state and leaders of elders council, Chief Chukwuemeka Ezeife, said that the group is aware of a conspiracy to again scheme the Igbos out of contention in their quest to produce the next president of Nigeria.

Ezeife lamented that the South-east had suffered exclusion under the present government which he said had tried hard to push the Igbos out of the country.

"And now we hear of conspiracy to negate the constitutional provisions of the parties, especially the PDP as far as zoning of offices and positions in it's constitution is concessioned. We have been zoning and rotating the presidency and now that it is the turn of the Igbos, all kinds of things are being said.

"We do not want to leave this country as a matter of choice because one thing we reject totally is being slaves.

If the 2023 presidential election eludes us, we will take it that the rest of Nigeria has denied us citizenship right in Nigeria. We will be left with no choice than to look for how to find comfort outside Nigeria," he said.



BSN'S BOARD MEETING…

L-R: A Supreme Court Judge, Justice John Okoro; Former Head of State and Patron of The Bible Society of Nigeria (BSN), Gen. Dr. Yakubu Gowon; President & Board Chairman of BSN, Bishop Dr. Timothy Banwo, and the General Secretary/CEO of BSN, Pastor Samuel Sanusi at the Divine Service/Formal opening of The Society's 55th National Board Meeting at All Saints Church, Wuse Zone 5, Abuja...recently

Yewa Monarchs Begged Tinubu to Release Me for Ogun West, Says Lagos Senator

James Sowole in Abeokuta

The Senator Representing the Lagos West, Senator Solomon Olamilekan Adeola, who is now seeking election to Ogun West Senatorial District, yesterday said that it took the intervention of traditional rulers in Yewaland, before the National Leader of All Progressives Congress (APC) Alhaji Bola Tinubu, could release him to contest in Ogun State.

Adeola, popularly called Yayi, disclosed this in his remark after a political group within the APC, West-2-West for DA Movement, presented a senatorial expression of interest and nomination form, which they purchased for him.

The Senator, who betrayed emotion, at the ceremony held at his country home in Ilaro, Yewa Local Government, Ogun State.

The presentation of the form was witnessed by leaders of the APC in Ogun West Senatorial District, including former Chairman, Ogun-Oshun River Basin Development Authority, Mrs. Iyabo Matilda Apampa; former Chairman of Ogun State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB), Muftau Ajibola; Chairman, Ogun State House of Assembly Service Commission, Waliu Taiwo; Commissioner for Budget and Planning, Olaoluwa Olabimtan.

Again, Customs Patrol Vehicle Crushes One to Death, Injures three Others in Katsina

Francis Sardauna in Katsina

The Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) patrol vehicle, yesterday crushed one person to death and left three others with varying degrees of injuries along Katsina-Jibia highway, Katsina state.

The incident occurred at Natsinta Barracks at about 3: 30pm when the custom officers were chasing a Peugeot Wagon vehicle suspected to be conveying smuggled items from the border town to Katsina.

When THISDAY visited the scene of the incident, it was observed that the slain disabled person was crushed into pieces while those who sustained injuries were rushed to a yet-to-be identified hospital in Katsina metropolitan area.

The deceased was riding on a motorcycle to Katsina town from Jibia when the vehicle that was being chased by the customs officers crushed him to death.

A similar incident occurred in August, 2021, where a patrol vehicle of the NCS veered off the road in Jibia while chasing a vehicle suspected to be conveying smuggled items, killing 10 people and injuring 15 others.

Lalong's Peace Project in Plateau Remains Laudable, Says Senator

Seriki Adinoyi in Jos

The Senator Representing Plateau South in the National Assembly, Professor Nora Dadu'ut, has congratulated the Plateau State Governor, Mr. Simon Lalong, on his 59th birthday anniversary, describing him as a rare gem whose peace project on the Plateau is laudable.

Dadu'ut said that despite some dots of attacks here and there, the governor remained an architect of the current peace being enjoyed in the state.

She said: "I want to use this opportunity to thank his Excellency, Governor Simon Lalong, for his support, and to say that I will always support his political aspiration. I remain grateful to him for all the support I enjoy from him at all times."

In a statement that was personally signed by her, the senator described Governor Lalong as a gentleman and a visionary leader who has over time shown his unalloyed commitment to the betterment of his people and has continued to lead as a true democrat.

Lawmakers Call on Buhari to Save Nigeria from Precarious Security Situation

Udora Orizu in Abuja

Members of the House of Representatives, at the plenary yesterday called on President Muhammadu Buhari to take every measure to save Nigerians from the present precarious security situation.

The lawmakers call followed the adoption to the amendment by the Deputy Minority Leader, Hon. Toby Okechukwu to a motion of urgent national importance sponsored by, Hon. Abdullahi Salame on the need to set up a national task force to address prevalent insecurity in Nigeria.

Salame had while moving the motion, prayed that the House will urge Mr. President as a matter of urgency to set up a National Task Force on national insecurity to specifically address rampant cases of banditry, insurgency and kidnapping.

He also prayed that the House will urge Mr. President to direct the National Task Force to ensure maximum synergy collaboration and coordination among all relevant security intelligence and enforcement institutions in ensuring collective fight against kidnapping, banditry of insurgency in Nigeria.

Contributing, the Deputy Speaker, Hon. Idris Wase was of the view that instead of creating a task force, the direction to move is to rather ensure they hold those people who are responsible accountable.

He said: "We are trying to collapse agencies and today we are asking for special task force. Even if you want to achieve that it can't come through motion, it has to come through bill. The institutions of security are established either by the constitution and they have their respective role."

2023: Mammoth Crowd as Women Hold Rally for Yahaya Bello in Ondo

Again, women in their numbers, converged on Akure, the capital of Ondo State, to demonstrate their support for the candidacy of Governor Yahaya Bello of Kogi State in the 2023 presidential election.

The women, who defied the heavy rain, yesterday morning, took to the streets, chanting solidarity songs and carrying various placards with inscriptions such as "Yahaya Bello, the best man for the job", "We're not interested in zoning, this is one Nigeria", and "Yahaya Bello, hero of women inclusion", among others.

The women, members of over 700 groups across Nigeria, in the massive rally, tagged, "South West Mega Women Rally for Yahaya Bello", said anyone who had the interest of Nigeria at heart would not be drumming the beats of zoning, but pray to God to give the country the best leader at this crucial point in history.

