Court Throws Out DSS' Application for Extension of Emefiele's Incarceration By Another 14 Days

Alex Enumah in Abuja

Justice Hamza Muazu of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) High Court in Maitama, Abuja, yesterday, struck out an application secretly filed by the Department of State Services (DSS) seeking the court's permission to detain the suspended Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Mr. Godwin Emefiele, for another 14 days.

The judge struck out the ex parte application for being an abuse of court process as well as outside the jurisdiction of the court.

Emefiele had been in the custody of the secret service since June 10, when he was arrested in Lagos and whisked to the agency's headquarters in Abuja. He was kept in flagrant disobedience of the rule of law, for which security agencies, especially the DSS, have become notorious.

The latest application, which was struck out by the court, was actually aimed at keeping the suspended CBN governor in perpetual custody in the

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THISDAY

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Two Months After, Tinubu Sends 28 Ministerial Nominees to Senate

●Ex-governors, federal lawmakers, dominate list ●Umahi, Badaru, Wike, El-Rufai, six women on board

Story on page 8

●Gbajabiamila: Why portfolios are not attached to names ●Reveals 13 more names to be forwarded to legislature soon

●PDP reacts to ex-Rivers gov's selection, says list not fantastic ●Sani: President embraced serpents, rewarded vultures


Olawale Edun (Ogun)


Muhammad Idris (Niger)


Ahmed Dangiwa (Katsina)


Hannatu Musawa (Katsina)


Uche Nnaji (Enugu)


Betta Edu (Cross River)


Dele Alake (Ekiti)


David Umahi (Ebonyi)


Nyesom Wike (Rivers)


Badaru Abubakar (Jigawa)


Nasiru Elrufai (Kaduna)


Uju Ohaneye (Anambra)


Nkiru Onyeojiocha (Abia)


Olubunmi Tunji Ojo (Ondo)



SEND OFF CEREMONY IN HONOUR OF CHIEF JAMODU...

L-R: MD/CEO Nigerian Breweries Plc, Mr. Hans Essaadi; Executive Governor, Edo State, Mr. Godwin Obaseki; Wife of the Immediate Past Chairman, Nigerian Breweries Plc, Mrs. Funmi Jamodu: Immediate Past Chairman, Chief Kola Jamodu: Wife of the Chairman, Mrs. Ifeyinwa Ighodalo and Chairman, Mr. Asue Ighodalo during the send forth ceremony held in honour of Chief Jamodu in Lagos…Wednesday



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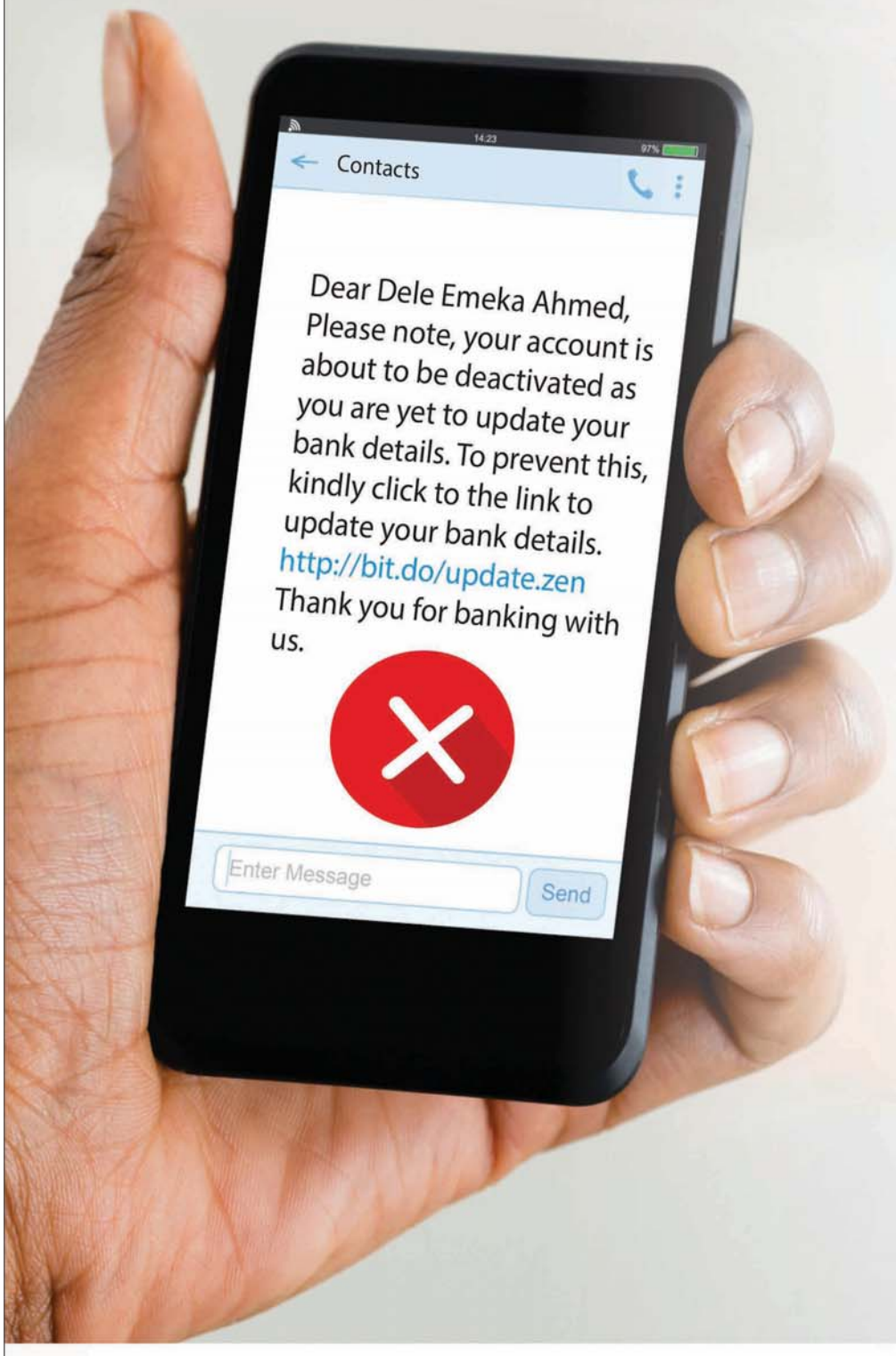
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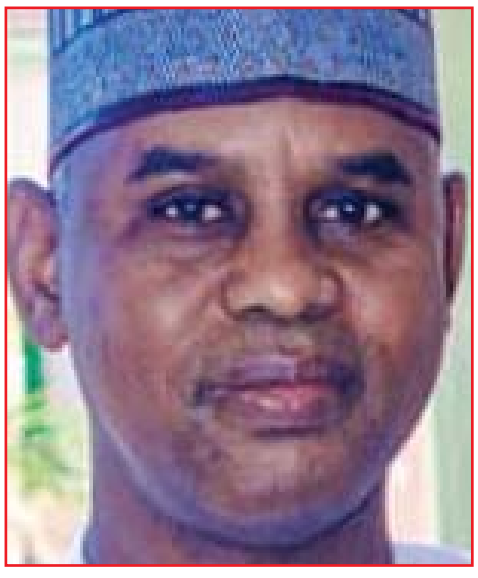

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PROFILE

Unveiling Team Renewed Hope



Stella Okotette (Delta)



Bello M. Goronyo (Sokoto)



Ekperipe Ekpo (Akwa Ibom)



Dorris Aniche Uzoka (Anambra)



Waheed Adebayo Adelabu (Oyo)



Iman Suleiman Ibrahim (Nasarawa)



Ali Pate (Bauchi)



Joseph Utsev (Benue)

YUSUF MAITAMA TUGGAR (BAUCHI)

Politician and diplomat, who was once Nigeria's ambassador to Germany, Yusuf Maitama Tuggar, was born March 12, 1967. He was a member of the House of Representatives from 2007 to 2011, representing Gamawa. He ran twice to be governor of Bauchi State, but didn't make. He just landed another opportunity to launch back into reckoning.

ABUBAKAR MOMOH (EDO)

A two-time member of the House of Representatives, Abubakar Momoh, in December 2019, said his decision to quit the PDP for the ruling APC was at the instance of his teeming supporters, even though a painful one. That decision might have paid off, ultimately. He represented Etsako federal constituency and was PDP Edo North senatorial candidate in the 2019 elections.

AHMED DANGIWA (KATSINA)

Ahmed Dangiwa was the Managing Director/ Chief Executive Officer of the Federal Mortgage Bank of Nigeria. But before his stint at the bank, Dangiwa, an architect, had been managing partner at AM Design Consults, an architectural and real estate development consultancy firm, since 1996. He comes off as one of the technocrats on board.

Dangiwa had his first and second degrees in architecture from Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, where he also earned an MBA. He is an alumnus of the prestigious Wharton University, Pennsylvania, USA, and had attended numerous training courses.

HANNATU MUSAWA (KATSINA)

Lawyer, politician and author, Hannatu Musawa, was the deputy spokesperson and deputy director public affairs of the APC. She was the secretary, screening committee of the party for the presidential aspirants. Her father, Alhaji Musa Musawa, is a veteran politician.

A graduate of Law from the University of Buckingham, United Kingdom, she holds a master's degree in the legal aspects of Marine Affairs from the University of Cardiff, Wales. She also has a Master's degree in Oil & gas from the University of Aberdeen.

UCHE NNAJI (ENUGU)

Governorship candidate of the APC in Enugu State, Uche Nnaji is from Akpugo in Nkanu West Local Government Area of the state. As his party's sole candidate, Nnaji scored 1,070 votes to emerge victorious at the primaries. Relatively unknown on the national front, he boasts some name recognition in his state and appears one of those compensated for their roles in the APC presidential election.

BETTA EDU (CROSS RIVER)

President Bola Tinubu might have recorded some credit against his name by appointing a 36-year-old, Dr. Betta Edu, a minister. Perhaps, the Youngest in the roll call, Edu, a medical doctor and humanist, was a commissioner in Cross River State. Until her appointment, the National Women Leader of the APC, Edu is a Harvard certified doctor and public health specialist.

After a medical degree from the University of Calabar, she bagged a postgraduate Diploma in Public Health for Developing Countries from London School Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, UK; a Master of Science Public Health in Developing Countries from London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, UK, and Doctor of Public Health from Texila American University (AC)

DORIS UZOKA-ANICHE (IMO)

A former commissioner for Finance and Coordinating Economy in Imo State, Doris Uzoka-Aniche, was a General Manager of Zenith Bank Plc, and hailed from Oguta Local Government Area of the state. She's one of the financial gurus on the team of the Tinubu administration. It is so believed.

DAVID UMAHI (EBONYI)

Senator Dave Umahi, an engineer by calling, is a two-term governor of Ebonyi State between 2015 and 2023. At the moment a senator, he participated in the APC presidential primaries, where he polled 38 votes to come a distant sixth position in the election won by Tinubu.

After a prolonged battle in various courts, INEC recognised Umahi as the candidate for the district, from where he was subsequently elected a first-timer at the 10th Senate.

As governor, Umahi, who used to be a member of the opposition PDP, was controversial, and fought many political battles, both home and away, even though he wasn't popular amongst his colleagues.

NYESOM WIKE (RIVERS)

The enfant terrible of Rivers State, Nyesom Wike, is the immediate past governor of the state, who sabotaged his party, the PDP, for personal interest under the guise of pushing a collective cause.

Born December 13, 1967, Wike who is notorious for hauling insults at everyone and everything in sight, stunted the PDP for not emerging the presidential candidate and also for failing to emerge the running mate to Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, the party's presidential standard bearer.

Yet, Wike hid under the push for the resignation of the party's embattled but suspended National Chairman, Iyorchia Ayu, ostensibly in the interest of the south for balance of power and stayed back to damage the PDP beyond repairs with his group of five, who called themselves the Integrity Group.

A lawyer from Ikwerre, who obtained his Bachelor of Law from the Rivers State University of Science and Technology before proceeding to Law School in 1997, Wike had earlier obtained an injunction against the party, pre-empting moves to expel him. Not long ago, the court cleared the way for the party to expel him, but that was well after he had done more than enough damage to his party just because he did not get the vice-presidential nomination.

Now with his appointment by Tinubu, his party with the PDP might be over, automatically. But he is seen as having huge influence in the judiciary, one of the reasons Tinubu was believed to have struck a deal with him and nominated him for a ministerial slot. Wike, who carries, with him staggering integrity and character burden, is evidently on the ministerial list as compensation for 'hard work' and treachery against his own party. He is very well liked today by the APC leadership and their supporters for "delivering Rivers votes" to Tinubu.

MOHAMMED BADARU ABUBAKAR (JIGAWA)

A former governor of Jigawa State, Mohammed Badaru Abubakar, is one of the ministerial nominees, who has reaped where he sowed. He was one of the presidential hopefuls to stand down for Tinubu during the APC primaries and immediately on that spot, earned himself a spot in the cabinet.

Chairman of the Presidential Committee on Fertilizer and the Presidential Committee on Non-oil Revenue, he is also the owner of Talamiz group of industries.

A graduate of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria where he obtained a B.Sc Accounting, he is an alumnus of the National Institute of Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS) in Kuru, Zaria.

NASIR EL-RUFAI (KADUNA)

Nasir El-Rufai, a former Minister of the Federal Capital Territory from 2003 to 2007, is the immediate past governor of Kaduna State. A founding member of the ruling APC, El-Rufai, who played a significant role in restructuring the capital city, was instrumental to the emergence of Tinubu as the APC candidate.

Before his appointment as FCT Minister, he was the director of the Bureau of Public Enterprises, a role he played successfully.

A first-class graduate of Quantity Surveying from the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, El-Rufai's politics was hitherto underestimated until he outplayed some of his friends in the run-up to 2023 elections, leaving many of them bitterly bruised, just to remain relevant in the Tinubu administration. El-Rufai is considered as going to be one of the most influential actors in the Tinubu cabinet as he was said to being prepped for the power ministry with gas to boot, a commitment he allegedly got in writing.

EKPERIPE EKPO (AKWA IBOM)

A grassroots politician, and former Council Chairman, who had a stint in the House of Representatives between 2007 and 2011, Ekperipe Ekpo, was the Senatorial candidate of the APC for Akwa Ibom North West Senatorial District. He is definitely representing the political interest of the state in the federal cabinet, with little known influence.

NKIRU ONYEJEOCHA (ABIA)

Continued on page 6

PROFILE

UNVEILING TEAM RENEWED HOPE

Nkeiruka Chidubem Onyejocha, is a ranking lawmaker in the House of Representatives, representing Isuikwuato/Umunneochi Federal Constituency of Abia State. Born November 23, 1969, Onyejocha was Executive Transition Chairman of Umunneochi Local Government Area of the state in 2002. In 2003, she served as commissioner for Resource Management and Manpower Development. In the 7th Assembly, she was awarded the most vibrant female legislator in Nigeria by Parliamentary Staff Association of Nigeria (PASSAN).

OLUBUNMI TUNJI OJO (ONDO)

A lawmaker from the Akoko North East/ Akoko North West Federal Constituency of Ondo State, Olubunmi Tunji-Ojo, another young fellow in the cabinet, was born May 1, 1982. In 1999, he gained admission into Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife to study Electrical and Electronics Engineering.

In 2002, while in his third year at the Obafemi Awolowo University, he proceeded to the University of North London (now London Metropolitan University), where he studied Electronics and Communication Engineering and graduated in 2005. He went on to obtain a master's degree in Digital Communication and Networking from the same institution in 2006.

He holds certifications in eighteen professional qualifications in ICT, including the prestigious title of being one of the first set of certified ethical hackers from Royal Britannia IT Training Academy in the United Kingdom before he was 24 years.

STELLA OKETETE (DELTA)

Stella Okotete, a member of the APC from Delta State, was the National Women Leader of the party's Caretaker/Extraordinary Convention Planning Committee (CECPC).

She served as a member of other committees such as the National Convention Committee, the National Presidential Convention Committee, the Women and Youth Presidential Campaign Team, and the 2019 Presidential Campaign Council, Women Mobilisation. She was later appointed the Executive Director of Business Development at the Nigerian Export-Import (NEXIM) Bank. She comes on board with both the political and the private sectors experience.

UJU KENNEDY OHANENYE (ANAMBRA)

Mrs. Uju Kennedy Ohanenye, a businesswoman, has been into real estate and education for over a decade. She was the only female presidential aspirant, but stepped down for Tinubu before the commencement of voting to elect the candidate of the party. She passes off as another candidate of the compensatory/reward list.

BELLO MUHAMMAD GORONYO (SOKOTO)

Bello Muhammad Goronyo was Commissioner of Information and Chairman of the state's Publicity Committee for the Governorship Campaign Council in Sokoto State. Zonal Secretary, North West of APC, he defected from the PDP to the APC in 2019. Goronyo does not seem to have the requisite experience for the task ahead, but turns out a fortunate member of the ruling party, who is on the ministerial list courtesy the reward programme of the Renewed Hope.

DELE ALAKE (EKITI)

A veteran media guru and strategist, with many years of experience and personal relationship with the president, Mr. Dele Alake, is a trained journalist, activist and technocrat, born October 6, 1956. He was commissioner for Information and Strategy in Lagos State between 1999 and 2007, when Tinubu was governor of the state, and together they ran the state, making his ministry quite famous.

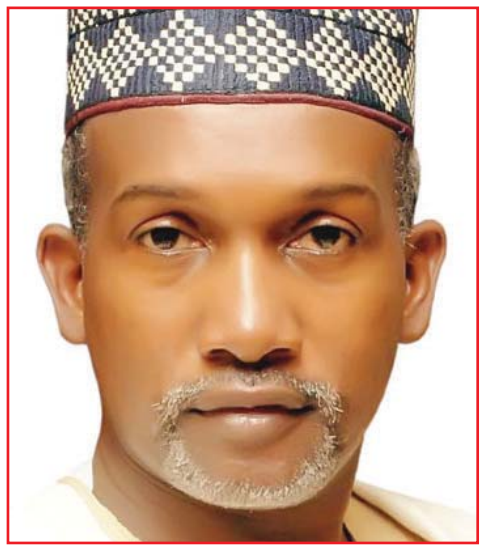
Confident and outspoken, Alake was the Director of Media and Communication of the Muhammadu Buhari Campaign Organisation to help Nigeria's former head of state, to victory in the presidential election of 2015. He was also appointed Special Adviser on media to the Presidential Campaign Council of APC in 2023, and presently the Special Adviser to Tinubu on Special Duties, Communications and Strategy. Alake, a very cognitive communication expert, comes to the job with experience, capacity and keen network. He is one of the few, who earned their slots on the list.

LATEEF FAGBEMI (KWARA)

A Senior Advocate of Nigeria, SAN, Lateef Fagbemi, was born on June 22, 1956, in Kwara State. He has been involved in various high-profile cases, especially election petitions and other constitutional matters. He had served as a judge in various Nigerian courts, including the Federal High Court and the Court of Appeal. He has written numerous articles on various legal topics and is widely respected as an expert in Nigerian law. He is another candidate, who earned a spot on the list based on merit.



Lateef Fagbemi (Kwara)



Yusuf Tuggar (Bauchi)



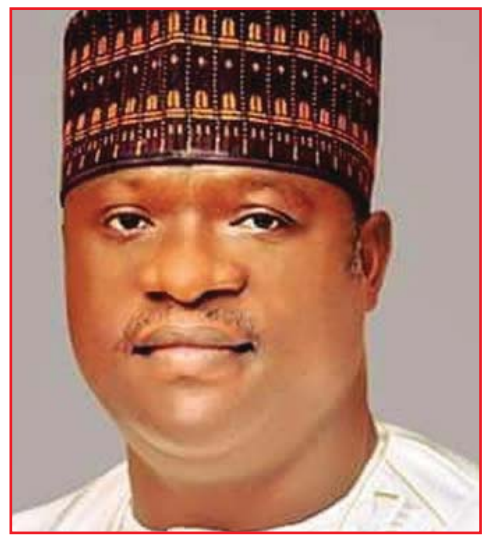
Abubakar Momoh (Edo)



Abubakar Kyari (Borno)



John Enoh (Cross River)



Sani Abubakar Danladi (Taraba)

MUHAMMAD IDRIS (NIGER)

Publisher of Blueprint Newspaper, Mohammed Idris, is a media entrepreneur with Master's in the English Language from the Bayero University, Kano State. He served as Communications Consultant on the Promotion of Nomadic Education in Northern Nigeria by the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development from 2007 to 2009.

He led the committee that developed and implemented Training Guide for Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND) across Nigeria from 2009 to 2011.He was also appointed as Communications Consultant by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) from 2017 to 2021.

Idris facilitated the Design and Implementation of Strategic Communications Guidelines for the Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development from 2019 to 2022. He comes on board with requisite experience and well-off resume.

OLAWALE EDUN (OGUN)

With a background in merchant banking, corporate finance, economics and international finance at both national and international levels, Mr. Wale Edun is a household name in financial economics.

Chairman of ChapelHillDenham Group, Lagos, a leading investment bank, Edunwas an Executive Director of a Lagos merchant bank, Investment Banking & Trust Company Limited, now Stanbic IBTC. He was recently appointed Presidential Adviser on Monetary Policies to President Tinubu.

Sharing near-similar backgrounds, Edun and Tinubu, had come a long way and had watched over each other's back for many years, in a relationship that is beyond business, and often serving as a personal advisor to Tinubu on financial matters, based on their long established trust.

WAHEED ADEBAYO ADELABU (OYO)

Adebayo Adelabu is the grandson of the popular strong Ibadan politician, Adegoke 'Penkelemesi' Adelabu in the Second Republic. Born on September 28, 1970, he started his career with PriceWaterhouse Coopers, and was on secondment to the Central Bank of Nigeria for one year in 1999, when he led the finance team on the CBN re-engineering and corporate renewal project tagged.

Adebayo was appointed by former President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan in February 2014 as Deputy Governor, Operations of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN). He was in operations at the CBN and 2019, emerged Oyo State gubernatorial candidate for the APC. He is leveraging the rich political history of his family, even, though he is in on personal recognition, too.

IMAAN SULAIMAN-IBRAHIM (NASARAWA)

Businesswoman and politician, Imaan Sulaiman-Ibrahim, was the Director General of National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) from December 1, 2020 till 27 May 2021. She was later redeployed as Federal Commissioner of the National Commission for Refugees, Migrants, and Internally Displaced Persons by President, Muhammadu Buhari. Although there's not much to her name, she has been fortunate by association to make the reward list.

MUHAMMAD ALI PATE (BAUCHI)

A physician and Professor of the Practice of Public Health Leadership in the Department of Global Health and Population at Harvard University, Muhammad Ali Pate, was born September 6, 1968. He served as the Global Director for Health, Nutrition and Population and Director of the Global Financing Facility for Women, Children and Adolescents (GFF) at the World Bank Group. He was also a Minister of State for Health.

JOSEPH UTSEV (BENUE)

A renowned civil and water engineer, Joseph Utsev is also an academic andpolitician. With about 17 years of classroom and professional experience, he is recognised as an accomplished administrator and highly respected professional within the West African sub-region due to his diverse experience in Civil Engineering practice and research. He is currently the pioneer Rector at the Federal Polytechnic, Wannune, Benue State.

SENATOR ABUBAKAR KYARI (BORNO)

No doubt, one of those, who came prepared with experience and capacity, whether or not his choice was on the basis of reward, is Abubakar Kyari. Born on January 15, 1963, Kyari was elected to the House of Representatives on the platform of UNCP in 1998. He was the State Treasurer All Peoples Party (APP), Borno State from 1998 to 1999.

He was re-elected to the House of Representatives, this time on the platform of the APPin 1999. Appointed the Commissioner for Water Resources, Borno State between 2003 and 2005, Kyari was the Managing Director, Rural Water Supply Agency, Borno State from 2005 to 2007.

He was made Commissioner for Education, Borno State, from 2007 to 2008 and later Commissioner for Water Resources, Borno State, 2008 to 2010. He was appointed Commissioner for Home Affairs and Information 2010 to 201, Commissioner Works 2011 to 2011 and later Chief of Staff, Government House,Borno State, 2011 to 2014.

Kyari moved on to become a senator representing Borno North Senatorial District at the 9th National Assembly from 2015 until his resignation in April 2022. He is at the moment the acting National Chairman of the ruling APC.

JOHN ENOH (CROSS RIVER)

Senator John Enoh, born on June 4, 1966, represented Central Senatorial District of Cross River State in the 8th Assembly. He was a member of the PDP up until May 2017, when he defected to the APC and contested for governorship but lost to former governor Ben Ayade. He is on the team with considerable experience and relative political network. He may be an asset, after all.

ABUBAKAR DANLADI (TARABA)

Abubakar Sani Danladi was running mate to a former governor of Taraba State,the late Danbaba Suntai in the 2011 general election, which they won on the platform of the PDP. He was, however, impeached on the grounds of gross misconduct by the Taraba State House of Assembly on September 4, 2012, and was replaced by Alhaji Umar Garba as Deputy Governor, who went on to become the acting governor of the state after Suntai's air crash.

Danladi regained his mandate after the Supreme Court ruled in his favour in November 2014. He contested in the 2015 elections for the Taraba North Senatorial seat on the platform of the PDP and won. Unfortunately, he was sacked as a senator by the same Supreme Court on June 23, 2017. Danladi was born on May 20, 1967 in Bachama.

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Shell, TotalEnergies Profits Slump to $5bn Apiece as Oil and Gas Prices Cool

Emmanuel Addeh in Abuja

Shell and TotalEnergies reported sharp falls in second-quarter profit from bumper 2022 earnings as oil and gas prices, refining margins and trading results all weakened during the period.

Oil and gas prices soared last year in the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine but energy prices have dropped sharply this year as fears of shortages eased amid global economic challenges.

Both companies missed earnings forecasts on Thursday, recording headline profit for April-June of around $5 billion each, down 56 per cent year-on-year at Shell and 49 per cent at TotalEnergies.

Still, this was broadly in line with Shell's performance in 2021, while TotalEnergies outperformed its pre-invasion results, Reuters reported.

Shell's shares were down 1.9 per cent and TotalEnergies' slipped 0.4 per cent, compared with a 1 per cent decline in the European index of oil and gas companies.

Shell slowed the pace of its share buyback programme to $3 billion in the next three months and $2.5 billion thereafter, while TotalEnergies stuck to a flagged $2 billion for the third quarter. Shell also raised its dividend by 15 per cent quarter-on-quarter, as expected.

Shell's Chief Executive, Wael Sawan, said the company showed "strong operational performance... despite a lower commodity price environment", while TotalEnergies' Chief Patrick Pouyanne said the quarter showed a "softening oil and gas environment."

Norway's Equinor reported on Wednesday a 57 per cent drop in second-quarter profits from a year earlier.

Benchmark Brent crude prices averaged $80 a barrel in the second quarter of 2023, compared with $110 a year earlier. Prices for liquefied natural gas (LNG), a key product for both groups, dropped to $11.75 per million British thermal units (mmBtu) from around $33.

TotalEnergies expects average LNG prices to linger between $9 and $10 mmBtu in the third quarter, but anticipates a rise to $15 mmBtu over winter due to Asian and European demand.

The benchmark front-month Dutch gas contract last traded at 30.70 euros per megawatt hour, down from above 100 euros last year - including a spike to over 300 euros in August - and 70 euros at the start of this year.

Both Shell and TotalEnergies had flagged shrinking profit from refining crude oil into fuel and chemicals in the quarter. Shell's adjusted earnings in that business were down 78 per cent.

TotalEnergies said European refining margins dropped due to a surge in Chinese exports and quicker-than-expected Russian crude and oil products finding global buyers after the EU imposed an embargo.

Nigeria Demands Release of Bazoum, Return to Status Quo

Liberian army chief calls for scrapping of presidential guards to stop coup

Michael Olugbode in Monrovia

The Federal Government of Nigeria, yesterday, again condemned the coup d'etat in the Republic of Niger, which ousted the democratically elected President Mohamed Bazoum, demanding his release and return to status quo.

This was as the Chief of Staff to the Liberian Armed Forces, Maj. Gen. Charles Johnson III, has advocated the scrapping of the presidential guards as a way of stemming the tide of military coup in the sub-region.

In a statement by the spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Francisca Omayuli, the federal government said, "This unconstitutional change of government is unacceptable in a time, where concerted efforts are being made to stabilise the sub-region and uphold the principles of democracy and good governance.

"In line with the pronouncement of the Chair of ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government, Nigeria calls for the immediate and unconditional release of President Mohamed Bazoum, his family members and other civilians being detained, and reversion to status quo ante.

"Nigeria welcomes and appreciates the support of the larger international community in urging the military authorities in Niger to respect the will of the people and return the country to constitutional order immediately."

However, Johnson III explained that, military interregnum in West Africa was a direct consequence of politicians meddling in affairs of the military and security agencies, thereby throwing organisational discipline out of the door on the altar of political patronage.

Fielding questions from journalists on the rising military coup in West Africa, yesterday, at the sidelines of the joint delocalised meeting of the ECOWAS Parliament's Joint Committees on Political Affairs, Peace, Security and the African Peer Review Mechanism, Judicial Affairs and Human rights, Social Affairs, Gender and Women Empowerment in Monrovia, he said the military has strong structure that most politicians come in to destabilise and cause disaffection that often resulted in the indiscipline that snowballed into coup d'etat.

He said one of the ways to put an end to military interregnum in West Africa is by abolishing the Presidential Guards, which has become a monster in some countries as they are not placed under the control of military command.

Johnson III said it was wrong to give power to the President Guards or any military for that outside the country of the military command, insisting that every soldier should be made to take instruction from the Chief of Defence Staff and not directly from the commander-in-chief.

The military commander, who was reacting to the recent coup in Niger Republic and growing military seizure of power in parts of West Africa, said ECOWAS member states must be mindful of how much control the military has, and if not abolished, the Presidential Guards of the Commander in Chief must not be allowed to wield so much power.

Johnson III, who had addressed members of the ECOWAS Parliament on the topic: "The Role of the Armed and Security Forces in Political Government: The Cases of Mali, Burkina Faso, and Guinea, Lessons to be Learned and Prospects," said, "My second recommendation was the issue of Presidential guard or elite forces that have direct control on the commander-in-chief.

"So, if you look at what is happening even in Niger yesterday (Wednesday), it is the presidential guards. And look at our history in Liberia, we have seen the issue of presidential guards being misused. The Peace and Reconciliation report of 2008 that says that, the Special Anti-Terrorism Unit was involved in a lot of alleged atrocities according to the report. That is why I emphasised that we need to be mindful and allow the military to have this control.

"When you have this political interference into the command and control of the military, like having a Presidential Guards, the Commander-in-Chief selecting somebody to head it instead of allowing the CDS, Chief of Defense Staff to go through that process or having somebody to control, then it becomes a problem.

"Because the CDS or the Chief of Staff have no control over the unit because he takes direct control from the Commander-in-Chief."

TWO MONTHS AFTER, TINUBU SENDS 28 MINISTERIAL NOMINEES TO SENATE

Chuks Okocha and **Sunday Aborisade** in Abuja

After a two-month wait, culminating in the legal deadline, President Bola Tinubu, yesterday, forwarded the much-anticipated ministerial list to the Senate for consideration and confirmation.

The list, which contained 28 names, was personally delivered to Senate President Godswill Akpabio at plenary by Chief of Staff to the President, Femi Gbajabiamila, the immediate past Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Under a law assented to by former President Muhammadu Buhari in March, an elected president or governor must within 60 days of taking the oath of office submit the names of those nominated as ministers or commissioners (in the case of governors) to the senate or House of Assembly for confirmation.

The Senate, after approving the votes and proceedings of the previous legislative day, at yesterday's plenary, invoked relevant sections of its Standing Rules to receive Gbajabiamila, and have him deliver the presidential communication.

After the ministerial list, which had no portfolios attached to the names, was read by Akpabio. It included four former governors, who had just served out their constitutional eight years, and six women.

Gbajabiamila, who justified the non-inclusion of portfolios, claimed it was to give the president the liberty to tinker with the ministries to be assigned the nominees.

The chief of staff spoke to newsmen at State House, Abuja, where he also revealed that 13 more names would be sent to the senate soon for confirmation. He said the president might restructure and create new ministries as part of his reform initiative.

But the leadership of Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) reacted to the inclusion of the immediate past governor of Rivers State, Nyesom Wike, in Tinubu's ministerial line-up, describing the list as a rehash of old politicians, who lack ideas and are incapable of rebuilding the country.

A former senator from Kaduna State, Shehu Sani, commenting on the ministerial nominees' list, said Tinubu embraced serpents and rewarded vultures.

Apart from Wike, other former governors on the list included Senator David Umahi (Ebonyi); Nasiru El-Rufai (Kaduna); and Abubakar Badaru (Jigawa).

Others on the list were Abubakar Momoh, Ambassador Yusuf Miatama Tukur, Arch. Ahmed Dangiwa, Hannatu Musawa, Chief Uche Nnaji, Dr. Betta Edu, Dr. Dorris Aniche Uzoka, Rt. Hon. Ekperipe Ekpo, Hon. Nkiru Onyeojiocha, Hon. Olubunmi Tunji Ojo, Hon. Stella Okotette, and Hon. Uju Kennedy Ohaneye.

Also on the list were Mr. Bello Muhammad G., Mr. Dele Alake, Mr. Lateef Fagbemi SAN, Mr. Muhammad Idris, Mr. Olawale Edun, Mr. Waheed Adebayo Adelabu, Mrs Iman Suleiman Ibrahim, Professor Ali Pate, Professor Joseph Utsev, Senator Abubakar Kyari, Senator John Eno, and Senator Sani Abubakar Danladi.

Tinubu, in the letter, said the 28 names formed the first batch of his proposed cabinet list and promised to forward the others in due course.

Part of the president's letter read, "In compliance with the provisions of the Section 147 sub section 2 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999, as amended, I am pleased to forward to Senate for confirmation the underlisted 28 ministerial nominees.

"While hoping that the additional nominations will be sent in due course, I hope that the aforementioned nominees will receive the expeditious consideration and confirmation of the Senate."

After reading the president's letter, Akpabio referred the list to the Committee of the Whole for appropriate legislative action.

Gbajabiamila: Why Tinubu Didn't Attach Portfolios

Chief of Staff to the President, Hon Femi Gbajabiamila, yesterday, said the reason portfolios were not attached to the ministerial list sent to the senate by President Bola Tinubu was because the president was at liberty to tinker with the portfolios to be assigned the nominees.

Speaking with newsmen at State House, Abuja, Gbajabiamila explained that it would have been a good idea to attach portfolios, but fixing portfolios to the names could cause problems if the president changed his mind after they had been screened.

Gbajabiamila said, "Yes, I mean for me that would have been one way to go about it. It would have been a welcome development. As good as that sounds, it straightjackets the president to pigeonhole one person in an office or the other.

"What happens then if you change your mind? Do you then bring the person back for screening again, because the president is at liberty to change his mind?

"For instance, if I decide I want somebody as Minister of Labour, and then after sending the name, later on, I decide that, you know what, I didn't know this about this person, this person would actually be better with another portfolio.

"And meanwhile, the senate has screened that person for that particular initial portfolio, what happens then? Do you now rescreen the person? So, a lot of these things have their merits and demerits, advantages and disadvantages.

"I like the idea of attaching portfolios, I actually do, because it makes it necessary for the senate to know exactly what you're asking and what you're looking for. But for now, it's been thought wise that we stick to the tradition of sending the names and then whilst the screening processes going on allowing the Mr. President and his team to look at the portfolios and the characters and see how they fit.

"The first step that he has done is that these are people that can work wherever you put them, except these specialised fields, like attorney general, and what have you. But in the main, in most of the portfolios, he believes most of them can fit in anywhere.

"And what's important is also that Mr. President intends to separate portfolios or restructure the ministries in such a way you might be hearing of new ministries that were not standalone ministries before. So, the process continues."

The chief of staff observed that the nominees had a good balance because, according to him, Tinubu took his time to assess them.

Gbajabiamila stated, "Well, first of all, I mean, I'm sure you all know that the government is not fully formed until a cabinet is in place. And that process started a while ago, culminating in the delivery of ministerial nominees today.

"The president took his time, spent a lot of time going through, did a lot of due diligence, going through the nominees one by one. As you know, he had 60 days from time of inauguration, as stipulated in the constitution. He has fulfilled that requirement of the constitution by submitting 28 names today.

"As his letter stated, and was read on the floor of the senate, the remainder names, not sure how many, probably about 12, maybe 13, will be forwarded to the senate in the coming days. As far as the nominees themselves are concerned, and like I said, Mr. President took his time to sift through those names.

"He dissected those names with a fine-tooth comb. And that's what you've seen. Each and every one, I believe, of the persons on that list are worth being on that list. But I really hope that we haven't missed anything that would have necessitated any name not being on that list.

"But we wait and see. It's a good mix of both people with political acumen and technocrats.

"So, this is a good balance and it's needed. These are people, who have keyed into the vision and mission of Mr. President. Like I said, it's a good balance needed to move the country forward, as Mr. President is eager to do and has already started doing."

PDP Reacts to Wike's Nomination, Says List Not Fantastic

PDP described Tinubu's ministerial list as a rehash of old politicians who lacked ideas and were incapable of rebuilding the nation.

Continued on page 43

COURT THROWS OUT DSS' APPLICATION FOR EXTENSION OF EMEFIELE'S INCARCERATION BY ANOTHER 14 DAYS

guise of "fresh evidence" against him.

While Emefiele was suspended from office on alleged grievous offences, including abuse of office, economic sabotage, among others, the federal government, curiously, filed a charge of alleged unlawful possession of firearms against him, seemingly confirming widespread claims that the former CBN governor was being persecuted rather than prosecuted.

However, when the suit marked FCT/HC/M/12105/2023 came up for hearing, Muazu directed the counsel to the DSS, Victor Ejelonu, to address the court on jurisdiction in view of the provisions of Sections 293 and 296 of the Administration of Criminal Justice Act (ACJA) 2015, which vests exclusive rights on the Magistrate Court to grant detention order. The counsel applied and withdrew the matter.

It would seem that what the DSS did was an attempt to use the court to legalise what the service did in Lagos, where they abducted Emefiele from the custody of the Nigeria Correctional Service (NCoS).

Condemnation and outrage have since trailed the filing of the ex parte application by the DSS before the FCT High Court seeking an order to detain Emefiele for a further 14 days.

This application followed the re-arrest of the suspended CBN governor from the premises of the Federal High Court in Lagos by the security agency after the ruling that he should be remanded in the custody of the Correctional Centre pending the perfection of his bail, which was granted by Justice Nicholas Oweibo.

Abuja-based constitutional lawyer, Nnamdi Mba, in his reaction said, "You cannot be charging someone to court yet you cannot obey the same court. What the DSS is doing is tantamount to intimidating the courts."

Another lawyer, C. C. Nwudo, who analysed the situation stated, "Ordinarily, when a person is brought to court and takes his plea, it is no longer the duty of the security agency that brought the defendant to court to determine where the person will be held in custody but the duty of the court.

"Hence, once a defendant is granted bail, except the judge specifically mentions otherwise, the men of the Nigeria Correctional Service take custody of such person until the bail conditions are perfected.

"In the case of Emefiele, the DSS practically abducted him from the custody of the correctional service and have now filed for an order seeking to further detain him for 14 days, when they have held him consecutively for over six weeks and have exhausted the maximum two previous orders to detain him for 28 days.

"Except they tell a bunch of lies in their application to the judge, no judge, knowing the true facts of this matter, can grant them such an application. I am glad to hear that the judge courageously struck out their application."

Another lawyer, Mr. Hassan Omale, said the abduction of Emefiele by the DSS from the custody of the Nigeria Correctional Service without court order was "unlawful and outright criminal and whoever gave the order for such to happen ought to be removed from office immediately."

Omale stated, "With the application having been struck out by the court, the DSS is now in a very difficult position to continue to further detain Emefiele, who has been in their custody for more than six weeks.

"They cannot continue to hold him illegally and they cannot get another magistrate order to overrule the order of the High Court since the High Court does not have jurisdiction to grant them such order.

"This is yet another judicial loss suffered by the DSS against Emefiele in a case that has been dubbed by many as persecution and personal vendetta."

Meanwhile, President General of Agbor Community Union (ACU), Chief Larry Egun Onyeche, hailed the court in Lagos for granting bail to Emefiele.