According to them, "regardless of what political oppressors might have fed the public", it is an incontrovertible fact that Governor Bello had the capacity to build on President Muhammadu Buhari's successes and tackle all challenges confronting Nigeria, headlong.

The women cut across different key sectors and professions such as Banking, Media, Nollywood, medical practice, including frontline entrepreneurs, market leaders, engineers and religious groups, among others.

The leader of the South-west market movement for Yahaya Bello, National Vice President, Iyaloja of Nigeria, Princess Nike Aroloye, said the women of Nigeria were already looking beyond the primaries of the two parties.

"We already see the ticket with Yahaya Bello. Once he gets it, we are marching straight to Aso Rock. All my market women are ready to support him. We will go everywhere for this cause. He has said we are important.

Court Jails Pastor for Life for Defiling Friend's Daughters

Wale Igbintade

An Ikeja Domestic Violence and Sexual Offences Court, yesterday, convicted and sentenced, Pastor Michael Oliseh, to life imprisonment for raping his friend's 12-year-old twin daughters.

Justice Abiola Soladoye in her judgment described the 54-year-old assistant pastor of the Anointed Chosen Vessel Ministry, Okota, Lagos, as a "serial rapist" who took delight in defiling his friend's daughters.

The judge held that the prosecution had convincingly proved the charges of defilement against Oliseh beyond any reasonable doubt.

The judge further held that the convict's action is unbecoming of a pastor, very disloyal and untrustworthy for abusing daughters put in his care.

She added that the convict should have his name entered in the Sex Offenders Register of the Lagos State Government.

Soladoye also berated the parents of the victims for lack of discipline by sending the children to stay with the convict.

The judge held that "the testimony of the defendant portrayed him as a serial rapist who took turns to defile the survivors.

"What a disloyal and untrustworthy pastor, who shamelessly and audaciously had sexual intercourse with his friend's children who were entrusted in his care.

"His conduct is unbecoming of a pastor.

"Having been found guilty as charged with the two offences, the defendant is hereby sentenced to life imprisonment."

Zulum Gets N50m from 179 Associations to Purchase Nomination Form

Michael Olugbode in Maiduguri

Borno State Governor, Professor Babagana Zulum, has been presented with a cheque of N50 million by 179 clubs, associations and professional bodies to purchase his expression of interest and nomination forms for re-election.

The associations with thousands of members had weeks ago begun to gather contributions from members and made public an account number to which money should be deposited.

Presenting the N50 million cheque, the Spokesperson of the Coalition, Mr. Awaji Bukar, said that the contributions, some of which came from as low as N1,000 by some of their members, was to raise the fund for the purchase of All Progressives Congress (APC)'s governor expression of interest and nomination form as a show of their appreciation to Governor Zulum for his purposeful leadership to the good people of Borno State.

He disclosed that the donations came from many registered members of over 179 clubs, associations and professional bodies across the state, stating that Zulum administration has, in three years, recorded more than 600 capital projects and introduced far reaching policies and programmes that include ongoing resettlement of internally displaced persons and refugees in more than 10,000 newly built houses and thousands of rehabilitated homes.

NEWSXTRA

Students in Edo Protest ASUU Strike, Ask FG to Intervene

Adibe Emenyonu in Benin City

Students from the various institutions of higher learning in Edo State yesterday, protested the continued strike by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU).

The protest caused a major chaotic traffic situation in several parts of Benin City, the state capital for several hours as the students urged the federal government to intervene, vowing to continue a daily stay in the city centre until their demands are met.

The students, who mobilised themselves from University of Benin (UNIBEN), Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma (AAU), Federal Polytechnic Auchi, carried placards with various inscriptions and blocked the Oba Ovonramwen Square popularly called Ring Road to express their grievances which resulted in traffic jams around the axis, including Akpakpava, mission road.

Speaking on the issue, National Vice President, Special Duties of the National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS) Idiahi Thomas, faulted Nigeria's educational sector, saying: "Our leaders have bastardised it, and, as it is, Nigerian students are at home and yet the government officials are busy purchasing forms for over N100 million,an amount presidents of other countries cannot earn constitutionally throughout their own tenure. If the federal government does not want us to remain here, they know obviously what to do. You are taking a course of four years to five years, now they spend six to seven years. Post Graduate students who are supposed to spend 18 months are spending two to three years and some get frustrated and abandon them."

A student Union leader from Ekpoma Abumere Joseph said: "We are tired of staying at home, for the past three months we have not attended classes. I was supposed to graduate in April but as it is now, I don't know when I will graduate. I have been in one level for close to two years, so we are tired."

On his part, the President, Students Union Government (SUG) of UNIBEN, Foster Amadin said the strike is "suffocating the dreams of Nigerian students while the government is going about their electoral processes and the striking lecturers are going about their individual businesses."



PROMOTING SAFETY AND HEALTH…

L-R: Assistant Manager, Health, Safety and Environment (HSE), Nigerian Social Insurance Trust Fund(NSITF), Esek Julius; Manager, HSE, Kemi Adekeye; Principal Manager, Claims & Compensation, Ijeoma Akiri; Assistant General Manager/Branch Manager, Apapa, Omotayo Daniel; Principal Manager, Enforcement, Eyoro Anthonia, and Manager, HSE, Ogosi Chukwuma, during NSITF's health and safety event in Lagos…recently

74 Anambra PDP Aspirants Protest Non-conduct of Three-man Delegate Election

David-Chyddy Eleke in Awka

Seventy-four aspirants for National and State Assembly seats in the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) have lamented the inability of the party's panel to hold election for three-man delegate last weekend.

The three-man delegate election, which was scheduled for 30th of April was later shifted to 1st of May by the Hon Jibrin Ahmed-led panel.

The election, however, failed to hold on the rescheduled date when it was discovered that the panel members came to hold the election without the original result sheet.

Meanwhile, the aspirants have lamented their fate in the face of the inability of the panel to hold the election, saying it will hamper their participation in the 2023 general elections.

The state and national assembly aspirants, 74 of them, who converged on the PDP secretariat in Awka, addressed a press conference, calling on the national leadership of the party to quickly conduct the ad hoc delegates election.

House Wades into Arrest, Detention of Dagogo on Wike's Order

Udora Orizu in Abuja

The leadership of the House of Representatives, at the resumption of plenary, yesterday resolved to wade into the arrest and continuous detention of Rivers federal lawmaker Hon. Farah Dagogo in police custody.

Dagogo, who was arrested on the orders of the Rivers State Governor, Nyesom Wike, is one of the aspirants for the governorship ticket of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in the state.

The Special Assistant to the Governor, Kelvin Ebiri, in a statement last week, had said Dagogo was declared wanted for hiring cultists to attack the PDP secretariat in Port Harcourt.

The statement reads: "The governor has hereby directed the Rivers State Police Command to arrest Hon. Farah Dagogo for hiring cultists, who stormed the PDP secretariat in Port Harcourt and disrupted the screening of aspirants for various elective positions. The police must, as a matter of urgency, arrest Farah Dagogo, wherever he is, and must be made to face prosecution."

A day after he was declared wanted, Dagogo was arrested by the state government and had since be remanded in police custody by a magistrate court in Port Harcourt. The lawmaker was reportedly been transferred to a hospital yesterday after complaining of ailment.

Moving a motion of urgent public importance, Hon. Chisom Dike (APC, Rivers) called for an action into what he described as 'unlawful detention of the lawmaker'.

Interjecting, the Leader of the PDP caucus, Hon. Kingsley Chinda (Rivers) citing Order 9, subsection 5 of standing rules of the House, urged the House to step down the matter because it's not in tandem with its rules, suggesting that the caucus should meet the leadership of the house on how to manage the issue.

Food Security: FG Okays 200 Youths for Training in Israel, Morocco

James Emejo in Abuja

The National Agricultural Lands Development Authority (NALDA) yesterday handed out travel documents to 200 young farmers to proceed on a capacity building trip on crop production and animal husbandry in Israel and Morocco.

The Executive Secretary of NALDA, Prince Paul Ikonne, at the ceremony, said the gesture was a continuation of the National Young Farmers Scheme (NYFS) which was recently inaugurated by President Muhammadu Buhari.

He said the capacity building initiative was aimed at making agriculture more attractive to the youths, adding that it will also expose and equip them on modern agriculture and agribusiness practices.

This, Ikonne said, would hopefully lead to massive food production to meet domestic consumption as well as for export.

Buhari, had during the inauguration of the NYFS, directed the authority to ensure the youths are actively involved in food production.

The scheme targeted 1,000 farmers from each of the 774 Local Government Areas, to create 774,000 direct employment annually.

Ekiti APC Leaders Attacked for Endorsing Lawmaker's Second Term Bid

Victor Ogunje in Ado Ekiti

Suspected thugs yesterday allegedly launched attack on some leaders of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in Ekiti West Local Government Area of Ekiti State over the decision to affirm the second term bid of a member of the state House of Assembly, Hon Tajudeen Akingbolu.

The leaders, led by former state APC Chairman, Chief Jide Awe, and other topnotches, were at a meeting held in Erinjiyan Ekiti in the council area when the suspected political thugs attacked them.

Other leaders at the event were Chairman of the Ekiti West LGA, Hon. Sedan Okere; former Deputy Speaker, state House of Assembly, Hon. Gbenga Odebunmi; former Chairman of Ekiti West LGA, Otunba Akin Oluwadare, and others.

However, Akingbolu, who related the attack to journalists, had alleged that the thugs were allegedly being prodded by one of the contestants for the Assembly seat and former council area chairman, who was said to be aggrieved over the endorsement.

Recounting how the attack happened, Akingbolu, currently representing Ekiti West constituency 1 in the Assembly, said the meeting, which started at 10a.m., was orderly and hitch-free until 10.30a.m., when Otunba Akin Oluwadare read the communique issued by the elders.

Akingbolu said: "Immediately it was announced that the leadership of the constituency had settled for Ward 01 and adopted me, the thugs, who came in chartered bus and appeared in uniform customized t-shirt, unleashed terror on them.

Nweke Jnr Joins Enugu Governorship Race on APGA Platform

Sunday Okobi

Former Nigerian Minister of Information, Mr. Frank Nweke Jr., has formerly been cleared to contest for the Enugu State governorship on the platform of the All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA).

In an official statement signed by the party Secretary, Screening Committee 2022, Sly Ezeokenwa, the party said the development was sequel to clearance from the Presidential and Governorship Screening Committee duly appointed by the National Working Committee (NWC) of the party, following the screening of prospective aspirants in pursuant to the provisions of Paragraph 16 (3), chapter 3 of the APGA Electoral Guidelines for the 2022 primary election.

Nweke, in his declarative statement said if he emerged governor, his administration would transform Enugu State into a global industrial hub.

Also, the party statement further listed other governorship aspirants who were 'cleared' by the committee as Umeadi Peter Nnanna Chukwudi, Udensi Chikwendu Ukaobasi, Ijioma Nwokoro Ijioma, Ibe Gregory Ikechukwu, Waya Joseph, Akaa Priscilla Denen, Odoh Benard Ifeanyi, Ozoemena Obi Donatus Madubuike, Nnamani Emeka, Udeh Donatus Ofobuikem, Ombugaku Mathew Avre, while Uwa Etigwe (SAN) was listed as 'uncleared.'

Nweke had served as Chief of Staff to former state Governor, Chimaroke Nnamani. He was later appointed the Minister of Youth, Minister of Information, and later the Minister of Information and Communications during the second term of President Olusegun Obasanjo (2003 to 2007).

Police Confirm Bomb Blast at Oil Company in Imo Community

The Police in Imo have confirmed a bomb blast at an oil company in Izombe, Oguta Local Government Area of Imo.

The Command's spokesperson, CSP Mike Abattam, who confirmed the incident to newsmen in Owerri, said it occurred in the early hours of yesterday.

Abattam said the explosion occurred at a facility operated by Addax Petroluem Development Nigeria Limited.

According to him, Commissioner of Police in Imo, Mohammed Barde, already deployed a squad from the command's anti-bomb unit, as well as some of its operatives to the area to prevent breakdown of law and order.

"It happened, there was a bomb blast this morning at the facility but the commissioner has deployed our men to the site," Abattam said.