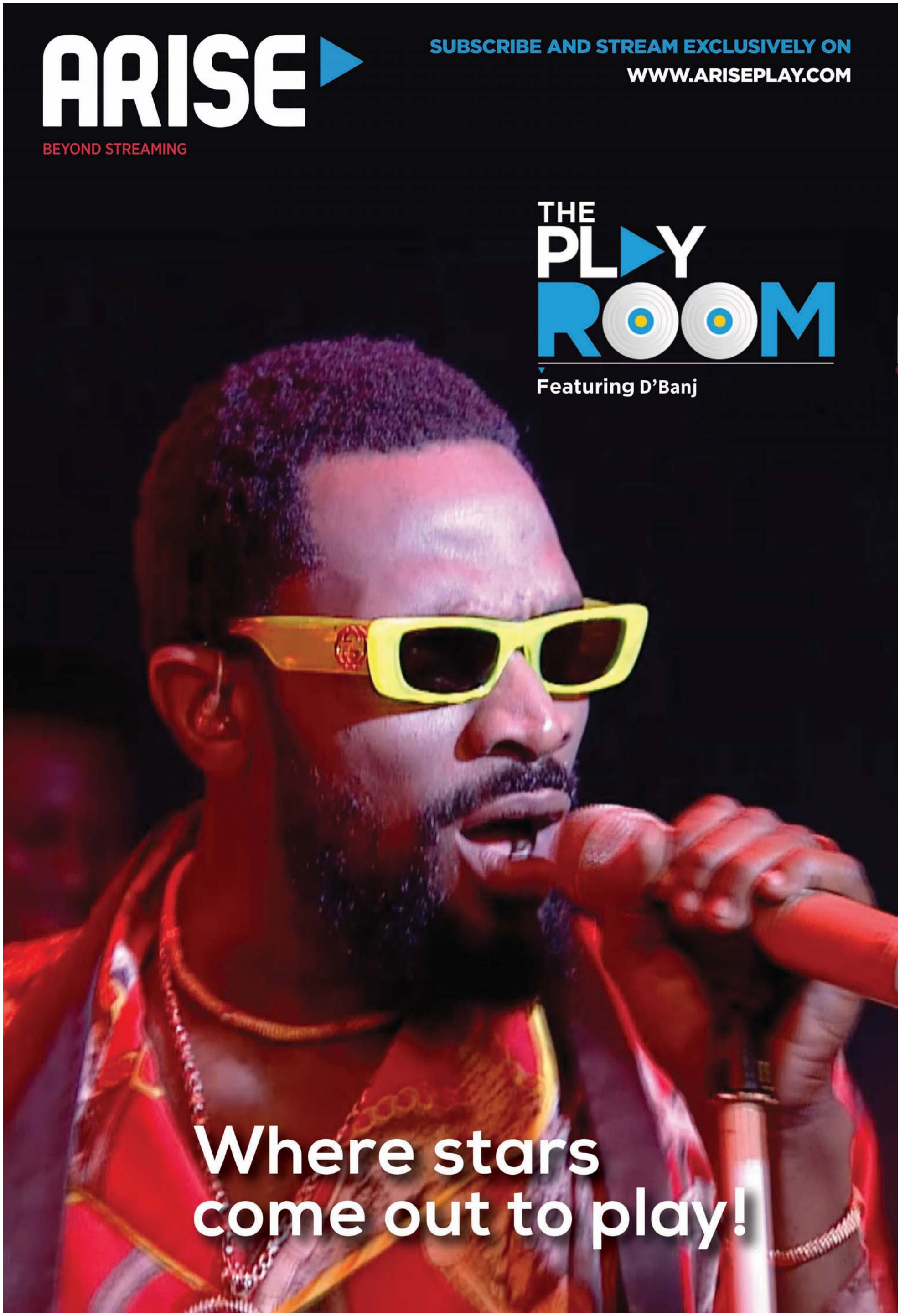
Onyeche, who is the Imarin Dein of Agbor Kingdom, stated that the Lagos High Court should be commended for granting bail to the suspended CBN governor, who according to him, did not commit any offence warranting his arrest and detention by the DSS for six weeks.

Onyeche noted that Emefiele, before his suspension, did his best to grow the Nigerian economy, hence, he should not be subjected to any ridiculous punishment by the security agency. He said the action of the court, which granted him bail, showed that Emefiele did not commit any crime as alleged.

Onyeche also condemned the drama that ensued between the two federal agencies at the court on Tuesday.

According to the Agbor community leader, "It is very clear that it is the Nigerian Correctional Service (NCS) that has the responsibility of keeping Emefiele in custody pending the perfection of his bail conditions. For the DSS to refuse NCS to have Emefiele in custody means there is much to it than meets the eye. The DSS has to tell the world Emefiele's crime.

"Continuously keeping Emefiele without clear cut reasons is highly condemnable. I say without equivocation that the federal government should direct the DSS to release Emefiele immediately in line with the court order.


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NEWS

Group News Editor: Goddy Egene
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GREG UANSERU MARKS 65TH BIRTHDAY WITH FRIENDS ...

L-R: Mr. Chieke Ogeah; celebrant/President GCA Energy Limited, Mr. Greg Uanseru; Chairman THISDAY/ Arise Media, Prince Nduka Obaigbena and GMD, Access Holdings Plc, Mr. Herbert Wigwe, during 65th birthday of Uanseru held in Lagos…Wednesday

MUBO PETERS

FG, Trade Unions Seek Ways to Strengthen Social Dialogue, Conflict Resolution

NECA: Only 21% of Nigeria's poor covered by social safety net

Onyebuchi Ezigbo in Abuja

The federal government has said it would work with the leadership of the trade unions to reposition the country's labour administration system in order to achieve greater industrial harmony and socio-economic development.

The move came as the Nigeria Employers Consultative Association (NECA) said it was shocking that only 21 per cent of Nigeria's vulnerable population currently had access to the government's social safety net.

Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Labour, Daju Kachollom, who spoke to journalists at the end of a workshop in Abuja, said the essence of the conference was to enable participants brainstorm and suggest strategies for effective labour administration.

Kachollom said, "Efficient conflict resolution mechanisms remain the only panacea for sustaining national growth and development. Regrettably, since 2019, the workshop has not been convened until now.

"The resuscitation of this programme, therefore, is predicated on the determination and commitment of the ministry to constantly strengthen the labour administration system in Nigeria.

"The essence of this workshop, therefore, amongst others, is to acquaint participants with current trends and contemporary issues affecting labour administration in Nigeria, and its implication for sustainable development."

Kachollom said the workshop would equip participants with the knowledge, skills, and expertise to efficiently manage trade union affairs, workplace disputes, jurisdictional scope dynamics, and unfair labour practices.

"It will also prepare stakeholders on how to handle the current challenges faced in the world of work, as well as how to harness the opportunities presented by the future of work in Nigeria," she added.

The permanent secretary explained that the fundamental thematic labour administration concepts and principles, such as social dialogue, negotiation, and collective bargaining, as tools for shaping the future of work, improving organisational productivity and workers' welfare, would be discussed.

Kachollom stated, "These education and empowerment workshops convened annually are essential ingredients for the development of a well-informed workforce which in turn contributes to good governance and the overall reduction in the number of industrial disputes in our workplaces.

"Thus, as change agents and promoters of productivity enhancement, it is clear that the fundamental objectives of decent work and harmonious industrial relations cannot be achieved without your contributions as key actors of the labour movement in this great country."

Director General of NECA, Mr. Adewale-Smatt Oyerinde, noted that with a projection of approximately 450 million people in Africa's working-age population of 15 to 64 between 2020 and 2035, there was need to create an environment that fosters gainful employment, promotes inclusivity, and harnesses the potential of youths.

Represented by Femi Paul, Oyerinde added that given statistics by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) that the youth unemployment rate in Nigeria would reach 40.6 per cent by the end of 2023, all hands must be on deck to equip the youth population with the necessary skills, foster entrepreneurship, and create an enabling business ecosystem that supports job creation.

Referring to the account of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Oyerinde stated that the informal sector played a pivotal role in Nigeria's economic landscape, providing employment to more than 80 per cent of the workforce.

"Formalising and strengthening this sector will not only enhance productivity and revenue generation but also ensure decent work conditions for millions of individuals, uplifting lives and communities," he said.

Lai Mohammed Named Special Advisor to UNWTO Secretary General

Olawale Ajimotokan in Abuja

Former Minister of Information, Culture and Tourism of Nigeria, Alhaji Lai Mohammed has been appointed as Special Advisor to the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) Secretary General, Zurab Pololikashvili.

The announcement of the appointment was made during the opening session of the 66th UNWTO Commission for Africa (CAF) currently underway in Mauritius.

Mohammed, brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to his new task having consistently played instrumental roles in the affairs of the world tourism body for the past seven years.

He led the organisation of the 61st UNWTO CAF Meetings in Nigeria in 2018, and the maiden UNWTO Global Conference on Linking Tourism, Culture and Creative Industries in Lagos last year. Mohammed is expected to help Pololikashvili pursue his objective of making Africa a key region for the global tourism economy through his Agenda for Africa programme.

While accepting the new role, Mohammed expressed gratitude, saying he was inspired by the confidence reposed in him by the Secretary General.

"I stand before you, deeply touched and inspired by your generous words of confidence and trust. With so much gratitude for the confidence placed in me by the Secretary General of the UNWTO, Mr. Zurab Pololikashivili and with an unswerving resolve to honour that trust, I humbly accept the appointment as the Special Advisor on Tourism to the Secretary General of this great Organisation.

"This would mark the first time that I would be attending a function of the UNWTO as a private individual having for the past seven years, served as the Minister of Information, Culture and Tourism of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

"I wish to extend my deepest respect and appreciation to all the leaders of the member states, particularly those from the Africa region; for their support and friendship," Mohammed said.

He added that he was deeply honoured to become the first Nigerian to serve in this capacity, describing Nigeria as a dynamic and diverse country in terms of natural and human resources in the areas of tourism, culture, creative industries, technology and other aspects of its national economy. "Having come so far and rising still, the Nigeria and Africa region in general is living and shaping the full range of achievements and challenges of our current times. It is therefore inspiring to take on more responsibilities that will guide the development of tourism in a more responsible and sustainable manner."

The mandate of the Special Advisor straddles several responsibilities including assisting in developing a strategy for restarting a sustainable and safe tourism post COVID-19 and advising the UNWTO Secretary General on issues related to information and culture.

In addition, Mohammed is also expected to prepare relevant reports and research documents in line with UNWTO's principles, accompany and offer advice to the Secretary General in his visits and propose relevant actions of public relations in line with the world tourism body's priorities.

Reps Ad-hoc Committee Applauds JAMB over Technological Innovation

Kuni Tyessi in Abuja

The Chairman, House of Representatives Ad-hoc Committee on the Ejikeme Mmesoma saga, Soli Sada, has commended the Registrar, of the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB), Prof. Ishaq Oloyede, for the technological innovations deployed by the exam body in the conduct of the Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME).

Sada, who gave the commendation when the ad-hoc committee visited JAMB's headquarters in Abuja, yesterday, applauded the exam body for fortifying its operations against criminal infiltrations.

He also congratulated the board for generating enough revenue for the federation account, stating that JAMB remains one of the public institutions with quality governance.

"This is one of the institutions that demonstrated the quality of Nigerians that we have in public sector governance of this country.

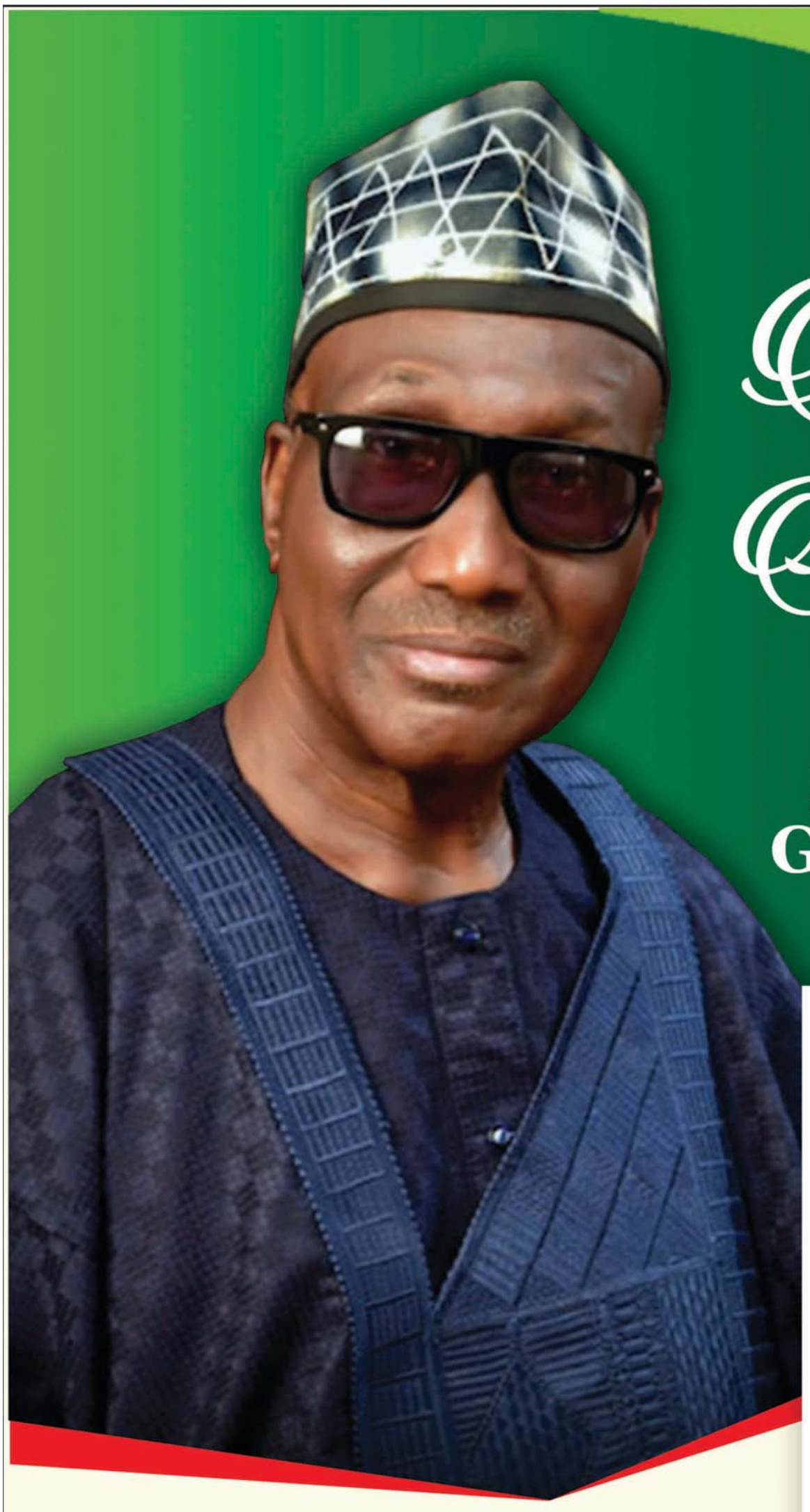
"What we have seen today in JAMB is a testimony of the quality of public officers that are there and how they are disciplined. No wonder JAMB is generating good revenue for the federation account.

"We as an institution of the parliament, have come and we have seen and will definitely go back with a report to the parliament and see how we can strengthen the capacity of JAMB so that they will continue to provide quality services to the country," Sada said.

In his response, Oloyede, told the committee that from the situation room, the exam body is able to communicate with all the states and also relate with the candidates during the examinations.

"From my office, I monitor all the centres, accreditation of CBT centres, I pay attention during registration, monitoring of admissions to over 1,000 higher institutions," he said.

It would be recalled that JAMB had remitted N2 billion as its interim surplus for the 2023 operating year to the Federal Government, saying more would be remitted as its operations for the year are completed.



Honour Well Deserved

CHIEF (ENGR.) SYLVANUS GHASARAH, *OFR*

(Baaloro of Orile Igbore)

We are absolutely delighted to extend our warmest congratulations on the occasion of your award of the prestigious

Officer of the Order of the Federal Republic OFR.

You have truly exemplified the values that define a national hero, and your selflessness has left an indelible mark on us all.

With warmest regards and admiration.

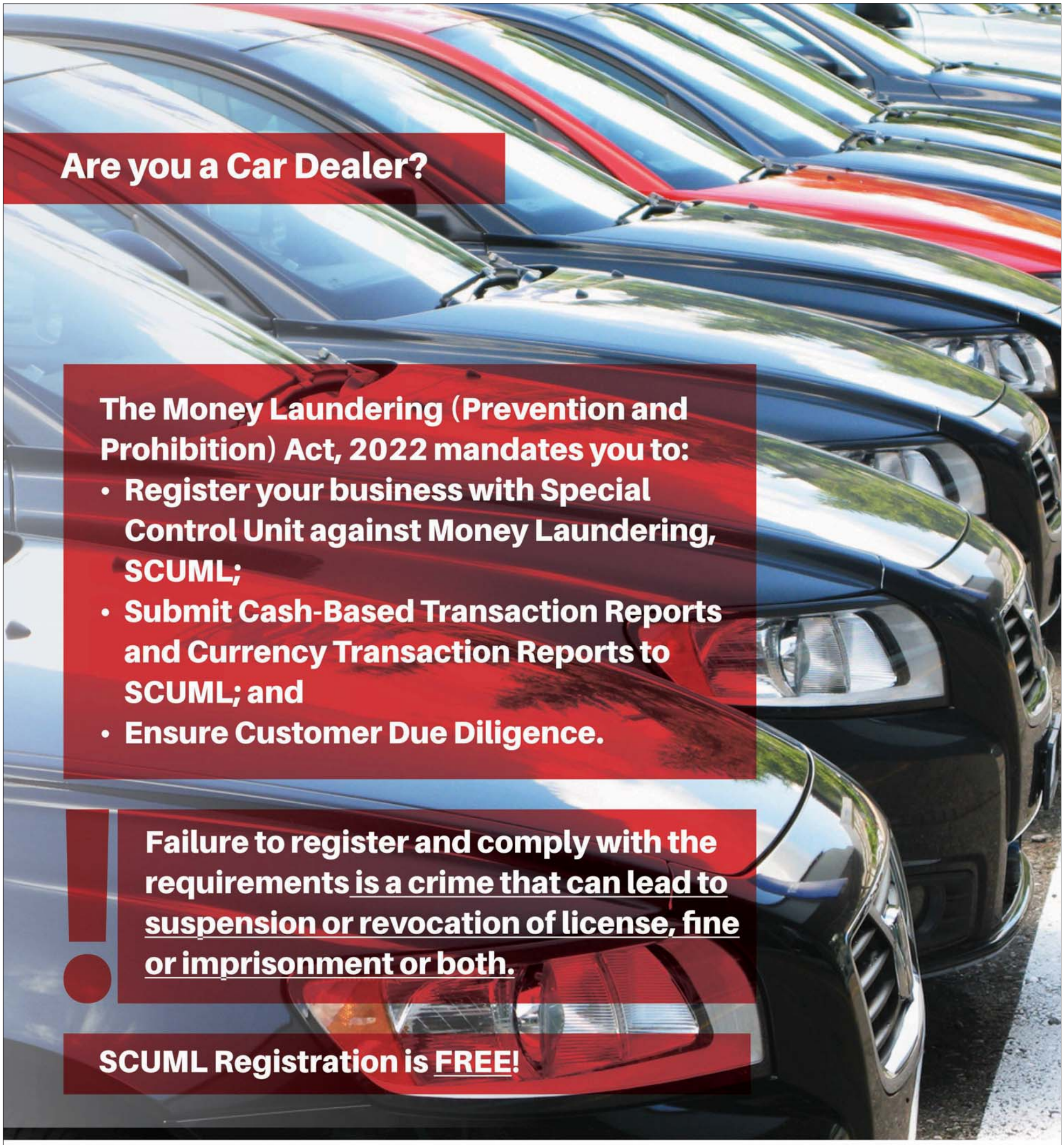
SIGNED:

President, for and on behalf of

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BAM-LA

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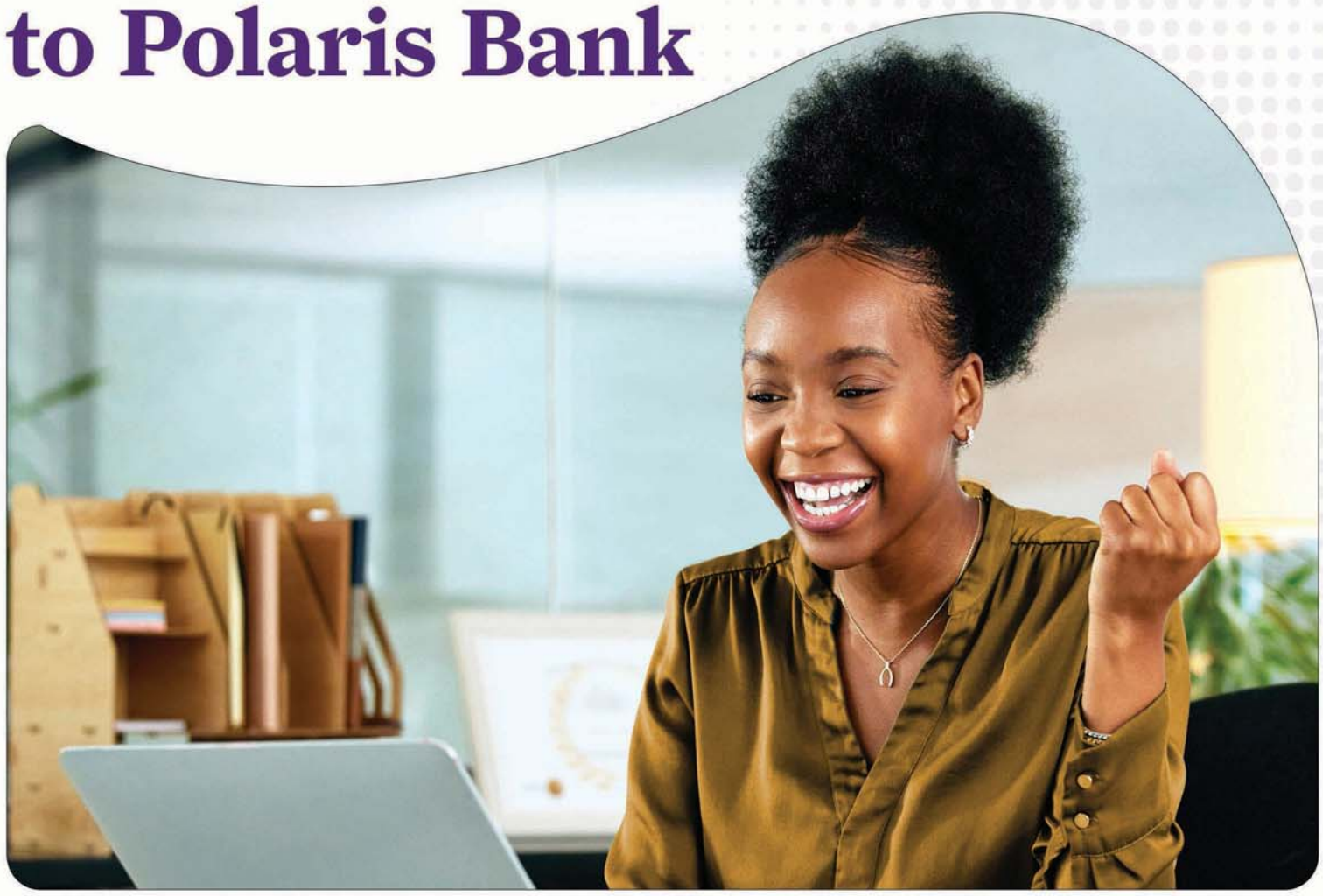
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PUBLIC NOTICE

Interim Forfeiture

1

IN THE FEDERAL HIGH COURT OF NIGERIA
IN THE ABUJA JUDICIAL DIVISION
HOLDEN AT ABUJA

SUIT NO. FHC/ABJ/CS/709/2023

BETWEEN

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA ..... APPLICANT

AND

ALHAJI ZANNA CHIROMA ..... RESPONDENT

ENROLLED ORDER

Upon this Motion Exparte dated the 5th day of May, 2023 but filed on the 22nd day of May, 2023 coming up before this Honourable Court the 13th day of June, 2023 and praying for the following reliefs:-

1. **AN INTERIM ORDER** of this Honourable Court for forfeiture to the Federal Government of Nigeria, the sum of N60,326,422.21 (Sixty Million, Three Hundred and Twenty-Six Thousand, Four Hundred and Twenty-Two, Naira, Twenty-One kobo) reasonably suspected to be proceeds of unlawful activity recovered in the course of investigation from the Respondent.

2. **AN ORDER** of this Honourable Court directing the publication in any National Newspaper the Interim Order under relief 1 above for persons who have interest in the money sought to

FEDERAL HIGH COURT OF NIGERIA ABUJA
SIGN:
DATE: 27/6/23

CERTIFIED TRUE COPY
FEDERAL HIGH COURT ABUJA
Sign ... Date 27/6/23
OJinq Eluh
Principal reg 77

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be forfeited to appear before this Honourable Court to show cause within 14 days why a final order of forfeiture of the funds mentioned in the relief 1 herein should not be made in favour of the Federal Government of Nigeria.

3. **AND FOR SUCH FURTHER OR OTHER ORDERS** as this Honourable Court may deem fit to make in the given circumstance.

UPON READING the Thirteen (13) paragraphed Affidavit in support of the Motion Exparte deposed to by Usman Mubarak Balarabe, Male, Nigerian Citizen and an investigation officer with the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, of Plot 301/302 institutions & Research district, Jabi, Abuja and filed at the Registry of this court.

AFTER hearing M. B. Baraya Esq. Counsel for the Applicant arguing the application and urging the Court to grant the prayers sought.

AND THE COURT having delivered its Bench Ruling in open Court, its reasoning and conclusion are as contained in the body of the Bench Ruling.

HON JUSTICE OBIORA ATUEGWU EGWUATU
PRESIDING JUDGE

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED AS FOLLOWS:

1. That an Interim Order of this Honourable Court is made for forfeiture to the Federal

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FEDERAL HIGH COURT ABUJA
Sign ... Date 27/6/23

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Government of Nigeria, the sum of N60,326,422.21 (Sixty Million, Three Hundred and Twenty-Six Thousand, Four Hundred and Twenty-Two Naira, Twenty-One kobo) reasonably suspected to be proceeds of unlawful activity recovered in the course of investigation from the Respondent.

2. That an Order of this Honourable Court is made directing that this Interim Order be published in the Punch Newspaper or Thisday Newspaper within Fourteen (14) days from today the 13th day of June, 2023 for persons who have interest in the money sought to be forfeited to appear before this Honourable Court to show cause within (14) days why a final order of forfeiture of the funds mentioned in the relief 1 herein should not be made in favour of the Federal Government of Nigeria.

This matter is adjourned to the 6th day of July, 2023 for report of publication.

HON JUSTICE OBIORA ATUEGWU EGWUATU
PRESIDING JUDGE

ISSUED AT ABUJA under the seal of the Court and the hand of the presiding Judge this **13th day of June, 2023.**

MICHEAL AKPIRI
REGISTRAR

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Sign ... Date 27/6/23
OJinq Eluh
Principal reg 77

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4

COURT ORDER RESTRAINING GMD ABUJA INVESTMENTS COMPANY LTD, ASKING ABUBAKAR USMAN FARUK TO REMAIN IN OFFICE AS MANAGING DIRECTOR, ABUJA MARKETS MANAGEMENT LTD (AMML)

IN THE NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL COURT OF NIGERIA
HOLDEN AT ABUJA

ABUJA MARKETS MANAGEMENT LTD.
26 JUL 2023
RECEIVED
SIGN

Suit No: NICN/ABJ/62/2023

Between:
Alh. Abubakar Usman Faruk } Claimant

AND
1. Hon. Minister of the Federal Capital Territory
2. Federal Capital Territory Administration
3. Abuja Markets Management Limited
4. Abuja Investments Company Limited } Defendants

ENROLMENT OF COURT ORDER

UPON THE CASE coming up today 26th day of July, 2023 for ruling. Appearance Emmanuel Omisu for Claimant/Applicant.

THE COURT HEREBY ORDERED AS FOLLOWS:

[1] I have read through the processes filed by the Claimant/Applicant's counsel and listened to his oral submissions, I shall adopt the sole issue raised as the Court's issue for determination.

> *"Whether in the peculiar circumstances of this case, it is just and equitable in the circumstances of this application to grant the reliefs sought by the applicant as prayed".*

[2] The facts upon which this Application was brought is that while the substantive matter in this suit was pending, the Applicant also had filed a suit in the Federal High Court Abuja via FHC/ABJ/CS499/2023 wherein the 1st, 2nd and 3rd

Defendants were parties and upon which a judgment was delivered on 10th July 2023 granting all his reliefs as contained in exhibit RLC1 which borders on the management of the 3rd Defendant. However, that in defiance of such judgment, the Defendants have gone ahead and called for an extra ordinary meeting of the Board members of the 3rd Defendant via exhibit RLC2 and purportedly terminated Applicant's appointment as the CEO/MD of 3rd Defendant vide exhibit RCL 6, also issued letters in exhibits RCL 8A & 8B to their bankers on post no debit instructions among others which touches on the subject matter of the reliefs before this Court.

[3] The counsel in his written address and oral submissions has argued and made reference to authorities on the conditions to be considered in the grant of this kind of Application and that he has placed relevant materials before the Court to have its discretion exercised in his favour.

[4] The pieces of evidence before this Court confirm the facts deposed to by the Applicant and all point to some level of hostility by the Group Managing Director of the 4th Defendant (who is acting on behalf of the 3rd Defendant) when considered alongside the decision of the Federal High Court of 10th July 2023 (i.e. exhibit RCL 1). Furthermore, the record of this Court of 20th July 2023 bears witness that the 3rd Defendant and Claimant had adopted their Terms of Settlement and this Court entered judgment on reliefs 6, 7,

8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15 and 16 in this suit. This is in addition to the pendency of reliefs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 14 before this Court for which the acts of the Defendants if left unchecked may result in mayhem and even defeat the essence of the pending claim before the Court.

Thus, I am convinced that there is clearly a need for the intervention of the Court to grant the Orders sought by the Applicant pending the hearing and determination of the Motion on Notice.

[4] It is in view of the above that this Court finds merit in this Application and hereby grants the reliefs sought by the Applicants as follows;

i. An order of interim injunction of this Honourable Court is made restraining the Defendants either directly or through their respective officers, staff, consultants, agents, workers, representative, assigns, attorney(s) or such third parties however called from convening or further convening and/or holding or conducting or further conducting any meeting of the Board of Directors or members of the 3rd Defendant and transacting any business of the 3rd Defendant touching on or affecting the management of 3rd Defendant and or the employment relationship between the Claimant and the 3rd Defendant, pending the hearing and determination of the Counterpart motion on notice.

ii. An Order of Interim injunction is made directing parities to maintain status quo ante i.e. before the issuance of the purported letter of termination of employment against the Claimant pending the hearing and determination of the Counterpart motion on notice.

iii. An Order of Interim injunction is made restraining the Defendants from giving effect or further giving effect to the purported letter of termination of employment issued against the Claimant/Applicant dated 17th July 2023, pending the hearing and determination of the Counterpart motion on notice.

Ruling is hereby entered.

Issued at Abuja under the seal of the Court and hand of the Presiding Judge this 26th July, 2023.

.....
Hon. Justice R.B. Haastrup
Judge



RUSSIA-AFRICA SUMMIT...
Vice President Kashim Shettima in warm handshake with the Russian President, Mr Vladimir Putin at the ongoing Russia-Africa Summit in St Petersburg. yesterday

At Russia-Africa Summit, Shettima Reiterates FG's Commitment to Revive ALSCON

Meets with stakeholders ● Putin says Russia ready to boost food security in Africa

Deji Elumoye in Abuja

The Vice President, Senator Kashim Shettima has reiterated the determination of the Bola Tinubu-led government to revive the Aluminium Smelter Company of Nigeria (ALSCON), particularly by engaging with key stakeholders in the industry.

Shettima, stated this yesterday, at a meeting with the management of Russian Aluminium Company – UC RUSAL and other stakeholders in the project, on the sideline of the ongoing Russia-Africa Summit in St. Petersburg, Russia.

The meeting with the stakeholders was in furtherance of the efforts by the federal government to reactivate production lines at ALSCON by re-engaging with UC RUSAL and other partners in the resuscitation of the plant.

Speaking after a presentation by the UC RUSAL management, the vice president noted the enormous benefits for the economy in many aspects such as in the area of energy transition, job creation both directly and indirectly, and its impact in the development of small businesses is also huge.

According to him: "The sooner we get this plant back to production, the better for everyone. We need to walk the talk; the Nigerian people deserve better."

Shettima urged all stakeholders to expedite work on the plan of action to restart production at the company.

Other officials at the meeting were Nigeria's Ambassador to Russia, Shehu Abdullahi; Nigeria's Ambassador to Germany, Yusuf Tugar; Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Petroleum Resources, Mr Gabriel Aduda; Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Mines and Steel Development, Mrs Mary Ogbe, and Chief Executive Officer of the Nigerian Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission (NUPRC), Mr Gbenga Komolafe, among others.

The vice president had earlier joined other African leaders at the Russia–Africa Economic and Humanitarian Forum declared open by Russian President, Vladimir Putin.

In his opening remarks, President Putin noted that the potential for trade and economic cooperation between Russia and African countries is much higher than the trade turnover of USD 18 billion seen in 2022.

He restated his country's commitment to food security in Africa and beyond, stressing that, "Russia will continue to work towards shaping a more equitable global food distribution system."

He added that Russia would increase its support for Africa which accounts for 65 per cent of the world's arable land and around 10 per cent of domestic renewable freshwater sources, noting that, "its huge potential for the further development of agriculture."

Subsidy Removal: Unilorin Deploys Free Transportation for Students, Staff

Hammed Shittu in Ilorin.

The management of the University of Ilorin, Kwara State has deployed three luxurious buses to convey students and staff of the institution to and from the campus at peak periods free of charge as part of efforts to cushion the effects of the petrol subsidy removal.

In addition, it is also offering free data during lectures to the students and lecturers.

This was disclosed in a statement by the institution's Director of Corporate Affairs, Alhaji Kunle Akogun yesterday.

It pointed out that the palliative measure, which was in addition to earlier ones, was announced by the Vice Chancellor, Prof. Wahab Olasupo Egbewole, at the end of the 296th Meeting of the institution's Senate last Tuesday.

It stated: "The three buses would be stationed at the university bus terminus at Tipper Garage, Tanke, between 6.30a.m and 7.00a.m and they would leave for the campus by 7.15a.m.

"Similarly, for the homeward journey at the close of work/classes, the buses would depart the Fountain Roundabout, near the Senate Building at 3.00p.m and 4.00pm every weekday".

The deployment, according to the institution, was meant to cushion the harsh effects of the high cost of transportation as a result of fuel subsidy removal.

Egbewole, was also said to have expressed management's deep concern over the adverse effect of the exorbitant transportation cost on members of the university community.

He said that the deployment of the buses was in furtherance to the earlier provision of highly subsidised transportation in which two buses were put on the road in June for a fare of N100 per drop.

Egbewole, pointed out that the university management, being aware that the cost of transportation was biting harder, decided to deploy an additional bus to the route and make the three buses free of charge for students and staff.

The Vice Chancellor also explained that the university management had intensified negotiations with the state government and private commuter bus operators on how they could assist the university in alleviating the transportation hardship facing members of staff and students.

While noting that the negotiation with the state government had resulted in the release of three buses to the university route, the private commuter bus operators plying the university route had pledged not to charge exorbitant fares.

Also, to facilitate the seamless prosecution of the virtual lectures initiative already put in place, Egbewole disclosed that the university's management would provide free data for all academic staff.

The virtual lecture initiative was instituted to reduce the number of times lecturers and their students would have to be physically present in school.

The Vice Chancellor, however, explained that the management would come up with more palliative measures to further cushion the effect of the fuel subsidy removal once the University Governing Council was in place.

According to him, such other measures, like financial palliatives, were beyond management as they have to be approved first by the Governing Council.

Countries Must Not Burn after Elections, Liberian Minister Tells ECOWAS Citizens

Michael Olugbode in Monrovia

No country should be allowed to burn after a general election, but instead, there should be inclusion and collaboration between winners and losers of the elections, Liberia's Minister of Commerce and Industry, Mawine Giggs has said.

She said this yesterday, while admonishing West African Citizens through members of Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Parliament.

Presenting a paper titled: "Mechanism for Collaboration between political majorities and opposition as a crisis prevention mechanism," at a delocalised joint committee meeting of the ECOWAS Parliament in Monrovia, Diggs said,"the majority as the winner and the minority as the loser have a duty to keep the country safe, peaceful, stable and prosperous through inclusion and collaboration."

She noted that: "As always in a democracy, there will be a political majority elected by the people through the ballot box and a minority who does not get elected."

However, she stressed that collaboration between political majorities and opposition was a sure means of crisis prevention.

She added that: "Like we say in Liberia, after all the political processes, the country 'will not burn'. So it is with all countries in the ECOWAS community. After elections, our countries must not and should not burn."

She admitted that in a democratic system of government, the majority wins but has a responsibility to protect the minority, insisting that: "This responsibility of protection encapsulates the respect for the rights of all, irrespective of the gender, ethnic or political affiliation of the individual.

"The governing majority is required to build strong and vibrant institutions including an independent judiciary and a free press.

"The governing majority is charged to ensure that the fundamental rights, including healthcare and education are available and affordable for all."

On the part of the minority, Diggs said: whilst the governing majority has a duty to govern, the minority has a charge to subscribe to the rule of law.

"The right to protest and hold the government accountable or "hold their feet to the fire," which is fundamental, must be exercised in a peaceful manner consistent with the constitution.

"Besides criticism, the minority is required to provide alternatives on what the governing majority could do in the best interest of the citizens."

She explained that: "The first step to govern is the creation of the space and atmosphere for governance, and this is attainable only by collaboration," insisting that: "Both the majority and minority must collaborate at all times regardless of the disagreements and divergence of views.

"Both sides must respect democratic principles and values. Whilst the majority focuses more on the delivery of its programmes, it must also create an enabling environment for everyone to co-exist.

"The threat of conflict is greatly minimised by a healthy collaboration between both the government, opposition and those of no position."

Diggs noted that: "In parliament it is often said that, "the minority has its say but the majority have the will.," stressing that: "This assertion finds its true meaning in the responsibility the majority has to all. To demonstrate will means, to do the right thing, create the space required for all to participate as they so wish.

"For the minority, having say, is meant to insist on holding the government accountable and serviceable while also respecting the rule of law.

"The majority and minority must collaborate and build synergies on their commonalities in areas of gender parity, a free press, an independent judiciary, and an open budget which puts the people first and above all, upholds the constitution."



CONFERENCE ON EMERGENT THREATS TO NATIONAL SECURITY...

R-L: Former Chief of Army Staff, Lt-Gen. T.Y. Buratai; Former Chief of Army Staff and former Minister of the Interior, Lt-Gen A.B. Dambazzau, and Vice Chancellor, Igbinedion University, Okada, Prof. Lawrence Ezemonye, at the International Conference on 'Organised Crime Networks as Emergent Threats to National Security'organised by the Igbinedion University at Abuja…recently

ICAN Calls for Postponement of Proposed Increase in Electricity Tariffs

Says Nigerians grappling with consequences of unified FX rate, petrol subsidy removal

Dike Onwuamaeze

The Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN) has asked the National Energy Regulatory Commission (NERC) and electricity distribution companies (Discos) to postpone the plan to implement an increase in the electricity tariffs in the country.

ICAN said delaying the increase in the electricity tariff was important because Nigerians are presently grappling with the consequences of the recently introduced market determined exchange rate and removal of petrol subsidy.

The President of ICAN, Dr. Innocent Okwuosa, gave the advice yesterday, in a press statement titled, "Re- Application for Rate Review by the Electricity Distribution Companies."

Okwuosa stated: "We recommend that the NERC and the DISCOs should differ the implementation of a rate increase to a future period.

"This is because Nigerians are still grappling with the effects of macroeconomic policy decisions such as the removal of petrol subsidy and the unification of the foreign exchange rates.

"The proposed increase at this time will further worsen the plight of the masses and push Nigerians into multidimensional poverty.

"Furthermore, the increase will significantly increase the cost of doing business particularly for the SMEs. These enterprises may be unable to pass on the additional costs to their customers, increasing the risk of business closures and further worsening the unemployment rate."

He said the government and NERC should consider additional short-term tax breaks and other incentives to the Discos as a form of production focused rather than consumption focused subsidy as an alternative to the hike.

He added that the Discos would, however, need to demonstrate better accountability and transparency in governance and reporting, adding that, "this is an area in which chartered accountants can provide valuable support."

In addition, "the Discos should invest further in their distribution network to reduce the technical losses and build a platform for sustainable electricity distribution."

Okwuosa, also said members of the ICAN possess the expertise and experience to support the commission and the Discos, "in providing deep insights on the inputs, market conditions and assumptions related to the proposed price increases," and support their efforts "to ensure transparency, fairness and accountability in the electricity sector."

He further stated that ICAN's review of the applications made by nine Discos for the increase in electricity tariff showed that there were some areas that required further considerations and disclosures.

These areas, according to him, included their cost breakdown, socio-economic impact assessment, macroeconomic and investment assumptions as well as capital and operation expenditures provisions.

The ICAN boss said, "apart from two discos, others did not breakdown cost implicitly to justify the proposed review. Also, the application mentions the need for cost recovery but fails to provide a comprehensive breakdown of the costs incurred.

"We believe that transparent and evidence-based justifications are essential to ensure fairness, accountability, and the protection of consumer interests."

He added that, "while some applications claim to have conducted an analysis of customer usage patterns, income levels, and socio-economic factors, they lack specific details on the methodology and findings of this assessment.

"A thorough and transparent socio-economic impact assessment is necessary to ensure that the proposed rate adjustments do not disproportionately burden consumers, particularly those with lower incomes. Without sufficient evidence, it is challenging to evaluate the true affordability implications for consumers."

Commenting on the macroeconomic and investment assumptions of the Discos, the institute stated that, "the applications present macroeconomic and investment assumptions for future years but do not provide reliable sources or a comprehensive analysis of how these factors have been considered in determining the proposed rate adjustments.

"The accuracy and validity of these assumptions should be clearly supported with up-to-date data and robust economic analysis to ensure that the proposed rates are realistic and justified."

Moreover, it observed that, "clarification on the assumptions and their accuracy to reflect the current economic conditions (such as inflation and currency devaluation) is necessary for annual capital and operation expense provisions."

Okwuosa, said the recent application to increase the price of electricity amidst the overwhelming series of policy resets made by the new administration like removal of petroleum subsidy and the unification of all segments of the Nigerian forex market, has raised different criticisms due to its timing and increase.

Report Urges Policymakers to Pay Greater Attention to Small Firms

James Emejo in Abuja

A new report has called on policymakers to increase attention on small firms which it noted are key sources of employment, though the "jobs they provide are precarious."

The study stated that the firms experienced significant volatility in revenue through the course of a year, and were neither on a strong upward nor downward growth trajectory.

The Small Firms' Diaries (SFD) was unveiled yesterday, by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) in collaboration with the Lagos Business School (LBS), Financial Access Initiative (FAI), Center for Inclusive Growth, Low-income Financial Transformation (L-IFT), Argidius and supported by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

The report stressed that access to formal credit was constrained for small businesses as about half of the firms in the Nigerian sample held loans that were mostly drawn from informal sources—suppliers, friends, and family.

The report further stressed that the financial tools the firms have access to were not sufficient to help them manage the volatility they faced and they constantly struggled with liquidity and access to working capital.

Essentially, the report, among other things, pointed out that most efforts to help small firms focused on providing loans for equipment or other capital investments.

"Data from the Small Firm Diaries shows that working capital and liquidity are more important. Firms closely match revenues and expenses on a month-to-month basis.