A witness who pleaded anonymous, however, told the *News Agency of Nigeria (NAN)* that two persons died in the explosion.

He said that the two middle aged men were the carriers of the bomb, which exploded and killed them while they were trying to find their way into the flow station through the entrance.

Bauchi APC Member Raises the Alarm over Destruction of Campaign Billboards

Segun Awofadeji in Bauchi

A member of the All Progressive Congress (APC) in Bauchi, Hon Ukkasha Hamza has raised the alarm over the destruction of campaign billboards of a Guber aspirant under his party, Malam Nura Manu Soro by thugs.

Hamza who is also the Chairman APC Youth Progressive Forum made this known while addressing a press conference in Bauchi yesterday, alleged that the attacks on the opposition parties, particularly the APC in Bauchi under the watch of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in the state needed urgent action on the thugs and their sponsors.

The APC chieftain's alarm is coming barely a day after Governor Bala Abdulkadir Mohammed of the state pledged an enabling campaign atmosphere for all the opposition parties in Bauchi.

In his text tagged: "Increasing Bauchi political thuggery and the urgent need to protect political opponents in the state", Hamza said he was prompted to address Journalists on the unfortunate incidence of increasing attacks on the opposition parties in the state.

The APC member said historically, Bauchi is known and described across the length and breath of Nigeria as pace-setter that laid standard for politics and politicians on the direction to follow.

He said since creation, Bauchi State and her politicians have been at the forefront and have dominated political scenes in the country both in terms of elections and by federal appointments, making it a leading State and a political tutor to others.

Hamza said it was necessary for him as a bonafide citizen and son of Bauchi soil to draw the attention of Governor Bala Mohammed on the need for his government to address the problem, as the country edges towards the 2023 elections.

THURSDAY SPORTS

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HALA MADRID!

● *It's Liverpool, Real Madrid final on May 28 as City fall in incredible comeback*

Duro Ikhazuagbe

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Real Madrid performed an incredible comeback against Manchester City inside the the Santiago Bernabeu last night to reach the final of the UEFA Champions League against Liverpool.

It is, perhaps, one game that will remain the talking point until the final on May 28 in Paris.

The final will be a repeat of the 2017/18 final in Ukraine when Sergio Ramos sent then red hot Mohamed Salah to the surgeon's table.

Last night, Manchester City were two goals ahead on aggregate going into the 90th minute after Riyad Mahrez's strike had added to their 4-3 first-leg win last week.

But Brazilian Rodrygo conjured two goals in two minutes to drag the game into extra time.

First, the Brazilian substitute turned home Karim Benzema's left-wing ball from close range in the final minute - with Real's very first shot on target.

And 90 seconds later he levelled the tie with a header into the top corner after Marco Asensio flicked on Dani Carvajal's cross.

That sent an already rowdy Santiago Bernabeu into absolute euphoria.

City, who thought they were going through to a second consecutive all-English Champions League final, were shell-shocked and could not respond appropriately after the likes of Kevin de Bruyne, Riyad Mahrez, Gabriel Jesus and Kylie Walker had been rested with few minutes to final whistle.

Both sides had chances to win the tie before that miracle by Rodrygo. Ederson denied Rodrygo a quick-fire hat-trick and then an unmarked Phil Foden fired over inside the box.

And so to extra time the game went - and it was Real who got the decisive goal in maybe the greatest Champions League semi-final ever.

Benzema beat Ruben Dias to a loose ball in the box and was brought down by the City defender. He stepped up to take the penalty himself and scored his 43rd goal of the season. There is no doubt it is the most important of the night.

Now, with another cup dream gone with the wind, the social media went abuzz last night with all manners of postulations.

Most City fans believed the curse placed on Pep Guardiola by Yaya Toure's agent, Dimitry Seluk in 2018, was responsible for their near-misses of the most prized club trophy in Europe.

In 2018 in the wake of the face off between Pep and Yaya Toure, Seluk said: "He turned all Africa against himself. I'm sure that many African shamans in the future will not allow Guardiola to win the UCL. This will be for Guardiola an African curse. Life will show whether I am right or not."



Real Madrid players celebrating their incredible comeback against Manchester City to reach the final of the UEFA Champions League 6-5 at the Santiago Bernabeu...last night. PHOTO: AFP

Iheanacho Upbeat Leicester Will Overcome Roma

Femi Solaja with agency report

Super Eagles' forward, Kelechi Iheanacho, believes that his side, Leicester City, will secure a place in their first ever European competition final tonight.

The former English Champions are aiming to play in the final of the third-tier European club tournament but must edge out Jose Mourinho's AS Roma this evening at the Stadio Olimpico after a 1-1 score line last week at the King Power Stadium.

The winner on aggregate will face either Feyenoord or Olympique Marseille in the final in Albania on May 25.

Speaking on the club's website last night, the Nigerian striker insisted that Leicester will do better than their insipid performance last week when they confront the host at the 75,000-capacity stadium in Rome this night.

"We are really disappointed in last week's) game," he began. "We lost, and obviously, we played well in both halves. But what changed the course was the goals. We are always together when we win and when we lose. So we won't dwell on that lost opportunities of last week. We have moved forward and hopefully, we'll sort that out and focus on tonight's game.

Iheanacho stressed Leicester will change the game tonight.

"We have a good squad; we can change things around. Hopefully, it will work quite well for us. They have a strong team, but we're looking to get to the final.

"Our supporters always support us, in good and bad situations. They're always there for us. We'll keep going and keep giving them our best and hopefully we'll get something for them on Thursday," Iheanacho quoted on Leicester's official website.

With Samuel Chukwueze out of Europe after Tuesday's semi-final elimination of Villarreal by Liverpool, only Calvin Bassey, Joe Aribo and Leon Balogun with Rangers and red hot Cyriel Dessers of Feyenoord are left among the legions of Nigerian players in European Club football this season.

TODAY@8:00pm

***EUROPA LEAGUE**

E'Frankfurt v West Ham

Rangers v RB Leipzig

***EUROPA CONFERENCE**

Marseille v Feyenoord

Roma v Leicester City

Okpekpe Race Organisers Set Registration Deadline

Organisers of the World Athletics Elite Label Okpekpe International 10km road race have set Saturday May 7 and Friday May 20, 2022 as deadlines for submission of completed registration forms for the eighth edition of the event scheduled to hold on Saturday May 28, 2022 in Okpekpe, Edo State.

Race Director, Zack Amodu, said in a statement on Wednesday that international athletes outside the invited ones wishing to participate in the race have until May 7 to submit their forms while local athletes must submit their entry papers two weeks later.

"Entry forms and other documents must be received by the deadline dates and entries mailed after the dates will not be accepted," he said.

Amodu revealed entry forms are still available at the Marathon office at the Teslim Balogun stadium in Lagos and the LOC office at the Samuel Ogbemudia stadium in Benin.

"Intending runners can also register online by going to the Okpekpe road race website, ww.okpekperoadrace.com, and click on the registration link,' he said and advised that they complete the application forms with duly certified medical report before confirmation can be given.

"Collection of running number (bibs) starts on Tuesday May 21 and will run through to Friday May 27 at Fatima College in Auchi. It starts from 9am to 6pm daily except on Friday when it closes at 2pm. Registered runners are advised to collect their own running number in person," added Amodu.

The race is organised by Pamodzi Sports Marketing, a leader in sports marketing, sponsorship, hospitality and rights acquisition business in Nigeria.

Mark D' Ball: Organisers Announce New Date for Sweet 16

The Organising Committee of Mark D' Ball Basketball Championships has announced a slight change in date for the commencement of the men's round of 16 tournament, otherwise tagged "Sweet 16."

A Statement from the Organisers, signed by the Secretary of the Committee, Umar Abdullahi, said the Round of 16 jump balls have now been brought forward, to hold between May 7th to 10th, 2022.

Abdullahi regreted the adjustment in dates which according to him, was necessitated by inability of the Stadium Management to accommodate the Championship, having already listed other sporting activities to take place at the Indoor Sports Hall, located in Package B of the MKO Abiola National Stadium, Abuja, during the period of the earlier proposed dates.

The statement added that all technical officials and qualified teams have been duly notified, and are all expected to arrive in Abuja on Friday May 6, 2022.



Diego Armando Maradona...the shirt he wore here to score that famous "Hand of God" goal sold for £7.1million ...yesterday

Maradona's 'Hand of God' Shirt Sells for £7.1m

The shirt Diego Maradona wore when he scored the 'Hand of God' goal and the much vaunted 'goal of the century' for Argentina against England at the 1986 World Cup has sold for a record £7.1million.

It is the highest price ever paid for a piece of sports memorabilia.

Former England midfielder Steve Hodge put it up for auction 36 years after he swapped it with Maradona following the famous quarter-final in Mexico.

After Maradona died in November 2020, Hodge said the shirt was not for sale.

In December that year Hodge said he had "people knocking on my door non-stop" and that reports he was looking to sell the shirt were false.

"I find it disrespectful and totally wrong," he added at the time. "It's not for sale. I am not trying to sell it."

Auction house Sotheby sold the shirt for more than its estimated price, which was between £4m and £6m.

"This is arguably the most coveted football shirt to ever come to auction, and so it is fitting that it now holds the auction record for any object of its kind," said Brahm Wachter, Sotheby's head of streetwear and modern collectables.

The previous highest fee paid for a shirt worn during a sports match was held by New York Yankees legend Babe Ruth's baseball jersey, which sold for $5.6m (£4.4m) in 2019.

In the same year the original Olympic manifesto, penned in 1892, sold for $8.8m (about £7m) to become the most expensive piece of sports memorabilia.

Ex-Nottingham Forest, Aston Villa, Leeds and Tottenham midfielder Hodge, 59, who appeared in two World Cups for England and won 24 caps, had owned the iconic blue Argentina away shirt since swapping it with Maradona in the tunnel at the Azteca Stadium in Mexico City after the game, which Argentina won 2-1.

There has been some confusion about the shirt since Sotheby's in London put it up for auction in April, with Maradona's family claiming it was not the shirt he had on when he scored the infamous 'Hand of God' goal.

During the past 36 years, the shirt, manufactured by Le Coq Sportif, has been publicly displayed as the one worn by the Argentine great. It was most recently housed at the National Football Museum in Manchester.

Sotheby said in its listing online that the shirt was matched to images of Maradona wearing it for both goals.

The two he scored against England are among the most famous goals by Maradona, who is widely regarded as one of football's greatest-ever players.

Balogun, Aribo, Bassey Target Final Ticket with Rangers

EUROPA LEAGUE

Giovanni van Bronckhorst said yesterday that he trusted in the character of his Rangers players as they seek to overturn a Europa League semifinal deficit against RB Leipzig while mourning the death of their kitman.

The death of the popular and long-serving Jimmy Bell at the age of 69 was announced by the Scottish club on Tuesday as the players were preparing for the second leg of their tie at Ibrox.

"Yesterday wasn't about keeping the spirits high," said the Rangers boss, whose side lost the first leg in Germany 1-0.

"We were all shocked by the news that Jimmy passed away, it was a hard day for all of us.

"I think everyone was really down as you could imagine, so yesterday we didn't do a lot. We were at the training ground, but the atmosphere was very down and still in shock."

Van Bronckhorst said he and his players were determined to "give everything we can to make everyone proud, especially make Jimmy proud".

"We still mourn, we are still down, but the character of my players is the best I have seen in any teams I have coached and I am sure tomorrow that the character, the determination will be there and we will do everything to reach the final," added the former Feyenoord boss.

"Today (Wednesday) we are back and we are going to try to prepare as well as possible for Thursday (today). I think we will be ready."

Captain James Tavernier admitted it was a "devastating" time for everyone associated with Bell.

"We all mourned Jimmy and obviously people are still doing it now, but I know Jimmy wouldn't want the fuss," he said. "He would want us to roll our sleeves up and get stuck in tomorrow."

Van Bronckhorst said it was too soon to know if forward Kemar Roofe and on-loan midfielder Aaron Ramsey would be fit to play -- they have not featured since the Scottish Cup semi-final win over Celtic at Hampden Park last month.

"When they got injured we all knew that they would work towards the game tomorrow," he said.

"Of course I will wait as long as possible."