"This helps confirm that they lack working capital/liquidity. Firms rarely take any operating risk that could result in negative monthly cash flow.

"Small firm use of supplier finance is another indication of their need for working capital: in Nigeria, they use credit from suppliers at much higher rates than microfinance or commercial bank loans," the study further revealed.

In addition, the result of the study throws up interesting insights into the nature and operations of small firms in Nigeria.

The results indicated a, "very high level of volatility in the revenues and expenditures of these small firms. The total monthly revenues from the sample of small firms interviewed reportedly ranges between less than N1 million to N45 million, with 75 per cent of the small firms reporting revenues of N440,000 or less monthly".

It noted that the "spread of the median monthly expense distribution across our sample firms was just as wide as that of their revenues, ranging from N3,200 to N16.6 million, with half of the firms having a median monthly expense of N87,000 or less, and around 75 per cent having a median monthly expense of N256,000 or less.

"These results indicate that this volatile nature of the revenues and expenses of these small firms are neither predicted nor desirable, hence presenting a serious challenge for them in terms of managing it effectively."

Continuing, the report stated that, "across the study, the firms are not able to provide consistent income to workers. In Nigeria, only one-fifth of workers were paid consistently throughout the year, and more than half were paid for less than half the year.

"At the same time, small firm workers find it difficult tto earn income elsewhere. Nearly half of the workers surveyed reported no other source of income.

Aviation Security Apprehend Passenger over Theft at MMIA

hinedu Eze in Lagos and **Okon Bassey** in Uyo

The Aviation Security (AVSEC) of the Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN) yesterday apprehended a passenger for stealing another passenger's laptop at the domestic terminal of the Murtala Muhammed International Airport (MMIA), Lagos, known as MMA2.

Ogeneochuko David, was arrested for stealing the laptop of another passenger from a bag kept in the overhead locker during the boarding of Ibom Air Flight Q1300 to Abuja.

A statement from the airline disclosed that the owner of the laptop had suspected the movement of the said David and decided to check where his laptop was kept.

Immediately he realised that his laptop was no longer there, he raised the alarm by notifying the crew members accordingly.

Reacting to the report, the cabin crew conducted a search, which revealed that David was in custody of the laptop.

He was immediately taken out of the aircraft and handed over to the AVSEC officials who subsequently handed him over to the police for further investigation.

The incident delayed the flight's take off by 30 minutes.

According to Ibom Air, the police confirmed that the suspect was a member of a large syndicate specialising in stealing onboard aircraft.

The owner of the laptop (name withheld) voluntarily discontinued his trip to assist with the investigation and promised to follow up with the case to its logical conclusion.

"In line with our corporate policy, Ibom Air has zero tolerance for this sort of criminal activity on board our flights and will prosecute any offenders to the full extent of the law," said the General Manager, Marketing and Communication, Ibom Air, Aniekan Essienette.

She recalled that one Kingsley Chinsunum, was alleged to have stolen the sum of N100,000.00 from a wallet kept inside a bag in the overhead bin while on board Ibom Air flight 4150 at Murtala Muhammed Airport Terminal two Ikeja on May 31, 2023.

"He has since been charged to court and is presently facing trial at the Ikeja Magisterial District. Not too long ago, a passenger, one Mr. Adebayi Adelugba, staged the stealing of his own checked-in bag and declared it missing, accusing the airline of negligence amidst threats of litigation, but for CCTV footage which caught him in the act.

"He was convicted of the crime of threat against Ibom Air, disturbance of public peace, and lies at the Ogba Magistrate court in Lagos, where he pleaded guilty and was sentenced to two weeks imprisonment and a fine.

"The report of an increase in stealing onboard aircraft highlights the importance of passengers to be extra vigilant and attentive to their belongings during flights. Following instructions from the crew members and taking necessary precautions can help minimize such incidents.

POLITICS

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As Senate Leader, Opeyemi Bamidele, Clocks 60...

Five years after an accidental gunshot almost terminated his life in 2018, Senate Leader, Senator Michael Opeyemi Bamidele, will on Saturday mark his 60th birthday. **Babatola Michael** writes.

Precisely, on June 1, 2018, I received an emergency call from the immediate past Commissioner for Housing in Lagos State and a two-term member of the House of Representatives, Hon. Moruf Akinderu-Fatai.

I thought it was one of the usual phone calls to discuss and evaluate the country's political dynamics at a time political parties were preparing for their primaries at both national and state levels.

But with a quivering voice that portended untold misery, Akinderu-Fatai simply said: "Leader has been shot, and we cannot precisely ascertain his condition. But we leave him in the hands of God Almighty."

He was visibly feeling uneasy, intuitively reflecting on his affinity with the leader and what they had suffered together in their collective exploits to deepen and promote progressive politics not just in Ekiti and Lagos, but also in Nigeria at large.

Midway into our conversation, I exclaimed: "Oh, God! What happened? How did it happen? Where was he shot?" He soberly replied: "I told him not to go to Ekiti for now. But he did not listen to me. See what happened now?" Obviously devastated and troubled, Akinderu-Fatai could not entertain further questions before he abruptly ended the conversation.

Anxious to get more details about what happened and how it happened, I called my contacts at different levels, but their lines were practically engaged. I eventually turned to the websites of foremost digital news platforms, curiously searching for news updates about Ekiti's gun violence.

Sadly enough, most of the digital platforms did not update their websites until 45 minutes later. Our inability to get updates immediately enabled our faith to seek divine intervention. Honestly, the waiting period was at best a moment of impending doom because nobody could ascertain whether he would survive the gunshot that ripped his stomach open.

At this point, we were just trusting God for divine intervention, eternally hopeful and fervently interceding with glimpses of faithlessness flipping through our hearts at regular intervals. Amid this seeming uncertainty, Akinderu-Fatai's call came in again. This time, he provided more details about how it all happened, where it happened and our leader's grave conditions despite intensive medical response.

He narrated how the then Minister of Solid Minerals Development, Dr. Kayode Fayemi, stood by him at the Ekiti State Teaching Hospital. He also recounted how President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, then the National Leader of All Progressives Congress, facilitated the deployment of an air ambulance that eventually conveyed him from the Ekiti State Teaching Hospital, Ado Ekiti to a private multi-specialist medical facility in Victoria Island, Lagos State.

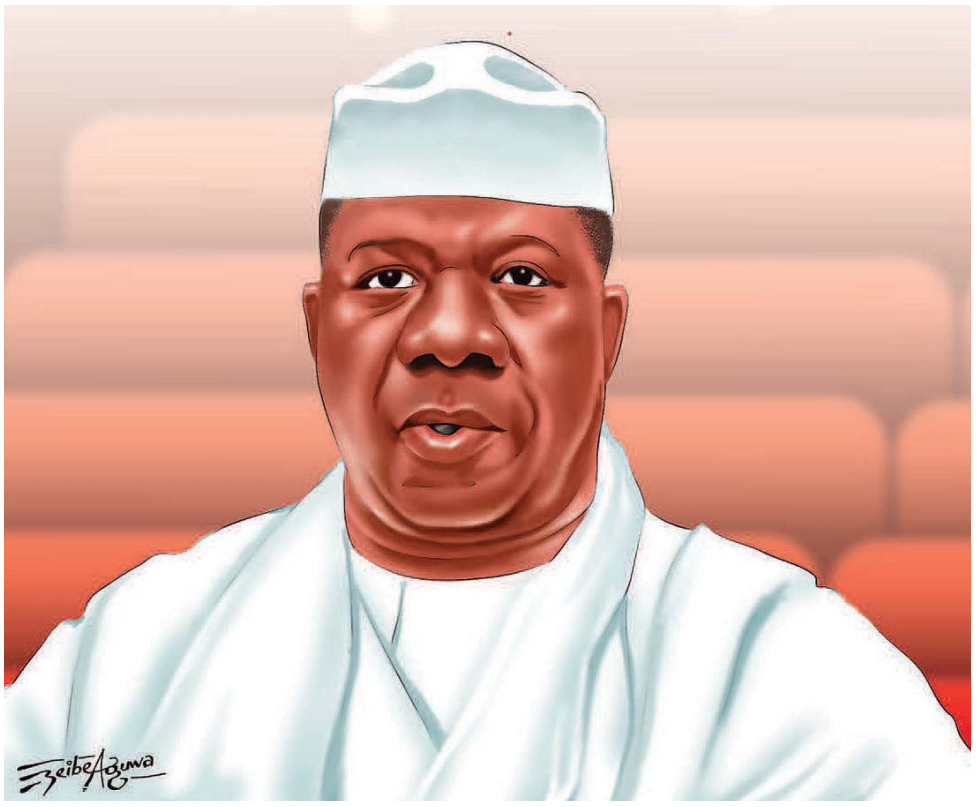
That perhaps was the gravest episode in the life and times of the Senate Leader, Senator Michael Opeyemi Bamidele. Then, we thought he might not witness every second that flipped through.

By providence, however, he will graciously turn 60 on Saturday, July 29, 2023. Glory and honour to God Almighty who averted the tragedy that almost cut short his life.

Bamidele, fondly called Leader among his political allies in Ekiti and Lagos, is today a living legend given the diverse atrocious travails he had survived on his political foray. From 1993 when he emerged the leader of the Nigerian students to 2023 when he became the Senate Leader, Bamidele has always been a victim of political travails that later placed him in the council of decision makers at a higher level than he ever bargained for.

The fiercest of such travails was the bullets that ripped through his stomach in Ado Ekiti on June 1, 2018. Why was he in Ekiti at a time he was gradually coming out of the cloud of the 2014 politics that cost Fayemi re-election? This question might sound illogical, even unreasonable to those who are conversant with the origin and politics of Bamidele for reasons that are not far-flung.

At first, Bamidele is an illustrious son of Iyin Ekiti, a purely ancient agrarian settlement coterminous to Ado Ekiti and located in Irepodun/Ifelodun Local Government Area. By implication, Bamidele is always at home anywhere on the soil of Ekiti. Besides, he is a political actor passionate about the state's socio-economic development.



He demonstrated this passion in 2010 when he officially quit the allure of Lagos politics to the uncertainty of Ekiti politics.

Lastly, Bamidele's heart of benevolence towards his immediate and remote constituents are unparalleled not just in the history of Ekiti State, but also Nigeria at large. Unlike other political actors whose acts of humanitarianism are tied to political payoff they are pursuing, lending strategic support to the people of Ekiti is just naturally a part of Bamidele's life.

From the jobless he has empowered to the widows he regularly wipes off their tears, the indigent he has given boundless hope and the communities he has saved from the impending crisis of water-borne diseases, Bamidele is, no doubt, not in politics for himself, but for his Ekiti people and beyond.

For these reasons, asking why Bamidele was in Ekiti on the day the bullets hit him is like asking what a dolphin is doing in the ocean. Nevertheless, the relevance of the question was rooted in the politics of the 2018 governorship election. Ahead of the governorship primaries, Fayemi was confronted with stark realities of a sharply divided party and an army of conflicting political gladiators, who had indicated interests in the state's governorship seat.

With this context, the need to forestall the scenario that culminated in the defeat of APC in 2014 compelled Fayemi to seek reconciliation with Bamidele, a formidable political figure whose public acceptability is not limited to his primary constituency, but criss-crosses the political geography of Ekiti.

Given this consideration, the state's former governor and the immediate past Minister of Industry, Trade and Investment, Otunba Adeniyi Adebayo, convened a private peace meeting between Bamidele and Fayemi. Fayemi's wife, also, played a central role in the process of reconciling her husband and Bamidele, one of her agelong comrades right from their days in students' activism.

At the peace meeting, Adebayo appealed to Bamidele to put aside what happened in 2014 in order to avoid another electoral defeat in 2018. He also appealed to Bamidele to support Fayemi's aspiration to return as the governor of the state in 2018. This came first with an assurance that Fayemi would support Bamidele's governorship aspiration in 2022 and also a promise to support him to garner senatorial nomination for Ekiti Central.

To demonstrate his commitment to the peace agreement, Bamidele attended a reception, which Ekiti APC then put together to celebrate Fayemi's active return to Ekiti politics. It was at this reception that accidental bullets hit Bamidele. It was a huge sacrifice he had to pay not to secure his personal political interest, but work in tandem with other progressives to reclaim Ekiti from the claws of the ruling conservatives who never nurtured Ekiti to truly be the land of honour it was created to be.

-Michael writes from Lagos

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

The Grand Reception for Osinbajo in Ikenne

Etim Etim writes that the people of Ikenne Remo in Ogun State recently rolled out the drums to welcome home their son and immediate past Vice President, Prof Yemi Osinbajo.

Underlying the notion of celebration everywhere is the idea of accomplishments and success. This is why Yoruba people in Nigeria are generally renowned for their sometimes lavish weekend parties and rejoicings.

Sunday, July 8, 2023 was no different as the people of Ikenne and their friends across the nation celebrated their illustrious son and associate, Prof Yemi Osinbajo, after his tour of duty and eight meritorious years of service to the nation as Vice President.

I need not state that the Prof was with his beautiful wife, Oludolapo, whom he fondly calls ''Dolly''. She is the granddaughter of the late Chief Obafemi Awolowo.

Ikenne has always seen big parties, big funerals and lavish pageantries.

But the Osinbajo reception was a grand event that many will not forget so soon.

Right from the streets you wouldn't miss the spirit of rejoicing and excitement that the Ikenne Development Association was bringing home the immediate past Vice President for such a time of thanksgiving.

Guests from across the country descended on the sprawling city in Ogun State. Some even arrived the state a day or two earlier. They turned up in colours – politicians, governors, traditional rulers, business people, academicians, the young and old.

Ordinary folks were also welcome.

The guests were not disappointed as Ikenne Development Association, the hosts and organizers of the event, had spared no expense in delivering the right degree of pomp. The large hall, beautifully decorated, was full to capacity. It was the first time the new hall was in use as the IDA had just completed the project in time to honour the law professor who became Vice President from among them.



There were dances, songs, tributes and speeches. The feeling in the air was one of satisfactory attainment. Merriments were in surplus. The atmosphere was convivial and joyous.

Ikenne has been famous for ages for many reasons. The late Chief Obafemi Awolowo and Tai Solarin, hailed from there.

The town was also made famous by Mayflower School, located on a 90-acre piece of estate and founded on January 27, 1956, by Tai Solarin, a Nigerian educator, humanist and social crusader.

Ikenne was a Mecca of sorts for politicians and journalists when Chief Awolowo was alive; and when he died in 1987, nearly every person of note showed up.

Another big crowd returned to the town in 2015 when Awo's widow, Chief HID Awolowo passed away. I recall that President Muhammadu Buhari attended her funeral. Chief Awolowo's mausoleum remains a major attraction.

Ikenne is also the hometown of 13 legal luminaries, all senior advocates. Osinbajo himself is the seventh of them. I do not know of any other town in the country that produces so many SANs.

The town has recently been provided with many amenities including hospitals, market, schools, solar-powered street lights thanks to the intervention of Osinbajo.

So, it was not a surprise that practically everybody had lined up the streets to welcome Osinbajo's motorcade when he arrived that Sunday afternoon.

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

Scaremongering and Sit-at-home Order in South East

David-Chyddy Eleke looks at the many sit-at-home orders placed on South east zone by factional leader of outlawed Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), Mr Simon Ekpa, and how he achieves it via scaremongering.



Separatist leader and Finland based factional leader of proscribed Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), Mr Simon Ekpa, recently ordered a week-long sit at home exercise in the South east zone of the country. In a video seen by THISDAY, he threatened to deal with anyone who dared to come out in all the states of the South East.

Ekpa said the exercise was necessary, to pressure the federal government to release the leader of IPOB, Mr Nnamdi Kanu, who has been in the custody of the Department of States Services (DSS), for two years now.

But the same Ekpa had severally been dismissed, and his messages discountenaced by the Kanu-led faction of IPOB. The media and publicity secretary of the group, Emma Powerful, had severally issued statements, dismissing him as an impostor, said to be rather working against Kanu's release, and has long been expelled from the group.

In Anambra State, the week-long sit at home exercise ordered by Ekpa revealed how he uses falsehood to scare South easterners, into obeying his orders. Ekpa's week-long sit-at-home orders showed that it was to start on Monday and run all through the week, with a break on Friday. The exercise was however not heeded in Anambra, where businesses continued as usual, save for Monday, which has become almost cast in stone as sit-at-home days.

The noncompliance in Anambra may have irked Ekpa and his gang, leading to the rumours that there were plans to attack Anambra State on Friday.

Previously, gunmen suspected to be loyal to him had on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday attacked Ebonyi and Enugu States. In Ebonyi, videos circulated on social media showed gunmen, who were said to have already been arrested, destroying wares at Ishieke market. Another showed them traumatizing Enugu residents, including innocent school children, who were made to kneel down and beg for their lives.

The rumour of a planned attack on Anambra penultimate Friday had gone wide, but it was however ignored, as residents went about their businesses. Markets, motor parks, schools and other businesses opened for business, and transactions were already going on well in various places, until around 10:30am, when suddenly pandemonium broke in various parts of the state.

THISDAY reporter was among a team of journalists who had been invited by the senator representing Anambra Central senatorial zone, Senator Victor Umeh. The journalists riding in same vehicle had arrived Aguluzoigbo in Anaocha Local Government Area, to behold a community in pandemonium.

At St Patrick's Catholic Church, Aguluzoigbo where a burial mass was holding a team of battle-ready security men, comprising of police, vigilante operatives and soldiers, were all at red alert. A woman, who operates a kiosk infront of the shop was frantically trying to close her shop, over a security alert she had gotten. She told journalists that there were rumours that Afor Agulu, a market in Agulu community, very close to Aguluzoigbo was being attacked by gunmen.

Surprisingly, the team of journalists had moments back past through the same Afor Agulu to arrive at Aguluzoigbo, and noticed no scare at all, or any incident. No one could identify anyone, who actually experienced attack, or agreed to knowing anyone attacked at Afor Agulu, which meant that it was all rumour. The rumour spread round the community, causing businesses to hurriedly shut down, while security men stationed at the church thoroughly searched anyone walking, riding or driving by.

While all these happened, THISDAY gathered that there was pandemonium in Awka, the state capital. Parents hurriedly withdrew their children from school, businesses closed abruptly and people ran helter skelter, over unsubstantiated stories of attacks in various parts of the town.

Onitsha was not an exemption, as stories flew in the air about attacks by gunmen in various parts. Some people even said there were deaths, resulting from gunmen attacks, over refusal to adhere to sit-at-home orders. A parent, told THISDAY that he has hurriedly withdrawn his children from school for fear of attacks. The parent who failed to disclose his name said there were rumours that gunmen were operating at Eke Awka market, and would be headed to Aroma afterwards, and since his children attend school in the area, he hurriedly withdrew them, before they got to the area.

Meanwhile, a trader in Eke Awka market told journalists on phone that there was no attack in the market, rather there was news that Aroma Junction was under siege, and that the gunmen would move to Eke Awka market, afterwards, making both statement by the trader and the parent to conflict.

In Onitsha, a resident, Mr Felix Eze: said "I heard that six people have so far been killed around Upper Iweka. I'm not in Onitsha now, but I have friends who are giving me update about the happenings in the town."

When THISDAY insisted that he called and ask any of his contact if they witnessed any attack personally, he called back to say that all stories about attacks were all third party narrations, as no one actually witnessed any.

Anambra State government reacting through the Press secretary to the State governor, Mr Christian Aburime, attributed the scare to misrepresentation. Though he acquised that there was misrepresentation in Onitsha. He said Anambra Vigilante Group (AVG) operatives, who were on patrol were mistaken for illegal gunmen, causing the scare in the state. He decried the sustained falsehood on social media, by people he described as enemies of Anambra State, who have been trying to de-market the state.

Also, the spokesperson of AVG, Mr Nweke Nweke, circulated videos, showing men of the group, patrolling in Nnewi town, capturing a busy market, to suggest that rumours of attacks in the city was false.

But the state police command dismissed all the rumours as propaganda deployed by Ekpa and his men to achieve a successful sit at home. The spokesperson of Anambra State Police command, DSP Tochukwu Ikenga, who spoke on the matter said: "We have observed with great dismay, the mischievous act of persons sharing false security alerts/messages, and doctored old videos of security incidents to cause tension/panic in the State. Given the above the Command shall invoke relevant cyber laws on persons found wanting in this regard."

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

As Assembly Moves to Curb Flooding in Ondo State...

Fidelis David reports that the 10th Ondo state House of Assembly has since it's inauguration June, 2023 set the ball rolling by focusing on serious legislative business proving that it won't be rubber-stamp parliamentary body.

On Saturday, June 3, 2023, the 10th House of Assembly in Ondo State was inaugurated, after the oath of office was taken by the 26 members following a proclamation by Governor Oluwarotimi Akeredolu with a member representing Ondo East constituency, and another lawmaker representing Ilaje Constituency 1, Hon Olamide Adesanmi Oladiji and Hon Abayomi Akinruntan elected speaker and deputy speaker respectively.

The 9th Assembly members led by Bamidele Oleyelogun David were accused by some people of being a rubber-stamp parliament or pawns who rubber-stamped the whims and caprices of the Executive but the then Chairman, House Committee on Information, Gbenga Omole denied the allegation.

Perhaps, in a move to change the narrative, the 10th Assembly in the sunshine state has since it's inauguration in June set the ball rolling by focusing on serious legislative business and has been proving that it won't be "rubber-stamp" Assembly or "business as usual".

Few weeks ago, flood-ravaged some areas in the state capital, Akure, following a torrential downpour that lasted for two days, resulting in a flood that affected several areas including Oba Adesida road, Oke-Aro, Oke-Ijebu, Araromi, NEPA, among others.

Pronto, the Acting Governor of the state, Lucky Ayedatiwa, visited the victims and assured them of government intervention and long-term strategies to prevent any reoccurrence of the incident.

Ayedatiwa who expressed sympathy for the victims affected by the devastating flood in the capital city noted that the on-the-spot assessment became necessary for possible intervention and to sympathize with the affected residents, as the government has a responsibility to take care of the people's welfare.

"I decided to come around so as to assess the extent of the havoc caused by the flood. We will do the needful to ensure safety by involving the officials of the Ministry of Works and Environment to clear all these canals.

"We shall do everything to forestall future occurrences, but I want to implore people around the canal to stop disposing of refuse into the canals. The government will do everything to help and assist in clearing these canals," he said.

Aside the state capital, perennial ocean surge had on several occasions destroyed property of residents of Aiyetoro, a costal community in Ilaje local government area of the state while many had been rendered homeless.

It is pertinent to state that Ilaje Local Government as a whole remains the only oil-producing community in Ondo State which contributes about 60,000 per barrel of crude oil per day to the country's oil production and accounts for 13% Oil derivation fund accruing to the state . Aside its oil wealth, Ilaje Local Government is famous for having the longest coastline in Nigeria estimated at 75km, bitumen, glass sand and quartz.

For emphasis, last year, there was unprecedented flooding across the country with millions of acres of farmlands and properties worth billions destroyed. The flood also caused the death of more than 500 people and displaced several thousands more.

In Kogi state alone, the menace led to the displacement of 200,000 persons, destroyed businesses, farmlands, crops, schools, hospitals, and homes while some motorists remained stranded for more than five days, and more worrisome were truckers of perishable cash crops who lost millions of naira as their goods rotten away.

Although, Ondo State isn't one of the 14 states listed by the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) to be prone to flood in 2023 but the state has so far witnessed heavy rainfall leading to flooding.



The development has triggered the 10th Assembly in the state to take legislative measures to check the recurrence of flooding and attendant disasters and also mitigate the adverse impacts on the people.

Deliberating on matters of urgent public importance, the House unanimously in a voice vote recently called on government of the State and other relevant stakeholders to take proactive measures on disaster, prevention and rehabilitation of affected citizens.

While calling on the Nigeria Erosion and Watershed Management Project (NEWMAP) to be more proactive in prevention and management of disasters, especially in the coastal communities of the State, the parliamentarians directed the Clerk of the House to write to the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) and other relevant stakeholders with a view to sensitizing them on the plights of affected people and the need to come to their aid.

In his contribution, the Deputy majority leader of the House, Oluwatosin Ogunlowo Ajirotutu, expressed displeasure over the incessant flooding across the state, lamenting that lives and valuable properties had been lost to the flood.

The Deputy Speaker of the House, Hon. Abayomi Akinruntan, expressed worry over the incessant flooding in Ilaje and Ondo East local governments.

Also contributing, the Minority leader of the House, Hon. Olajide Oguntodu, explained that flooding is now becoming a serious concern to all and sundry, saying it has displaced many people in the state.

Responding, the Speaker of the House, Hon Oladiji Olamide said: "As elected representatives of the people, we cannot fold our arms and watch helplessly as our people relish in untold hardship, poverty and squalor. We must take a proactive position. To this end, the Ministry of Environment (Commissioner or top official) is summoned to appear before the House on Tuesday, 25th of July in order to brief members on its disaster prevention plan for this year.

"We shall share a common goal and bring the benefits of democratic governance to the good people of Ondo State", he explained.

According to the speaker, the House would not be unduly antagonistic to issues and policies that would add value to the lives of the people who elected them.

"We will work with the Executive arm. We shall explore every avenue humanly possible to develop the land and the people even in the face of glaring challenges confronting us as a nation", he said.

While calling on residents to desist from indiscriminate dumping of wastes on waterways, the speaker therefore, set up a seven-man ad-hoc committee on environment to effectively engage stakeholders and find solution to the perennial flooding problem.

The Chairman of the committee is Ololade Gbegudu,while other members are Rotimi Abitogun, Olawumi Fayemi, Nelson Akinsuroju, Olatunji Ifabiyi, Babatunde Fasonu with Tope Odole serving as Secretary while the committee is mandated to report back to the House in seven days.

ISSUE

Disquiet in LP's Camp as INEC, DSS Clear Mbah of NYSC Certificate Forgery

The allegation of forgery of National Youth Service Corps certificate levelled against the Governor of Enugu State and Peoples Democratic Party candidate, Peter Mbah, by the Labour Party governorship candidate, Mr. Chijioke Edeoga, has put his petition in doubt with the testimonies of the Department of State Services and the Independent National Election Commission, writes **Wale Igbintade**

The petition filed by the Labour Party (LP) governorship candidate in Enugu State in the March 18 election, Mr. Chijioke Edeoga, suffered a major setback penultimate last week when the Department of State Services (DSS) debunked claims that the Governor of Enugu State and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) candidate, Peter Mbah, forged his National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) discharge certificate.

Mbah's NYSC discharge certificate has been a subject of controversy between the governor and the NYSC, with the Director General of NYSC, Brigadier General Y. D. Ahmed, categorically claiming that the certificate with number A808297 Mbah is parading was forged and that it was not issued by them. But Mbah has insisted that it was genuine and issued by the institution.

The DSS made its position known in a written statement on oath adopted by its representative, Mr. Yahaya Isa Mohammed, at the ongoing Enugu State Governorship Election Petition Tribunal as Mbah called two witnesses to open his defence last Wednesday.

Giving evidence, the subpoenaed DSS Deputy Director, Operations and Strategic Department, said the security agency commenced an investigation into the discharge certificate controversy, following a petition to it by Mbah dated February 8, 2023. The service said the certificates in a series that included Mbah's, were found to have been issued to corps members in Lagos, contrary to the NYSC's claim.

It frowned on the NYSC's misplacement of the governor's original file and opened a temporary one for him, noting that the corps was also unable to trace to whom or which state or states of the federation 12 of its certificates, A808297 to A808308, were issued.

The secret police said: "The failure of the NYSC to maintain a proper record-keeping system was the cause of its inability to trace Mbah's initial certificate", adding "It would be wrong for the NYSC to blame Peter Ndubuisi Mbah for its own failure in record keeping."

Mohammed said the investigation revealed: "That there were exchanges of correspondences between Mbah and the NYSC at every stage of their interactions. Mbah did not take any action without the NYSC's approval.

"That Mbah's file with the NYSC got missing at some point in time and NYSC started using a temporary file for him. For instance, in NYSC response to his application for deferment, the file number was LA/10/1532, while in their response to his remobilisation application, the file number was LA/01/1532/T. That there was a mix-up in his record as a result of the missing file.

"That the difference in Mbah's certificate number compared to others that were mobilized at the same time, is due to the inability of NYSC to trace the initial file where the first certificate A678 was."

According to him, "from the documents presented by NYSC regarding certificate numbers, about 12 certificate numbers (A808297-A808308) which include that of Mbah, remained unaccounted for in the eight series by the NYSC."

The DSS said it came to its conclusion relying, among others, on the verified documents submitted by Mbah and the NYSC, most of which it said were "one and the same".



Mbah

Documents tendered by Mbah, according to the agency, include the correspondence between Mbah and the NYSC at every stage of their interactions: Mbah's call-up letter with Serial Number: 0134613, Reference Number: NYSC/FRN/2001/800351 and deployment state – (Lagos); and Mbah's posting letter with reference number LA/01/1532 to Udeh & Associates for his primary assignment.

The documents also include Mbah's signed monthly clearance letter for 11 months from Udeh & Associates law firm, Lagos; signed final clearance letter from Udeh & Associates law firm, Lagos dated September 2003; Mbah's application for deferment of his service year; NYSC's approval of his application for deferment; and Mbah's application for reinstatement to complete his service.

Others are NYSC's approval of his application for reinstatement (with Reference Number: LA/01/1532/T): letter from Udeh & Associates law firm in Lagos, confirming that Mbah served with the firm and ensuing clearances including the final clearance were issued to him; and Mbah's NYSC Certificate of National Service with number A808297.

The lead counsel to Labour Party and the petitioner against Mbah in the matter, Chief Awomolo Adogoke, SAN, had during the cross-examination, sought to know from the DSS representative if his coming was official and authorised by the Director General of the agency, which the witness responded in the affirmation. He addec he was in court following the subpoena by the tribunal.

Continuing, the DSS said it further found that the failure of the NYSC to maintain a proper record keeping system was the cause of its inability to trace Mbah's initial certificate", adding that "it would be wrong for the NYSC to blame Peter Ndubuisi Mbah for its own failure in record keeping".

The agency, therefore recommended: "That the NYSC should retract its initial letter that Peter Ndubuisi Mbah's certificate was not issued by it, as it has failed to trace its records for 12 certificates (A808297-A808308), inclusive of Peter Ndubuisi Mbah's; that the NYSC, the petitioner as well as other relevant action agencies such as the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF) be intimated about the outcome of the investigation and; that the NYSC be requested to explain how 12 certificates with serial numbers (A808297 to A808308) are still unaccounted for, as well as be requested to trace the said certificates".

The testimony of the DSS agent followed that of the subpoenaed witness from the Independent National Election Commission (INEC), Mr. Dimas Friday Emmanuel, who was called by Edeoga. He told the tribunal the discharge certificate submitted to the commission by Mbah was certified by the NYSC.

Emmanuel, while under cross-examination by Mbah's lawyer, Chief Wole Olanipekun (SAN), averred that the governor's NYSC discharge certificate was forwarded to the NYSC for authentication, stressing that the NYSC certifies only a document emanating from it.

Chief Olanipekun had said to the INEC witness, "Have a look at Exhibit EPT01/A, B, and C, particularly the NYSC certificate there, that certificate which you said Mbah forged was certified by the NYSC", to which he replied in the affirmative.

"Am I correct to say that NYSC can only certify a document in its possession and a document emanating from the institution?" Again, he said "yes".

Upon further cross-examination by the counsel to the PDP, Dr Alex Iziyon (SAN), the witness, who is a legal practitioner, also admitted that Mbah's NYSC certificate carried a stamp of the NYSC, certifying the document.

"Look at Exhibit 08A and B, there is an NYSC Certificate, it carries a stamp of NYSC, certifying that document", Iziyon had asked, to which the witness answered "Yes".

Emmanuel further confirmed that the name on the said certificate was Mbah Peter Ndubuisi, that it was dated January 6, 2003 and that the certificate number was also A808297.

Meanwhile, Emmanuel confirmed upon cross-examination that LP's governorship candidate, Edeoga's name, was not contained in Exhibit 16, being the LP membership register for Enugu, which he also tendered.

Efforts by Edeoga's lawyer, Ehitayo Fatomi (SAN), to have the court refuse the admission of the register was overruled by the court.

For now, there is absolute disquiet in Edeoga's camp over the testimonies of the representatives of the DSS and INEC.

Addressing journalists after the proceedings, a member of the defence team, Ikechukwu Onuoma, said all the allegations raised against his client had been convincingly debunked by the two witnesses.

"Today, during the proceedings, we had opened our case with evidence by Dr. F.S.A Uzoh adopting the Statement on Oath. He gave evidence in the areas in dispute as the State Collation Agent," Onuoma said.

"We also had the second witness, Isa Mohammed, who is a staff of the DSS. He investigated the alleged certificate, which the petitioners stated was not issued by the NYSC. And he also debunked that allegation clearly in the witness box.

"With these two witnesses, we think that we fielded credible witnesses in order to debunk the two grounds. And these two grounds are first, the grounds of non-qualification as alleged by the petitioner.

"The second is the ground of alleged non-compliance with the provisions of the Electoral Act. And we think that these two witnesses have sufficiently debunked those allegations and with that we have closed our case for the 2nd respondent, Dr. Peter Mbah."

For now, what was seen as a case by supporters of Labour Party and Edeoga has been rubbished by the two witnesses.

INTERVIEW

Biola Ayeni: Greatest Sacrifice I Have Made

•My home is unshaken

Despite the allegations and rumours of dalliances with several women that have dogged their marriage in recent times, Abiola, the wife of billionaire businessman, Olatunde Ayeni, decries such inglorious labelling of her husband and declares emphatically that he is no flirt. Rather, she describes him as a good father, husband, and a person whose good-naturedness has been exploited for far too long, writes **Lanre Alfred.**

The charm of a trusty wife strikes at first sight but it is her merit that wins the heart. Through war and peace, thick and thin, she submits herself to the task of protecting her husband and her marriage. Biola Ayeni does this with the valour of a trooper and the passion of a poet. Thus it may be said that her love for her husband is true as the needle to the pole or the dial to the sun.

The fashion entrepreneur and wife of former Skye Bank Chairman, Tunde Ayeni, commits diligently to upholding the sacred tenets of their wedlock with the devotion of one who understands that the best moments in life are spent in the glory of a worthy spouse.

If you ask her, she would tell you that suspicion lowers the most promising matrimony to the petty level of the meddling Joneses. She would tell you that love's transcendent bliss while surreal must scorn the fungus of distrust in order to fully thrive. Thus her decision to stand by her man in the wake of disconcerting allegations by an Abuja-based lady, Adaobi Alagwu, claiming to be his wife and mother of his child.

Beyond family, Biola asserts herself in her craft with matchless ingenuity. The mother of three competes convincingly with the leading brands in the United Kingdom and the United States. She has won the most sceptical fashion buffs over even as she titillates the interests of the random enthusiast with her inventiveness and entrepreneurial depth. Ultimately, she has even her most ardent critics eating from her palms. In this interview, Mrs Ayeni bares her mind on several issues including the travails of Nigeria's fashion industry and rumours of her husband's alleged infidelity. Excerpts…



Ayeni

Married to a billionaire whose business tentacles spread all over the world, this certainly comes with challenges. What is the experience like?

Being married to a successful man will definitely come with its own challenges but how you manage everything that comes with it makes you a happy and fulfilled person. I woke up to that reality early in life when my husband started moving up the ladder of success and tended to travel a lot. Initially, I felt 'this is not what I bargained for in marriage.' But I had to tell myself, 'If you have a husband that is always at home, you will not get some of the comforts you enjoy! It is the choice life has made for me. And I had to adapt. If you ask those whose husbands are home and around all the time, they would probably tell you that they prefer to have a husband who is hardly around but provides them with all the comfort they desire. The earlier one understands that finding satisfaction in what life throws at you is the only way to be happy, the better.

It was one thing for me to come to terms with this reality and it was another thing to make our young children understand why their father was hardly around at home. When Iyiola was in kindergarten school, his graduation from nursery clashed with his sibling, Bolaji's school A-Levels exam in London, and I had to travel for a week to stay with her for that period. I told my husband to ensure that he attended Iyiola's graduation but a meeting came up that he needed to attend on that day and he tried to delegate someone to attend the meeting. So he told my sister to attend on his behalf. Iyiola went to wake his dad up in bed early in the morning and said: 'Dad, you mean you won't be at my graduation?' He was about four years old at the period. My husband said he was compelled to shelve everything and attend the event because the way the boy put the question to him made him feel like he was about to commit a crime. At that young age, Iyiola knew how to demand his rights. Sometimes, he came home insisting that his dad had to come and pick him up from school because his friends' dads used to come and pick them up, and he didn't understand why his father couldn't do that. I had to sit him down and explain to him that his friends' fathers are not in the same line of business as his dad. The fact that your father doesn't pick you up from school doesn't mean he loves you less, I told him.

These were some of the challenges I faced because of his business. I passed through the phase of suspicion of extramarital affairs, checking phones, and insisting on accompanying him on trips and I grew up to see that those were mere traps and distractions that destabilise marriage. I finally realised that the best way to watch after your man is through prayers.

One thing you have to understand is that a handsome, successful and prominent man doesn't have to be a flirt for him to start cheating on his wife, because even if he doesn't chase women, women will chase him and if they don't, friends will influence him. And in these days of desperate girls using diabolical means to seduce innocent men, only a naive wife would fight her husband over his dalliances with other women. These girls even go as far as trying men of God! So when married to a successful man, you can trust your husband with everything but not with women! It's time to shift that trust to God concerning your husband. He will not allow him to hurt you or let you down.

What is the greatest sacrifice you have made in life?

You just hit something. The greatest sacrifice I have had to make in life is having to give up my own career as a lawyer to obey my husband's directive to stay with the children because we can't both be leaving home very early in the morning to run after money. We can't leave the children in the hands of nannies. However, when I see some of my mates who are now Judges or Senior Advocates of Nigeria (SAN), the sacrifice hurts. But I thank God that my children are well-mannered and are doing well to the glory of God. Interestingly, I have found fulfilment in the line of business I chose for its flexibility and the opportunity it allows me to be around my children.

Because of his prominence, he is always in the news. Only recently a lady, Adaobi Alagwu alleged that your husband is the father of her baby. How would you react to such news and how has it affected you?

Let's take it one step at a time. Thank God you said because of his prominence he is always in the news. When a man is successful you know, he will have a lot of enemies and they would write a lot of things about him. When you have made a name, you will become a target for traducers. And that is when it's good for you to know whom you are married to. It is important to know the kind of person you are married to. There was some publication about some incident and people started calling me about it. They asked me how I was feeling or coping and I told them that I was fine. I don't listen to what they say about my husband outside and I don't need anyone to tell me who my husband is. I have my husband beside me. When I need to clarify things, we talk about it. We don't hide anything from each other. I prefer to hear it directly from his mouth no matter how bad. He has no reason to lie to me because he knows I will stand by him anytime, any day. Thus no matter what anyone says about him, it doesn't bother me.

I know my husband has a good heart and he will stand by you through thick and thin. Once you are his friend, he becomes loyal to a fault. And even if you decide to make yourself his enemy by letting him down or cheating him, he would never seek your downfall.

My husband can be too trusting and I warn him every time that it is not everyone that would reciprocate the goodwill he shows towards them. But I see that he can't change himself. It is his nature so I simply pray that God gives him a discerning spirit, in order to know who to avoid.

As for the impostor you mentioned, I will not glorify her by calling her a lady but somebody's child. Because the age gap between her and my husband makes it more of an insult to refer to her as a lady. Her matter is not something I want to entertain.

As per your question on how I reacted to the news of her claim, truth be told, the first thing I did when I heard the news was to check with God if truly He would fold His arms and let anyone destroy a home He used His hands to build and guard jealously for 31 years and He told me that her claim is untrue and I should disregard it. In the end, the truth will prevail. The young lady knows the father of her child. And when I checked with my husband, he told me the child is not his! God has spoken and my husband has also spoken, nothing else matters. So, I am not moved by naysayers or rumours about her claims.

Is it true Adaobi Alagwu is now Mrs Ayeni and that her child is a daughter of Ayeni, how would you react to that?

I am not surprised the so-called girl is parading herself to be who she is not; by so doing, it becomes clear that she is a desperate gold digger and a slut who thinks she can become Mrs Ayeni by merely pinning a child on her highest paying victim. And it is quite surprising that despite her degree in Law, she needs somebody to tell her that a child is not a marriage certificate! Neither does a child offer her security to maintain a fake lifestyle that she has become accustomed to. And to now think that the child does not belong to my husband makes her claim even more embarrassing. Anyway, she has been warned through our lawyers to desist from parading herself as Mrs Ayeni because she is not and she will never be as the Lord lives. My husband and I are legally married

As for her calling her child by my husband's surname, Ayeni is many. The child is not Tunde Ayeni's child. Period! When she is tired of calling the child the borrowed name, she will change it to her father's name.

You mentioned that your husband is quite generous and has a good heart and people take that for granted to say different things. It is alleged that people who are close to her, Miss Alagwu, claimed your husband bought her a lot of of gifts when the going was good…

Let me tell you something, I didn't want to go to this length before but since you asked, I will answer. Here is my take: It may appear as if my husband's name is always associated with messy affairs with one lady or the other, but it doesn't change my opinion of my husband and you cannot convince me that my husband is a flirt because I didn't marry him as a flirt. Even if you show me all the evidence of how many women he has been with. Why? Because money makes a man misbehave. Friends make a man misbehave, and strange women seduce men with all manner of Jazz (juju) to make a man misbehave! Rather, I pity my husband as an unsuspecting and naive victim of the level of desperation and diabolical tendencies of this runs girl he got associated with. Even with his fellow men, my husband is too trusting. So, you can imagine the level of his nonchalance and how it led to such a mess. How can a man who is happily married and in his right senses be spending lavishly on a prostitute of that age?

Such magnitude of spending should raise the question 'In return for what…five-minute pleasure?' When spending becomes unusual, you should suspect that a man is under a spell. So, whatever she claims my husband bought for her, she knows what she did to get it from him. But that season has ended. I promise you.

To answer your question on whether the allegation has affected my marriage or my home? I am happy to let you know that Christ is the bedrock of my home, he has built a wall of fire around it and I can confidently assure you that my home is not threatened. My marriage is standing solid. My husband's love for me is not threatened and he is not lost. My children are unmoved by the claim and my husband has no children outside of the three we have together.