Leon Balogun (left) and Joe Aribo are to play vital roles in ensuring that Rangers defeat Roma to reach the final of the Europa League tonight

YE-KING: Ten Years After Still an Enigma

Rashidi Yekini - who died 10 years ago - was a man who "gave his all" to Nigeria but was quickly forgotten by his country, according to former international team-mates Sunday Oliseh and Victor Ikpeba.

Yekini, 48, was reportedly kidnapped shortly before he passed away, but the cause of his death is still unclear ten years later.

Police in Oyo State, where the striker was living when he died, told the BBC shortly after his death that no investigation was opened.

A decade on, there is pride in the achievements of the 1993 African Footballer of the Year yet sadness at his death and anger at the way he had been treated by the government and football authorities.

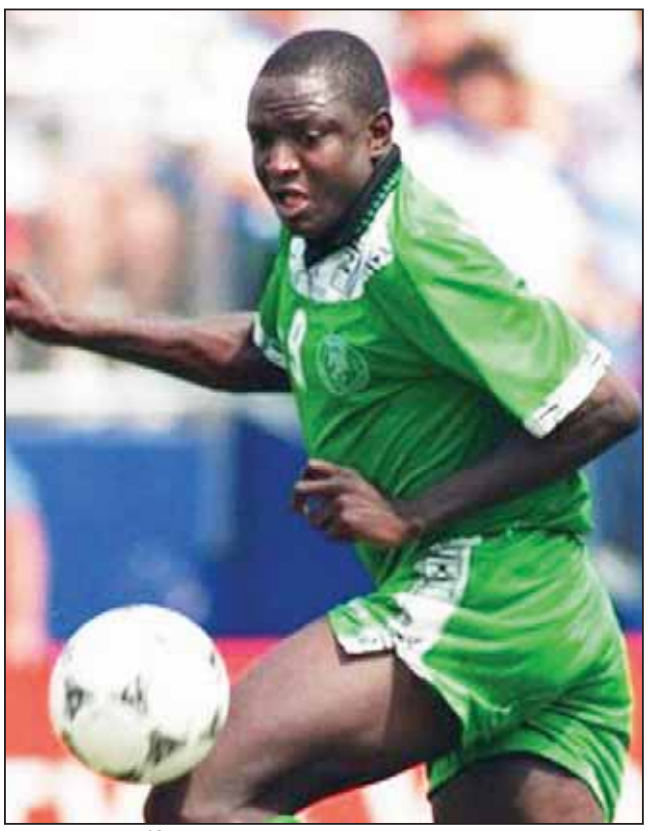
"What I find very sad is not just that there's no closure about his passing, but that for all the man did for our country he deserves to always be remembered," fellow Super Eagles star Oliseh told BBC Sport Africa.

"It's not encouraging because one of the most interesting things about people who served their nations is that one wants to be remembered for the sacrifices you've made. That is why I find it very unfortunate that priority is not given to remember Yekini, who gave his all to our country."

The prolific striker played a key role in some of his country's greatest moments on the pitch, ending top scorer at the 1994 Africa Cup of Nations as Nigeria won their second continental crown.

Yekini is still the Super Eagles' all-time leading scorer with 37 goals and is third on the list of Nations Cup scorers, wit his tally of 13 strikes at the finals only bettered by Cameroonian Samuel Eto'o (18) and Ivory Coast's Laurent Pokou (14).

He also scored his country's first ever World Cup goal in 1994, against Bulgaria, famously celebrating with his clenched fists punched through the net in exultation, which became an iconic image of both the tournament and of the man.



Rashidi Yekini...10 Years gone by since his passage

Ikpeba, who was also in Nigeria's 1994 Nations Cup-winning team, is still upset there was no full investigation into Yekini's death.

"A lot of things could have been done to give closure to his family, fans and the country," the 1997 African Footballer of the Year, 48, told BBC Sport Africa.

"It's shocking because it's 10 years and nobody knows how he died. So who do we blame - the police, his state government or the federal government? These are the questions I ask myself.

"I know he was a Muslim and was buried within 24 hours as practiced in his religion, but an autopsy could have been carried out to tell us what happened to him. Sadly, we failed him when he was alive and in death. That is not how a legend like Yekini should be remembered."

His international career aside, Yekini was also prolific at club level - seeing huge success with Shooting Stars of Nigeria, Ivory Coast's Africa Sport and Vitoria Setubal of Portugal, amongst others.

He helped Shooting Stars reach the final of the African Champions Cup (forerunner of the African Champions League) in 1984 and made his debut for Nigeria the same year.

His final international outings came at the 1998 World Cup, and he once confronted a club coach who had questioned his frequent trips to represent the West African nation.

"There was a time I learnt that my (club) coach was complaining in the press that I went too often to play for Nigeria and that it affected his plans," Yekini once said.

"I told him nobody can stop me from playing for my fatherland. This is where my people love me - not only because I score goals, but because I am their son. Even if Nigeria has a fixture against ants and cockroaches and I am invited, I will go and play."

Yekini lived a reclusive life after he quit football for good in 2005 following a spell back in the Nigerian league.

He aggressively shunned the media limelight and turned down several offers to be part of the country's football in other capacities, rejecting the chance to be a Nigerian football ambassador to the 2010 World Cup - a move which was never explained.

However, Oliseh and Ikpeba, who both won Olympic football gold with Nigeria in 1996, said Yekini was given no support by Nigeria's football establishment when he needed it most.

"He always kept to himself but came alive during training sessions and matches for his country. A wonderful human and team-mate. Somewhat withdrawn, but that was his nature," recalled Ikpeba.

"He was not one to dwell on negative things around the team but just happy to play for the national team instead. Yekini needed help, but the entire football community failed him.

"I'm glad there was a posthumous recognition given to him by the Confederation of African Football, thanks to Anthony Baffoe, which Yekini's daughter attended. But here in Nigeria, we have nothing to remember him by at state or federal level, I am deeply sad."

Former captain Oliseh, 47, echoes Ikpeba's sentiments, adding: "What have we done to honour him? Do kids growing up know anything about the man or his incredible achievements?

"He's the best striker Nigeria ever had, and he proved it in so many ways. For that reason, I feel extremely sad there is no proper commemoration to honour him.

"As a team-mate I will always remember and cherish him for everything he did. But I believe a lot more could have been done for the man."

Apart from a recognition award given to the Class of 1994 by the Nigeria Football Federation (NFF) in 2019, with the striker's daughter picking up his plaque, there has been no commemoration of Yekini by the organisation.

A top official of the NFF declined to comment on the subject, while the body's outgoing President Amaju Pinnick was not available for comment.

Falconets' U-20 World Cup Opponents to Emerge Today

Nigeria's U20 women's national team, Falconets, ever present in all the preceding nine editions of the FIFA World Cup tournament will today know who their group opponents will be when the tournament kicks off in Costa Rica on August 10.

They are one of the four countries never to miss any edition since the competition began 20 years ago.

The others are Brazil, Germany and United States.

Nigeria originally had a bid to host the tournament but lost it to a joint bid of Panama and Costa Rica before it was later switched to Costa Rica alone.

Already, the Nigerians are in the second-tier seed and thus fall into Pot 2 of the draw along with USA, Mexico and Spain. The final draw will hold this Thursday at the Teatro Nacional in San José.

Featuring in the draw are: Australia, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, France, Germany, Ghana, Japan, Korea Republic, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Spain, the USA and hosts Costa Rica.

As part of the draw procedures, the 16 participating teams have been allocated to four pots of four teams each, based on a ranking created according to past sporting performance.

The draw will start with four pots labelled 1 to 4 representing the teams. The four pots representing the groups will be labelled A to D. In each pot, there will be four balls containing the position numbers 1, 2, 3 and 4 of each respective group, with each pot being completely emptied before moving on to the next pot.

TEAMS BY CONFEDERATIONS:

AFRICA: Nigeria, Ghana
ASIA: Australia, Japan, Korea Republic
CONCACAF: Costa Rica, Canada, Mexico, USA
OCEANIA: New Zealand
EUROPE: Germany, France, The Netherlands, Spain
CONMEBOL: Brazil, Colombia



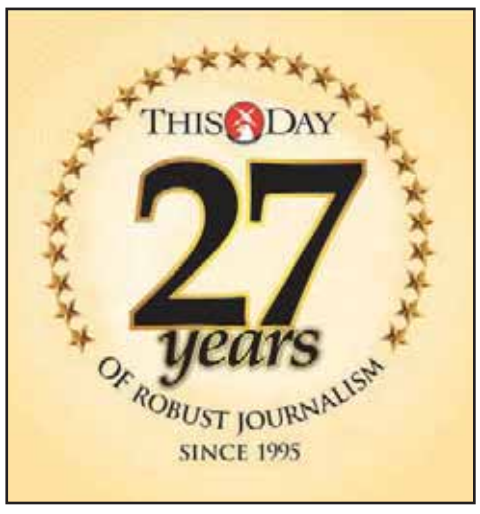
THISDAY

Thursday, May 5, 2022 Price: N250

MISSILE

Aliyu Mohammed to Federal Government

"We are confused and most of the victims are in dire need of medical attention. There is a seven-month-old pregnant woman who is due for a Caesarean session. Her brother, who was shot, has an untreated bullet wound. We have toddlers and an 85-year-old woman who is diabetic and so many others. No government agency has reached out to us even though we have made attempts to see the right authorities" *—Families of passengers abducted in the Abuja-Kaduna train attack on 28th March*



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THE VERDICT

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2023 and Obiano's Worthy Example

I was among friends who hail from the southeast when the Anambra State gubernatorial election result was officially declared on November 7th last year. Not surprisingly, the outcome provoked considerable excitement in the room. One said, "I can bet that Segun's next column will be on Soludo", and turning to me, he added, "I know you like Soludo a lot." After affirming that I really do like Soludo, I replied, "But my column will be on Anambra State. I want to write on Willie Obiano." I could sense the surprise before one asked, "Obiano? You know him?" My response that I had never met Obiano and the last time I visited Anambra State was when Peter Obi was governor, elicited a sharp retort: "Then, please don't write about Obiano". And they all began to regale me with tales about the man, his government and family.

Most of what they held against Obiano were allegations of personal habits and the meddlesomeness of his wife. Only one person, who hails from Anambra, spoke of Obiano's stewardship which he dismissed as dismal. Although my interest had nothing to do with how Obiano managed Anambra State and its resources, the resistance was strong enough to discourage me from writing the column. The subsequent drama of 17th March this year at Soludo's inauguration, when Mrs Ebelechukwu Obiano nearly disrupted proceedings, finally killed the idea.

But a Twitter conversation I followed on Tuesday convinced me that the Obiano issue is important for our democracy. Olukayode Bakre (@kayodebakre8) had tweeted: "Governors get an easy pass. They are not held accountable for anything. Millions of kids are out of school. We blame the FG. A state has very high unemployment rate, we blame the FG alone. A governor does not pay salaries regularly and as such poverty grows in his state. We blame the FG. The governor decides to reside in Abuja and occasionally visits his state. He can decide to spend government monies on his political ambition or to install a stooge. He can decide to donate billions of Naira to other states when his own state is in dire need of money. They can't even ensure out-of-school kids are taken back to school. They can't invite companies to invest in their states. They can't ensure payment of salaries. They can't take care of wastes. They can't make schools conducive for students. The FG is blocking all these?"

The import of Bakre's tweet is that with so much focus on the federal government, states are not being held to account for the basic things they are supposed to provide. And as it so often happens in Nigeria, many left the ball to attack the leg, given comments that followed the post. It is not difficult to understand what Bakre was saying. If we are to develop as a country, the focus cannot only be on Abuja. We must also begin to interrogate what is happening in the 36 states which is why I believe the example of Obiano is important. With the current global realities vis-à-vis the price of oil and the unending subsidy regime, many of the states are already facing hard times. In some months, finance commissioners return from the Federation Account Allocation Committee (FAAC) meetings in Abuja empty handed. That then explains why outgoing governors must begin to think beyond themselves when endorsing candidates for succession.



Obiano

But before I address that issue, let me quickly speak to the recent call by Chief Afe Babalola, SAN, for an interim government. "…The same (1999) Constitution has made politics become not only very attractive, but the only lucrative business in Nigeria today," said Babalola who believes that a contraption of unelected people is what we need at this period. "What this means is that any election that holds under the present scenario will end up producing transactional and recycled leaders, with no ability to turn things around."