Do you have any advice for young ladies out there?

My advice is that they should marry their own friends and know what their husbands are capable of doing or not doing so that they can properly defend them. In addition, build your home on Christ, not on trust. Trust may fail you along the line! When you marry your own friend, it is easy to see their pain and struggles rather than their faults, and this helps you to render them the necessary support they need to live up to your expectation. That support is prayer. You cannot have a successful man or marriage without being prayerful.

A lot of people get into marriage praying for their husbands to be rich without being prepared for all the things that accompany success. You need to know who your spouse really is. If I didn't build my home on God and put my trust in Him; if I didn't have the wisdom to differentiate an action that is my husband's from what he did under some undue influence, the enemy would have succeeded with their plans. But I thank God for His faithfulness in my life and that of my husband and children.

As a fashion expert, can you describe Nigeria's position in the world of fashion?

What I can say about the fashion industry in Nigeria is that it has improved tremendously from what it used to be, but we are yet to attain global standards because our improvement is wrongly channelled. If you look at the fashion industry in the Western world and compare it with the fashion industry in Nigeria you will see that we are not even ready to compete. In Nigeria as we speak the leading designers are still practising made-to-measure and freehand cut, and are making garments that cannot be sold abroad. Why? Because the focus is on the Nigerian market and getting little money here and there.

A lot of our designers still measure and sew for clients, but do not have any defined sizing concept that they could use to compete abroad. Sizing forces you to update your skills. We need to develop our skills and bring them to par with global standards. In the West, for example, garments are made through pattern making and computer aided designs.

NOTE: Read full interview in the online edition on www.thisdaylive.com

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 26-July-2023, 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	263.82	264.97	39.40%
Afrinvest Plutus Fund	100.00	100.00	6.50%
Nigeria International Debt Fund	331.48	331.48	7.17%
Afrinvest Dollar Fund	107.45	108.55	1.91%
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	11.62%
AIICO Balanced Fund	4.45	4.54	30.43%
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	100.00	100.00	7.11%
Anchoria Equity Fund	188.50	190.87	30.05%
Anchoria Fixed Income Fund	1.34	1.34	9.05%
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	29.19	30.07	33.04%
ARM Discovery Balanced Fund	636.35	655.54	22.09%
ARM Ethical Fund	49.18	50.66	9.00%
ARM Eurobond Fund ($)	1.15	1.15	1.79%
ARM Fixed Income Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
ARM Money Market Fund	1.00	1.00	9.22%
ARM Short Term Bond Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
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	100.05	100.05	10.13%
AVA GAM Fixed Income Naira Fund	1,138.65	1,138.65	6.25%
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	2.22	2.22	9.85%
Capital Express Balanced Fund(Formerly: Union Trustees Mixed Fund)	2.81	2.88	-200.22%
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	1.02	1.02	4.81%
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	10.51%
Paramount Equity Fund	24.52	25.05	42.20%
Women's Investment Fund	194.01	197.54	29.09%
CHD Nigeria Bond Fund	98.23	98.23	12.09%
CHD Nigeria Dollar Income Fund	1.00	1.00	11.46%
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	8.11%
Cordros Milestone Fund	157.49	158.47	22.79%
Cordros Fixed Income Fund	107.17	107.17	10.42%
Cordros Halal Fixed Income Fund	104.31	104.31	5.85%
Cordros Dollar Fund ($)	112.35	112.35	7.34%
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	1.00	1.00	9.66%
Coronation Balanced Fund	1.43	1.45	25.92%
Coronation Fixed Income Fund	1.41	1.41	3.47%
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	N/A	N/A	N/A
EDC Nigeria Money Market Fund Class B	N/A	N/A	N/A
EDC Nigeria Fixed Income Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
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	N/A	N/A	N/A
Emerging Africa Bond Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
Emerging Africa Balanced Diversity Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
Emerging Africa Eurobond Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
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	1569.55	1569.55	11.68%
FBN Balanced Fund	249.96	253.92	25.17%
FBN Halal Fund	131.45	131.45	13.33%
FBN Money Market Fund	100.00	100.00	10.16%
FBN Dollar Fund	124.67	124.67	7.12%
FBN Smart Beta Equity Fund	240.89	243.60	45.46%
FBN Specialized Dollar Fund	110.08	110.08	9.39%
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	7.34%
Legacy Debt Fund	3.51	3.51	-1.68%
Legacy Equity Fund	2.65	2.71	32.55%
Legacy USD Bond Fund	1.30	1.30	3.15%
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	5,167.16	5,203.50	40.20%
Coral Income Fund	3,873.88	3,873.88	7.68%
Coral Money Market Fund	100.00	100.00	9.71%
FSDH Dollar Fund	1.17	1.17	5.57%

GUARANTY TRUST FUND MANAGERS LIMITED			enquiries@investment-one.com
Web: www.gtcoplc.bank; Tel: +234 812 992 1045,+234 1 448 8888			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
Guaranty Trust Money Market Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
Guaranty Trust Balanced Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
Vantage Guaranteed Income Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
Guaranty Trust Equity Income Fund (VEIF)	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	1.77	1.80	11.02%
Lotus Halal Fixed Income Fund	1,182.31	1,182.31	5.81%
MERISTEM WEALTH MANAGEMENT LTD			info@meristemwealth.com
Web: www.meristemwealth.com/funds/; Tel: +2348028496012			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
Meristem Equity Market Fund	16.20	16.30	39.73%
Meristem Money Market Fund	10.00	10.00	11.29%
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)	102.29	102.29	10.12%
Norrenberger Money Market Fund (NMMF)	100.00	100.00	10.90%
Norrenberger Dollar Fund (NDF) ($)	101.96	101.96	10.71%
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	2.01	2.06	28.09%
PACAM Fixed Income Fund	11.83	12.18	7.28%
PACAM Money Market Fund	10.00	10.00	10.87%
PACAM Equity Fund	2.15	2.18	51.53%
PACAM EuroBond Fund	128.00	131.81	15.24%
SCM CAPITAL ASSET MANAGEMENT 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 The Frontier Fund	158.60	166.99	26.16%
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	1.05	1.05	11.04%
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	4,590.67	4,628.76	35.44%
Stanbic IBTC Bond Fund	252.01	252.01	6.98%
Stanbic IBTC Ethical Fund	1.93	1.95	53.97%
Stanbic IBTC Guaranteed Investment Fund	343.30	343.30	9.63%
Stanbic IBTC Iman Fund	338.43	342.08	44.80%
Stanbic IBTC Money Market Fund	1.00	1.00	9.58%
Stanbic IBTC Nigerian Equity Fund	16,445.99	16,638.42	50.60%
Stanbic IBTC Dollar Fund (USD)	1.42	1.42	9.86%
Stanbic IBTC Shariah Fixed Income Fund	125.00	125.00	6.92%
Stanbic IBTC Enhanced Short-Term Fixed Income Fund	120.95	120.95	13.70%
Stanbic IBTC Absolute Fund	4,805.44	4,805.44	12.96%
Stanbic IBTC Aggressive Fund	4,752.93	4,812.11	70.95%
Stanbic IBTC Conservative Fund	4,975.65	4,998.76	30.75%
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	1.25	1.26	36.96%
United Capital Balanced Fund	1.74	1.76	34.43%
United Capital Wealth for Women Fund	1.35	1.36	25.69%
United Capital Sukuk Fund	1.13	1.13	12.25%
United Capital Fixed Income Fund	1.89	1.89	7.02%
United Capital Eurobond Fund	121.48	121.48	5.80%
United Capital Global Fixed Income Fund	1.05	1.05	8.76%
United Capital Money Market Fund	1.00	1.00	9.41%
Web: www.quantumzenith.com.ng; Tel: +234 1-2784219			
Fund Name	**Bid Price**	**Offer Price**	**Yield / T-Rtn**
Zenith Balanced Strategy Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
Zenith ESG Impact Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
Zenith Income Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
Zenith Money Market Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
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	N/A	N/A	N/A
Vetiva Consumer Goods Exchange Traded Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
Vetiva Griffin 30 Exchange Traded Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
Vetiva Money Market Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
Vetiva Industrial Goods Exchange Traded Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A
Vetiva S&P Nigeria Sovereign Bond Exchange Traded Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A

REITS

Fund Name	NAV Per Share	Yield / T-Rtn
SFS REIT	119.40	4.92%
Union Homes REIT	54.58	2.94%
Nigeria Real Estate Investment Trust	101.72	
UPDC REIT	10.08	-11.73%

EXCHANGE TRADED FUNDS

Fund Name	Bid Price	Offer Price	Yield / T-Rtn
Lotus Halal Equity Exchange Traded Fund	20.99	21.09	35.55%
SIAML Pension ETF 40	85.00	85.00	-33.97%
Stanbic IBTC ETF 30 Fund	259.99	259.99	157.80%
MERGROWTH ETF	17.40	17.50	42.56%
MERVALUE ETF	16.40	16.50	62.76%

INFRASTRUCTURE FUND

Fund Name	NAV Per Share	Yield / T-Rtn
Chapel Hill Denham Nigeria Infrastructure Debt Fund	108.39	0.00%

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.

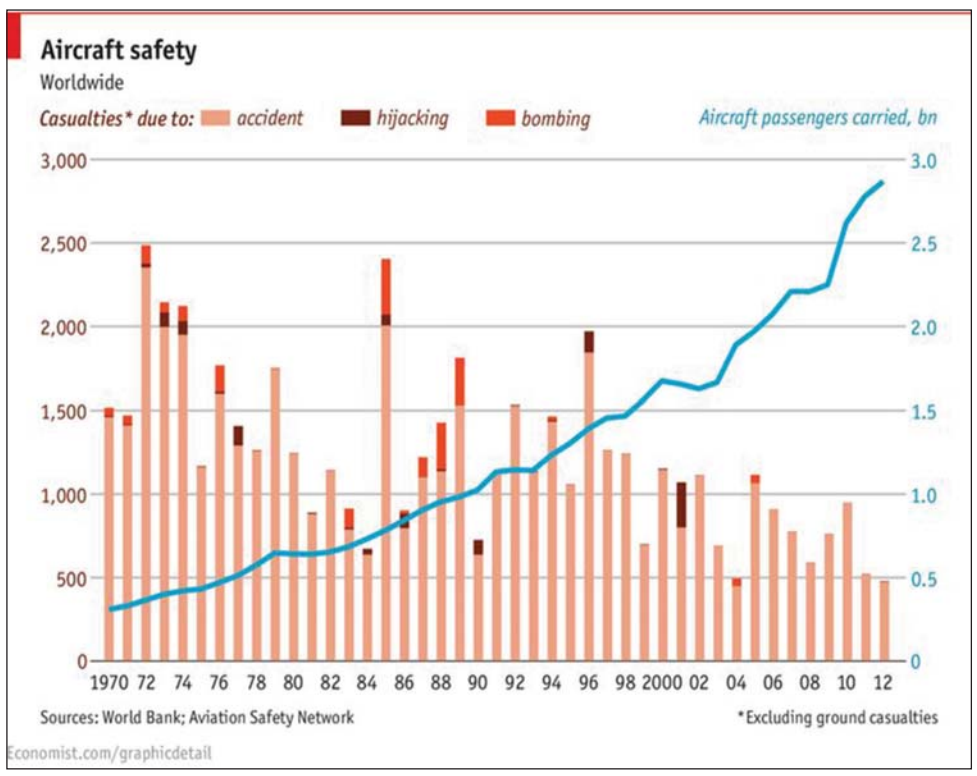
BUSINESSWORLD

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RATES AS AT JULY 27, 2023

MONEY MARKET		REPO		S & P INDEX		S & P INDEX		EXCHANGE RATE
OPR	11.25%	CALL	19.12%	INDEX LEVEL	611.31%	1/4 TO DATE	-0.07%	N795.28/ 1 US DOLLAR*
OVERNIGHT	11.50%	1-MONTH	16.25%	1-DAY	0.03%	YEAR TO DATE	0.48%	*AS AT MONDAY, JULY 24, 2023
		3-MONTH	15.75%	MONTH-TO-DATE	-0.7%			

Aviation Experts Call for Continuous Safety after Several Years of Zero Accident in Nigerian Airspace





Chinedu Eze

Aviation industry experts have called on the Federal Airport Authority of Nigeria (FAAN) to ensure continuous safety of the Nigerian airspace, having maintained zero accident for close to 10 years.

The industry experts made the call based on the recent signals from the aviation industry, which indicate that airlines and regulatory agencies are beginning to handle aviation safety with complacency.

They therefore called on the relevant authorities to brace up in order to ensure that air passengers continue to enjoy the good record of zero accident in the sector.

According to them, for almost ten years, Nigeria has maintained zero accident involving scheduled airlines. During the period, Nigeria recorded only three deaths involving helicopter accidents, which many considered as a very good safety record globally.

However, in the last two weeks there have been incidents that constituted safety breach that threaten Nigeria's good record on safety and these are the presence of contaminated aviation fuel, which some airlines purchased and it ruined components of their engines.

The second incident is about the warning notice issued on Monday by the Nigeria Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA), alleging that domestic airlines overwrite the Cockpit Voice Recorder (CVR) of aircraft after serious incidents and accidents.

NCAA said airlines indulge in the unprofessional act in order to circumvent investigation by the Nigeria Safety Investigation Bureau (NSIB).

It went further to say, "This practice makes it practically impossible for the Nigerian Safety Investigation Bureau (NSIB) to retrieve actual data to aid in its investigation as required by Paragraphs 25 and 26 of the Civil Aviation (Investigation of Air Accidents and Incidents) Regulations 2019. This action has also impeded and posed undesirable difficulty in ensuring that NSIB successfully discharge its statutory mandate of investigating accidents and serious incidents.

"Unfortunately, this unwholesome practice has recently been detected in the industry. The Authority, by this AOL (letter), wishes to reiterate that Nig. CARS Part 7.8.1.3 (b), which is derived from the provisions of ICAO Annex 6, Section 11.6 states that, "To preserve flight recorder records, flight recorders shall be deactivated upon completion of flight time following an accident or incident. The flight recorders shall not be reactivated before their disposition as determined in accordance with the accident incident regulations of Nigeria."

However, there are doubts that the flight crew may be able to erase or overwrite what is recorded in the CVR, but aviation expert, Sushil Bajpai, who writes for Quora, an online medium, argued that flight crew could erase recordings on CVR because it contains private recordings of the crew, which they may consider confidential. He however noted that flight crew may not have access to Cockpit Flight Data Recorder (DFDR).

"The flight crew quite obviously had serious concerns about violation of the private conservation between the crew. If there is no accident there is no need for anyone to hear the conversation between the flight crew. The erase switch was provided so that the crew could erase the conversation after normal landings.

The story continues online on **www.thisdaylive.com**

Dele Oye: Nigeria Can Become World's Leading Outsourcing Destination

Eromosele Abiodun

The National President of the Nigerian Association of Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture (NACCIMA), Dele Kelvin Oye, has said Nigeria has the potential to become a leading outsourcing destination, taking advantage of its large pool of highly educated and talented workforce.

The NACCIMA boss, however, noted that the nation must first take deliberate steps to confront various challenges that have hindered its progress in the past, including security and political instability, poor infrastructure, and limited access to finance, among others.

Oye stated this while speaking at the Nigerian Export Promotion Council (NEPC) National Conference on Trade-in-Services in Nigeria, with the theme, "Making Nigeria a Global Outsourcing Destination," held at the NEPC Headquarters in Abuja.

The conference with emphasis on outsourcing and Information Technology Enabled Services (ITES) in Nigeria, aims at providing a platform for networking, sharing ideas, and suggesting policies that would advance the interest of the outsourcing industry in Nigeria.

Oye noted, "As the President of NACCIMA, it is my responsibility to champion the interests of Nigerian businesses and entrepreneurs. We are all aware that outsourcing has become a key business strategy in today's global economy. Companies all over the world are seeking to outsource their non-core activities to more cost-effective locations. Nigeria has the potential to become a leading outsourcing destination and take advantage of this trend, especially with its large pool of highly educated and talented workforce.

"However, the road to achieving this will not be easy. We must confront various challenges that have hindered our progress in the past. These challenges include security and political instability, poor infrastructure, and limited access to finance, to name a few."

He continued: "But I am glad to report that efforts are being made to overcome these challenges. The government has rolled out various initiatives to improve the business environment and attract foreign investors. The establishment of special economic zones across the country is one such initiative that is geared toward creating a conducive environment for doing business.

"In addition, the private sector has a critical role to play in making Nigeria a global outsourcing destination. Businesses must invest in upskilling their employees and providing them with the necessary tools and resources to become competitive in the global market. We must also foster a culture of innovation and creativity, which is essential for developing high-quality services that meet global standards."

The NACCIMA boss added, "Distinguished guests, ladies, and gentlemen, let me conclude by saying that making Nigeria a global outsourcing destination requires a collaborative effort from all stakeholders. It is only by working together that we can overcome the challenges and capitalize on the opportunities that lie ahead.

The story continues online on **www.thisdaylive.com**

MARKET DATA AS AT THURSDAY, JULY 27, 2023

BONDS

DESCRIPTION	Price	Yield	Change (%)	Updated Time
^13.53 23-MAR-2025	106.81	9.03	-0.19	July 21, 2023
^12.50 22-JAN-2026	103.19	11.01	0.16	July 21, 2023
^16.2884 17-MAR-27	112.91	11.82	0.00	July 21, 2023
^13.98 23-FEB-2028	104.79	12.57	0.14	July 21, 2023
^14.55 26-APR-2029	108.40	12.45	-0.03	July 21, 2023

BILLS

MATURITY	Discount	Yield	Change (%)	Updated Time
NTB 24-Aug-23	2.25	2.25	0.00	July 21, 2023
NTB 7-Sep-23	2.41	2.42	0.00	July 21, 2023
NTB 26-Oct-23	3.00	3.02	0.00	July 21, 2023
NTB 9-Nov-23	3.17	3.20	0.00	July 21, 2023
NTB 7-Dec-23	3.50	3.55	0.00	July 21, 2023

CPS

MATURITY	Discount	Yield	Change (%)	Updated Time
JULI CP II 25-OCT-23	15.81	16.49	0.00	July 21, 2023
ZEDC CP I 17-NOV-23	13.99	14.66	0.00	July 21, 2023
NSDL CP IIA 22-NOV-23	18.23	19.44	0.00	July 21, 2023
MTNN CP V 23-NOV-23	10.82	11.24	0.00	July 21, 2023
NSDL CP IIB 23-NOV-23	18.24	19.45	0.00	July 21, 2023

OTC FX FUTURES

CONTRACT TENOR (MONTH)	Contract	Current Rate (₦/$)	Updated Time
1	NGUS JUL 31 2024	892.95	July 21, 2023
2	NGUS AUG 28 2024	905.96	July 21, 2023
3	NGUS SEP 25 2024	916.80	July 21, 2023
4	NGUS OCT 30 2024	927.64	July 21, 2023
5	NGUS NOV 27 2024	938.48	July 21, 2023

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NIGERIA POST FUEL SUBSIDY

JOSHUA J. OMOJUWA

canvasses a campaign on how to survive the times



See page 25

LAGOS, TECHNOLOGY AND TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

Traffic management is getting better in the state, thanks to infusion of technology, reckons

BOLANLE OGUNLOLA



See page 25

EDITORIAL

RETHINKING LOCAL GOVERNMENTS



26

There is need for some consensus on how to preserve good policies, writes

CHUKWUEMEKA UWANAKA

OBASANJO AND NIGERIA: A POLICY POST-MORTEM?

At the peak of Nigeria's constitution amendment process in 2006, one of the arguments by the proponents for changes to the maximum of two-term limits for the president and state governors, was the need for sustainability of critical socioeconomic reforms. Drawing from the experience of Asian countries such as Singapore, China and Malaysia, their argument was that the then President Olusegun Obasanjo would need an extra term in office, for critical reforms to be sustained. The current socioeconomic challenges in Nigeria, characterised by sharp rises in energy cost, rising public debt, costly importation of refined petroleum products, declined foreign investment inflow, and a sharp drop in the value of the local currency and purchasing power, suggests some plausible merit to their position on the review of term limit- and necessitates some policy review of the Obasanjo years.

It is important to state that there is no record of Obasanjo publicly supporting attempts at reviewing the constitutional term limit for President, as part of the then Constitutional Amendments Bill.

The current administration of Bola Ahmed Tinubu assumed office on May 29, 2023 at a time when 96.3 percent of national revenue was spent on debt servicing, a 35 percent difference in value of foreign exchange at official and parallel market- with huge opportunities for arbitrage, unemployment at 33.3 percent, inflation at 22.4 percent and 63 percent of population or 133 million people living in multidimensional poverty. Prevailing circumstances therefore led to a series of fiscal and monetary policies. The short-term outcome of these policies has been an increase in the price of petrol from N198 to N617 per litre, while the official value of the Naira has declined by over 50 percent, from N460 per $1, to N778 to $1, with the attendant loss in purchasing power of Nigerians.

A better understanding of what led the Tinubu administration into these rafts of policies, may however require some policy and contextual review, and maybe lead to a change in approach towards policy, leadership and governance in Nigeria.

Though he had a stint in office as Military Head of State from 1976 to 1979, Olusegun Obasanjo, a retired General of the Nigerian Army, was elected as president of Nigeria, and served a constitutional two terms between 1999 and 2007. His assumption of office in 1999 was on the backdrop of military rule since 1983, with the attendant international sanctions, political instability and economic challenges. In his eight years as elected president, the socioeconomic reforms he introduced, some of them well into his second term, will be assessed, to demonstrate their relevance to contemporary events in Nigeria.

First the petroleum sector. On May 17, 2007, and after many unsuccessful attempts at refurbishing ailing government-owned petroleum refineries, the Obasanjo administration through the Bureau of Public Enterprises, concluded the



privatization of the New Port-Harcourt Refining & Petrochemical Company Limited and Kaduna Refining & Petrochemical Company Limited refineries. This privatization involved the sale of 51 percent of government shares to a consortium led by Bluestar Oil Services Limited, that had Dangote Oil with 55 percent, Zenon Oil with 25 percent, and Transnational Corporation with 5 percent. Prior to this exercise and despite Nigeria being the 10th largest oil producing country in the world, Nigeria had been spending huge sums of foreign exchange in importing refined petroleum products for domestic needs. This was because its four refineries - Old Port-Harcourt, New Port-Harcourt, Warri and Kaduna, which have a combined processing capacity of 445,000 barrels a day, operated at below 70 percent capacity, and were periodically shut down due to operational and management problems.

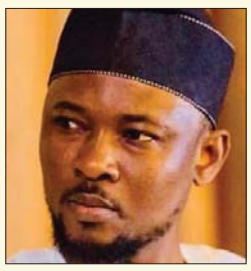
The logic in the privatization policy was for Nigeria to subsequently refine petroleum products in Nigeria, earn 49 percent of profits from functional refineries, and reduce the huge amount of foreign exchange spent of petroleum imports. This will ultimately strengthen the local currency, increase purchasing power and enhance macroeconomic management. The privatization of the two refineries was however reversed by the succeeding administration, due to concerns about the $750 million paid for the two refineries. In the time after the reversal, three of the four refineries, which are Port Harcourt, Kaduna and Warri refineries, have incurred at least N1.64 trillion in cumulative losses in their operations since 2014, while the government has spent N13.7 trillion or $74.386 billion on fuel subsidy in 15 years (2005 -2020). If concerns on the valuation of the privatization exercise and additional assets such as pipelines and storage tanks had been resolved, instead of outright cancellation, these additional cost on Nigeria would have been prevented, and the contemporary macroeconomic situation probably avoided. The awaited panacea is the ongoing 650,000 barrels per day Dangote refinery project, worth over $18.5bn, which is ironic, given that Dangote was part of the consortium that won the cancelled privatization exercise.

Still on the energy sector, the Obasanjo administration conceived and began implementation of the ambitious National Integrated Power Project (NIPP) in 2004, to address insufficient power generation and gas flaring. The idea of a NIPP, which entails having all the ingredients that make up power into a single entity, was designed as a fast-track government financed enterprise to stabilize Nigeria's electricity supply system, while the private sector driven structure of the Electric Power Sector Reform Act (EPSRA) of 2005 took effect. Taking into consideration the relevance of power supply to real economic growth, the original concept had seven medium sized gas fired power stations in the gas producing states, which have subsequently been expanded. The Federal Government therefore incorporated The Niger Delta Power Holding Company Limited (NDPHC) as a limited liability company, to be the legal entity holding the NIPP assets, in line with private sector-orientated best business practices. Its initial funding of $2.5 billion was drawn from the country's Excess Crude Oil Account, after legislative approval.

Similar to what occurred in the petroleum industry, the succeeding administration subjected the NIPP to undue political, financial and legal scrutiny, which led to over two years interruption on project funding and implementation. Contracted commitments totaled US$7.385 billion, at time of suspension in 2007. By the time a decision was made to continue with the project, cost overruns, contractual defaults and issues that normally occur when planned projects are unduly interrupted had set in. The NIPP project disruption and attendant impact on investor confidence have contributed to the current electricity situation in the country, where about 85 million people or 43 percent of population lack access to the electricity grid. This makes Nigeria the country with the largest energy access deficit in the world, leading to estimated annual economic losses of $26.2 billion (□10.1 trillion), or about two percent of GDP, according to the World Bank. What may be the saving grace for the sector was the EPSR Act of 2005, which preserved some of the reforms in the sector.

For core economic management, debt relief, banking reforms and attracting foreign direct investment (FDI) were some of key goals of the Obasanjo administration. At the time he assumed office in 1999, Nigeria's external debt had ballooned to about $30 billion due to mismanagement and sanctions, with significant parts of government revenue spent on debt servicing as total debt-to-GDP ratio rose to 66.13 percent in 2002. With greater vigour and a diverse economic management team that had international credentials, a debt cancellation agreement was reached in October 2005 with the Paris Club.

Dr. Uwanaka
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Joshua Omojuwa canvasses a campaign on how to survive the times

NIGERIA POST FUEL SUBSIDY

One of my favourite passages from the Holy Bible speaks about the inevitability and reality of seasons. 'For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven…a time to plant…a time to build up…a time to embrace…and a time to sew.' The verbs from the excerpts of that passage reflect the way I see the times we are in currently. These are tough times for everyone in Nigeria. It seems to me that we reached a consensus that the fuel subsidy had to go. That clarity is however absent with the subject of how as a people we will brave the effects of the removal.

Generally speaking, the implementation of public policies (whether good or bad), brings shocks and unpleasant consequences to the current system before the benefits accrue: call it a sort of gestation period. In Nigeria's case, there was an apparent consensus subsidy had to go. The real challenge is in having to navigate the tough gestation period before its benefits become apparent and then,



sustained. The point when people can say their lives are getting better because of the policy.

Save for the inevitable public discourse around the issue, the government has not done much to educate the people on the inevitable behavioural and attitudinal change necessary to better withstand the pressure and consequences of costlier fuel prices. A friend posted some numbers on twitter recently: someone who usually filled the tank of his SUV with ₦20,000 before the subsidy removal, now spends ₦60,000 for the same amount of fuel. He fills his tank an average of three times in a month, which means that government was subsidising this person's movement at the monthly rate of ₦120,000/month. That's a whopping N1.4m or so every year. Bear in mind that most people with such SUVs have other cars. Meanwhile the national minimum wage is ₦360,000 a year. No wonder the poor could hardly breathe under such an unfair distribution of government benefits.

It is difficult for an old dog to learn new tricks. To assume that because a new way is more beneficial, people who are used to doing things differently, even to their own detriment, will make the switch willingly, is naive. Resistance to the removal of fuel subsidy is regardless of the fact that the savings from subsidy is to be ploughed into sectors where the gains will be felt not just today, but for a long time to come. The key to resolving this issue is a massive behavioural change campaign. However, the most difficult behavioural change to orchestrate is one that requires the participation of a mass of people. For it to succeed, the campaign must be designed with tools and measures that will arouse motivation for change, empower the people to make the change happen, and make them see the positive outcomes of that change before they even come to fruition. Removing subsidy before implementing these measures is tantamount to putting the cart before the horse. However, it is not too late.

We have treated the need for mass orientation with kid gloves for far too long. The fuel subsidy removal was a World Cup Final moment for an organisation like the National Orientation Agency (NOA) to shine if not for anything but that those who often wonder what it exists for would find answers in the way which they were made to understand the times and the changes that need to be made to survive it.

The onus remains on the government to engage with the citizenry through direct and indirect means. This is not just about government though. Private organisations must do what they can to ease the effects of the fuel subsidy removal. I have a few suggestions.

Easing the burden of the cost of transportation on workers by exploring Work From Home options at least twice a week, is a good place to start. Covid lockdown has shown that with the right measures, WFH is not synonymous with a decline in productivity. Another incentive could be that those who maintain a certain level of productivity automatically earn the privilege to continue to work from home for a longer period than those who do not.

It is also time to seriously consider increasing salaries. Whilst the federal and state governments navigate the bureaucracy to enable this, private organisations are more flexible and have no such constraints. There are particular sectors where profit is inversely proportional to the value they deliver to the economy. This is a good time to plough some of that money into increased salaries for their staff. Thankfully some banks and other private companies have taken the initiative.

Government officials must exhibit a sensitivity that is regrettably absent in public life. Measures to discourage corruption and wastage must be adopted and the reorientation ought to start at the top. Corruption should attract the same consequences as economic sabotage, which is what it really is. The police and other law enforcement agencies must also adjust their behaviours. This is not the time to push citizens to the wall with oily demands for bribes masquerading as requests for particulars. Any attempt to extort citizens at this time must be considered an offense against the state. Times are already hard, no government official should make it excruciating.

'Let the poor breath' has since gone viral, often serving as a joke. Whilst I appreciate the utility of comedy for the maintenance of good mental health, it is important to remember to make life easier for one another. In the absence of state-run social safety nets, there is no better time to set up private interventions. Food banks, soup kitchens, medical outreaches: any and everything to make the poor breathe. Whilst we look out for one another, the government must hasten its rollout of response mechanisms to meet the immediate and remote challenges of the subsidy removal. The relevant agencies need to be alive to their responsibilities. This is not the time to be caught napping.

There is a time for everything, this is the time for everyone, in or out of government, to stand up to be counted. ■

Omojuwa
is chief strategist, Alpha Reach and author, Digital Wealth Book

Traffic management is getting better in the state, thanks to infusion of technology, reckons BOLANLE OGUNLOLA

LAGOS, TECHNOLOGY AND TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

The extent to which the economy of a society will develop is dependent on how technologically-driven the public transportation system is. In fact, the survival of any economy is largely determined by the efficiency of the transportation system. And to a large extent, this efficiency can only be achieved with the application of technology in transportation.

With the pronouncement on the use of technology for Traffic Management on 16th May, 2017 and the subsequent introduction of Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) system, Lagos State has joined the league of world smart cities with unalloyed sustainability plan.

The commencement of ANPR for the verification of vehicle documents such as vehicle license, road worthiness and insurance synchronized on e-platforms have brought about easy accessibility to vehicle status, while removing human intervention which impedes traffic.

Before the adoption of technology, manual verifications were conducted by the Vehicle Inspection Officers (VIOs) through checks on the road, with the attendant clash between the



officers and the violators.

The operational value of ANPR technology through removal of human intervention has led to the maintenance of tranquility on the roads, reduction in traffic and enhanced economic opportunities and growth across the State.

Another integral part of the deployment of technology in traffic management in Lagos State is the Traffic Management Solution (TMS) device. The TMS is a Traffic Law compliance scheme that allows the real-time capture of picture and video evidence of road traffic and vehicle compliance violations as they occur.

Through the deployment of the device, the perennial traffic gridlock usually generated through controversies between the traffic law enforcement officers and traffic law violators is gradually reducing.

The offender may choose to visit a Traffic Law Court and present the violation number for the violation he/she wishes to challenge in line with Global best practice.

Significantly, with the introduction of the TMS device, the need for traffic law enforcement personnel to have physical contact whatsoever with vehicular offenders on the road will gradually reduce. This is because they now only face the duty of capturing violations and providing an enabling environment for efficient and effective traffic management, which, of course, is their primary duty.

The goal of this modern device is to simplify enforcement by eliminating situations that facilitate traffic impediments and cause counterproductive results on our roads.

This is exactly how traffic violations and compliance checks are processed in developed countries all over the world, and Lagos, being an emerging smart city, should not be different in any way.

In another development, reports gathered through traffic count survey have clearly shown that the roundabouts and junctions, which were built when the State's population was around 3-5 million, could no longer cope with the current population of over 22 million.

In September 2019, the Lagos State Ministry of Transportation embarked on Traffic Management Intervention Plan (TMIP) for 60 identified Junctions/Corridors with a view to enforcing the proper use of road carriageway, pedestrian walkways, parks and garages. This is in order to reduce travel time, lessen pedestrian/motorist conflicts, and improve safety on the roads.

The TMIP plan led to the reconfiguration of the Junctions, including six major roundabouts, which were remodeled into junctions. These include Allen Junction, Lekki Junction 1, Lekki Junction 2, Ikotun Junction, Maryland Junction and Abraham Adesanya Junction. All of them are now under the control of traffic signal technology, thereby replacing manual traffic management style.

The synchronized smart traffic signal lights at the junctions have contributed in great measures to seamless traffic management across major junctions and roundabouts in the State. Right now, going through Allen Roundabout, for instance, requires less travel time, as opposed to what was obtainable in the past.

The same experience is similar in Maryland junction, which used to be a major traffic bottleneck in the past.

At Ikotun Junction, human error is the reason why the traffic signal light control has not been maximized. The conflicts between transport unions, motorists and traders are the major cause of the setback the junction is experiencing.

Thanks to the latest infusion of technology, traffic management is getting better across the State. Evidence abounds to support this claim. In Ikeja Under Bridge, for instance, navigating the corridor now takes lesser travel time, courtesy the traffic signal lights, as opposed to what was happening before.

Similarly, following the introduction of the 'no vehicle inspection, no road worthiness certificate' policy, which commenced in January 2022, the Lagos State Government has been able to stem incessant accidents, loss of lives and property.

The policy regime has put under check vehicles that could pose danger to other road users through minimum safety standard tests conducted at the 31 computerised vehicle inspection centres across the State and the two mobile centres. Through these centres, a reasonable degree of sanity is being maintained on Lagos roads.

The good news has also extended to Apapa and its environment in terms of reduction in traffic congestion. Sequel to the taking over of Apapa Traffic Management and control with the aim of restoring sanity and socio-economic prosperity to Apapa and its environs, the state government partnered with the Nigeria Port Authority (NPA) for the introduction of e-call up technology system for truck access into the ports. ■

Ogunlola
is Director, Public Affairs, Ministry of Transportation, Alausa, Ikeja

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EDITORIAL

RETHINKING LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Local councils should be empowered in order to perform their constitutional functions

The 1999 Constitution not only recognises the third tier of government, but it also prescribes its functions generally to include having the duty to "participate in economic planning and development of the area." The idea behind the creation of local government administration is essentially to bring the effect and benefit of governance nearer the people at the grassroots. The need for this tier of government is further demonstrated by their sheer numbers – 774. Unfortunately, despite trillions of Naira that have accrued to them in the past 24 years, Nigerians have not felt their impact.

In the fourth schedule of the constitution, the specific functions of the local government are well laid out. One of it, for instance, says, "local governments shall be responsible for the construction and maintenance of roads, streets, street lightings, drains and other public highways, parks, gardens, open spaces or such public facilities as may be prescribed from time to time by the House of Assembly of a state." Also, the local government administration has the duty to provide and maintain public conveniences, sewage and refuse disposal.

But over the years, the performance of local governments has been disappointing. And this is simply because they bear very little or no impact on the lives of the people at the grassroots. Indeed, most of the local governments have abandoned their basic duties. But for the physical existence of their offices, many local governments exist only on paper. Worse still, council officials are adept in the collection of rates and tolls from the communities, markets, motor parks, among others, without much thought of maintaining the structures and facilities from which those rates and taxes are collected.

The terrible state of feeder roads, street roads, and inability to clear even refuse bins are all signature malaises of the failure of local government administration. In several of these local governments across the country, it is difficult to believe they are responsible for local dispensaries, health centres, and markets. Ironically, local governments now receive much more money, both from the federation account and internally generated revenues. Sadly, many of them merely exist for sharing monthly allocations from the federation account among top members of the council and political godfathers.

That the councils maintain a joint account with the state governments has been blamed for this sordid state of affair. Some state governments are in the habit of hijacking the local government funds, releasing to them only a fraction of their entitlements for paying bills and maintaining statutory overhead expenses. Worse still, many of the governors sometimes release the pinched council funds with the attitude of 'you should be grateful for even this bit'. State governors have been consistently accused of frustrating the local councils by unnecessarily dipping their hands into their statutory allocations.

Former President Muhammadu Buhari once expressed misgivings on the relationship between the local governments and states, saying that "the states feel like they own the local governments." Apparently in a bid to deal with this problem, he signed Executive Order 10 which grants financial autonomy to the legislature and the judiciary in the 36 states of the country. But in nullifying the order, the Supreme Court judges held that the Constitution provides a "clear delineation between the state and federal government."

We believe that the local governments are important to the development of the country and for that reason, there is an urgent need for a reform that will make them play the critical role for which they were established. That should be part of the legislative agenda of President Bola Tinubu's administration.



State governors have been consistently accused of frustrating the local councils by unnecessarily dipping their hands into their statutory allocations

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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

WOMEN IN NIGERIA'S CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

While the world is evolving, women continue to remain underrepresented at every level and are still lagging behind when it comes to leadership roles.

The architecture profession, a vibrant noble profession, and other professionals in the construction industry have been marching for equal rights and fighting for their rightful place in the Nigerian society.

In the construction industry less than 15% women are professionals, and only 2% of them are working on construction sites. This figure needs to change, we need to do better. Uneasy lies the head that wears the crown, especially being a woman. Women need to continue to pursue excellence and remain committed, our prestige need to be returned, then we'll get our commensurate reward.

Professional women are contributing to Nigeria's construction industry and its GDP, but all of sudden the economy is a challenge. Getting government projects is difficult, while a lot of abandoned projects are not being delivered. Ab initio you'll be penalised if you fail to deliver. It is very discouraging, and its affecting practice.

For a woman in the architecture, engineering and construction industry, it is even more challenging, because you're doing twice as much. Right from school the men dominate the class. Girls are very few; in a class you may have one or two girls, so you are in the minority. And in assignments you need more energy, boys naturally have it so you are competing and when you come out of school the story is not different.

Coming to the field is the same, nobody will favour you because you're a woman. And the reason is not far-fetched; the problem is largely from the society and partly from the women themselves. It is perception, that some jobs are meant for men while some are for women because they are weak. It could also be cultural; in some parts of the country women are not supposed to be exposed.

Women need to be encouraged, it's the way they're wired, but the women are not given the chance. Some are even discouraged, by family, friends, and others. There's the stereotype, consciously or not, and it gets to the girl or woman.

In the office environment, it may be subtle but it's there. So you have to work twice as hard as men before your work can be appreciated. You have to constantly prove yourself. Nobody will give you your right, you have to demand for it. And not by mouth but what you can do, show competence, and creativity.

Consideration should be given to working mothers. For employers, business and work must continue; they try to be nice but the burden is there, and it has not changed.

You take children to school, take care of the husband. To balance work time, its strenuous as a woman. And then you have the monthly menstruation, managing yourself, your family and work: these are things women professionals have to deal with, so they should be appreciated more and encouraged, not pampered.

This way women would be attracted to professionalism, they have a lot to offer. In the next decade the target is that we hope to move from 15% to 25%.

Yemi Sola-Adebiyi,
Chair, Nigerian Institute of Architects, Abuja Chapter

FAAN, Bi-Courtney Meet, May Chart New Partnership

Chinedu Eze

After many years of animosity over concession agreement, the Managing Director of the Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN), Mr. Kabir Mohammed, on Monday, met with the Chairman of Bi-Courtney Aviation Services Limited (BASL), operators of the Murtala Muhammed Airport Terminal Two (MMA2, Dr Wale Babalakin, in a historic interaction.

The duo in a high-level meeting held behind closed doors with the top echelons of BASL and FAAN, indicated that new partnership might be in the offing, as they discussed the future of the nation's aviation sector.

Babalakin said the new development was a pleasant surprise and promised to explore the window to foreclose all pre-existing gaps.

According to him, "It has been a challenging 16 years of an undefined relationship with FAAN. I am positive that this meeting marks the beginning of a new era between BASL & FAAN."

Babalakin said it was noteworthy to emphasise BASL's commitment to sustainable investment and promotion of good governance and global best practices in the aviation sector.

"The industry clearly needs to be reengineered to bring the services and infrastructure standards to what is comparable elsewhere in the world with a clear focus on automation, passenger facilitation and comfort all over the country. Together with this renewed partnership, I assure you of our unequivocal commitment to the objective of building a virile aviation sector," Babalakin added.

The meeting was preceded with a courtesy visit by the Senior Management Team of BASL, to the MD/CEO of FAAN, and his team.

In an unprecedented gesture, the FAAN boss, in the company of a select few of his team, reciprocated the visit by making an unscheduled visit to Babalakin, in his office.

The BASL official visit was led by its Acting Chief Operating Officer, Mrs. Tosan Duncan Odukoya.

NiMet DG Meets Governors over Vulnerable Communities

Director General, Nigerian Meteorological Agency (NiMet), Prof. Mansur Bako Matazu, has met with state governors, and decisions were taken to raise awareness about forecast and early action, especially in vulnerable communities.

Speaking on Tuesday in an interview on NTA program tagged: 'Mitigating Flood Amidst Rising Water Level', Prof. Matazu said he led his team to brief the Governors' Forum on the need to continue to raise awareness about the hazards inherent in extreme weather conditions, adding that the governors remain the only channel through which the communities would be reached.

Matazu insisted that many of the extreme events happened, but getting in touch with them with necessary information has been an arduous task.

He however said he recently got the assurance from the Governors' Forum that critical matters about the current weather would be presented before National Economic Council (NEC) soon.

"At the last meeting with the Governors, we were given the opportunity to talk and freely raised the level of alert especially to be well prepated and based on the agreement, it was established that we really need to work closely and together. For us in NiMet, we have 100 offices across the country and we have capability to do state level forecast of not only rainfall but we want Nigerians to look beyond the negative aspect of weather and because the old is developing, we have to key in, thanks to the policies of government, we need to explore other weather information and utilise them positively.

"We are very optimistic, we have got strong words from the governors that some of the issues that are beyond us would be taken to NEC," he said.

The NiMet boss, who expressed sympathy with farmers, noted that the present weather condition, especially, in the North is not favourable stressing that July to September is the 'wetest' period in the rainy season.

He regretted that farmers in many communities where weather information is needed to guide them during planting, were not aware of critical forecast even though the information was translated into other languages when the Seasonal Climate Prediction (SCP) was released in January.

"As discussed earlier, July up to September is the wetest period in our rai ny season, especially in the Northern part of the country and we've seen build up of these rains in the Noth with some pockets of dry spell because presently, we are experiencing El Nino globally. We have seen extreme weather condition in the US, Australia and some parts of Asia and Europe. We are also experiencing such impact and shocks within the country,"

WMO Issues Early Warning on Climate Change

The WMO Regional Association I (RA1) management group, met in Addis Ababa from the 19-21 July 2023 to deliberate on issues related to meteorology and hydrology in Africa, including the Early Warning for All (EW4ALL).

The group examined the outcomes of the 18th session of the Regional Association (RA I-18, Phase III) and the 2023 Regional Conference (RECO 2023). It also reviewed the 19th Congress (Cg-19) and 77th Executive Council (EC-77) of WMO for implementation in the region.

The management group was further briefed by the chairs/co-chairs of the Committees in the Regional Association on their work plans and activities and expected deliverables for 2023 - 2027 sessions in line with the respective resolutions.

In his opening statement to the group, the President of the RA I and Director General (DG) of the Ethiopian Meteorological Institute (EMI), Mr. Fetene Teshome, stated that the group has set for itself strategic priorities as contained in the decision of RA I Strategic Plan for 2024–2027. According to him, the priority will help address the apparent challenges by integrating them into the national strategic Plan.

The WMO Director of Member Services and Development Department, Mr. Filipe Lucio, called on the management group to ensure that the region's priorities are addressed and urged them to advise on the appropriate arrangements to enhance the work of NMHSs.

While welcoming the Members of the Group to the meeting, the Director of the WMO Regional Office for Africa, Dr. Agnes Kijazi, said: "Africa as a region covers 54 countries, 33 of which are Least-Developed Countries (LDCs); 16 Land-Locked Developing Countries (LLDCS) and 6 are Small Island Developing States (SIDS); hence faced with several human and infrastructural challenges in the region."

The Regional Office will continue its role as the front-line of the organisation and constitute a two-way communication between Members and the Secretariat, she added.

Airtel Completes First Batch of Talent Recognition, Promotes Staff

Emma Okonji

Airtel Nigeria has announced the successful completion of its employee promotion cycle for the financial year 2022/2023.

The promotions, which took effect from April 1, 2023, and cuts across all the six regions of operations in the country, mark another milestone in the company's commitment to recognizing and rewarding the exceptional contributions of employees.

Airtel Nigeria has said it places immense value on its employees and their career fulfilment, by maintaining a culture of consistently recognizing and rewarding high performing staff, while creating an enabling environment for employees to develop their skills and collaborate towards providing outstanding services to customers.

According to the company, promotions are done twice yearly, in July and December, and for the first batch of elevations done in 2023, no fewer than 20employees moved into senior leadership roles, out of whom three are women. One staff member was also elevated toa vice president position.

Commenting on the announcement, Chief Executive Officer, Airtel Nigeria, Carl Cruz, noted that Airtel was thrilled to see its employees grow while being moreinstrumental to the growth of the organisation.

"Airtel Nigeria is a world-class company which both implements global best practices throughout its divisions and regularly spotlights employees who live the values of excellence for which the companyhas become known. We are immensely proud to welcome these employees into their new roles and wish them more success in their careers." Cruz said.

Also speaking, the Director, Human Resources and Administration, Adebimpe Ayo-Elias, said: "These employees have consistently met and exceeded expectations in their respective areas of work, delivering value to the organisation. Our organisation will continue to recognise and appreciate top performers as opportunities arise."

The implementation of these promotion cycles serves as a testament to Airtel Nigeria's commitment to fostering a culture of meritocracy, Cruz reiterated.

"By providing opportunities for advancement within the organisation, Airtel Nigeria aims to further motivate its employees, encouraging them to continue delivering outstanding results and contributing to the company's overall success," he said.

OFFICE OF THE TRADE COMMISSIONER
THE REPUBLIC OF VANUATU TO NIGERIA

26th July, 2023

PUBLIC NOTICE REGARDING UK'S VISA WAIVER REVOCATION FOR VANUATU CITIZENS.

The United Kingdom Home Office has unexpectedly revoked her visa free Entry permits granted to all Vanuatu citizens effective from July 19th 2023. This revocation is as a result of what the home office termed as '' Clear and Evident of abuse of the CBI program.

The Vanuatu Government has strongly challenged such assertions made by the British Government and as a matter of urgency is taking steps to resolve this unfortunate situation.

In Furtherance to the step taken by the Vanuatu Government, four weeks grace period had been granted to all those who have already booked or purchased their tickets to travel to the United Kingdom but those travelers must arrive not later than 16th of August, 2023.

The Vanuatu Minister of Foreign Affairs has confirmed the travel restrictions and has assured all Vanuatu citizens of the Government's commitment in seeing that the issue is resolved.

All Vanuatu citizens are hereby advised to remain calm and adhere to this new measures.

We solicit your cordial understanding with this uncomfortable development.

This Notice is Issued by the:

Office of the Trade Commissioner of the Republic of Vanuatu to Nigeria.

(for further clarification and assistance, kindly contact us at: +234 8071291577, +234 9033068000 or email us at: Vanuatutradecommissionnigeria@pm.me.)

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AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK
NIGERIA COUNTRY DEPARTMENT
(RDNG)

PROCUREMENT NOTICE

ADB/ITB/TCGS/2023/0183

SUPPLY AND INSTALLATION OF WINDOWS BLINDS FOR THE AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK'S OFFICE IN ABUJA - NIGERIA

The African Development Bank (hereafter designated as "the Bank") is desirous to secure the services as per above listed tender for its Country Office based in Abuja - Nigeria. Only legally registered companies that have competency, capacity, and skills to carry out these activities are invited to bid.

1. The bid documents are on the Bank's website, **http://www.afdb.org/en/about-us/corporateprocurement/procurement-notices/current-solicitations/**. Bidders may also make enquiries from **Tender@AFDB.ORG** should they encounter some problems with downloading or printing of the same bid documents. On all communications, Bidders should state the bid number and its nomenclature.

2. The pre-bid meeting and site visit shall be on **8 August 2023 at 9:30 A.M (Abuja local time) at AfDB – Abuja Country Office: African Development Bank,1521 Cadastral Zone A0; Off Memorial Close Beside Silverbird Galleria Central Business District, Abuja**

3. The Closing date for this bid **is 18 August 2023 at 12:00 P.M of local time in Abuja-Nigeria.** It is the responsibility of the Bidders to ensure that the bids reach and arrive at the Bank's office on time, a proof of timely mailing will not be considered by the Bank.

4. The sealed bids should be registered by the Security Personnel of the Bank. The Bank's office premises, and postal address is:
African Development Bank,1521 Cadastral Zone A0; Off Memorial Close Beside Silverbird Galleria Central Business District, Abuja

5. Bidders must originate from the Bank's member countries, list of which is provided at **http://www.afdb.org/en/about-us/members/** and the list is also on the bid document.

6. Submission may be made by hand or courier and late bids shall be rejected.

7. Thank you for showing interest in doing business with the African Development Bank

AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK
NIGERIA COUNTRY DEPARTMENT
(RDNG)

PROCUREMENT NOTICE

ADB/ITB/TCGS/2023/0182

PROCUREMENT OF OUTFITTING WORKS FOR THE 5th FLOOR FOR THE AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK'S OFFICE IN ABUJA -NIGERIA

The African Development Bank (hereafter designated as "the Bank") is desirous to secure the services as per above listed tender for its Country Office based in Abuja - Nigeria. Only legally registered companies that have competency, capacity, and skills to carry out these activities are invited to bid.

1. The bid documents are on the Bank's website, **http://www.afdb.org/en/about-us/corporateprocurement/procurement-notices/current-solicitations/**. Bidders may also make enquiries from **Tender@AFDB.ORG** should they encounter some problems with downloading or printing of the same bid documents. On all communications, Bidders should state the bid number and its nomenclature.

2. The pre-bid meeting and site visit shall be on **2 August 2023 at 9:30 am (Abuja local time) at AfDB – Abuja Country Office: African Development Bank,1521 Cadastral Zone A0; Off Memorial Close Beside Silverbird Galleria Central Business District, Abuja**

3. The Closing date for this bid **is 18 August 2023 at 12.00 hours of local time in Abuja-Nigeria.** It is the responsibility of the Bidders to ensure that the bids reach and arrive at the Bank's office on time, a proof of timely mailing will not be considered by the Bank.

4. The sealed bids should be registered by the Security Personnel of the Bank. The Bank's office premises, and postal address is:
African Development Bank,1521 Cadastral Zone A0; Off Memorial Close Beside Silverbird Galleria Central Business District, Abuja

5. Bidders must originate from the Bank's member countries, list of which is provided at **http://www.afdb.org/en/about-us/members/** and the list is also on the bid document.

6. Submission may be made by hand or courier and late bids shall be rejected.

7. Thank you for showing interest in doing business with the African Development Bank

AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK
NIGERIA COUNTRY DEPARTMENT
(RDNG)

PROCUREMENT NOTICE

ADB/ITB/TCGS/2023/0190

PROCUREMENT OF THE SOLAR PLAN PROJETC FOR THE AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK'S OFFICE IN ABUJA -NIGERIA

The African Development Bank (hereafter designated as "the Bank") is desirous to secure the services as per above listed tender for its Country Office based in Abuja -Nigeria. Only legally registered companies that have competency, capacity, and skills to carry out these activities are invited to bid.

1. The bid documents are on the Bank's website, **http://www.afdb.org/en/about-us/corporateprocurement/procurement-notices/current-solicitations/**. Bidders may also make enquiries from **Tender@AFDB.ORG** should they encounter some problems with downloading or printing of the same bid documents. On all communications, Bidders should state the bid number and its nomenclature.

2. The pre-bid meeting and site visit shall be on **2 August 2023 at 11:00 am (Abuja local time) at AfDB – Abuja Country Office African Development Bank,1521 Cadastral Zone A0; Off Memorial Close Beside Silverbird Galleria Central Business District, Abuja**

3. The Closing date for this bid **is 18 August 2023 at 12.00 hours of local time in Abuja-Nigeria.** It is the responsibility of the Bidders to ensure that the bids reach and arrive at the Bank's office on time, a proof of timely mailing will not be considered by the Bank.

4. The sealed bids should be registered by the Security Personnel of the Bank. The Bank's office premises, and postal address is:
African Development Bank,1521 Cadastral Zone A0; Off Memorial Close Beside Silverbird Galleria Central Business District, Abuja

5. Bidders must originate from the Bank's member countries, list of which is provided at **http://www.afdb.org/en/about-us/members/** and the list is also on the bid document.

6. Submission may be made by hand or courier and late bids shall be rejected.

7. Thank you for showing interest in doing business with the African Development Bank

AIR WATCH

Air Watch – in partnership with – AIR PEACE ...your peace, our goal www.flyairpeace.com

As Air Peace Keeps Nigeria on International Routes



Chinedu Eze

There will be many benefits if Nigerian airlines are enabled to operate international routes. They will be able to earn foreign exchange; they will provide competition on Nigerian routes, which will bring down cost of airfares for the traveler, and they will create more jobs and also help in manpower development.

Industry observers have said that if Nigerian carriers were encouraged by government policies and protected the way other countries protect their own, no country in West and Central Africa would have more developed airport facilities than Nigeria because more passengers would pass through Nigeria to other West Coast destinations.

Despite the challenges, Nigeria's foremost carrier, Air Peace has been able to operate international destinations. Of course, few years after it started flight service in 2014, it started operating to some countries in West Africa and has sustained the service and later it started Dubai, South Africa, India, China and Israel. Currently, the airline operates to Mumbai, Israel, South Africa and to many countries in West and Central Africa.

In March this year, Air Peace launched non-stop flight service to Mumbai, the capital city of Maharashtra State in Southwestern India.

It started with two weekly flight frequencies to Mumbai and intended to operate to Delhi as soon as the Mumbai service garnered significant momentum and the airlines got the necessary approvals from Indian authorities.

The nonstop Mumbai service is a respite to Nigerians and Indians who have to travel for so many hours to India with stopovers via other countries. There are a lot of Indians in Nigeria who would prefer to fly directly to India from Nigeria.

The Chief Operating Officer, Air Peace, Oluwatoyin Olajide, said: "The Mumbai route is our fourth international destination and is strongly indicative of our unwavering commitment to continually expand our route network to meet the evolving travel needs of not only the Nigerian market but also the West African sub-region.

"On May 31, 2020, Air Peace became the first ever Nigerian airline to operate the first direct flight from Nigeria to Kochi, India, airlifting 312 Indian citizens. In the same year and early 2021, we operated more than six evacuation flights afterwards, showing our strength and familiarisation with the Indian airspace.

"Our Mumbai service is direct- meaning no stopovers. So, you're saving time, money and avoiding stopover stress. Also, we're offering a launch fare of 450,000 naira. That's unbeatable, especially considering that we're deploying our comfy Boeing 777 aircraft, offering passengers best-in-class hospitality."

According to her, the airline is strengthening its presence on the Asian continent with the launch of Mumbai service, adding that it is not just a big stride for the airline; but also, a huge feat for Nigeria in the implementation of its Bilateral Air Services Agreement (BASA) with India, and deepening socio-economic ties between both countries.

Shortly after, Air Peace started direct, non-stop flight to Israel. The airline commenced scheduled operations into Tel Aviv on April 20, 2023, from Lagos and Abuja.

At the well-attended inaugural flight ceremony held at the Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport, Abuja, the Chairman of Air Peace, Barrister Allen Onyema, said history had been made in the bilateral relations between Nigeria and Israel through the commencement of direct, nonstop flights from Lagos and Abuja to the city of Tel Aviv.

"This is undoubtedly a big milestone as, for the first time, a Nigerian airline is connecting both countries directly through scheduled commercial flights," he had said.

Onyema said the airline was delighted particularly because the new route would provide huge respite to Nigerian travellers who, henceforth, do not have to travel to Israel through other countries, spending over 20 hours in stopovers whereas a direct flight is less than six hours.

"Our entry into Israel today will open up more layers of opportunities and possibilities socially, and economically, and advance the implementation of the Bilateral Air Services Agreement between Nigeria and Israel. The connectivity will boost 'religious tourism', especially factoring the numerous Nigerians who embark on pilgrimage trips to Israel", the Air Peace Chairman stated.

In order to enhance connectivity in West Africa, Nigeria's biggest carrier would today commence flights to Lome, Togo. The airline said the Lagos-Lome-Lagos route would be operated with the 50-seater Embraer 145 jets.

"We are expanding our West African presence to strategically connect key cities in the sub-region, ease connectivity for Africans and strengthen commercial ties between countries.

"Air Peace is committed to easing the air transportation burden of Africans, and this will continue to drive our route expansion as well as fleet modernisation. We also recently received two Boeing 737-700 aircraft to further strengthen our domestic and regional operations," the airline said.

In addition to the flight to these international destinations, Air Peace is operating special flight to Antigua. Antigua and Barbuda is a sovereign island country in the West Indies. It lies at the conjuncture of the Caribbean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean in the Leeward Islands part of the Lesser Antilles.

The majority of the country's population is of African descent. There are also small groups of Europeans, particularly Irish, British and Portuguese. Tourism is the major economic activity in the island nation.

Air Peace disclosed that it is offering the best flight deals for customers who plan to travel for the Antigua Carnival from August 5-9, 2023, plus bespoke hotel packages from Tour Brokers International.

The strides of Air Peace should encourage the federal government to show more support to Nigerian carriers by using diplomatic channels and BASA to pave ways for them to operate to more international destinations. There are many cities in the United States that yearn for direct flights to Nigeria and other countries in West Africa. Although two US airlines operate to Nigeria but the market is still open to more direct flights. It is the same with flights to London, UK; a country that is Nigeria's second home.

Curbing Ports Fraudulent Practices with Technology

Francis Ugwuoke

The role of technology in human lives in recent times appears to have no bound. In the past, the story was about technology taking the role of humans in big time factories, doing even better and tireless jobs than what humans can do. Today, this is no longer story. Technology has continued to advance to do anything as much as humans can desire. In advanced countries, robots now perform such roles in homes ranging from house helps to such as expected of the opposite sex. There now exists technology that helps couples to have babies outside the ways one is used to. An author,

Trung Tran, writes that under artificial intelligence, "robotic companions can keep people company when they're alone, providing social interaction and making those who feel lonely less likely to become depressed". Tran adds, "Whether it's a robot that performs tasks with the person or one that simply provides companionship, robotic "friends" can make life more fulfilling for people of all ages". This is as far as robots can go.

In Nigerian situation and as it affects the ports industry, the use of technology is desirable and most imperative now. Already, automation is playing a big role in checking unnecessary human interface, which over the decades has led to corruption in the ports. Until the ports were concessioned, clearing of goods was one in which everything was manual that the agents had to visit one table after another in the Customs long room as part of the processes. Today, the processes of clearing of goods have advanced that such human traffic has gone down. But despite this, the issue of fraudulent practices have remained which is where technology comes in. There are such issues as under-valuation, under-declaration and outright concealment. These are malpractices adopted by importers and their customs agents to evade payment of some duties. Customs personnel who detect such practices have always moved to check the importers and their agents but not without some of them taking advantage of the situation to line their own pockets. Such malpractices heightened following the distortion of the Pre-Arrival Assessment Report (PAAR) regime in the past few years. PAAR was introduced on December 1, 2013 but was enhanced on March 2014 under what was known as PAAR Platform. It was used to determine the duties payable on imports. But it was later dumped for the policy of benchmarking owing to issues of fraudulent practices. It is sparingly used in determining duties except in cases involving big time manufacturers whose credibility could be attested. In other cases, like the general importers, Customs could just determine duties to be paid with the policy of benchmarking.

CTN TO THE RESCUE

One of the technologies that has come to the rescue of the government in checking all forms of practices that lead to evasion of payment of correct duties is the Cargo Tracking Note (CTN). Also known as waiver certificate, it is used in a number of African counties to "provide local custom authorities with the required information and visibility about the import shipment". Saloodo, logistics body, describes CTN as having the advantage of "controlling, supervising and managing import and export traffic.." CTN, according to the experts, "contains details of the exporter importer, shipment value, the method and type of shipment, freight cost, and the name of the vessel". In Nigeria, CTN is expected to check revenue losses as the importers and their customs agents will be confronted with advanced information on their goods. In effect, it becomes an uphill task trying to doctor documents already stating the true and exact content of containers and value of such goods. CTN gives information on the goods coming into the country from the ports of departure and everywhere the ship may have to visit before finally coming to deliver the goods. In other words, the technology monitors the movement of the goods in any part of the world. Beyond this, the technology will also help in checking arms imports at a time like this when Nigeria is waging war against insurgency.

NSC, CTN REVOLUTION

As part of the efforts to sanitise the ports environment of obvious malpractices, the Nigerian Shippers' Council (NSC) as the ports economic regulator is the agency assigned with the task of deploying CTN. The NSC is saddled with the statutory obligation of enthroning efficiency in ports system for a more business friendly environment. The Council believes that with CTN decades of fraudulent practices at the ports can be checked. The ports economic regulator also says the technology can be used to reduce crude oil theft,

The Executive Secretary of the Council, Hon. Emmanuel Jime while describing CTN as very useful tool in a number of ways, said it will also address the problem of proliferation of small arms.

According to Jime, "CTN is a very useful tool in a number of different ways. We all know that part of the problem of this nation is the proliferation of small arms, and how do they find their ways into our shores?. Most of it through our ports, also we have to remember that our borders in most cases are porous, but you can drastically reduce the capacity and ability of people with bad intentions from accessing our country with this (CTN). Jime added, "CTN will enable this country to be able to identify what is contained in a cargo from a port or origin to any port of destination in Nigeria and throughout the course of journey. What that does is that it prepares our security apparatus from the very beginning where that ship is to set sail, from that port of origin, so as to know exactly what are the content. In other words, if you for some reasons take off from that particular port and decide to divert some places so that you can now go and change what actually is the content of the vessel, the tracking device is able to give us the very 'get go' so we are able to get tract, that is the first thing. That will then allow us to be able to alert our security agencies and let them know that this particular ship, this is exactly what it is carrying and also soon as it comes into our waters it can be apprehended. That helps.

"We are also looking at the possibility from the tools that are available from this particular CTN to be able to identify the movement of crude from our ports to different destinations worldwide. Part of the problem again as you know is that crude theft has constituted big big obstacle in our ability to sufficiently get the revenue that are due to our coffers. Again, we have now a tool that will be available which will enable our security agencies to know from the beginning there is particular activity that is being undertaken in our waters.

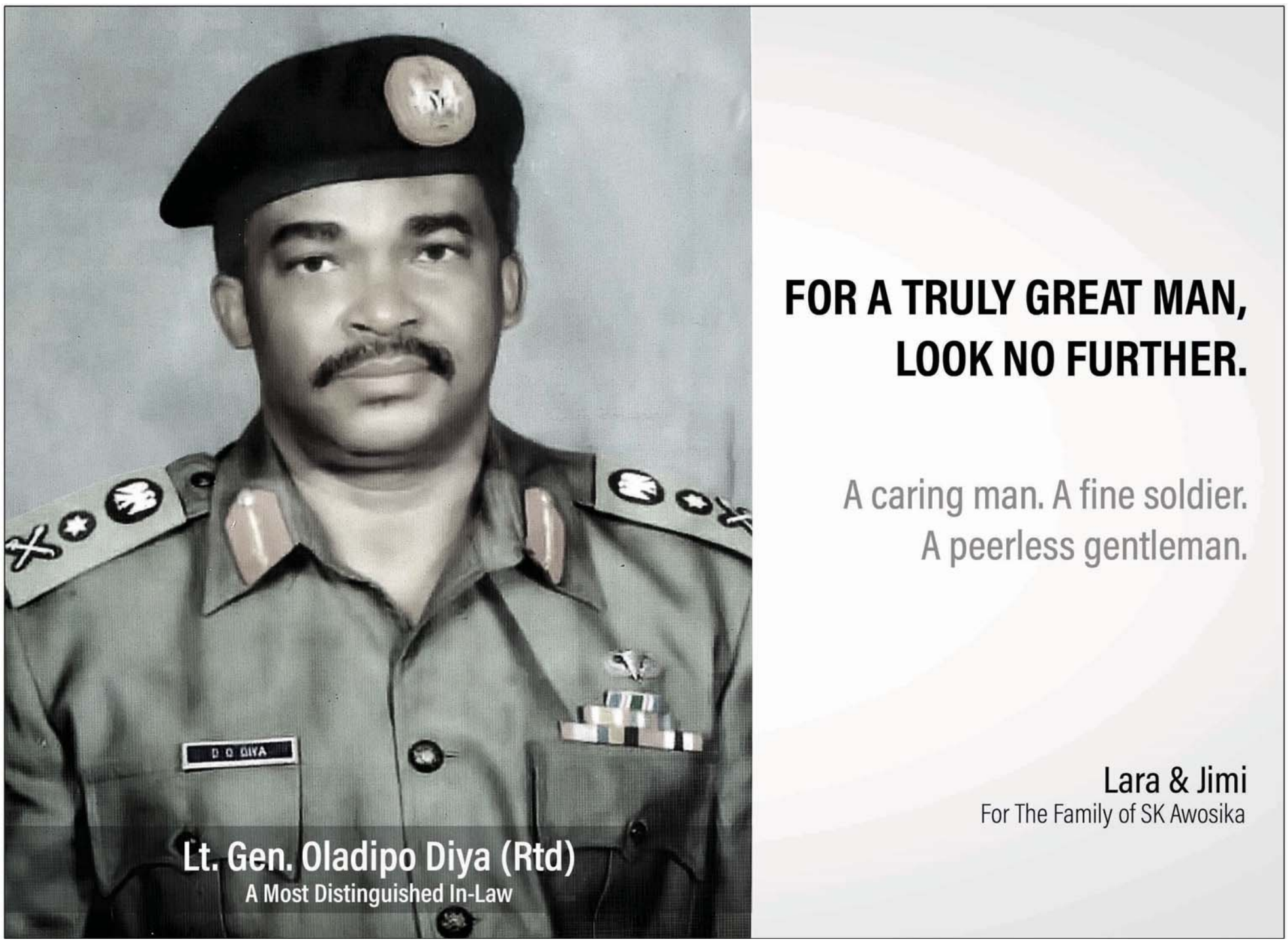
"If we can stop or at least reduce substantially the incidence of such occurrences, whether it is the area of small arms finding their way into our nation or the theft of our crude, that I think is substantial.

"There is also the incidence of under-declaration which over time has been part of the challenge that we have. Imagine bringing in quantity or certain kind of goods or may be contraband and then pretending that what is in the vessel is different from what actually were seen".

"I know of course, people can argue that with scanners in our ports that obviously will substantially stop… but we are talking of our ability even when the ship has left the particular port in any part of the world and heading into our waters, we are able to identify it and stop it from that point. So, those and many others, actually, we are talking about the efficiency of our services, we are talking about cargo clearance, we are talking about delays into substantial demurrages.

"Before the ship has left, the manifest and every identification that is needed is supplied to us ahead of time, in some cases even two weeks or three weeks before that ship comes into our water, already the clearance can proceed while the vessel is still at sail. By the time the ship finally arrives, all you need to do is simply walk in and clear the goods that have come. That will enable the efficiency that we have been looking for in an even much better way that we operate at the moment. So these are some of the advantages of CTN I can remember now".

•.Ugwoke, Publisher of Shipping Day Online/ Magazine writes from Lagos

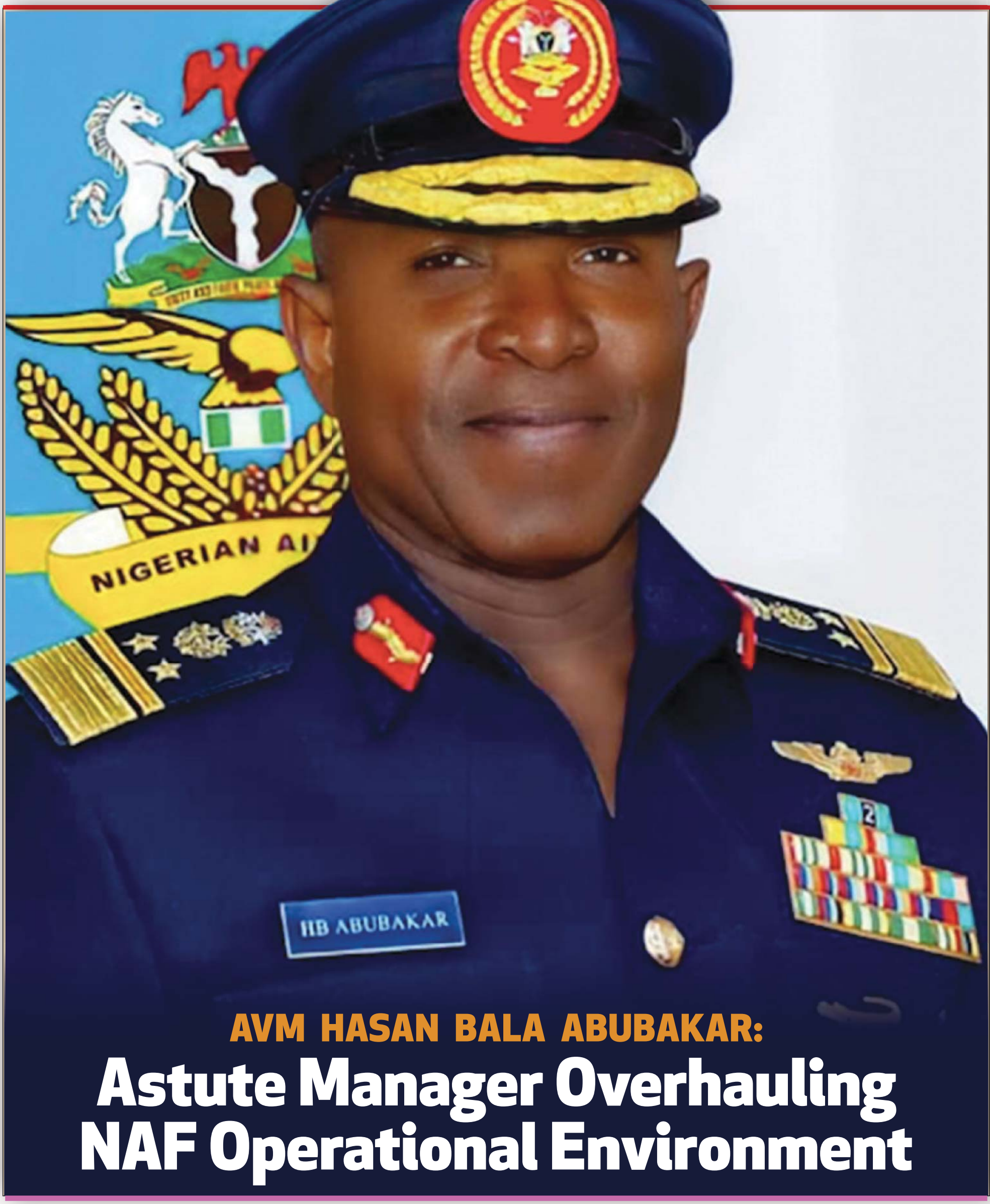


This Weekend

FRIDAY, JULY 28, 2023

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THISDAY
WEEKLY MAGAZINE



AVM HASAN BALA ABUBAKAR:

Astute Manager Overhauling NAF Operational Environment

COVER

This Weekend

AVM Hasan Bala Abubakar: Astute Manager Overhauling NAF Operational Environment

Air Vice Marshal, AVM, Hasan Bala Abubakar, is the 22nd Chief of Air Staff. Prior to his appointment on June 19, 2023, he was at the Nigerian Air Force Headquarters as the Chief of Standards and Evaluation, an appointment where he placed high premium on Research and Development. With his appointment, it is hoped that his plan to gradually stop dependence on foreign vendors for materials as well as to save foreign exchange for the country will pay off, especially with the serious R&D to embarked upon by NAF. Upon taking over the helm of affairs of the Nigerian Air Force on June 22, 2023, he revealed that his Command Philosophy, which is coined out of the vision and mission of the AFN as encapsulated in the 2017 National Defence Policy document, aims at providing a holistic view of how to accomplish assigned missions, get the various parts of the NAF working in unison and thriving, while also safeguarding the welfare of all personnel. Beyond this, Chiemelie Ezeobi writes that the astute manager of men and resources is bent on overhauling NAF operational environment



The CAS during a recent inspection of state-of-the art equipment

On June 19, 2023, President Bola Tinubu announced the appointment of Air Vice Marshal, AVM, Hasan Bala Abubakar, as 22nd Chief of Air Staff. Until his appointment, he was the Chief of Standards and Evaluations, Headquarters Nigerian Air Force, Abuja and he took over from Air Marshal Oladayo Amao (Rtd).

COMMITMENT TO SERVE AT HANDING AND TAKING OVER

At the handing and taking over in Abuja on June 22, 2023, he commended his predecessor for the mentorship and solid legacies which he can seamlessly build upon.

While thanking President Bola Tinubu for the honour and privilege to serve as the Chief of Air Staff, he said his appointment came at a time that the expectations of Nigerians towards accelerated actualisation of peace and security is very high.

Therefore, he restated his commitment to reinvigorate the fight against terrorism, insurgency, banditry and a host of other security threats bedeviling Nigeria, adding that given that the two unique attributes of the former chiefs were cooperation and jointness and how it contributed immensely to the successes achieved in the various theatres of operations, he said this present crop of service chiefs will uphold these attributes in line with Mr. President directive issued during the maiden National Security Council meeting.

He also pledged to take additional airpower measures and approaches that will continue to diminish our challenges and then enhance the disposition of our various theatres of operation.

AVM Abubakar also pledge his unalloyed loyalty to Mr. President, stressing that the NAF is ever willing, able and ready to lay at Mr. President's disposal, professional expertise "to achieve our mission of fulfilling all air power tasks demanded by national defense and security imperatives".

COMMAND PHILOSOPHY

For his Command Philosophy, the CAS said it will be coined out of the vision and mission of the AFN as encapsulated in the 2017 National Defence Policy document.

According to him, the need to adhere and key into a single vision and mission by the AFN will enhance synergy of purpose while improving jointness, cooperation and esprit de corps.

He went on to note that his Command Philosophy aims at providing a holistic view of how to accomplish assigned missions, get the various parts of the NAF working in unison and thriving, while also safeguarding the welfare of all personnel.

OVERHAULING NAF OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

In view of the need to readapt to the ever-dynamic nature of the current operational environment, the CAS on July 4, revealed that the NAF will soon undertake an overhaul of its entire operations.

Speaking at the weekly operations briefing at the Strategic Operations Centre, Headquarters Nigerian Air Force (NAF), Abuja, he said the need to overhaul the operational environment became expedient in order to maximise the potentials of jointness as being exhibited by members of the Armed Forces of Nigeria (AFN) and other security agencies.

He however noted that the need for attitudinal change by all NAF personnel was imperative if the gains of an overhaul of the entire operational environment were to be maximised. According to the CAS, "Without the right attitude by the officers and men of the NAF, any form of overhaul undertaken by the service will be a waste of time and resources."

While commending the efforts of NAF personnel especially those at the various operational theatres for their commitment and dedication to ongoing counterterrorism operations, he reiterated the need for all to redouble their efforts towards ensuring that all forms of criminality were eradicated from the society.

The CAS also noted that though there was the need to employ non-kinetic means of reaching out to those aggrieved, which does not fall within the purview of the military, air and ground operations must be sustained.

He also stated that under his watch, an all-inclusive leadership style would be imbibed where every personnel would be carried along, while also ensuring that welfare, infrastructural development and all operational needs are given due consideration.

Inspection of New NAF Base in Ibadan

As expected, the chief went on an inspection of some commands and units to know their capabilities.

During the recently concluded Nigerian Army Day Celebration (NADCEL), Ibadan, the CAS inspected the ongoing projects at the new NAF Base situated at Ajia Community, Ibadan on July 6.

According to the Director of Public Relations (DOPRI), Air Commodore Edward Gabkwet, on April 2022, the NAF had taken possession of a 58-hectare land at Ajia Community in Ibadan donated by the Oyo State government for the construction of a permanent NAF Base.

According to the DOPRI, it is hoped that when completed, the new base would enhance NAF readiness and responsiveness to security challenges in the state.

Situated near the Ibadan Airport, the new bsse is also expected to serve as an alternate airfield to Lagos airfield, thus enabling the NAF to launch seamless and efficient air operations in the Southwest Region of Nigeria.

CAS' CHARGE TO NAF RECRUIT GRADUATES

On July 8, at the graduation of new set of 1,124 recruits at the Military Training Centre, NAF Base, Kaduna, the CAS tasked them to be focused, motivated and innovative while contributing to NAF's efforts towards achieving Nigeria's national security imperatives.

After reviewing the Passing Out Parade of the Basic Military Training Course recruits, he reminded them that they would be deployed to the various operational theatres to contribute their quota to national security. He also urged them to ensure they operate within the rules of engagement as enumerated in the code of conduct for Armed Forces personnel involved in internal security operations.

He also admonished them to ensure they respect and protect the innocent and law-abiding civilians they trained to defend. "Treat them with respect and protect their rights. By so doing, you will be discharging your professional and constitutional duties. Remember also that the NAF undoubtedly expects the highest standards from you regarding civil-military Relations, " he stated.

The CAS went on to advise the new recruits to take advantage of abundant training opportunities in the NAF to become proficient in their chosen specialties. He also reiterated the need for them to be disciplined and subordinate their personal interests to those of the service and the nation.

Speaking further, Air Vice Marshal Abubakar charged them to ensure they internalise and thoroughly embrace the NAF core values of 'Integrity first, Service before self and excellence in all you do,' in order to maintain the reputation the Service has earned over the years.

On the ongoing efforts to rid the nation of all criminal acts, the CAS counselled them not to allow themselves to be used by any subversive elements to destabilise the country. According to him, "You must not succumb to any inducement or action that would cause disaffection amongst fellow members of the Armed Forces and remember that your duty is to protect all Nigerians, irrespective of their leanings or inclinations."

Air Vice Marshal Abubakar also told the recruits to remember that they were now subject to both military and civil laws, hence, they must ensure they submit themselves to civil authority under democratic tenets.

In view of the dangers the misuse of social media by some personnel portends for ongoing operations, the CAS advised them to thoroughly familiarise themselves with the social media policy of the Armed Force of Nigeria. According to him, contravening any of the provisions therein would be viewed very seriously.

ADDITIONAL PLATFORMS TO BOOST COUNTER-TERRORISM OPERATIONS

On July 21, the CAS, while addressing officers and men during his maiden operational tour of NAF units in Makurdi, Benue State, disclosed that the NAF is expecting 51 additional platforms to boost counter-insurgency and counterterrorism operations in the country.

He noted that acquisition of additional platforms would bolster training, air power employment and projection.

The platforms being expected, according to the CAS, include 2 Agusta 109 Trekker Multi-role helicopters, 2 Beechcraft King Air 360, 3 Diamond DA-62 surveillance aircraft and 6 T-129 ATAK helicopters. Other pending acquisitions include 2 CASA -295 medium airlift/surveillance aircraft, 12 AH-1Z attack helicopters and 24 M-346 attack aircraft. All these acquisitions, according to the CAS, demonstrates the federal government's deep commitment to equipping the NAF for the safe conduct of training and agile airpower employment to meet the Nation's security challenges.

Speaking further, Air Vice Marshal Abubakar stated that the NAF would continue to enhance cooperation and jointness as part of a whole-of-nation approach to quickly resolving the security challenges bedeviling the country.

"While the NAF augments its airpower measures and approaches, it will also continue to promote seamless interoperability of equipment and joint force employment by the various services."

He therefore enjoined the personnel to cooperate with other services and security agencies to meet the high expectations of Nigerians on the Armed Forces as well as restore peace and security and ensure a safe and prosperous nation.

The CAS also assured the personnel of his commitment to proactively address maintenance and logistics support for all NAF fleet to ensure it surpasses the current average serviceability of over 78 per cent.

ADDRESSING TRAINING NEEDS

On training, Air Vice Marshal Abubakar has stated that overseas and local training will henceforth be deliberate and targeted to address deficiencies in needed skills and capabilities, just as selection for such courses will be purely merit-based to ensure that only the most qualified are selected to give the NAF value for money.

BOOSTING WELFARE FOR PERSONNEL

On welfare, the CAS has also noted that under his watch, problems of poor electricity and water supply as well as dilapidated accommodation and road infrastructure on all NAF Bases would be given the utmost priority they deserve to ensure personnel and their families live comfortably.

While assuring them of prompt payment of all entitlements, he also promised to look into the issue of uniforms and other accoutrements. The CAS also called on the need for the personnel to remain disciplined, diligent and responsible in their conduct in and out of uniforms.

ABOUT AVM HASAN BALA ABUBAKAR

Born on September 11, 1970, AVM Hassan Abubakar hails from Shanono Local Government Area of Kano State. He enlisted into the Nigerian Air Force (NAF) as a member of Nigerian Defence Academy Regular Course 39 and was commissioned Pilot Officer on September 19, 1992.

AVM Abubakar has attended several courses, among which are Ab-initio and Basic Flying Training Courses at the then 301 Flying Training School, Kaduna; Basic and Advance Airborne Courses at the Nigerian Army Infantry Centre and School, Jaji; and Company Amphibious Operations Course at the Nigerian Army Infantry Centre and School, Calabar.

Others include Junior and Senior Command and Staff Courses at the Armed Forces Command and Staff College Jaji, and National Defence Course at the Nasser Higher Military Academy, Cairo, Egypt.

Previous appointments held by the CAS include Officer Commanding B Squadron (Do 228), 81 Air Maritime Group NAF Benin; Team Leader MILOB Team Site 615 Mahagi (Ituri Brigade) United Nations Organisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC); and Aviation Planning Officer, MONUC Air Operations Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo.

He was Commanding Officer Base Services Wing 81 Air Maritime Group Benin, and later served at different times at the 88 Military Airlift Group, Ikeja, where he held various appointments, including Operations Officer Operational Conversion Unit, Operations Officer, Commanding Officer 21 Wing, and Group Safety Officer.

Furthermore, he was Fleet Operation Officer 011Presidential Air Fleet, and thereafter served as the Commander of the Unit. His other appointments include Chief of Staff, Mobility Command, Yenagoa; Air Officer Commanding Logistics Command, Ikeja, as well as Director of Policy, and Director of Operations, both at the Headquarters Nigerian Air Force, Abuja.

AVM Abubakar has earned several awards and decoration, some of which include Distinguished Service Star (DSS), Passed Staff Course (psc), and Fellow Defence College (fdc). He is a member of the National Institute of Management, Chartered Institute of Public Management, and Nigerian Institute of Safety Professional.

The Chief holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Biological Science from NDA, and Masters Degree in International Affairs and Diplomacy from Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

NEWS

Nook International Fashion Promotes Decency on Runways

Stories by Mary Nnah



L-R: Mrs Odochi Parker, Dame Nneoma Ochuko Momoh and Mrs Barbara Manuel during the press briefing

Worried about the immodesty often displayed on Nigerian fashion show runways, the organisers of the Nook International Fashion Weekend have advocated decency in dressing on the runways.

Speaking during a press briefing to announce preparation for the 2024 edition of Nook International Fashion Weekend, scheduled to take place in February 2024, the visioners, the directors and representatives of the Nook International Fashion Weekend, Mrs Odochi Parker, Dame Nneoma Ochuko Momoh and Mrs Barbara Manuel stressed the need to bringing decency to the runways and also to impact on the society by giving back.