This is a recurring conversation at every election cycle in Nigeria, ever since General Ibrahim Babangida introduced the idea in 1993. In the prelude to the 2007 general election, former Anambra State Governor, Chief Chukwuemeka Ezeife advocated an interim national government based on his unfounded fears. The leaders of the proposed interim government, according to Ezeife, would be chosen from a college comprising pre-1999 political actors. On the eve of 2015 general election, then Senate President, David Mark, was so incensed by the call for interim national government that he described it as "imprecise, sordid and strange." And shortly before the 2019 general election, Senior Pastor of the Household of God Church, Reverend Chris Okotie said there was a need to save the nation. "That is why I have reiterated my call for an interim government because that is the only paradigm that is realistic at this point."

The 1999 constitution is not perfect. But it cannot be an argument to derail the 2023 general election, as Babalola is advocating. Making that clear now is important because once the primaries are over and many of the clowns pretending to contest for one office or another in the major parties lose out, there will be a great deal of noise and many weird propositions. That is usually when this call for interim national government becomes strident. We should not give anybody the space for such a self-serving campaign.

Now back to Obiano. When governors seek successors in Nigeria, their consideration is usually based on the 'loyalty' to them rather than the capacity of such aspirants to deliver public good. Yes, we have had a few instances when outgoing governors identified talents among their appointees and backed them: Bola Tinubu to Babatunde Raji Fashola in Lagos, Chimaroke Nnamani to Sullivan Chime in Enugu, Kashim Shettima to Babagana Zulum in Borno and a few others. But we have never had a situation like Anambra State where a sitting governor would endorse someone who could be considered superior to him in experience, exposure, and intellect.

In a milieu where governors look for pliant people that they imagine they could control, regents who would be answerable to them and their families, Obiano has done something worthy of emulation. By supporting Soludo, he has sent a message that in planning succession, governors should think about their states. Let's face it, Obiano was an obscure executive director of a little-known bank when Soludo was already Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) Governor. So, it must be obvious to Obiano that he can never play the role of godfather after office with a man like Soludo as governor. Instructively, at campaign rostrums before the election, Obiano reportedly continued telling the people that Soludo was better than him in several respects. It takes character to say such things in today's Nigeria.

What Obiano did in Anambra State is even more significant going by Soludo's public testimony. As part of the salutations during his inaugural speech, Soludo said: "Let me particularly thank my friend and outgoing governor of Anambra, Willie Maduaburochukwu Obiano, for being an honourable gentleman and leader. On Sunday, 20th November 2016, I accepted your proposal for gentlemen's understanding and partnership. I kept my part in 2017 and even after five years, you still kept yours in 2021. I always emphasize this point because it is rare these days to find people who keep their word in politics, and we will never take your support for granted."

The backstory is that in the last Anambra State gubernatorial election, Obiano asked for Soludo's support with a pledge that he (Obiano) would work for the latter to succeed him. I have heard many such tales before in Nigeria. It never works. With the way we play politics morality has little to do with it. Promises and agreements can be cynically broken where there is no sanctity in fixed commitments. I believe there is a lot we can learn from Obiano if we are to rebuild trust in our politics.

Today, we live in a nation where politicians and people in public offices have no qualms about making all kinds of promises because they know they will not fulfil them, and they cannot be held accountable. Yet, when we talk about integrity in leadership or business, we mean people who can stand by their words or promises regardless of consequences to their person or position. Men whose yes will remain yes and whose no will be no, regardless of a change in fortunes. Not people who sign agreements today and renege on them tomorrow. It is safe to conclude that those who break agreements with friends and associates would not consider campaign promises to be worth fulfilling. This is a problem that transcends politics.

One Nigerian for whom I have tremendous admiration and respect is Mr Tajudeen Fola Adeola. On the day he retired as the pioneer Managing Director/CEO of GTBank (which he co-founded) in 2002, he decided to walk from his office in Victoria Island to his Ikoyi residence. Having been detailed to stay with him that day, we did the walk together after which I interviewed him. One thing he spoke about which I will never forget is the concept of 'to have and to yield'. That unfortunately is one area where many Nigerians, either in politics or the corporate world, fail miserably because it is an attribute that speaks to integrity and selflessness. But we will come back to this another day.

I am aware that as we inch towards the 2023 general election all eyes are on the presidency. For sure, that is a huge political prize in an environment like ours. But even if we end up with the best president in the world, and are left with nonentities in the 36 states, not much will change. So, while we seek to replace President Muhammadu Buhari in Abuja, there are also open-seat gubernatorial elections in 17 states in March next year. These states where the incumbent governors will be completing their second term are: Abia, Akwa-Ibom, Benue, Cross River, Delta, Ebonyi, Enugu, Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Niger, Plateau, Rivers, Sokoto, and Taraba. Gubernatorial elections in Anambra, Bayelsa, Edo, Ekiti, Imo, Kogi, Ondo and Osun are off-season. In Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Kwara, Lagos, Nasarawa, Ogun, Oyo, Yobe and Zamfara states, the governors would be seeking re-election this being their first term. With off-season elections in eight states and incumbents seeking re-election in 11 states, we have a situation where 17 governors are plotting succession. It would help if they looked beyond 'loyalty' and began to cultivate aspirants with capacity to do the job. That precisely is the value of what Obiano has done in Anambra State.

Meanwhile, the problem of succession is likely to persist for as long as we conceive of the states as private estates and medieval fiefdoms rather than commonwealths. An over monetized electoral system guarantees that the incumbent governor is often the only one with a deep enough pocket to fund succession election and of course ensure victory for his candidate. More often than not, independent voices fall outside the incumbent governor's circle of preferred aspirants. The exception of Anambra is perhaps because a friend of the outgoing governor happens to also be an outstanding intellectual and competent technocrat. That Obiano had the courage and confidence to cultivate such an impeccable combination is why he offers a worthy example to emulate.

Printed and Published in Lagos by **THISDAY Newspapers Limited. Lagos:** 35 Creek Road, Apapa, Lagos. **Abuja:** Plot 1, Sector Centre B, Jabi Business District, Solomon Lar Way, Jabi North East, Abuja .
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