One of the directors, Mrs Odochi Samson Parker, who said the Nook International Fashion Weekend is more of a charity, lending a hand and giving back to them, noted that outside all of these, it was more of decency in the fashion industry.

She said, "Fashion goes beyond nakedness, which we all know is prominent in our society, and then who makes these naked dresses, the designers. And of course, who chooses to wear these naked dresses, our children? Models have made the fashion industry look like a whorehouse. It seems as though if you do not conform you cannot be part of the fashion industry."

"You see young boys walking like women and you see young girls walking like a man, you no longer know who is who, we hear about transgender and all of that. We want to see how we can cub this. A lot of our young men and women who are in the fashion industry cannot say no because they do not understand themselves. They are intimidated because they do not understand their place and power in the fashion industry", she noted further. Speaking further, Parker said, "When they go for model cast what happens is they are forced to do things ordinarily they do not want to do. Because they want to belong, without realising that modelling is a door, it is not the end. It is a means to an end. With modelling you develop yourself, the world is your own to access, you can be anything. So young people are intimidated into all sorts of immoralities, homosexualism and lesbianism."

Henkel Demonstrates Commitment to Empowering Youth, Celebrating Talents

Henkel, a German multinational with industrial and consumer businesses, maker's of WAW and Nittol detergent brands, once again demonstrated its commitment to developing and empowering youth and celebrating talents in the country when it hosted the top five finalists of the Nigerian Idols season 8 to victory party in Lagos.

The Waw Party took place at a glitzy Shiro Lagos restaurant in the heart of Victoria Island where the brand celebrated the exceptional talents of the top five contestants. It also provided an opportunity for the contestants to unwind and network before the final stage of the competition.

Speaking at the event, Managing Director of Henkel, Rajat Kapur said Henkel is deeply committed to contributing to Nigeria's economic growth and empowering its communities through sponsorship of various initiatives including the Nigerian Idol.

"We will continue to invest in talent development, create sustainable employment opportunities, and drive impactful CSR initiatives. We aim to foster long-term growth and make a meaningful difference in the lives of Nigerians, thereby solidifying our position as a multinational company that truly cares about the country and its people", he said.

Head of Marketing, Henkel, Ivie Akalu also emphasised the company's commitment to supporting young creative talents in the country which engendered the partnership with Nigerian Idol.

According to Akalu, the Waw Party was organised to celebrate the showmanship of the budding talents who, through sheer hard work, discipline, and a sense of dedication, have enrolled themselves among the outstanding talents of the Nigerian music industry.

"We recognise the immense potential of young individuals in driving societal progress, and Nigerian Idol provides an exceptional platform to nurture and showcase such talents. By supporting this renowned talent show, we aim to continue to foster a culture of excellence, provide opportunities for aspiring artists, and contribute to the growth and empowerment of Nigerian youth", said Akalu.

PMIEF Boosts Entrepreneurial Training Through African Leadership Academy

The African Leadership Academy (ALA) has received a multi-million rand grant from the PMI Educational Foundation (PMIEF). The grant expands on PMIEF's current partnership with the ALA, which seeks to introduce students to project management through the Build-in-a-Box curriculum. The curriculum is a portable toolkit that provides content and teaching materials that allows ALA student facilitators to run professional Entrepreneurial Leadership camps in their home countries.

The curriculum is based on BUILD, a unique framework for teaching youth entrepreneurship to fight unemployment and engage them to lead solutions to local problems.

ALA works with its students to find partner organisations that they can work with to run a successful and impactful camp in their respective countries. Students enrolled in ALA's flagship Two Year Program have led and facilitated over 60 Build-in-Box camps for over 2000 of their peers in cities like Lagos, Nairobi, Accra, Harare, Bamenda, Kinshasa, and Port Elizabeth.

ALA's strategy is to train its students in entrepreneurship and project management and enable them to go into communities to train more young people to run and manage businesses. Successful start-ups will create much-needed employment and contribute to the GDP.

Quoting Henry Ford, MD of PMI Sub Saharan Africa, George Asamani said, "A country's competitiveness starts not on the factory floor or the engineering lab. It starts in the classroom. Passion, attitude, and character are one side of the enterprise coin, and having a program that sharpens the leadership and project management skills required to become entrepreneurs helps and yields better results. The programme is well-integrated with the industry, and PMI South Africa Chapter volunteers often provide the required support and participate with students in their projects and serve as mentors."

The programme's approach, Asamani noted further, is well aligned to this year's World Youth Skills Day theme - skilling teachers, trainers, and youth for a transformative future, adding,

"Entrepreneurship has been a driver of global economic growth, and Africa should be no different."

Terra Developers Launches Carmen's Creek, Affordable Homes for Young Family

Terra Developers Limited, one of the leading developing firms in Lagos and Abuja, has launched a unique product, "Terra Vantage", which will encourage young families to acquire homes tailored to suit their immediate housing needs.

This is coming on the heels of the launch of its recent projects which include Carmen's Creek Phase 1 & 2, Paul's Creek and Olivia Heights Phase 3, Victoria Garden City (VGC), Lekki, Lagos.

Speaking during the launch of the projects, the Managing Director, Terra Developers Limited, Kola Ashiru-Balogun, said the Carmen's Creek project, which focuses mainly on young families, has altogether 160 units.

"We are doing two-bed each. It is a unique design in this area. It is more affordable. The houses are in the range of N40 million, which is much more affordable than a lot of homes in this area. The two bedrooms are purposely built for young families and we are also adding BQs. It is fully functional for starters families and is at an affordable price", he noted.

Speaking on the uniqueness of Terra Developers and the Carmen's Creek project, which he revealed will cost more than N5 billion to complete, Ashiru-Balogun, said, "We build very solid buildings here and that is one thing that differentiates Terra from a lot of developers out there, especially nowadays that buildings are collapsing. It is very important for people to always remember that quality is more important than anything else."

He stressed further that what Terra is offering is unparalleled, adding, "A lot of people build terrace houses and bigger houses here but our houses are more functionalised to your wallet. Like, I have two children and I don't need a four or five-bedroom flat. I can't even afford a 4-bedroom apartment at this time. So, we felt that instead of selling expensive houses, why don't we reduce the prices and create functional size houses for people."

He explained further that with the number of young people around Lagos today, there was an urgent need for developers to build functional two-bedroom homes, otherwise, young families will be deprived of living peaceful and happy lives in their respective homes.

He said the young population are a huge market, revealing however that a lot of them have been pushed out of the market, which is why Terra Developers is focusing on that particular population at the moment.

HOW VISA WILL SECURE CONTACTLESS PAYMENTS IN NIGERIA



Uaboi

Andrew Uaboi

The Central Bank of Nigeria recently released guidelines for contactless payments, making this the first-time contactless solutions will be formally enabled in the country.

The guidelines seek to ensure that participants in contactless payments implement appropriate risk management measures, while keeping to best industry standards.

Contactless payments are already common in places like South Africa, Canada, Australia and the United Kingdom. In addition to being a fast and easy way to pay, contactless cards provide strong protection against fraud without ever touching the payment terminal. Here are some contactless security facts.

Contactless cards use the same secure technology as EMV Chip

Every contactless transaction includes a one-time use cryptographic code that prevents counterfeit fraud. EMV Chip technology ensures cardholder information is encrypted, dynamic and secure for payments making it much more difficult for threat actors to steal and monetize data.

Fraudsters have limited options

Visa contactless cards must be within 4 centimeters of a merchant's contactless terminal for card information to be transmitted. If fraudsters were to get close enough to read a contactless card, they would not gain access to the cardholder's name or the 3-digit security code, helping to prevent counterfeit and e-commerce fraud.

Contactless payments are protected by the same technologies as other Visa transactions

Every Visa payment product is protected with security at the card, terminal, and network levels. Visa cardholders benefit from multiple layers of security that work behind the scenes with every transaction to prevent payment fraud—even before it can happen.

Secure protocols, artificial intelligence, real time analytics, cryptographic algorithms and many more layers work together to prevent fraud.

The combination of embedded security in our payment products and multi-layered security behind every transaction is why Visa has been able to keep global fraud rates significantly low.

Visa payment solutions evolve

In partnership with the wider industry, including financial institutions, technologist, academics, and others, Visa constantly adapts, enhances, and evolves its payment solutions to identify and address new risks.

When appropriate, we make changes in technology and infrastructure to mitigate risks.

As a result of this industry collaboration, contactless cards are a secure way to pay, and consumers can use them with confidence.

• Uaboi is Vice President & Head, Visa West Africa.

A Bouquet for Chidi Amuta @ 70

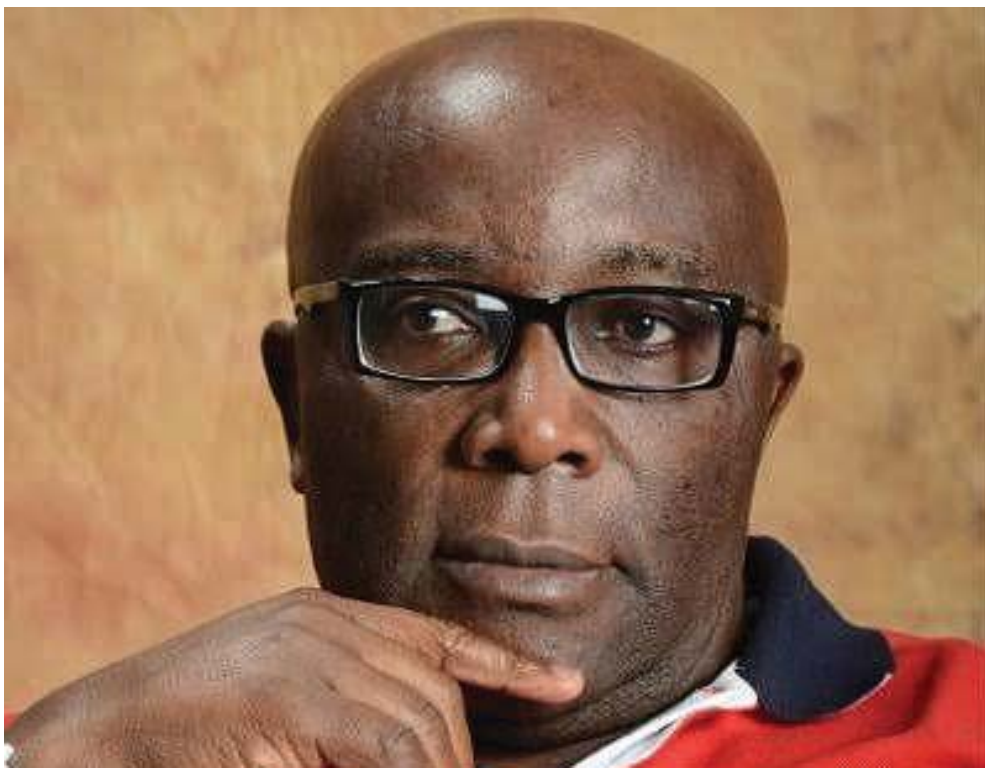
By Tunde Olusunle

Monday July 24, 2023 marked the 70th birthday of the renowned scholar, teacher, theorist, journalist and author Chidi Amuta. As a student of literature, my first "encounter" with Amuta was during my postgraduate studies courtesy of his first book of literary criticism *Towards a Sociology of African Literature,* released in 1986. I would later engage with *Theory of African Literature: Implications for Practical Criticism* also written by him and published in 1989. Amuta also wrote *Prince of the Niger: The Babangida Years* in 1992. He has availed the reading public with selections from his humongous mass of media treatises with his book *Writing the Wrong* an intimidating 1000-page compendium published in 2014.

I have read Amuta voraciously beginning from his contributions to *The Guardian* which was established in 1983. He was in the critical core of scholars who invested Nigeria's contemporary media with noticeably refreshing rigour, scholarship, style and flair, with the outset of *The Guardian.* That generation of writers were those you always wanted to read, study and be inspired by. Those early greats at *The Guardian* included Patrick Dele-Cole, Stanley Macebuh, Yemi Ogunbiyi, Femi Osofisan, Olatunji Dare and Edwin Madunagu. There were also Chinweizu (Ibekwe), Onwuchekwa Jemie, Sully Abu, Odia Ofeimun, Sonala Olumhense, Eddie Iroh, Ashikiwe Adione-Egom, Andy Akporugo, Godini Darah, Ted Iwere, Dapo Olorunyomi, among others. There were also seasoned media technocrats like Lade Bonuola, Femi Kusa, Emeka Eluem-Izeze, Ama Ogan, Dupe Ajayi, Juliet Ukabiala, Kingsley Osadolor, Ben Tomoloju, Doyin Mahmoud and a host of others. *The Guardian* seemed to have poached the cream of Nigerian academics and media practitioners from the universities and older publications!

It was for me a dream come true when I eventually met Amuta at the *Daily Times of Nigeria Plc,* following my employment by Ogunbiyi. He had been appointed Managing Director of the organisation by Nigeria's former military President, Ibrahim Babangida, in 1989. Elsewhere, I have shared the uniqueness of my experience of my first ever meeting with the media mogul and my subsequent adoption by him. As I rounded up postgraduate studies at the University of Ilorin, I continuously "harassed" my uncle, Albert Anjorin, Emeritus Professor of Pathology, to introduce me to Ogunbiyi. Both men were students of the University of Ibadan and belonged to a few extracurricular associations. We eventually travelled together from Ilorin to Lagos to see Ogunbiyi. The erstwhile *Daily Times* chief asked me a question: "Tunde, your uncle tells me you are specialist in Literature and English. What experience do you have to contribute to the success of this organisation?"

I try to be as well prepared as possible and on this occasion I just pulled out a file from my bag. Ogunbiyi flipped through and saw articles and interviews I had previously contributed to *The Guardian,* *Daily Times* and *The Herald.* They included full page stuff on literary monoliths like David Cook, Zulu Sofola, Oludare Olajubu, Niyi Osundare, Obafemi and so on. Ogunbiyi looked up to me from the file before me: "You are the Tunde Olusunle who has been writing all of these?" I answered in the affirmative. Ogunbiyi promptly summoned his Secretary. "Please get me the GM.""Onyema," he requested. Onyema Ugochukwu was functioning as General Manager of Times Publications Division, (TPD). He joined us in minutes. "Onyema," Ogunbiyi began: "I just got you a real literary scholar here fresh from the University of Ilorin. Please give him a letter of appointment immediately!" Thus began my sojourn in Daily Times.



Amuta

Ogunbiyi came along to the *Daily Times* with quite a number of professionals from *The Guardian* when he exited the venture. Amuta, Darah, Osofisan, Ndaeyo Oko, Afam Akeh, Dapo Adeniyi, Ejiro Onobrakpeya, Sam John, Edwin Baiye, were some of those Ogunbiyi migrated with. Amuta was Chairman of the Editorial Board of the *Daily Times,* Darah his deputy. Members of that Ogunbiyi era Editorial Board included: Kayode Soremekun, Omar Farouk Ibrahim, Ngozi Anyaegbunam, Al Bishak, Ayo Olukotun, most of whom joined the organisation at Ogunbiyi's prodding. His friends from their days in the university notably Osofisan came around from time to time. Osundare equally stopped by at least on one occasion and applauded Ogunbiyi for the renaissance he brought to be in the organisation in an article he titled "The Ogunbiyi Phenomenon" published in the *Newswatch* magazine edition of March 9, 1992, where he was a columnist.

The new-look Editorial Board was supplemented by a very cerebral, experienced and professional core inherited from the existing order in the organisation. These included Ugochukwu, Femi Sonaike, and a select few *Daily Times* insiders. In terms of quality and diversity of manpower, the *Daily Times* ranked neck to neck with *The Guardian* which has prided itself as the "flagship of Nigerian journalism" since its inception. The university tradition of dialogue and engagement flowing over from the faculty to the staff club, took root in the new order as the lengthy and luminous corridor of TPD regularly broke into talkshops, giggles and guffaws. *Daily Times,* the newspaper colossus which was established in 1926, breathed a refreshing new life. Away from the denigrating tags of "obituary newspaper" and "government mouthpiece" respectively, the revamped *Daily Times* hallmarked editorial independence and enhanced believability on the newsstands.

Being southpaw conferred some uniqueness on Amuta. He earned a first class in English back in 1979, going all the way to his doctorate breaking new research grounds in literature and literary theory on his trail. You could imagine my eternal delight when as a "Staff Writer" straddling the features and literary departments of the *Daily Times,* I was called up to collaborate with Amuta to put together a special edition on "Achebe at 60." Holding in my hands a copy of the *Sunday Times* of November 11, 1990, my name as coauthor with Amuta of that three-page tribute titled "Achebe: Eagle above Seasons," was one of the happiest days of my career!

Much as I was officially in the features department, I was subsequently co-opted to join in executing "special assignments" bothering on literature and the arts. I collaborated for instance with Harry Garuba in producing the special edition on the Association of Nigerian Authors, (ANA) when the body marked its 10th anniversary in November 1990. Garuba's essay was titled: "Legions and Languages: A toast to ANA at 10." My addendum was headed "Celebrating a Literary Legacy" I also helped out in the arts department where Akeh and Adeniyi dutifully produced the *Times Review of Ideas and the Arts.* The experiences aggregated from these exertions were immensely beneficial to my choice of a topic for my doctorate degree dissertation and my research work several years after.

I have studiously followed Amuta's trajectory thereafter as he made a first stop at *Tanus Communications* with Ogunbiyi. In a very brusque and unthinking December 1990 move, Ogunbiyi was removed from his brief by the Babangida government. Ogunbiyi's ouster contributed largely to the eventual unravelling of the erstwhile newspaper octopus. Things fell apart and the centre never held together again, post-Ogunbiyi. In solidarity, Amuta joined his longtime friend to set up the new venture, functioning as Executive Director. He also featured prominently at *Post Express* newspapers where he served as Managing Director.

Macebuh whose contributions to the development of Nigeria's mass media has not been exhaustively studied, was the initiator of the *Post Express* project. The newspaper unfortunately suffered the "stillbirth" syndrome which strangulated many Nigerian publications as they were respectively asphyxiated trying to catch fiscal oxygen in a suffocating socioeconomic environment. Amuta, Chief Executive of *Wilson and Weizman Associates* a public relations consultancy, is more contempraneously associated with *USAfrica* a very authoritative online news medium. He also continues to maintain a regular column in *THISDAY.* I felicitate heartily with an inspirational figure as he joins the club of septuagenarians. He is one star boy who has survived Nigeria's unending tempests, even as I wish him many more years of service to knowledge, culture and the media.

•Tunde Olusunle, PhD, poet, journalist, scholar and author is a Member of the Nigerian Guild of Editors, (NGE)

MicCom to Partner OGTAN towards Encouraging Local Content Development Initiatives

Precious Ugwuzor

MicCom Cables and Wires Limited is set to partner with the Oil and Gas Trainers Association of Nigeria (OGTAN) to take on training and technology transfer opportunities with Nigerian students to encourage local content development initiatives, especially in the cable manufacturing sector.

The Chief Operating Officer of MicCom, Bukola Adubi, stated this in an interview with Majorwaves on the margins of the recently concluded 2023 NOG Energy Week, which was held in Abuja with the theme "Powering Nigeria's Sustainable Energy Future."

MicCom has been playing a key role in capacity building. Some of the things the company has done include the donation of Electrical/Electronic Laboratories to LAUTECH, Ogbomosho in Oyo state; establishment of MicCom Funds for Teaching and Research at Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile Ife; construction of Physics Laboratories at Bowen University, Iwo, Oyo state; and building and donation of Technical Workshops in Lagos and Osun States.

"With our proposed partnership with the Oil and Gas Trainers Association of Nigeria (OGTAN) we shall take on training and technology transfer opportunities with Nigerian students to encourage local content development initiatives, especially in the cable manufacturing sector," Adubi said.



Bukola Adubi speaking during a panel session at the just-concluded NOG Energy Week

"At the core of our R&D is our partnership with OAU, LAUTECH, and BOWEN Universities, which features laboratories which MicCom has donated where research and development functions in the fields of electricity and electronics, allowing us to accelerate development speed, and along with a firm understanding of customer needs that ultimately guides our processes.

"The facility also aims to be a base for the development of technology through cooperative efforts with raw material manufacturers and joint research projects between industry and academia, bringing together advanced technical information and specialists from each field, as we keep our eyes on the future."

On challenges confronting manufacturers in the country, Adubi listed inadequate power supply, high energy costs, lack of access to renewable energy sources, inefficient energy utilization, limited financing options, and lack of technical expertise as some of them.

"Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive approach involving government support, policy reforms, investments in renewable energy infrastructure, promotion of energy efficient practices, and capacity building initiatives for us manufacturers. The conversation has started and will continue. We are optimistic about the entrance of the new government," she noted. Adubi moderated a panel session at the conference, which focused on the topic, "Capacity Development for Emerging Opportunities."

Summarizing the session, the MicCom boss said: "Capacity development refers to the process of enhancing an individual's or organization's ability to effectively respond to and capitalize on new and evolving opportunities in various sectors generally and in the oil & gas sector particularly. It involves acquiring new knowledge, skills, and resources to adapt to changing circumstances and maximize potential benefits.

"The goal is to enable organizations to identify and understand emerging trends, technologies, and markets and to then develop the necessary capabilities to take advantage of these opportunities. Including but not limited to training programmes, mentorship, networking, and access to resources and funding.

"By investing in capacity development, organizations can stay ahead of the curve, innovate and remain competitive in a rapidly changing world. It allows for continuous growth, adaptability, and sustainability."

To sustain Nigeria's energy sector for the future, she suggested investment in renewable energy; fostering of collaborations and partnerships; enhancement of technical skills and knowledge; strengthening of regulatory frameworks; promotion of entrepreneurship and innovation; and improvement of infrastructure and grid stability.

•Tunde Olusunle, PhD, poet, journalist, scholar and author is a Member of the Nigerian Guild of Editors, (NGE)

FOREIGN DESK

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Putin Promises Russian Grain Shipments to Africa



On Thursday, Russian President Vladimir Putin told leaders and officials from African countries that Moscow would provide grain for sale or free to the neediest countries to avert the uncertainty in the global food supply caused by Russia's refusal to guarantee safe passage for Ukrainian grain exports across the Black Sea.

Putin, speaking at the opening session of a two-day Russia-Africa summit in St. Petersburg, said, "I have already said that our country can replace Ukrainian grain, both on a commercial basis and as grant aid to the neediest African countries, more so since we expect another record harvest this year."

"Our country will continue supporting needy states and regions, in particular, with its humanitarian deliveries," Putin said. "We seek to actively participate in building a fairer system of distribution of resources. We are taking maximum efforts to avert a global food crisis."

But in Washington, the White House pushed back on Putin's claim of professing to resolve the food crisis affecting the world's most impoverished countries.

National Security Council spokesman John Kirby told VOA, "I hope he tells them, 'I'm the reason why the food prices are volatile.'"

67% of People View China Negatively in 24 Countries: Survey

A survey examining people's views of China across 24 countries has reported that 67 per cent of adults hold unfavourable views of the country, and less than 28 per cent of respondents speak favourably of China. In most high-income countries, negative views of China are at or near historic highs.

The Pew Research Center survey published Thursday gathered opinions from more than 27,000 adults from 24 countries between February 20 and May 22 of this year, focusing on respondents' opinions on several issues related to China and their confidence in Chinese leader Xi Jinping. Countries featured in the survey include advanced economies in North America, Western Europe and Asia Pacific, and middle economies in Latin America and Africa.

Analysts told VOA that negative views of China in many countries are caused by the public's perception of China as a threat to their economic interests and governance system, as well as the deteriorating human rights situation in China since Xi Jinping came to power.

North Korea's Kim Shows off Banned Missiles to Russia

Russia's defence minister accompanied North Korean leader Kim Jong Un to a defence exhibition that featured the North's banned ballistic missiles as the neighbours pledged to boost ties, North Korean state media reported Thursday.

The Russian minister, Sergei Shoigu, and a Chinese delegation, including a Politburo member, arrived in North Korea this week for the 70th anniversary of the end of the Korean War, celebrated in North Korea as "Victory Day."

The missiles were banned under UN Security Council resolutions adopted with Russian and Chinese support, but this week, they provided a striking backdrop for a show of solidarity by three countries united by their rivalry with the US.

Shoigu is making the first visit by a Russian defence minister to North Korea since the fall of the Soviet Union.

For North Korea, the arrival of the Russian and Chinese delegations marks its first major opening up to the world since the coronavirus pandemic.

Shoigu gave Kim a letter from Russian President Vladimir Putin, North Korean media reported.

Kim thanked Putin for sending the military delegation led by Shoigu, saying the visit had deepened the "strategic and traditional" relations between North Korea and Russia.

China Angry As Japan Imposes Microchip Export Ban

Japan imposed export controls on advanced microchip technologies this week in a move widely seen as targeting China, mirroring recent restrictions imposed by the United States and the Netherlands, two other major producers of cutting-edge semiconductors.

Tokyo listed 23 types of semiconductor technology that are now subject to export restrictions beginning July 23. They include advanced microchip manufacturing equipment, such as machines that deposit films on silicon wafers, to devices that etch out the microscopic circuits of chips.

Analysts Yoshiaki Takayama of the Japan Institute for International Affairs in Tokyo said that the controls would affect China's ability to make advanced chips.

"The Japanese measure complements US-led export control measures because the number of companies with the capacity to manufacture cutting-edge chips is extremely limited," Takayama told VOA in an interview Wednesday. "The Japanese measure makes it difficult for China not only to import advanced chips but also to manufacture them."

He added that Beijing appears to be shifting its semiconductor strategy by focusing on middle- and low-end semiconductor manufacturing rather than cutting-edge semiconductor manufacturing.

China Vows to Respond in Kind to US Chip Export Restrictions

If the United States imposes more investment restrictions and export controls on China's semiconductor industry, Beijing will respond in kind, according to China's ambassador to the US, Xie Feng, whose tough talk analysts see as the latest response from a so-called wolf-warrior diplomat.

Xie likened the US export controls to "restricting their opponents to only wearing old swimsuits in swimming competitions, while they themselves can wear advanced shark swimsuits."

Xie's remarks, made at the Aspen Security Forum last week, came as the US finalised its mechanism for vetting possible investments in China's cutting-edge technology. These include semiconductors, quantum computing and artificial intelligence, all of which have military and commercial applications.

The US Department of Commerce is also considering imposing new restrictions on exports of artificial intelligence (AI) chips to China, despite the objections of US chipmakers.

Wen-Chih Chao of the Institute of Strategic and International Affairs Studies at Taiwan's National Chung Cheng University characterised Xie's remarks as part of China's "wolf-warrior" diplomacy, as China's increasingly assertive foreign policy style has become known.

US Sanctions Top Malian Officials over Russian Wagner

The United States imposed sanctions on several top Malian officials this week, saying they facilitated activities of the Wagner Group, the Russian mercenary unit that recently staged a brief mutiny against Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Mali's military government Wednesday criticized the sanctions on high-ranking members of the army accused of facilitating Wagner Group activities in the country as Mali continues its decade-long fight against Islamist militants.

A statement was read on state TV station ORTM by presenter Mah Camara and later posted to the station's Facebook page.

"These new measures, contrary to international law, which we strongly condemn, add to the long list of aggressive measures, acts of intimidation, blackmail and hostile campaigns against Mali," the statement said in French.

The statement also accused the United States of having "actively contributed to the spread of terrorism and weapons in the Sahel."

On Monday, the US Department of the Treasury announced the travel and financial sanctions against Mali's minister of defence, Colonel Sadio Camara, as well as Colonel Alou Boi Diarra, Mali's chief of staff of the air force, and Colonel Adama Bagayoko, the Malian Air Force deputy chief of staff.

India Allows Muslim Procession in Kashmir's Main City, First in 3 Decades

Thousands of Shiite Muslims were allowed to hold a religious procession marking the Muslim month of Muharram in Indian-controlled Kashmir's main city on Thursday for the first time since an anti-India rebellion broke out in the disputed region more than three decades ago.

The participants, mostly wearing black clothes, beat their chests and recited elegies in the commercial heart of Srinagar. Some carried copies of the Quran to protest recent public desecrations of the Islamic holy book in Sweden and Denmark.

Muharram is among the holiest months for Shiite Muslims and marks the martyrdom of the Prophet Muhammad's grandson Imam Hussein and his 72 companions in the battle of Karbala in the 7th century in present-day Iraq. The mourning over their deaths peaks on Ashura, the 10th day of Muharram. Thursday's procession marked the eighth day on the calendar.

The main Muharram gatherings on the eighth and 10th days that used to pass through the city centre were banned a year after an armed insurgency broke out in 1989 demanding the region's independence from India or its merger with neighbouring Pakistan, which also controls part of Kashmir. However, Muharram processions continued to be allowed elsewhere in the Indian-controlled portion.

New Permit Applications to Burn Religious Books Worry Swedish PM

Sweden's prime minister said Thursday that police had received several permit applications for burning religious texts in the country next week, and he fears this may escalate tensions further with the Muslim world.

In his first public comments since the start of the Quran burning crisis that has severely strained Stockholm's ties with Muslim nations, Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson told Swedish news agency TT he was "extremely concerned" about a new wave of desecrations.

"It's the police that make those decisions, not me. If they [permits] are granted, we face a number of days with the obvious risk of serious things happening," Kristersson told TT.

A recent string of public Quran desecrations by a handful of anti-Islam activists in Sweden and neighbouring Denmark has sparked angry demonstrations in Muslim countries.

Sweden does not have a law specifically prohibiting the burning or desecration of the Quran or other religious texts. The Swedish Constitution values and protects the right to hold public demonstrations. Police generally give permission based on whether they believe a public gathering can be held without major disruptions or risks to public safety.

Trump Lawyers Meet US Special Counsel as Indictment Looms

Donald Trump said his attorneys met on Thursday with U.S. Justice Department officials investigating the Republican former president's attempts to overturn his 2020 election defeat, in a sign that criminal charges could come soon.

But the grand jury investigating the case will not hand down an indictment on Thursday, an official at the federal court in Washington said.

It is not uncommon for defence attorneys to meet with federal prosecutors before an indictment, but Trump said on his Truth Social platform that the Department of Justice had not told his attorneys when action was likely.

"My attorneys had a productive meeting with the DOJ this morning, explaining in detail that I did nothing wrong, was advised by many lawyers, and that an Indictment of me would only further destroy our Country," Trump said. "No indication of notice was given during the meeting."

Special Counsel Jack Smith is investigating actions by Trump, the front-runner for the 2024 Republican presidential nomination, to try to reverse his loss to Democrat Joe Biden in the 2020 election.

Officials have testified that during his final months in office, Trump pressured them with false claims of widespread voter fraud. His supporters attacked the US Capitol in a January 6, 2021, bid to stop Congress from certifying Biden's win.

Trump said on July 18 he had received a letter from Smith stating that he was a target of the probe.

IMAGES

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L-R: Regional Sales Manager, Spectranet, Mr. Babatunde Agunbiade; Manager, Customer Service, Spectranet, Mr. Sujato Ghatak; Marketing Manager, Spectranet, Prem Kumar; Chief Executive Officer, Spectranet, Mr. Maneesh Kulshrestha; and Regional Sales Manager, Spectranet, Mr. Nasiru Jibril, at the Spectranet Jara launch event held in Ikeja, Lagos...recently PHOTO: ETOP UKUTT



L-R: Delta State Coordinator of the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC), Mr. Olusegun Alao; NYSC Director-General, Brigadier General Yusha'u Dogara Ahmed; Director, Special Duties, NYSC, Alhaji Musa Abubakar; and Director, Press and Public Relations, NYSC, Mr. Eddy Megwa, during Ahmed's working visit to the Delta State Orientation Camp of the NYSC in Ogwashi-Uku…recently



L-R: Director, Entrepreneurship Unit, Redeemer's College of Technology and Management (RECTEM), Dr. Sunday Onjewu; RECTEM's College Librarian, Mr. Timothy Ayanda; RECTEM's Registrar, Mr. Babatunde Odugbesan; RECTEM's Rector, Dr. Stella Mofunanya; Ogun State JAMB Coordinator, Alhaji Abdulhakeem Abdulhameed; RECTEM's acting Deputy Rector, Academic, Mrs. Christiana Alonge; and RECTEM's Bursar, Mr. Felix Oyewole, during the RECTEM matriculation ceremony for the 2022/2023 session, held at the Redemption City of God, Mowe, Ogun State…recently



L-R: Programme Assistant, Speak Out Africa Initiative, Oluchi Alphonsus; Lead Director, Speak Out Africa Initiative, Kenneth Eze; and Civic Officer, Speak Out Africa Initiative, Blessing Agu, during the official launch of CRiG.NG Governance Tracker in Abuja...recently PHOTO: AYO AJAYI



A cross-section of the newly-appointed Special Advisers to the Osun State Governor, Senator Demola Adeleke, in Osogbo, the state capital…recently



L-R: Guests and family members, Mr. Joshua Taiwo, Mrs. Comfort Oyeronke Adesida, and Pastor Timothy Taiwo; birthday celebrant, Mrs. Funmilola Bosede Taiwo; other family members, Miss Abigail Oluwatoyin Taiwo, Mr. Babatunde Taiwo, and Mr. Daniel Taiwo, during Mrs. Funmilola's 65th birthday celebration and thanksgiving service on her retirement from the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, held at the Christ Apostolic Church (CAC), Ile-Ife, Osun State…recently

Thisday Afrinvest Index dipped 59bps

Thisday Afrinvest 40 index lost by 0.59% to close at 2,9203.64 index points due to selloffs in **GTCO** (-3.1%), **ZENITH** (-0.8%), and **FBNH** (-4.4%). Cumulatively, these stocks account for 20.1% of the index.

Extended Profit-taking on the Local Bourse... ASI down 31bps

Yesterday, the NGX-ASI fell 0.3% to 65,482.91 points, following selloffs in **GTCO** (-3.1%), **FBNH** (-4.4%) and **NB** (-4.8%). As a result, the YTD return declined to 27.8% (previously 28.2%), while market capitalisation reduced by ₦111.1bn to ₦35.6tn. Activity level was mixed as volume traded rose 1.8% to 509.2m units while value traded fell 32.9% to ₦4.8bn.

Mixed Sector Performance

Performance across our coverage sectors was mixed as 3 indices gained, 2 lost, while the **AFR-ICT** index closed flat. The **Oil & Gas** index led gainers, up 88bps on the back of buying interest in TOTAL (+4.1%) and OANDO (+2.7%). Trailing, the **Banking** and **Industrial Goods** indices rose 2bps and 1bp respectively due to price uptick in JAIZBANK (+3.2%), FIDELITY (+0.6%) and CAP (+5.3%). Conversely, price depreciation in CORNERST (-6.3%), MBENEFIT (-3.9%), FLOURMILL (-4.6%), and CADBURY (-9.8%) dragged the **Insurance** and **Consumer Goods** indices lower by 95bps and 66bps accordingly.

Outlook

Investor sentiment, as measured by market breadth, worsened to -0.39x from 0.15x in the prior session as 14 stocks advanced, 38 declined, while 62 closed flat. In the last trading session, we expect the bearish performance would continue in the absence of positive catalyst.

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	Divindend Yield	Earnings Yield
	THISDAY AFRINVEST 40	**2903.64**	**-0.59%**		**23.0%**	**190.4%**	**23.6%**	**5.3%**	**6.0x**	**1.2x**	**5.8%**	**13.7%**
1	BUA Foods PLC	135.75	0.0%	18.0%	108.8%	0.0%	45.4%	17.7%	21.8x	9.0x	3.4%	4.6%
2	MTN Nigeria Communications PLC	275.10	0.0%	10.0%	28.0%	0.6%	91.7%	13.2%	15.4x	12.9x	5.6%	6.5%
3	Airtel Africa PLC	1,319.90	0.0%	9.6%	-19.3%	0.0%	18.6%	3.2%			2.6%	
4	Guaranty Trust Holding Co PLC	37.50	-3.1%	8.1%	63.0%	7.1%	19.7%	3.0%	5.8x	1.2x	8.2%	17.4%
5	Zenith Bank PLC	35.00	-0.8%	7.1%	45.8%	2.2%	16.7%	2.0%	4.7x	0.8x	9.1%	21.1%
6	FBN Holdings Plc	19.60	-4.4%	4.9%	79.8%	15.0%	23.6%	2.2%	2.7x	0.5x	2.5%	37.7%
7	Dangote Cement PLC	352.00	0.0%	5.2%	34.9%	23.5%	34.8%	14.7%	15.6x	5.2x	6.2%	6.4%
8	Lafarge Africa PLC	27.90	0.0%	3.3%	16.3%	-5.4%	12.3%	9.1%	8.8x	1.0x	7.4%	11.3%
9	United Bank for Africa PLC	14.80	0.0%	3.5%	94.7%	20.8%	20.4%	1.7%	2.9x	0.5x	7.5%	34.9%
10	SEPLAT Energy PLC	1,693.60	0.0%	3.0%	60.4%	21.0%	5.7%	2.8%	12.3x	0.7x	2.8%	8.1%
11	Nestle Nigeria PLC	1,175.00	0.0%	2.3%	6.8%	-6.0%	110.1%	12.8%	19.7x	20.1x	5.5%	5.1%
12	Access Holdings PLC	17.35	1.2%	4.3%	104.1%	86.6%	13.9%	1.2%	3.5x	0.4x	14.9%	28.7%
13	Stanbic IBTC Holdings PLC	69.50	0.0%	2.7%	107.8%	28.7%	22.4%	2.9%	9.1x	2.1x	5.1%	11.0%
14	Ecobank Transnational Inc	17.00	3.3%	2.3%	60.4%	11.8%	19.1%	1.0%	1.7x	0.4x	3.1%	59.4%
15	Okomu Oil Palm PLC	265.00	0.0%	1.9%	60.6%	12.8%	47.7%	23.5%	15.6x	7.4x	4.2%	6.4%
16	Nigerian Brew eries PLC	40.00	-4.8%	1.3%	-2.4%	-11.1%	-6.3%	-1.9%		2.0x	3.4%	-3.4%
17	Fidelity Bank PLC	8.60	0.6%	1.8%	97.7%	22.9%	16.7%	1.4%	4.7x	0.8x	4.7%	21.4%
18	Flour Mills of Nigeria PLC	29.35	-4.6%	0.9%	3.3%	-13.9%	11.4%	2.5%	5.7x	0.6x		17.5%
19	Transnational Corp of Nigeria	3.50	-4.4%	1.0%	209.7%	-0.3%	6.4%	1.5%	21.1x	1.3x	1.4%	4.7%
20	International Brew eries PLC	4.60	0.0%	0.9%	-2.1%	-11.5%	-19.2%	-5.2%		1.1x		-20.0%
21	AXA Mansard Insurance PLC	3.73	-0.3%	0.8%	86.5%	-5.6%	13.3%	3.4%	6.8x	1.1x	8.0%	14.6%
22	FCMB Group Plc	6.75	-1.0%	0.9%	75.3%	32.4%	12.7%	1.3%	3.8x	0.4x	3.7%	26.2%
23	PZ Cussons Nigeria PLC	18.50	-2.1%	0.5%	63.0%	-15.9%	35.2%	10.0%	5.0x	1.7x	5.5%	20.1%
24	Guinness Nigeria PLC	74.00	0.0%	0.6%	6.8%	-7.5%	7.3%	2.9%		2.0x	10.2%	-11.2%
25	Dangote Sugar Refinery PLC	30.00	0.0%	0.7%	86.9%	20.0%	36.5%	12.3%	6.2x	2.2x	5.1%	16.1%
26	Presco PLC	220.00	0.0%	0.6%	60.0%	23.6%	53.4%	13.5%	11.4x	5.2x	0.9%	8.8%
27	United Capital PLC	14.50	-3.3%	0.5%	3.6%	-7.9%	38.7%	1.6%	8.8x	3.3x	10.2%	11.4%
28	BUA Cement Plc	98.95	0.0%	0.4%	1.2%	7.3%	25.0%	12.6%	33.2x	8.2x	3.0%	3.0%
29	NASCON Allied Industries PLC	33.40	-0.3%	0.6%	200.9%	78.6%	37.7%	13.0%	13.2x	4.3x	3.2%	7.6%
30	TotalEnergies Marketing Nigeri	385.00	4.1%	0.4%	99.5%	10.0%	34.8%	5.8%	8.1x	2.8x	6.8%	12.4%
31	Wema Bank PLC	4.59	-1.1%	0.2%	17.7%	-13.2%	17.2%	1.0%	3.5x	0.7x	6.5%	28.4%
32	Jaiz Bank PLC	1.96	3.2%	0.3%	113.0%	17.4%	27.5%	2.0%	9.1x	2.3x	26.3%	11.0%
33	Geregu Pow er PLC	345.00	0.0%	0.3%	131.5%	15.0%				26.3x	2.4%	
34	Union Bank of Nigeria PLC	6.80	-2.9%	0.2%	6.2%	-7.5%	15.8%	1.6%	5.5x	0.7x		18.1%
35	Julius Berger Nigeria PLC	28.00	-2.3%	0.2%	14.3%	-9.7%	11.2%	1.3%	7.0x	0.8x	8.9%	14.4%
36	Unilever Nigeria PLC	15.50	-1.6%	0.2%	33.6%	-4.9%	8.0%	4.0%	16.7x	1.3x	1.7%	6.0%
37	Oando PLC	5.34	2.7%	0.1%	36.2%	-7.1%		3.2%	1.8x			56.9%
38	Conoil PLC	101.25	0.0%	0.1%	282.1%	22.0%	34.4%	13.1%	8.1x	2.5x	2.7%	12.3%
39	Transcorp Hotels Plc	37.95	0.0%	0.2%	507.2%	62.2%	3.5%	1.9%	171.5x	6.1x	0.4%	0.6%
40	Notore Chemical Industries Ltd	62.50	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	-27.3%	-6.4%		1.5x		-16.5%

Top 10 Gainers

Ticker	Price	Price Chg %
LASACO	2.09	10.0%
MULTIVERSE	2.98	10.0%
SKYAVN	23.30	9.9%
RTBRISCOE	0.53	6.0%
CAP	22.00	5.3%
TOTAL	385.00	4.1%
NAHCO	18.75	3.9%
NGXGROUP	27.50	3.8%
ETI	17.00	3.3%
JAIZBANK	1.96	3.2%

Top 10 Losers

Ticker	Price	Price Chg %
JAPAULGOLD	1.00	-9.9%
CADBURY	13.80	-9.8%
FTNCOCOA	2.41	-9.4%
NEIMETH	1.65	-9.3%
COURTVILLE	0.60	-9.1%
UNITYBNK	1.45	-8.2%
STERLINGNG	3.40	-8.1%
UPDCREIT	3.50	-7.9%
ACADEMY	2.20	-7.2%
CORNERST	0.89	-6.3%

Top 10 Trades by Volume

Ticker	Volume	Price Chg %
JAPAULGOLD	115.7	-9.9%
UBA	40.4	0.0%
TRANSCORP	37.5	-4.4%
FCMB	35.0	-1.0%
FIDELITYBK	31.8	0.6%
FTNCOCOA	26.9	-9.4%
ZENITHBANK	16.4	-0.8%
ACCESSCORP	15.9	1.2%
STERLINGNG	15.7	-8.1%
VERITASKAP	14.9	0.0%

Top 10 Trades by Value

Ticker	Value	Price Chg %
UBA	595.9	0.0%
ZENITHBANK	575.1	-0.8%
ACCESSCORP	277.7	1.2%
FIDELITYBK	271.2	0.6%
FCMB	237.7	-1.0%
TOTAL	221.0	4.1%
FBNH	215.3	-4.4%
AIRTELAFRI	213.0	0.0%
MTNN	177.0	0.0%
NASCON	161.6	-0.3%

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Ashiru: Our Reforms Will Make Odu'a Investment Company World-class Conglomerate

Eromosele Abiodun

The Group Chairman, Odu'a Investment Company Limited (OICL), Bimbo Ashiru has stated that the board and management of the company have worked assiduously over the last one year to reposition it to compete globally and become a world-class conglomerate.

Ashiru who stated this while speaking at the company's 41st Annual General Meeting (AGM) held in Lagos, said the ongoing reforms and potential investments in the energy, power, agriculture, real estate, among others, some of which will translate into viable businesses and partnerships, will take it to a new level.

He noted that during the year 2022, the company made significant progress in the area of business development.

He added that the company maintained it's focus on good corporate governance, in line with the highest international standards and practices.

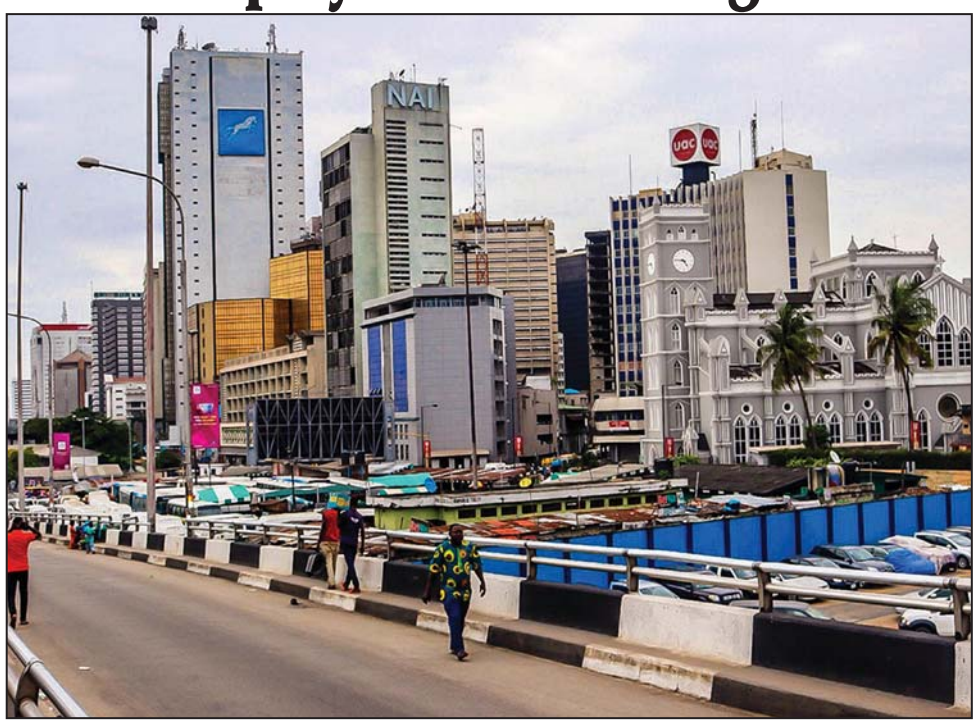
According to him, "As part of fulfilling our responsibilities of steering the company towards achieving its potential, we have stayed committed to the execution of our Five-year Strategy, which we refer to as Sweat, Revive and Create (SRC) 2025. The central thrusts of the strategy include sustainably improving returns by Sweating existing assets, Reviving moribund businesses within our portfolio or optimising their assets, and Creating new businesses across our priority sectors (Agriculture, Healthcare, Real Estate, Hospitality, Financial Services, Energy, ICT and Transportation and Logistics)."

Ashiru also noted that in the year under review, the board worked tirelessly to improve the quality and depth of engagement across the group, with emphasis was on setting the foundations for improved shared service arrangements and deriving intra-group synergies.

He noted that the board of the company planned to leverage it's shared service programs to drive group wide culture and standardised business practices, while expecting that these efforts would result in increased efficiency and effectiveness of the operations of the company.

Speaking on the dividend, the General Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of OICL, Adewale Raji the 2020 dividend will bring the total dividend paid to shareholders over the last 9 years to the sum of N2.56 billion.

On the financial performance of the company in year 2022, Raji said Odu'a Investment Company recorded a revenue of N3.68 billion.



CBN Takes Campaign to Bauchi Sensitises Students on eNaira Benefits

Segun Awofadeji in Bauchi

The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) on Wednesday took its eNaira policy campaign to the Federal Polytechnic, Bauchi to sensitise them on the benefits of adoption and usage of eNaira in their daily financial transactions.

CBN Bauchi Branch Controller, Mr Idris Haladu Andaza during a sensitisation visit on the Management of the polytechnic said the polytechnic can adopt eNaira for collection of fees, levies and other revenues with great efficiency and security.

He enjoined the business community of the polytechnic to also key into eNaira payment platform to effect transactions for free and without interest.

According to him, "The eNaira, which is the first digital currency in Africa has the capacity to revolutionise the way Nigerians make financial transactions with ease and accessibility. It is designed to complement the Naira with a secure and efficient convenient digital currency payment platform without necessarily using hard currency and ATM cards".

He assured the management of the polytechnic that the eNaira is safe and secured, adding that it is being managed by the apex bank.

He added, "the eNaira is Catalyst for economic growth positioned Nigeria at the forefront of growth and progress".

He reiterated that the e-Naira policy plays a vital role in promoting financial inclusion, particularly for individuals without access to traditional banking services.

Responding, the Rector of the polytechnic, Sani Usman assured that the institution along with it's staff and students will be a vanguard on eNaira transaction.

While assuring that the polytechnic will consider using the eNaira platform for one of its payments.

LEAP Africa, IYF Launches Youth Enterprise Funding Initiative

Sunday Ehigiator

LEAP Africa, a non-profit leadership development organisation, in partnership with the International Youth Foundation (IYF), a global youth development organisation has recently launched the Youth Enterprise Fund (YEF) initiative targeted at empowering 10 Nigerian social innovators with a grant of $10,000 each in funding

In a statement from the partnership, they revealed that the initiative was made possible through the generous support of the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, and it seeks to empower young entrepreneurs by providing them with the necessary resources and financial backing to turn their ideas into reality.

"The pitch event constitutes a qualifying stage for the Youth Enterprise Fund which aims to reward ten Nigerian social innovators with a grant of $10,000 each in funding with capacity building focused on the specific needs and requirements of each social enterprise, to deepen the impact of their work across Nigeria.

"By investing in the next generation of young innovative leaders, the YEF aims to drive economic growth, job creation, and social development in Africa. Both the IYF and LEAP Africa are renowned for their unwavering commitment to youth."

Speaking at the official launch of the initiative, the Executive Director of LEAP Africa, Kehinde Ayeni, highlighted the importance of innovators being disruptors, stating that, "Irrespective of how developed a nation is, there is the necessity for disruptors. We need disruptors to alleviate poverty in Nigeria as we cannot continue to rely on the government."

Joining the event virtually, the Regional Director for Africa and the Middle East, International Youth Foundation, Ronnie Murungu, stated that for over two decades, IYF has been championing the importance of social entrepreneurship and this focus birthed the collaboration with LEAP Africa ten years ago.

Surge Energy Drink Enters the Nigerian Market

Oluchi Chibuzor

With a sudden powerful upward movement, Surge Energy Drink enters the Nigerian market as one of the products of FirstBev Nig. Limited, the authorized bottler of the RC Cola range of products.

Addressing the audience at the launch, the Country Head of Marketing, FirstBev Nigeria Limited., Mr. Shakiru Ogunyemi, remarked that Surge Energy is intended to satisfy the desire of many Nigerians that craved a unique taste of a premium energy drink different from the existing variants in the market.

He stressed that RC Cola as an American brand is reputed for maintaining the best global standard practice, and this underscores the consumer's confidence in Surge Energy Drink over the competition brands.

He further stated that Surge Energy Drink is produced to align with the lifestyle preference of health conscious consumers.

According to him, "With its unique taste and packaging, It is the ideal drink for consumers of class, and of both genders. It is extremely refreshing and revitalizing. Surge Energy Drink is very affordable and available in all parts of Nigeria."

MARKET INDICATORS

MONEY AND CREDIT STATISTICS (MILLION NAIRA)

	MARCH 2023
Money Supply (M3)	**54,634,063.50**
-- CBN Bills Held by Money Holding Sectors	**442,402.18**
Money Supply (M2)	54,191,661.32
-- Quasi Money	32,839,133.46
-- Narrow Money (M1)	**21,352,527.87**
---- Currency Outside Banks	**1,445,439.42**
---- Demand Deposits	119,907,088.45
Net Foreign Assets (NFA)	**5,992,904.55**
Net Domestic Assets(NDA)	**48,641,158.95**
-- Net Domestic Credit (NDC)	70,596,115.20
---- Credit to Government (Net)	**27,529,720.19**
---- Memo: Credit to Govt. (Net) less FMA	**0.00**
---- Memo: Fed. and Mirror Accounts (FMA)	**0.00**
---- Credit to Private Sector (CPS)	43,066,395.01
--Other Assets Net	11,123,812.79
Reserve Money (Base Money	15,975,739.59
--Currency in Circulation	1,683,498.35
--Banks Reserves	14,292,241.24
--Special Intervention Reserves	419,889.49

• Source - CBN

Money Market Indicators (in Percentage)

Month	April 2023
Inter-Bank Call Rate	15.80
Minimum Rediscount Rate (MRR)	
Monetary Policy Rate (MPR)	18.00
Treasury Bill Rate	5.73
Savings Deposit Rate	4.59
1 Month Deposit Rate	7.32
3 Months Deposit Rate	7.92
6 Months Deposit Rate	9.84
12 Months Deposit Rate	8.18
Prime Lending rate	14.05
Maximum Lending Rate	28.59

• Monetary Policy Rate - 13%

OPEC DAILY BASKET PRICE AS AT 17 JULY, 2023

The price of OPEC basket of thirteen crudes stood at $82.06 a barrel on Friday, compared with $81.53 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), Basrah Medium (Iraq), Kuwait Export (Kuwait), Es Sider (Libya), Bonny Light (Nigeria), Arab Light (Saudi Arabia), Murban (UAE) and Merey (Venezuela).

MARKET NEWS

'ESG Compliance Critical to Attracting Investments in Capital Market'

Kayode Tokede

The Divisional Head, Capital Markets at Nigerian Exchange Limited (NGX), Jude Chiemeka, has highlighted the importance of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) compliance and the democratisation of data in attracting investments and enhancing stock liquidity in the Nigerian capital market.

Chiemeka shared this during a panel session titled, "ESG and Sustainable Finance; The Future of Investments," which was jointly organised by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and the Financial Centre for Sustainability in Lagos yesterday.

Whilst noting that NGX is a member of the Sustainable Stock Exchanges Initiative, Chiemeka emphasized the Exchange's strong focus on technology, which facilitates investor access to essential data. According to him, seamless access to various products in the capital market is crucial, especially for retail investors.

Furthermore, Chiemeka offered advice to investors, urging them to consider companies that are ESG-compliant and provide transparent and high-quality disclosures. He stressed the significant correlation between ESG disclosures and corporate performance. "Companies on the Exchange that demonstrate strong ESG compliance often gain access to more capital, attract a broader investor base, and can even raise capital from foreign markets. The NGX Premium Board features companies that adhere to international best practices on corporate governance and meet NGX's highest standards of capitalization and liquidity. Compliance is not only a matter of prestige but also an indicator of sustainable growth, making these companies more appealing to both international and domestic investors".

Chiemeka also commended the SEC for its efforts in establishing a sustainable finance framework, especially in regards to green bonds. "Nigeria's issuance of a green bond solidified its position as the first sovereign country in Africa to do so, and we applaud the SEC's role in making this possible", he said.

PRICES FOR SECURITIES TRADED ASOF JULY/27/23

MAIN BOARD	DEALS	MARKET PRICE	QUANTITY TRADED	VALUE TRADED (N)

FINANCIAL SERVICES						
S/N	BANKING	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
1	UNITED BANK FOR AFRICA PLC	596,151.44	14.80	-0.67	710	62,786,247
2	ZENITH BANK PLC	1,089,458.33	34.70	-1.28	476	13,335,231
BANKING					1,186	76,121,478
S/N	OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
3	ACCESS HOLDINGS PLC	638,036.80	17.95	-2.18	521	18,708,058
4	FBN HOLDINGS PLC	782,517.38	21.80	9.82	878	346,990,107
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					1,399	365,698,165
FINANCIAL SERVICES					2,585	441,819,643
ICT						
S/N	TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
5	MTN NIGERIA COMMUNICATIONS PLC	5,495,718.52	270.00	-	280	414,941
TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES					280	414,941
ICT					280	414,941
INDUSTRIAL GOODS						
S/N	BUILDING MATERIALS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
6	DANGOTE CEMENT PLC	5,998,258.61	352.00	-	93	221,967
7	LAFARGE AFRICA PLC.	463,099.12	28.75	0.52	193	5,210,787
BUILDING MATERIALS					286	5,432,754
INDUSTRIAL GOODS					286	5,432,754
OIL AND GAS						
S/N	EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
8	SEPLAT ENERGY PLC	823,704.70	1,399.80	-	52	175,366
EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION					52	175,366
OIL AND GAS					52	175,366
AGRICULTURE						
S/N	CROP PRODUCTION	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
9	ELLAH LAKES PLC.	7,860.00	3.93	-9.86	38	1,838,319
10	FTN COCOA PROCESSORS PLC	8,580.00	2.20	10.00	63	15,027,406
11	OKOMU OIL PALM PLC.	252,786.15	265.00	5.87	47	572,038
12	PRESCO PLC.	220,000.00	220.00	-	0	0
CROP PRODUCTION					148	17,437,763
S/N	LIVESTOCK/ANIMAL SPECIALTIES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
13	LIVESTOCK FEEDS PLC.	5,850.00	1.95	-1.52	46	1,377,786
LIVESTOCK/ANIMAL SPECIALTIES					46	1,377,786
AGRICULTURE					194	18,815,549
CONGLOMERATES						
S/N	DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
14	CUSTODIAN INVESTMENT PLC	44,113.98	7.50	-	37	2,005,302
15	JOHN HOLT PLC.	1,054.60	2.71	-5.24	53	1,140,801
16	S C O A NIG. PLC.	695.31	1.07	-	1	400
17	TRANSNATIONAL CORPORATION PLC	154,462.36	3.80	-6.17	304	14,437,027
18	U A C N PLC.	33,357.90	11.40	3.64	68	2,769,741
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIES					463	20,353,271
CONGLOMERATES					463	20,353,271

PRICES FOR MAIN BOARD SECURITIES						
CONSTRUCTION/REAL ESTATE						
S/N	BUILDING CONSTRUCTION	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
19	ARBICO PLC.	152.96	1.03	-	0	0
BUILDING CONSTRUCTION					0	0
S/N	INFRASTRUCTURE/HEAVY CONSTRUCTION	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
20	JULIUS BERGER NIG. PLC.	45,840.00	28.65	-	34	73,865
INFRASTRUCTURE/HEAVY CONSTRUCTION					34	73,865
S/N	REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
21	UPDC PLC	20,415.97	1.10	2.80	13	343,618
REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT					13	343,618
CONSTRUCTION/REAL ESTATE					47	417,483
CONSUMER GOODS						
S/N	AUTOMOBILES/AUTO PARTS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
22	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
23	CHAMPION BREW. PLC.	29,438.91	3.76	-	20	94,688
24	GOLDEN GUINEA BREW. PLC.	3,299.43	3.22	-	6	6,809
25	GUINNESS NIG PLC	159,807.95	73.00	-	83	215,946
CONSUMER GOODS						
S/N	BEVERAGES--BREWERS/DISTILLERS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
26	INTERNATIONAL BREWERIES PLC.	130,281.03	4.85	-	32	810,456
27	NIGERIAN BREW. PLC.	448,553.18	43.65	-	61	267,469
BEVERAGES--BREWERS/DISTILLERS					202	1,395,368
S/N	FOOD PRODUCTS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
28	BUA FOODS PLC	2,443,500.00	135.75	-	30	19,533
29	DANGOTE SUGAR REFINERY PLC	361,369.63	29.75	2.59	263	7,320,017
30	FLOUR MILLS NIG. PLC.	128,341.88	31.30	-1.88	151	1,253,443
31	HONEYWELL FLOUR MILL PLC	27,676.39	3.49	-1.69	69	1,276,322
32	MULTI-TREX INTEGRATED FOODS PLC	1,340.10	0.36	-	0	0
33	N NIG. FLOUR MILLS PLC.	2,432.43	13.65	9.64	13	229,990
34	NASCON ALLIED INDUSTRIES PLC	84,517.08	31.90	10.00	74	888,337
35	UNION DICON SALT PLC.	2,214.04	8.10	-	5	21,500
FOOD PRODUCTS					605	11,009,142
S/N	FOOD PRODUCTS--DIVERSIFIED	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
36	CADBURY NIGERIA PLC.	31,929.43	17.00	-	62	297,785
37	NESTLE NIGERIA PLC.	931,371.10	1,175.00	-	95	49,109
FOOD PRODUCTS--DIVERSIFIED					157	346,894
S/N	HOUSEHOLD DURABLES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
38	NIGERIAN ENAMELWARE PLC.	1,349.57	17.75	-	0	0
39	VITAFOAM NIG PLC.	27,018.23	21.60	-	15	13,400
HOUSEHOLD DURABLES					15	13,400
S/N	PERSONAL/HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
40	P Z CUSSONS NIGERIA PLC.	75,042.02	18.90	-5.50	104	2,585,878
41	UNILEVER NIGERIA PLC.	91,632.84	15.95	-8.60	99	1,649,060
CONSUMER GOODS						
S/N	PERSONAL/HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
PERSONAL/HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTS					203	4,234,938
CONSUMER GOODS					1,182	16,999,742
FINANCIAL SERVICES						
S/N	BANKING	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
42	ECOBANK TRANSNATIONAL INCORPORATED	302,767.60	16.50	2.17	128	2,693,360
43	FIDELITY BANK PLC	240,490.82	8.30	6.14	496	42,779,657
44	GUARANTY TRUST HOLDING COMPANY PLC	1,133,100.40	38.50	-1.17	582	20,619,899
45	JAIZ BANK PLC	65,628.23	1.90	-4.04	154	8,606,561
46	STERLING FINANCIAL HOLDINGS COMPANY PLC	109,403.59	3.80	-4.04	254	34,995,010
47	UNION BANK NIG.PLC.	203,845.27	7.00	-	33	246,620
48	UNITY BANK PLC	18,586.05	1.59	-3.64	129	11,976,220
49	WEMA BANK PLC.	57,861.70	4.50	-9.09	187	10,113,603
BANKING					1,963	132,030,930
S/N	INSURANCE CARRIERS, BROKERS AND SERVICES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
50	AFRICAN ALLIANCE INSURANCE PLC	4,117.00	0.20	-	0	0
FINANCIAL SERVICES						
S/N	INSURANCE CARRIERS, BROKERS AND SERVICES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
51	AIICO INSURANCE PLC.	25,257.64	0.69	-1.43	56	4,980,723
52	AXAMANSARD INSURANCE PLC	33,300.00	3.70	-1.33	55	510,494
53	CONSOLIDATED HALLMARK INSURANCE PLC	11,882.00	1.11	5.71	82	12,603,176
54	CORNERSTONE INSURANCE PLC	17,439.74	0.96	-	16	389,138
55	CORONATION INSURANCE PLC	13,435.34	0.56	-6.67	38	548,774
56	GOLDLINK INSURANCE PLC	909.99	0.20	-	0	0
57	GUINEA INSURANCE PLC.	1,473.60	0.24	-	9	1,024,065
58	INTERNATIONAL ENERGY INSURANCE PLC	1,784.88	1.39	-	0	0
59	LASACO ASSURANCE PLC.	3,227.11	1.76	10.00	48	1,376,446
60	LINKAGE ASSURANCE PLC	9,660.00	0.69	7.81	8	527,449
61	MUTUAL BENEFITS ASSURANCE PLC.	10,030.81	0.50	6.00	38	4,827,252
62	NEM INSURANCE PLC	30,098.87	6.00	-	26	428,888
63	NIGER INSURANCE PLC	1,547.90	0.20	-	0	0
64	PRESTIGE ASSURANCE PLC	6,493.76	0.49	-	5	1,747,168
65	REGENCY ASSURANCE PLC	2,600.81	0.39	-	5	408,350
66	SOVEREIGN TRUST INSURANCE PLC	7,159.61	0.63	8.62	35	3,179,634
67	STACO INSURANCE PLC	4,483.72	0.48	-	0	0
68	STANDARD ALLIANCE INSURANCE PLC.	2,582.21	0.20	-	0	0
69	SUNU ASSURANCES NIGERIA PLC.	3,195.94	0.55	3.77	3	483,269
70	UNIVERSAL INSURANCE PLC	3,680.00	0.23	-4.17	49	6,583,219
71	VERITAS KAPITAL ASSURANCE PLC	3,744.00	0.27	-3.57	25	5,556,000
INSURANCE CARRIERS, BROKERS AND SERVICES					498	45,174,045
S/N	MICRO-FINANCE BANKS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
72	NPF MICROFINANCE BANK PLC	11,866.01	1.98	2.06	18	1,019,897

MAIN BOARD	DEALS	MARKET PRICE	QUANTITY TRADED	VALUE TRADED (N)

FINANCIAL SERVICES						
S/N	MICRO-FINANCE BANKS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
MICRO-FINANCE BANKS					18	1,019,897
S/N	MORTGAGE CARRIERS, BROKERS AND SERVICES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
73	ABBEY MORTGAGE BANK PLC	10,255.38	1.01	-9.82	11	1,409,329
74	ASO SAVINGS AND LOANS PLC	7,370.87	0.50	-	0	0
75	INFINITY TRUST MORTGAGE BANK PLC	5,087.96	1.22	-	0	0
FINANCIAL SERVICES						
S/N	MORTGAGE CARRIERS, BROKERS AND SERVICES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
76	RESORT SAVINGS & LOANS PLC	2,265.95	0.20	-	0	0
77	UNION HOMES SAVINGS AND LOANS PLC.	2,949.22	3.02	-	0	0
MORTGAGE CARRIERS, BROKERS AND SERVICES					2	200,000
S/N	OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
78	AFRICA PRUDENTIAL PLC	13,500.00	6.75	0.75	38	890,053
79	DEAP CAPITAL MANAGEMENT & TRUST PLC	540.00	0.36	2.86	9	707,136
80	FCMB GROUP PLC.	122,578.78	6.19	-0.16	146	18,032,304
81	NIGERIAN EXCHANGE GROUP	52,540.10	26.75	7.00	15	333,018
82	ROYAL EXCHANGE PLC.	3,087.22	0.60	-	0	0
83	STANBIC IBTC HOLDINGS PLC	738,548.84	57.00	-	64	626,181
84	UNITED CAPITAL PLC	87,300.00	14.55	-0.34	125	1,885,751
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					397	22,474,443
FINANCIAL SERVICES					1,948	188,659,714
HEALTHCARE						
S/N	HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
85	EKOCORP PLC.	2,886.90	5.79	-	0	0
HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS					0	0
S/N	MEDICAL SUPPLIES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
86	MORISON INDUSTRIES PLC.	2,799.33	2.83	-	2	14,179
MEDICAL SUPPLIES					2	14,179
S/N	PHARMACEUTICALS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
87	FIDSON HEALTHCARE PLC	34,424.94	15.00	-	25	29,159
88	GLAXO SMITHKLINE CONSUMER NIG. PLC.	9,268.04	7.75	-	31	252,573
89	MAY & BAKER NIGERIA PLC.	9,402.53	5.45	-9.17	36	813,553
HEALTHCARE						
S/N	PHARMACEUTICALS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
90	NEIMETH INTERNATIONAL PHARMACEUTICALS PLC	7,777.05	1.82	0.55	22	1,391,185
91	PHARMA-DEKO PLC.	401.12	1.85	-	15	491,890
PHARMACEUTICALS					220	6,203,275
HEALTHCARE					224	6,228,117
ICT						
S/N	COMPUTER BASED SYSTEMS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
92	COURTEVILLE BUSINESS SOLUTIONS PLC	2,379.84	0.67	-	7	122,839
COMPUTER BASED SYSTEMS					7	122,839
S/N	COMPUTERS AND PERIPHERALS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
93	OMATEK VENTURES PLC	1,235.55	0.42	7.69	50	21,028,822
COMPUTERS AND PERIPHERALS					50	21,028,822
S/N	IT SERVICES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
94	CWG PLC	4,923.41	1.95	5.41	30	6,269,915
95	NCR (NIGERIA) PLC.	366.12	3.39	1.80	8	298,069
IT SERVICES					38	6,567,984
S/N	PROCESSING SYSTEMS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
96	CHAMS HOLDING COMPANY PLC	4,179.49	0.89	9.88	33	6,597,700
97	E-TRANZACT INTERNATIONAL PLC	71,668.00	7.79	9.87	20	411,330
PROCESSING SYSTEMS					53	7,009,030
S/N	TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
98	AIRTEL AFRICA PLC	4,960,384.17	1,319.90	-	102	55,815
TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES					102	55,815
ICT					250	34,784,490
INDUSTRIAL GOODS						
S/N	BUILDING MATERIALS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
99	BERGER PAINTS PLC	3,188.06	11.00	0.46	33	832,781
100	BUA CEMENT PLC	2,815,821.04	83.15	-9.86	86	751,340
INDUSTRIAL GOODS						
S/N	BUILDING MATERIALS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
101	CAP PLC	15,683.89	19.25	-1.79	58	593,647
102	MEYER PLC.	1,402.47	2.64	-	7	16,751
103	PREMIER PAINTS PLC.	1,230.00	10.00	-	0	0
BUILDING MATERIALS					184	2,194,519
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.	8,806.61	2.50	-4.58	58	1,715,195
ELECTRONIC AND ELECTRICAL PRODUCTS					58	1,715,195
S/N	PACKAGING/CONTAINERS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
106	BETA GLASS PLC.	23,308.69	38.85	-	15	32,945
107	GREIF NIGERIA PLC	232.39	5.45	-	0	0
108	TRIPPLE GEE AND COMPANY PLC.	1,509.61	3.05	-9.76	9	461,462
PACKAGING/CONTAINERS					24	494,407
S/N	AGRO-ALLIED & CHEMICALS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
109	NOTORE CHEMICAL IND PLC	100,754.14	62.50	-	4	5,000
AGRO-ALLIED & CHEMICALS					4	5,000
INDUSTRIAL GOODS					270	4,409,121
NATURAL RESOURCES						
S/N	CHEMICALS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
110	INDUSTRIAL & MEDICAL GASES NIGERIA PLC	4,595.34	9.20	-	17	69,374
CHEMICALS					17	69,374
S/N	METALS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
111	ALUMINIUM EXTRUSION IND. PLC.	1,429.71	6.50	-	0	0
METALS					0	0
NATURAL RESOURCES						
S/N	MINING SERVICES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
112	MULTIVERSE MINING AND EXPLORATION PLC	1,598.23	3.75	-	3	14,047
MINING SERVICES					3	14,047
S/N	PAPER/FOREST PRODUCTS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
113	THOMAS WYATT NIG. PLC.	345.40	1.57	-	3	79,525
PAPER/FOREST PRODUCTS					3	79,525
NATURAL RESOURCES					23	162,946
OIL AND GAS						
S/N	ENERGY EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
114	JAPAUL GOLD & VENTURES PLC	5,260.67	0.84	9.09	165	44,261,612
ENERGY EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES					165	44,261,612
S/N	INTEGRATED OIL AND GAS SERVICES	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
115	OANDO PLC	72,102.19	5.80	-0.69	180	9,941,175
INTEGRATED OIL AND GAS SERVICES					180	9,941,175
S/N	PETROLEUM AND PETROLEUM PRODUCTS DISTRIBUTORS	MARKET CAP(Nm)	PRICE	%CHANGE	TRADES	VOLUME
116	ARDOVA PLC	22,011.93	16.90	-	50	452,605
117	CONOIL PLC	61,067.79	88.00	-	61	124,875
118	ETERNA PLC.	33,125.27	25.40	9.96	67	1,164,175
119	MRS OIL NIGERIA PLC.	28,459.43	83.00	-	78	80,153
120	TOTALENERGIES MARKETING NIGERIA PLC	125,623.08	370.00	5.71	88	287,080
PETROLEUM AND PETROLEUM PRODUCTS DISTRIBUTORS					344	2,108,888
OIL AND GAS					689	56,311,675



AKWA IBOM LAUNCHES ARISE AGENDA…

L – R: Akwa Ibom State Deputy Governor, Senator Akon Eyakenyi; State Governor, Umo Eno; his wife, Patience Umo Eno; Speaker, Akwa Ibom State House of Assembly, Udeme Otong, and Senator Emmanuel Ibokessien, during the formal launch of ARISE AGENDA of the state government in Uyo…yesterday

House to Probe Acquisition of OVH Energy by NNPCL

To recover seized, abandoned funds in financial institutions

Juliet Akoje in Abuja.

The House of Representatives has setup an Ad hoc committee to investigate the circumstances surrounding the acquisition of OVH Energy by the NNPC Limited and report back to it within four weeks for further legislative action.

The lawmakers also urged the NNPC Limited to immediately suspend the acquisition of OVH Energy Marketing and the proposed relocation of the NNPC Retail Head office from Abuja to Lagos, pending the outcome of the investigation.

The resolutions followed the adoption of a motion moved by Hon. Miriam Onuoha, Hon. Dabo Ismal Haruna, Hon. Mark Chidi Obeto, Hon. Abdullahi Aliyu, Hon. Sadiq Ango, Hon. Aliyu Gara, Hon. Clement Akan during plenary yesterday.

Onuoha, while presenting the motion noted that the NNPC Retail is a subsidiary of NNPC Limited saddled with the responsibility of retailing fuel and allied products to the Nigerian populace, with about 700 company owned stations and affiliates across all states.

She recalled that, "the recent enactment of the Petroleum Industry Act, NNPC Limited was commercialised and expected to fund its operations. To achieve this feat, NNPC Limited deployed a plan to grow the assets of NNPC Retail Limited (NRL) which included the acquisition of other downstream companies."

"Cognizant that in every acquisition, if a firm buys more than 50 per cent of a target company's shares, it effectively gains control of that company but in this case. it appears that the NNPC has taken over OVH Energy but in operational terms, it is OWH Energy that has taken over the affairs of NNPC Retail.

"Also cognisant of the need to ensure transparency by addressing these irregularities and nefarious activities to take over the NNPC Retail by interested parties at a critical time in the Nigerian energy sector given the overhaul of the petroleum laws, the removal of fuel subsidy and in particular the deliberate efforts to curb corruption in the energy sector," she added.

Meanwhile, the House of Representatives yesterday, resolved to constitute an Ad-hoc Committee to identify, recover public funds seized, forfeited and abandoned in financial institutions and Government Agencies.

The committee is also to appraise the federal government's current policy framework, to ascertain who authorises the seizures, who keeps the seized funds and for what duration.

The House also has demanded for the statement of account for a period covering ten years, proffer measures to curb revenue losses and identify, analyse all funds trapped in other banks, funds recovered so far by the CBN, the EFCC, NFIU and other agencies and report back within four weeks.

These resolutions followed the adoption of a motion moved by Hon. Dachung M. Bagos at plenary, yesterday.

NULGE Expels Two Former Officials in Abia, Pledges Support for Otti

Emmanuel Ugwu-Nwogo in Umuahia

Two immediate past officials of the Abia State chapter of the National Union of Local Government Employees(NULGE) have been expelled from the union.

The National leadership of NULGE clamped down on the former Deputy state president, Kenneth Nwasuka and the former state publicity secretary, Ikechukwu Uko, over alleged anti-union activities.

In a letter dated July 21, 2023, and signed by the National Secretary of the union, Isah Gambo, a copy of which was seen by THISDAY, the national leadership of NULGE pronounced the expulsion of the two recalcitrant former leaders.

"I am directed to inform you that the National Executive Council (NEC) meeting of July 20, 2023, has approved your expulsion from the Union," the NULGE national secretary stated in the letter.

"You are hereby expelled from the Nigeria Union of Local Government Employees (NULGE) for anti-union activities".

The expulsion of the two former officials was not unconnected with the festering leadership crisis in Abia NULGE even after a state delegates conference was successfully conducted and new executives elected.

Gambo made the affected members to know that their expulsion followed due process, saying the allegations of anti-union activities levelled against them was, "confirmed through our investigations, in addition to your failure to exonerate yourselves."

The NULGE national secretary had in a recent letter addressed to the Abia governor, Mr. Alex Otti, over the leadership crisis in Abia chapter, informed the Governor there was no crisis in the union in Abia.

However, the NULGE scribe acknowledged that some complaints were received by the National Secretariat, from some members in Abia State following the state delegates conference.

"The complaints were concerning the last State Delegates Conference held in Aba which ushered in new State Administrative Council (SAC) members and that it(complaint) has been referred to the appropriate organ of the Union for mediation," he said.

In the letter which was copied to Abia State Police Commissioner; State Director, DDS; Abia State Commissioner for Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs among others, the NULGE national leadership affirmed the emergence of a new SAC in Abia.

NGE Institutes Annual Memorial Lecture in Honour of Jakande

Holds maiden edition in Lagos

The Nigerian Guild of Editors (NGE) has instituted an annual memorial lecture in honour of its pioneer President and former Governor of Lagos State, late Alhaji Lateef Jakande, with the maiden edition to take place in Lagos on August 7, 2023.

In a press statement issued in Lagos, yesterday, signed by its President, Eze Anaba and General Secretary, Dr. Iyobosa Uwugiaren, the professional body of editors in Nigeria, stated that its decision was informed by a deliberate programme to nurture a culture of appreciation.

'As part of nurturing a culture of appreciation, the NGE is instituting an Annual Lecture in honour of its late pioneer president, Alhaji Jakande, which will interrogate developments affecting the media and society.

''It is both a testament to the cherished service rendered by Alhaji Jakande and an acknowledgement of the importance of having such a dialogue for the overall good of our media and our country, Nigeria.

"The First Annual Lecture is slated for August 7, 2023, at Sheraton Hotel & Towers, Ikeja, Lagos, at 10am'', the statement added.

With the theme ''Lateef Jakande: The Man, His Journalism, His Politics'', a seasoned veteran journalist and Fellow of NGE, Chief Felix Adenaike, would be expected to deliver the maiden annual lecture, while former Nigeria Ambassador to Brazil and celebrated columnist, Amb. Patrick Dele Cole, wouldl chair the event.

The Guild added that important personalities, including publishers, state governors, captains of private sector, journalism students, members of the political class and others, are expected at the event - with Lagos State Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu, as Special Guest of Honour.

Giving a background to the annual memorial lecture, the editors stated that the NGE was born on May 20, 1961 - to serve as an elite club of editors through, which editors - as professional heads of their publications, could advance their professional interests by networking to discuss common challenges and developing relationships with their various audiences in the media itself, government, and professional/ trade associations.

''Originally named as the Guild of Newspaper Editors of Nigeria, it was later renamed Nigerian Guild of Editors to accommodate colleagues in the broadcast media.

''The NGE's Founding President was Alhaji Lateef Jakande (1929-2021). He had rallied his colleagues to form the body that was conceived to occupy the strategic middle ground of editorial managers between media owners and the general workforce of journalists'', the statement added.

After discharging ''sterling duties'' to the Nigerian media, the NGE explained that Jakande went on to render "commendable service'' as the first civilian governor of Lagos State, and as federal Minister of Works and Housing.

According to the editors, 62 years after, the NGE remains a respected professional body in the media, credible force among professional bodies, and leader in civil society, while Alhaji Lateef Jakande's name remains treasured - whenever committed service is mentioned in the media and public service.



CONVERSATION OF FIRST DIESEL/PETROL BUS TO COMPRESSED NATURAL GAS ENABLED...

L-R: Immediate past Senior Special Assistant on Energy to the Governor, Olaniji Adedapo-Aisida; Special Adviser and Chief Economic Adviser to the Governor, Dapo Okubadejo; Governor Dapo Abiodun, and Head of Nigeria Gas Transportation Solution Limited, Milind Dakhole, explaining details about the conversation of the first diesel/petrol bus to a Compressed Natural Gas enabled bus to the Governor in Abeokuta…recently

Group: NLC Proposed Protest Will Lead to More Hardship for Nigerians

Niger NLC demands N50,000 monthly palliative for civil servants, N30,000 for pensioners

Asks Governor Bago to suspend PAYE

Adedayo Akinwale in Abuja and **Laleye Dipo** in Minna

Following the decision of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) to mobilise Nigerians and other affiliate unions to embark on nationwide protest on August 2, 2023, to express their disapproval of the petrol subsidy removal, a Coalition of Civil Society Organisations and Political Parties for Good Governance (COSOSAP) has warned that the strike would lead to more hardship for Nigerians.

Addressing a press conference yesterday, its National Coordinator, Dr. Lillian Ogbole, acknowledged that the fuel subsidy removal had visited untold hardship on Nigerians, but expressed optimism that Nigerians would heave a sigh of relief going by the measures being put in place by the President Bola Tinubu led administration in no distant time.

She insisted that the oil subsidy regime could no longer be sustained as it constituted a source of monumental corruption and a clog in the wheels of the nation's progress in the last 45 years.

Ogbole, noted that no matter the perspective the situation was looked from, Nigerians must be guided by the "overriding national interest which is the continuous survival of our citizens under one indivisible entity."

Against this background, the group called on those opposed to the policy to exercise a little more patience and support the government to create the enabling environment that would improve the living standard of the larger majority of Nigerians.

Ogbole said: "It is true that Nigerians desire and deserve to buy petrol at a cheaper rate, but again it is equally true that neither our economy, nor any other economy in the world can bear the brunt of the mega corruption associated with the fuel subsidy regime as was obtainable in Nigeria.

"It suffice therefore to say that, the only way our dear nation Nigeria would not go the way of failed states like Venezuela and Sri Lanka etc., is to obliterate the fuel subsidy regime."

Ogbole, said this accounted for why the last administration ended the fuel subsidy regime in the twilight of its tenure as evident in their refusal to make appropriation for fuel subsidy for the month of June 2023 and even subsequent months.

The group, therefore, called on government regulatory agencies to expose and sanction any company that might indulge in the importation of substandard petroleum products into the country without hesitation.

Ogbole added: "It is worthy of note therefore to mention emphatically that the NLC cannot roll in the path of any form of industrial action either by way of protest or nationwide strike as this will further escalate more crisis and problem than what is presently obtainable.

"It is no news that the world at large is going through severe Post-Covid hardship; this has damaged several economies around the globe today. This information is available for free on various global communication platforms.

"The menace of difficult times and hardship can only be overcome through reasoning together and working in synergy to achieve prosperity and progress."

Meanwhile, the Niger State Chapter of the NLC has asked Governor Mohammed Umaru Bago to pay civil servants N50,000 monthly as palliative to cushion the effect of the removal of petrol subsidy by the federal government.

In addition the Congress wants the minimum pension in the state to be jerked to N30,000 monthly.

The Congress, according to a reliable source, wrote the Governor last week to make the demands for the palliatives in addition to asking for other interventions from the new administration to make life worth living for the people of the state.

According to the demands, the NLC also asked the governor to suspend the Pay As You Earn (PAYE) policy but was silent on the period it wants it suspended.

The demands the Congress said should also cover workers in the 25 local government Councils of the state as well as all agencies of government.

The Congress noted that prices of foodstuff and other commodities have skyrocketed in the state, pointing out that the high commodity prices were introduced by shylock traders to inflict pains on the ordinary people.

The Congress also asked the Governor, "to improve on the state and local government area security architecture with special emphasis on encouraging the local vigilantes".

When THISDAY contacted the State Chairman of the NLC, Idris Abdulkareem Lafene, confirmed in the telephone conversation that: "Yes we have written to the Governor".

He however did not give details of the letter.

Governor Eno Launches ARISE Agenda

Decorates ambassadors to drive initiative Creates new ministry for water resources, sanitation

Okon Bassey in Uyo

In an event that marked the commencement of a new chapter in Akwa Ibom's development, the Governor of Akwa Ibom State, Umo Eno, yesterday, unveiled the ARISE Agenda, a visionary plan aimed at propelling the state's socio-economic growth and transforming the lives of its citizens.

The launch which served as the culmination of a weeklong series of activities organised by the state government, was graced by prominent figures, including a former Minister of Budget and National Planning, Senator Udoma Udo Udoma, and the immediate past governor of the state, Mr. Udom Emmanuel.

Addressing a diverse audience, Eno expressed commitment to achieving global best democratic practices in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). He emphasised that the ARISE Agenda and its economic blueprints have been holistically crafted to address the challenges faced by the state while fostering sustainable development.

Furthermore, he expressed his support for the creative industry in Akwa Ibom State and called on local entertainers to form an umbrella body under the auspices of the "Akwa Ibom Creative Association."

The governor pledged to pay a premium to the development of local content, recognising the significant contributions of the creative sector to the state's cultural identity and economic potential.

The governor urged all stakeholders to unite and work together in a concerted effort to achieve the effective actualisation of the ARISE Agenda. He emphasised that the success of the agenda relied on the collective contributions and dedication of the people of Akwa Ibom State.

In her opening remarks, the Deputy Governor of the State, Senator Akon Eyakenyi, appreciated the Governor for standing out to prove he is a great leader sent by God to usher in a paradigm shift in the governance landscape of the State.

Eyakenyi, said Eno has availed Akwa Ibom people with the ARISE Agenda as a guiding principle, especially, key stakeholders on their path towards contributing to the success of the present administration.

Disclosing the key component of The ARISE Agenda, the Economic Adviser to the Governor, Mrs. Uduakobong Inam, said the initiative was a conceptualised comprehensive framework, anchored on five key pillars, to build upon the achievements of previous administrations and take the state to new heights.

According to Inam, the primary focus areas included Agricultural Revolution, Rural Development, Infrastructure Maintenance and Advancement, Security Management, and Educational Advancement.

She said through the core pillars, the government seeks to bolster existing economic efforts while fostering a more vibrant, inclusive, diversified and highly industrialised economy for Akwa Ibom.

The agenda-setting event received goodwill messages from prominent sons of the State, among them were: the Political Leader of Uyo Senatorial District, Sen. Effiong Bob, the Chief Judge of Akwa Ibom State, Justice Ekaette Obot represented by Justice Archibong Archibong, Ambassador Assam Assam, the Speaker Akwa Ibom State House of Assembly, Rt. Hon. Udeme Otong and Engr. Uwem Okoko, the Managing Director, Hensek Integrated Services.

The launch also featured the decoration of ARISE Agenda ambassadors by the Governor. Those decorated with the prestigious honour as ARISE Ambassadors were; the First Lady of the State, Mrs. Patience Umo Eno; the Deputy Governor, Senator Akon Eyakenyi; the Speaker, Akwa Ibom State House of Assembly, Udeme Otong; Peoples Democratic Party State Chairman, Mr. Aniekan Akpan; Secretary to the State Government, Mr. Enobong Uwah; Senator Effiong Bob, Sen. Emmanuel Ibokessien, Elder Ben Udobia, among others.

Meanwhile, the governor has created a new Ministry for Water Resources and Sanitation in the State.

Eno announced the creation of the new Ministry while addressing participants during the Akwa Ibom Dialogue for the interpretation and implementation of the ARISE Agenda blueprint of the state government.

The Governor decried the state exclusion in water-related benefits from the central government and donor agencies, saying the creation of a designated Ministry for Water Resources, would fully integrate the state in the United Nations Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), programme and reposition the state to implement the existing Water Law as well as tackle other water and sanitation related issues most appropriately.

The creation of the Ministry for Water Resources was an answer to the plea of a cluster of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Akwa Ibom WASH Policy Cluster.

APC Chairmanship: North Central Youth Leaders, Support Groups Endorse Ganduje

Adedayo Akinwale in Abuja

The Coalition of North Central All Progressives Congress (APC) Youth Leaders and Support Groups yesterday, endorsed the immediate past Governor of Kano state, Dr. Abdullahi Umar Ganduje, for the position of the National Chairman of the party.

Their endorsement came few days after All APC State Chairmen, North-west Zone had endorsed him for the same position.

The positions of the National Chairman and Secretary of the party became vacant following the recent resignation of Senator Abdulahi Adamu as the chairman and Senator Iyiola Omisore as the Secretary.

However, addressing a press conference in Abuja, the Convener, Okpokwu Ogenyi, said the coalition believed that Ganduje was the best man for the job, while also expressing optimism that APC under Ganduje would complement the implementation of President Bola Tinubu's blueprint for the benefit of Nigerians.

He said the youth leaders consisted of Benue, Nasarawa, Plateau, Kwara, Kogi, Niger and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT).

Ogenyi stated: "We the people of North Central have occupied the National Chairmanship position of all ruling parties in the country and have done well in terms of party administration. We are proud to say that a Chairman from the zone led the party to victory in the last presidential election.

"Today, our father who was the National Chairman of the APC has resigned his position thereby making the post vacant. As you may be aware, there is no vacuum in governance, so a competent hand must be employed in order to move our party forward.

"It is on this note that we wholeheartedly endorse Dr. Abdullahi Umar Ganduje as the National Chairman of our great party, APC. Abdullahi Ganduje is a party man who has distinguished himself as an intellectual of high repute.



WE HAVE THE TROPHIES...

Governor Hope Uzodimma of Imo State displays the two trophies won by Heartland Football Club of Owerri at a banquet he held for the players and management at Government House Owerri Wednesday night.

House Unveils 134 Standing Committee Chairs, Deputies

Juliet Akoje in Abuja.

Speaker of the House of Representatives, Hon. Tajudeen Abbas, yesterday, inaugurated 134 standing committees, increasing the number by 25 from the 109 in the 9th Assembly.

Abbas, while announcing the committee chairmen, also named their deputies at plenary.

He appointed the former chairman of Appropriation, Hon Aliyu Betara as Chairman FCT; former Deputy Speaker, Hon. Ahmed Wase as Chairman, Committee on Federal Character; former Majority Leader, Hon. Ado Doguwa as Chairman, Petroleum (Upstream).

Some of the new committees are Committee on Islamic Pilgrimage Affairs, Committee on Christian Pilgrimage Affairs, Committee on Civil Societies and Development Matters and Committee on Lake Chade.

Committee on Constituency Outreach, Committee on Federal Polytechnics, Committee on Basic Examination Boards, Committee on Legislative Budget and Research. Committee on Industry, Committee on Public Service Matters, Committee on Science Research Institutions, Committee on Public Asset, Committee on Shipping Services.

Hon. Abubakar Bicchi, was named chairman, Committee on Appropriation; Hon. Amos Daniel, chairman, Committee on House Services, Hon. Akin Alain, chairman, Committee on Works, and Hon. David Zacharia, chairman, Committee on FCT-Judiciary.

The 9th Assembly lawmakers, who retained their committees were Hon. James Faleke, Committee on Finance; Hon. Jimi Benson, Chairman, Committee on Defence; Hon. Yusuf Gagdi, Chairman, Committee on Navy; Hon. Leke Abejide, Chairman Commitee on Customs Services.

The Speaker also appointed Hon. Bamidele Salam, Chairman Committee on Public Account, Hon. Vigor Nwokolo, Chairman Committee on Power, Hon. Abdulmumin Jibrin, Chairman, Foreign Affairs, Hon. Mike Etaba, Chairman Committee on Public Petition.

He further called on the National Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies (NILDS) to immediately design a capacity building programme that would equip the leadership of committees with the requisite knowledge and skill on committee management, oversight function, investigative hearing, public hearings and useful knowledge in this regard.

Abbas, however, charged the committee chairmen to carry every member along in ensuring that the interest of the people was always uppermost in any decision they take.

"Committee chairmen must ensure that there are functional secretariats for their respective committees. This is very crucial as the House is redefining legislative work at the Committees.

"All Committees are now required to submit regular reports of their activities to the leadership of the House on a quarterly basis. Investigative hearings, public hearings and reports from oversight functions have to be submitted to the House in plenary for further legislative action.

"Accordingly, the committees should draw up their workplans and submit same to the leadership of the house. Our responsibilities as lawmakers require diligence, probity, transparency, dedication and commitment to national interest. I, therefore, charge you to be guided by these principles even as we embark on the oversight of other arms of government."

The House, thereafter, adjourned plenary for it's six weeks annual recess, to resume by September.

Strike: FG Grants N25,000 Allowance to Doctors

Onyebuchi Ezigbo and **Juliet Akoje** in Abuja

In a bid to halt the ongoing nationwide strike by resident doctors, the federal government has granted approval for the payment of N25,000 peculiar allowance to medical and dental doctors in federal public hospitals and clinics in the country.

This was contained in a letter dated July 26, 2023, titled, "Accoutrement allowance for medical and dental doctors in hospitals, medical centres, and clinics in federal MDAs."

The letter which was signed by the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the Income, Salaries and Wages Commission, Ekpo Nta, read: "The federal government has approved the payment of an Accoutrement allowance of twenty-five naira (N25,000.00) per quarter to Medical and Dental Doctors in hospitals, medical centres, and clinics in the Federal Public Service. The allowance is to be paid from the overhead budget.

"The approval takes effect from June 1, 2023. All enquires relating to this circular should be directed to the Commission."

Resident Doctors under the aegis of the Nigeria Association of Resident Doctors (NARD) had embarked on an indefinite nationwide strike on Tuesday, demanding payment of new hazard allowance, skipping allowance, immediate payment of the 2023 MRTF, immediate release of the circular on one-for-one replacement of doctors in hospitals, and Payment of skipping arrears.

Meanwhile, the Director General of the Budget Office, Ben Akabueze, yesterday, alleged that some medical doctors who have left Nigeria in search of greener pastures still have their names on the nominal rolls of hospitals in the country.

He made this known during a meeting between the House of Representatives Ad hoc Committee to address the strike action embarked on by resident doctors in the country.

Akabueze appealed to the doctors to stop holding Nigerians to ransom with industrial action, saying it was affecting Nigerians negatively.

According to him, "When you look at the nominal roll, many of the people who are said to have exited, to have "japa" are still on the nominal roll of the hospitals because…some of them are taking study leave, some of them are taking leave of absence and they remain on the nominal roll.

"Meanwhile the hospitals knows these people have 'japad,' they are not available, but they are still kept. That is something that perhaps at the level of Ministry of Health that makes policy to determine how we deal with these things.

"Health workers can't simply go off on leave of absence and have his job or her job guaranteed there waiting, meanwhile there is nobody to serve the people because there is no vacancy there, they cannot replace. If we do not deal with this, even when you come to implement this, one-on-one replacement, would such people be deemed as replaceable? People who have left. And if they are replaced and tomorrow the person returns, what then happens"

The Deputy Chairman of the Ad-hoc Committee, Hon Tanko Sununu, in his remarks at the meeting said it was important to find a solution to the incessant strike as Nigerians at the receiving end.

Sununu urged the resident doctors to be reasonable and give the government more time to address their grievances.

Tinubu to Youths: Be Patient, Tough Choices on Economy Meant to Secure Better Future

Promises to include them in governance *Says he feels the pains of Nigerians*

Deji Elumoye in Abuja

President Bola Tinubu has called for the patience and understanding of Nigerians, particularly the youths, assuring them that the hardships of the moment would eventually give way for a more prosperous, equitable and inclusive economy.

The president, who gave the assurance yesterday, at the State House, Abuja, while receiving All Progressives Congress (APC) National Youth Leaders from across the 36 States of the federation and Federal Capital Territory, Abuja said, "I make my pledge to the country that no decision will be difficult for this administration to take for the prosperity and unity of this country. Economic reforms could be slow. Be patient a little more."

He added: "I can assure you that I understand the pains you are going through. It is not easy to get out the monster of over 40 years called fuel subsidy."

Tinubu told the youths that his administration would include them in governance, and decision-making processes, adding that "no decision would be too difficult for his administration to take for the prosperity and unity of the nation."

The president said he feels the pains Nigerian citizens are currently going through.

He noted that his administration would do everything necessary to widen the net in order to accommodate more women and youths.

According to him, this w be done, among others, by 'liaising with our lending institutions to give micro loans at a very low interest rate' for economic activities among the citizens.

Earlier in his remarks, APC National Youth Leader, Hon. Dayo Israel, told the president that, as representatives of all the youth organs of the party, they visited him to congratulate him on the party's victory at the polls and seek inclusion in appointments into the dissolved boards and agencies of government.

Armed Forces'll Defend Democracy, Musa, Chief of Defence Staff Assures Nigerians

Kingsley Nwezeh in Abuja

The Chief of Defence Staff, Maj. Gen Christopher Musa, yesterday, declared that the Armed Forces of Nigeria would stoutly defend democratic rule in the country.

He said security forces were determined to stick to their constitutional role of defending the territorial integrity of the nation and ensuring internal security with the citizenry at the center of its new direction.

Outlining his leadership roadmap in Abuja, the defence chief said his security roadmap and, "leadership concept" would be anchored on three pillars, "which include being people-centric, prioritising troops' welfare while deepening jointness and interagency collaboration.

"The Armed Forces of Nigeria (AFN) will proactively defend our territorial integrity and democracy as well as safeguard internal security and unity to achieve the stability required to guarantee sustainable national development," he added.

He said his appointment by President Bola Tinubu, was a clear manifestation of the confidence reposed in him to direct the efforts of the AFN to fulfil its constitutional roles in order to address evolving security dynamics across the country.

"The realisation of this critical responsibility elicits a clear leadership concept which will serve as the roadmap supporting the implementation of relevant guiding principles by the AFN.

"The significance of this roadmap is to foster a highly

disciplined, cohesive and inspired AFN ready to achieve its constitutional roles, facilitate national security and enhance sustainable socio-economic development in the country," he said.

He pledged to provide people-centric leadership for the armed forces.

"I recognise the significance of leading the thousands of devoted and distinguished service men and women to provide a secure and peaceful environment for the Nigerian people to freely engage in their legitimate enterprise in line with the constitutional mandate of the AFN.

"In this regard, the AFN under my leadership will be people-centric by prioritising and safeguarding our people and their legitimate way of life as prescribed by the Nigerian Constitution.

"Accordingly, the AFN will apply the lens of people-centricity to key components of activities to truly put the Nigerian people at the centre of its actions geared towards promoting and safeguarding a secure environment for all.

"To achieve this, the AFN will proactively defend our territorial integrity and democracy as well as safeguard internal security and unity to achieve the stability required to guarantee sustainable national development," he said.

Musa also disclosed that he would prioritise joint operation which was designed to exploit unity of efforts to seize, retain and maintain the initiative in order to achieve a clearly defined military objective is crucial to the realization of the AFN constitutional duties.

The defence chief assured that troops' welfare and sound administration would provide the required atmosphere for the AFN to deliver on its constitutional responsibilities.



STAKEHOLDERS IN TECHNOLOGY TO UNLOCK GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES...

L-R: Executive Producer 77, Tonye Princewill; Co-Founder DLD, Steffi Czerny; Co-founder, Venture Garden Group, Bunmi Akinyemiju; CEO Global Tech Africa, Dr Inya Lawal; US Consul General, Will Stevens; DG, National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA), Inuwa Kashifu Abdullahi and Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Sweden, Joran Bjallerstedt at the Global Tech Africa Summit, a platform that brought together African and international stakeholders in Technology to unlock growth opportunities and build the tech ecosystem in Africa, held at the Lagos Intercontinental Hotel recently

Save South-east from Sit-at-Home Enforced By Non-state Actors, Uzodimma Tells Security Agencies

Governor Hope Uzodimma of Imo State has challenged the leadership of security agencies in the country and those serving in the south-east in particular to step up their game, with the view to saving the south-easterners the embarrassment of sit-at-home which non-state actors were enforcing.

He said that the sit-at-home had almost crippled the region's economy, commerce and trade and should not be allowed to continue unattended to.

According to a statement yesterday, the Governor made the call when he received in audience, the Flag Officer Commanding Central Naval Command, Rear Admiral Ayuba Chugali and the Assistant Inspector General of Police Zone 9 Umuahia, Echeng Eyo Echeng, both of who were on a courtesy call at the Government House Owerri.

Though the Governor addressed his guests and their teams separately, his remarks to both visitors found a common ground in the State of insecurity in the region and how the security agencies could deal with it decisively.

"This is time for all security agencies to synergise and come up with a united front to tackle the insurgency and insecurity in the zone perpetrated by those whose identities cannot be properly fixed," he said.

In welcoming the Flag Officer, Uzodimma thanked the Chief of Naval Staff, Rear Admiral Emmanuel Ikechukwu Ogalla, for approving the visit by his men, but used the visit to sincerely thank President Bola Tinubu for the choice of Ogalla as the Chief of Naval Staff.

The governor described the role of the Navy in maritime security as "critical item that must be strengthened," acknowledging that the "Nigerian Navy and other security agencies have distinguished themselves in their job."

To both organisations, the governor emphasised the need for partnership with each other and even the communities "to ensure the best of results in security of lives and property of Nigerians, especially in the south-east."

Uzodimma, recalled that on assumption of Office he discovered that the Naval Base in Oguta is a good idea and that he had to quickly embark on the opening of maritime way to the sea targeted at boosting the economy of the State and the Zone and enhancing commerce and trade in the area.

He promised to do all within his powers to encourage the Nigerian Navy to realise their mission and expressed happiness to hear that the geographic survey report for the dredging of the Orashi River to the Atlantic is ready.

He equally reassured the Navy of the State Government's readiness to partner with them anytime they call on the government.

He hinted that he was aware that political content was involved in the sit-at-home menace and that recent intelligence revealed that some political gladiators were collaborating with some university cult members to carry out what they call "synchronised violence" especially during the forthcoming governorship elections.

The governor urged the security agencies to do everything within their behest in collaboration with government to unearth their nefarious plans and activities.

To the Assistant Inspector General of Police (AIG), Zone 9 Umuahia, Echeng Y. Echeng, he thanked him for coming, and for his commitment in the Police Force, especially in the south-east and his achievements and records as a Commissioner before his elevation to AIG.

The governor emphasised the need for serious support and deployment of the security agencies to the Communities in the Southeast through additional manpower and logistics to fight the monster of insurgency at the grassroots.

He reiterated that the people of south-east were highly threatened by insecurity as commerce and industry and the entire economy was dying.

He noted, in the case of Imo, that the state needs peace and unity to develop and protect her businesses, hence the security agencies must gear up to removing fear and harassment from the psych of the people.

His words: "Please recover the confidence of our people and remove fear in them. Please take over the political space and protect our people so that we can exist."

Uzodimma however advised those who want to challenge those in authority to have a rethink as they will never succeed under him.

He also seized the opportunity to bemoan the attitude of leaders who have refused to speak out and condemn the killings of innocent citizens in the State.

Uzodimma further appealed to the security agencies at all levels in the country to ensure that they protect the Igbos wherever they are in Nigeria as it is the responsibilities of every government to protect the lives and property of her citizens.

Northern Group Mobilises for Peaceful Protest to Demand Bichi's Resignation

Condemns continuous detention of Emefiele, Sarkin Hausawa of Lagos

John Shiklam in Kaduna

The Arewa Civil Society Organisations (ACSO) said it is mobilising its members for mass and peaceful protest to demand for the removal of the Director General of the Department of State Services (DSS), Yusuf Bichi.

In a statement yesterday, in Kaduna, the Chairman of the group, Adamu Musa, condemned the DSS for the continuous attack on the judiciary and disregard for court orders.

The group also accused the DSS of illegally holding people in detention without trial, thereby violating their fundamental human rights.

The group urged the DSS to obey the court orders by releasing within 48 hours, all persons that the court had ordered to be released from detention.

Musa said members of ACSO would match peacefully to occupy the Abuja headquarters of the DSS to demand for Bichi's resignation. He, however, did not say when the protest would hold.

"We are compelled to mobilise our members to come out in numbers and match to occupy the premises of the yellow house for a peaceful protest demanding the resignation of Mr Yusuf Magaji Bichi, Director General of the DSS," he said.

According to him, "the action, is in reaction to the DSS continuous attack on the judiciary and the outright disregard to court orders, illegally detention and violation of fundamental human rights."

The statement recalled that on June 10, 2023, the DSS arrested Emefiele, after his suspension in Lagos, and held him in detention for over a month without charging him to court or release him.

It noted that even after arraigning him and the court granted him bail, the DSS still kept him in detention.

Musa also condemned the arrest on July 12, 2023, of the Sarkin Hausawa of Lagos, Alhaji Aminu Yaro and his wife, Sa'adatu in connection with Emefiele's case.

The statement lamented that Yaro and his wife had been in detention by the DSS, despite two separate court orders for their release.

"This is a violation of human rights and disregard for the rule of law by the DSS. We must respect the laws of our land because our laws are our strength.

"We hereby give Mr. Yusuf Magaji Bichi an ultimatum of 48 hours to comply with the court and release all individuals in their facility as ordered by the courts.

"Failure to comply will attract a massive and peaceful protest. We are mobilising our youths to stop this dictatorship by Bichi and his operatives", Musa said.

Waziri-Azi: NAPTIP has Achieved 624 Convictions in 20 Years

Michael Olugbode in Abuja

The National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) has in 20 years, secured 624 convictions for trafficking in persons' offenses, the Director General of the agency, Prof Fatima Waziri-Azi has disclosed.

Speaking at a ceremony to celebrate the 20 years anniversary of the agency in Abuja, yesterday, Waziri-Azi said NAPTIP has progressed from its very first command in Benin -Edo State to offices in 32 states and task force against human trafficking in 22 states.

She said. "We have made progress in our criminal justice response with a significant increase in convictions (624 Convictions since the first conviction was secured in 2006."

Waziri-Azi further explained that the agency secured 80 convictions in 2022, which was the highest in a single year since the inception of NAPTIP and 48 convictions and counting in 2023 including for the first time the conviction of a law enforcement officer for human trafficking offences

The DG while noting that the agency has prosecuted several mutual legal assistance cases, said on the 8 of March 2023, NAPTIP was able to extradite a high profile human trafficker to Italy to serve out her 13 years jail term.

She said: "Our recent strategic partnership with Meta (owners of Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp) and the United States National Centre for Missing and Exploited Children have further enhanced the capacity of NAPTIP to tackle issues of online child exploitation."

She noted that Nigeria was better poised to control and tackle human trafficking because of the collaborative efforts of everyone.

Waziri-Azi said last year, "with support from our supervising Ministry, the Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Alfairs, Disaster Management and Social Development, not one, but three policy documents targeted at revolutionising the fight against human trafficking in Nigeria, including the National Action Plan on Human Trafficking (2022-2026); were approved by the Federal Executive Council."

She added that: "Today we will present more policy documents and innovations and they include: NAPTIP Disability Inclusion Policy, NAPTIP Service Charter, policy documents that have been transcribed into braille for the blind in collaboration with the disability commission."

She noted that part of the improvement of the agency was the rebranding of the organisation's logo, that has already been mainstreamed.

She said: "The rebranded logo represents a re-commitment from NAPTIP to protect all persons against human trafficking, and violence against persons through a people-centered access to justice, and the provision of safe spaces."

TWO MONTHS AFTER, TINUBU SENDS 28 MINISTERIAL NOMINEES TO SENATE

The party, which reacted to the nomination of Wike as minister, said it was good riddance to rubbish, as the party would wait for him to accept or reject the offer, before taking the next step.

Speaking with newsmen, a member of the National Working Committee (NWC) of PDP, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said, "There is nothing to give any renewed hope in the ministerial list just released.

"There is nothing to show for any renewed hope. It is just job for the boys. Reward for political patronage. There is nothing spectacular. It is nothing but an assemblage of some retired politicians being recycled.

"What are the likes of the former governors, who never commissioned any project while in office, coming to do in the proposed federal executive council that they could not do when they were governors?"

Specifically on the nomination of Wike, the NWC member said, "We are waiting for him to accept the offer. If he accepts, then to the PDP, it is goodbye to rubbish.

"We hope he accepts it and this will give the party (room) to start looking inwards towards reorganisation once the presidential petition of the party in the tribunal is disposed of for good.

"He cannot be a minister in a government of the APC and still be a member of the PDP. Yes, he secured a restraining order from the court that restrained the parry from suspending him.

"If he accepts, then he is no longer a member of the PDP, as PDP is not participating in Tinubu's government and the party did not nominate him. So, to answer your question. We are waiting for him to accept it. If he does, then the party will take the necessary action."

Sani: Tinubu Embraced Serpents, Rewarded Vultures

A former senator from Kadun State, Shehu Sani, said from the ministerial list, President Bola Tinubu embraced serpents and rewarded vultures.

Sani, in a post via Twitter, averred that Tinubu embraced some serpents with a known history of treachery, and vultures for playing the betrayal game.

He tweeted, "The ministerial list: The president embraced some serpents with a known history of treachery and rewarded some vultures for playing the Judas. Appeasing a snake in a palace doesn't spare the king."

NEWS



SHALINA HEALTHCARE UNVEILS BRAND AMBASSADOR…

L-R: Brand Manager, Shalina Healthcare, Femi Laleye; Chief Commercial Officer, West Africa, Arun Raj; Nollywood Actor /Film Producer, Bolanle Ninalowo; Brand Marketing Head, West Africa, Sandeep Sahu; Finance Head, West Africa, Bharat Pahuja; Director and Regulatory Head, Theophilus Emeka Adimoha, Shalina Healthcare at the Unveiling of Ninalowo as the Brand Ambassador for Polygel, a product of Shalina Healthcare in Lagos…recently DAN UKANA

NSCDC Parades 12 Suspects Arrested for Oil Theft in Rivers

Blessing Ibunge in Port Harcourt

The Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), Rivers State Command, has arrested 12 suspects for alleged involvement in vandalism, oil theft and illegal dealings in petroleum products.

Speaking during parade of the suspects at the NSCDC command in Port Harcourt, the Commandant, Basil Igwebueze, said the fight against illegal oil bunkering activities in Rivers State was not negotiable.

Basil warned economic saboteurs to either desist from such heinous act or face the full wrath of the law.

He said as the commandant of the NSCDC Rivers State Command, he was determined to fight the menace of illegal oil bunkering activities which overtime has led to environmental degradation, pollution of land, aquatic life and health hazards.

He hinted that the Commandant General, Dr Ahmed Audi deployed him to the State to "achieve mandate of the NSCDC of safeguarding all critical national assets and infrastructures, ensuring that operators of unregistered private guard companies do proper registration or risk being shut down; ensure that the good people of Rivers State sleep with their two eyes closed without fear of intimidation or any danger".

Insurgency: Niger to Create Ministry of Pastoral and Nomadic Affairs

Laleye Dipo in Minna

As part of his strategy to curb insurgency and banditry, the Niger State Governor Alhaji Mohammed Umaru Bago is to establish a Ministry of Pastoral and Nomadic Affairs.

Bago's decision is also informed by the vastness of the state which has made banditry and insurgency to thrive by the creation of a safe haven for bandits and other criminals in the forests.

The Governor told the Assistant Inspector General of Police AIG Zone 7, Adebowale Williams, who paid him a courtesy visit in Minna that with "the vast land the state is blessed with, criminals have taken advantage of the ungoverned spaces to launch their nefarious activities.

He said as a result of this development "we will create a Ministry of Pastoral and Nomadic Affairs that will work towards securing the forests and ungoverned spaces using the inhabitants in the areas to enable Farmers and Nomads to return to their farmlands."

Bago said his government was ready to partner with the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) to secure this vast arable land and thereby restore peace and security to all parts of the state.

Oniru Harps on Solutions to Housing Financing in Nigeria

Yinka Kolawole in Osogbo

The Oniru of Iru-land, Lagos, Oba Abdulwasiu Omogbolahan Lawal, yesterday proffered solutions on how to provide affordable housing for Nigerians through innovative financing mechanism.

The monarch, who spoke at a Special Summit on Interactive Session with Political Leaders on Housing Industry Stakeholders at the 17TH Arica International Housing Show, Abuja, noted that government should look at how to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) such as national security, food security and of course, housing.

The Oniru spoke on "Current Trends In The Housing Market And Providing Affordable Housing for the Citizens Through Innovative Financing Mechanism."

According to him, "it was imperative for government to get things right; I do know that we all see the urgency of the situation and I believe that the new administration will tackle the issues militating against adequate and affordable housing, particularly for the teaming masses."

He said: "current trend in the housing market is providing affordable housing for the citizens through innovative financing mechanism. The housing market in the nation is fast evolving and despite this, affordability remains limited to a certain strata of society, especially the white collar middle class employees and certain categories of public sector workers with relatively decent income. Others are small business owners and diaspora buyers."

"These are the current main drivers of the real estate market which delivers an average of 5000 homes annually through government direct intervention and private sector initiative."

"Unfortunately, these interventions are like a drop in the ocean when it comes to addressing the housing deficit which arguably stands at around 20 million shortfalls.

CAC to Deregister 100,000 Companies, Pledges to Fight Corruption

Ahmad Sorondinki in Kano and **Wale Igbintade**

The Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) has concluded plans to deregister 100,000 companies for their alleged failure to publish returns.

The Registrar of CAC, Alhaji Garba Abubakar, stated this yesterday in Kano while addressing members of civil society organisations, the media, security agencies, and other stakeholders, on the use of Beneficial Ownership Register initiatives.

He has also has reiterated his commitment to strengthen the fight against corruption and ensure transparency in the system.

According to him, "The law is clear on the procedures; any company not filing its returns is considered not in operation or inactive, and is liable to be struck out."

He further stated that the names of the affected companies will soon be published on the commission's website, adding that: "They will be given four weeks within which to respond, failure of which they will be struck off from the CAC data.

'Ekiti Committed to Reduction of Infant Mortality'

Gbenga Sodeinde in Ado Ekiti

Ekiti State First Lady, Dr. Olayemi Oyebanji, has promised that no efforts would be spared in providing effective health interventions to reduce the infant mortality rate and boost the care of babies in the state.

She said the state government also attached importance to measures aimed at ensuring that women of childbearing age and their babies benefit from adequate healthcare delivery in every part of the state.

Dr. Oyebanji gave the assurance at the flag-off ceremony of the Maternal Newborn and Child Health Week in the state, which was organised by the state Primary Health Care Development Agency in conjunction with Ekiti State Committee on Food and Nutrition.

She explained that the state government's efforts were clearly demonstrated in the priority given to the health sector by equipping various hospitals and health centres, and in the implementation of qualitative programmes across the state.

The first lady, noted that the programme, which is bi-annual, would commence on July 28 to August 1 this year in all government health facilities and designated places across all local government areas.

PDP Tasks AbdulRazaq on Infrastructural Deficit, Insecurity in Kwara

Hammed Shittu in Ilorin

The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in Kwara State has advised the state Governor, Alhaji AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq, to take time to settle in the state in order to address the infrastructural deficit and insecurity ravaging the state.

The PDP said that the continued absence of the governor from the state on the excuse of "national assignment" in Abuja had continued to take a toll in the day-to-day governance of the state.

A statement issued in Ilorin yesterday and signed by the party's Publicity Secretary, Mr. Tunji Moronfoye, said: "The PDP can only watch in complete sadness as the governance in Kwara State is now in free fall.

"Kwarans are totally appalled by the state of infrastructural decay and lack of attention from the state All Progressives Congress (APC)-led government."

The statement added: "The poverty level and the security situation in the state are horrible and depressing. Kidnappings are now a daily occurrence in the state.

Adamawa Assembly Receives List of 23 Commisioner-nominees

Daji Sani in Yola

Adamawa State House of Assembly yesterday received a list of 23 commissioner-nominees for confirmation from the state Governor, Ahmadu Umaru Fintiri.

Fintiri in the letter sent to the Speaker, appealed to the Assembly members to consider and confirm the nominees in order to form his cabinet.

The list was read by the Speaker, Rt. Hon. Bathiya Wesley, who presided over the plenary session, and said the date for screening would be communicated later to the public.

Those nominated include Wali Yakubu, Dr. John Ishaya Dabari and Mary Augustina Vasumu(Michika), Hon. Usman Abdullahi(Mubi South), Hon. Tijjani Maksha (Maiha), Dr. Umar Garba Pella(Hong), Prof. Fintiwa David Jatau(Gombi), Abdullahi Adamu Prame (Song).

Others are Job Haggai Sama(Girei), Ibrahim Mijinyawa Yayaji(Yola North), Bello Hamman Diram(Yola South), Chief Felix Tangwami and Hon. Iliya James (Demsa), Hon. Ibrahim Haruna (Shelleng), Hon. Kallamu Musa Mohammed (Mayo Belwa), Adamu Atiku (Jada), Aloysius Babadoke(Jada), Emmanuel Biridimso(Toungo), Mrs. Nedo Geoffrey (Numan), Titus Solomon(Lamurde), Anthony Birina(Guyuk), Mohammed Sadiq(Ganye), Ayuba Audu Tanko(Mubi North).

CSOs Advise Enugu against Use of Force to Enforcing Ban on Sit-at-Home Order

Gideon Arinze in Enugu

The Enugu Network of Civil Society Organisations (ENSNet) has advised the Enugu State Government against the use of force in enforcing the ban on sit-at-home order in the state.

The network was reacting to the decision by the state government to seal shops which failed to comply with the order, a development which resulted in a protest in the state and reported loss of lives.

In a statement yesterday, Chairman of the ENSNet, Osmond Ugwu, said that in as much as the network appreciates the efforts being made to end the sit-at-home, which has impacted negatively on the security and economy of residents in the state, the approach of use of force by the government is not the best practice and runs counter to democratic norms.

"The action of sealing off of the shops of traders who voluntarily decided not to open shops on Mondays is tantamount to ultra vires as the state government under a democratic setting has no such powers to seal or close down the shops of the traders because there is no law that empowers the government to do so in a democracy such as ours," the network said.

The network also asked the government to locate the families of the casualties of the protest and pay them the necessary compensations arising from the loss of lives while those that sustained injuries are to be treated and paid necessary compensations.

Kano Reopens 26 Entrepreneurship Centres Closed by Ganduje

The Kano State Government yesterday announced the reopening of 26 Entrepreneurship Institutes closed by the administration of former governor, Abdullahi Ganduje.

The Commissioner for Works and Housing, Alhaji Marwan Ahmad made the disclosure at a news conference in Kano.

He said the institutes were established by the Sen. Rabiu Musa Kwankwaso's administration with the mandate to equip youths and women in different skills.

"Gov. Abba Kabir-Yusuf has directed that all the 26 Entrepreneurship Institutes established by the Sen. Kwankwaso's Administration which were abandoned by the previous administration, are hereby reopened.

"The institute include: Journalism, Horticulture, Poultry, Driving, Reformatory, Hospitality and Tourism, Animal Husbandry, Sports, Informatics, Corporate Security, among others," he said.



LAGOS STATE HEALTH INSURANCE SUMMIT…

L-R: Chairman, Governing Board, Lagos State Health Management Agency (LASHMA), Dr. Adebayo Adedewe; Permanent Secretary, LASHMA, Dr. Emmanuella Zamba; Permanent Secretary, Lagos State Public Service Office, Mrs. Oyegbola Sukanmi; Representative of the Lagos State Governor, Dr. Olusegun Ogboye; Representative of the First Lady of Lagos State, Dr. Olayemi Oke-Osanyintolu, and Divisional Head, Education and Health Sector, Sterling Bank Plc, Mr. Obinna Ukachukwu, at the maiden Lagos State Health Insurance Summit organised by LASHMA in Lagos…yesterday ETOP UKUTT

Domestic Airlines Explore New Alliance to Curb Flight Delays, Improve Service Delivery

Chinedu Eze

To curb flight delays and cancellations, domestic airlines are working on introducing one ticket for all, whereby one ticket from one airline can be accepted by other airlines in a planned alliance.

The airlines said this would help to significantly eliminate the inconveniences faced by passengers who suffer from constant flight delays and cancellations occasioned by bad weather, VIP movement and technical problems.

The new alliance will enable a passenger to buy a ticket of one of the airlines and use it in any other member of the alliance and this will also help the airlines reduce low load factor, as one flight could take in passengers from different airlines travelling to the same destination.

The President of Top Brass Aviation Limited and a member of the Airline Operators of Nigeria (AON), Roland Iyayi, disclosed this yesterday in his presentation at the 27th annual seminar of the League of Airports and Aviation Correspondent (LAAC) with the theme, "Aviation Industry: Changing Times, Changing Strategies."

Iyayi explained that the domestic airlines had decided to come together to address the concerns of passengers for improved service delivery.

Though he did not disclose the details of the domestic network alliance, he said the alliance would ensure that a passenger could buy a ticket of one airline and use the same on any of the domestic airlines that is member of the alliance.

Iyayi, who spoke on enhancing airlines' profitability, however, called for an enabling environment to actualise the code-share initiative among domestic carriers while advocating for a national air connectivity agenda to expand air connectivity across the country.

Uzodimma Fetes Heartland FC, Gifts N100m to Players, Managers

Governor of Imo State, Senator Hope Uzodimma has feted the players and management staff of Heartland Football Club of Imo State for emerging double champions in the recent Nigerian National League (NNL)and also getting promoted to the Nigeria Premier Federation League.

In a show of appreciation for their performance, the Governor announced a donation of N100 million for the players and their managers which he said will come through extra budgetary allocation.

Hosting the team to a dinner party in Owerri on Wednesday night, Governor Uzodimma said: "My heart is full of joy for receiving you this evening with a double barrel honours."

He noted that his heart was troubled when Heartland Football Club was relegated from the premiership league despite the huge amount put into the industry since 2020 but explained that he was aware that the team has talents "but the problem was how to manage those talents."

Governor Uzodimma added that "when they reached out to us we responded, offered our support and today we are celebrating them," informing that he is very happy that the Heartland Football Club is back to the Premiership League.

He encouraged the players and their managers not to relent "because the government will continue to render more support" to them.

His words: "In today's world, we cannot do without sports. "In my government I cannot do without Heartland."

He, however, encouraged them to carry along the Heartland Queens, noting that he is also interested in Heartland Queens winning.

He said: "Now that you have shown that you can win, government can show that they can support.I am rewarding your efforts with a cash of N100 million and this money is not part of your salaries nor running cost but to be shared among."

Obaseki Mourns Passing of Samson Abu

The Edo State Governor, Mr. Godwin Obaseki, has mourned the passing of a leader of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in Oredo Ward 1, Hon. Samson Abu, who passed aged 65 years.

In a statement, the governor described Hon. Abu as a political mobiliser, who worked assiduously for the betterment and development of his people.

According to Obaseki, "I mourn the passing of Hon. Samson Abu, a leader of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in Oredo Ward 1.

"He was a great leader and political mobiliser, and worked hard for the development of his people."

The governor commiserated with friends and family of the late Hon. Abu, adding, "May God grant all the fortitude to bear the irreparable loss."

Nigeria Lost Two Million Jobs Prior NOGICD Act, Says Wabote

Blessing Ibunge in Port Harcourt

The Executive Secretary of the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB), Mr. Simbi Wabote, has revealed that prior to the enactment of the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development (NOGICD) Act 2010, the country lost two million jobs, as most opportunities were executed by foreigners

Wabote also disclosed that over 50 years before the enactment of NOGICD, the country lost about $380 billion, capital flight as estimated.

The NCDMB boss, who spoke virtually at the Local Content Workshop organised for Rivers State Judiciary held in Port Harcourt, said local content was not about nationalisation of foreign firms, but about domiciliation and domestication for local value addition.

Speaking on the theme, "Philosophy and Imperative of the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development (NOGICD) Act 2010", Wabote said local content needs foreigners and foreign direct investments to thrive.

NACCIMA Boss Seeks Better Partnership to Expand Nigeria, Spain's $4bn Trade Value

The National President of the Nigerian Association Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture (NACCIMA), Dele Kelvin Oye Esq., has called for deeper collaboration between Nigeria and Spain to expand the $4billion trade value between the two countries.

The NACCIMA boss said this during a courtesy visit to the Spanish Ambassador, Juan Sell, noting that Nigeria and Spain have enjoyed a long-standing relationship, spanning several decades, which has resulted in increased trade and investment opportunities between the two countries.

Oye said: "Your Excellency, H.E Juan Sell, the Spanish Ambassador, I am honoured to be here today in the spirit of goodwill and mutual cooperation as President of NACCIMA. Let me begin by expressing my profound appreciation for the critical role Spain plays in the global socio-economic spectrum, especially regarding international trade.

"Our two nations have enjoyed a long-standing relationship, spanning several decades, which has resulted in increased trade and investment opportunities between our countries."

PDP Alleges Discrimination as Sani Swears in Commissioners

John Shiklam in Kaduna

Kaduna state governor, Senator Uba Sani, yesterday swore in 13 of the 14 commissioners screened and cleared by the state House of Assembly.

The opposition Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), has however, described the appointments as lopsided, aimed at excluding certain section of the people from the governance structure of the state.

Speaking shortly after administrating oath of office on the appointees at the Government House, Kaduna, the Sani said his administration would cut down cost of governance to overcome the economic challenges facing the state.

He said his government will set up a trust fund to cater for the poor and the vulnerable people adding that he will donate 50 per cent of his salary to the trust fund.

The governor said the commissioners were appointed based on their experience and competence and urged them to live up to expectations.

"We count on you to bring your experience and competence to bear on governance in the state.

Don Advocates Gender-focused Rural Devt to Boost Nigeria's Economy

Gbenga Sodeinde in Ado Ekiti

A university lecturer, Prof. Grace Modupe Adebo, has expressed the need for a specific gender-focused rural development approach in the country.

She made the recommendation at the 74th inaugural lecture of the Ekiti State University, Ado Ekiti, titled: 'De- escalating Grassroots Gender Poverty: Imperatives for Sustainable Rural Development Agenda in Nigeria'.

She noted that over the years, it has been proven that generalised development policies have not favoured women, as they are often cornered by men while women are side-lined in all aspects of the policies.

Prof. Adebo pointed out that a women-focused policy programme would reduce the chances of its being hijacked by the privileged men in power and bureaucrats.

According to her, "Efforts made by rural women to bail themselves out of poverty yielded minimal results due to lack of finance and institutional support."

Alleged $1.4m Debt: Firm Asks Court to Liquidate Debtor over Insolvency

Wale Igbintade

A firm, Uniterm Nigeria Limited has asked the Federal High Court in Lagos, to wind up an indigenous oil and gas company, Oriental Energy Resources Limited over alleged $1, 453, 356.76 debt.

The petitioner, in the winding up petition filed by its counsel Uchechukwu Obi, SAN, told the court that despite repeated calls and demands the Respondent has serially failed, refused and is unable to liquidate its outstanding debt to date.

It stated that over eight weeks have lapsed since the petitioner issued and served the Statutory Demand Notice on the Respondent on 13th April, 2022 but the respondent has failed, refused, defaulted and neglected to pay the said debts and its accruing interest.

The petitioner stated that it has suffered enormous business damage particularly with its funds withheld by the Respondent which the Respondent has instead invested into its own business thereby depriving the petitioner of its legitimate use of the funds for its business.

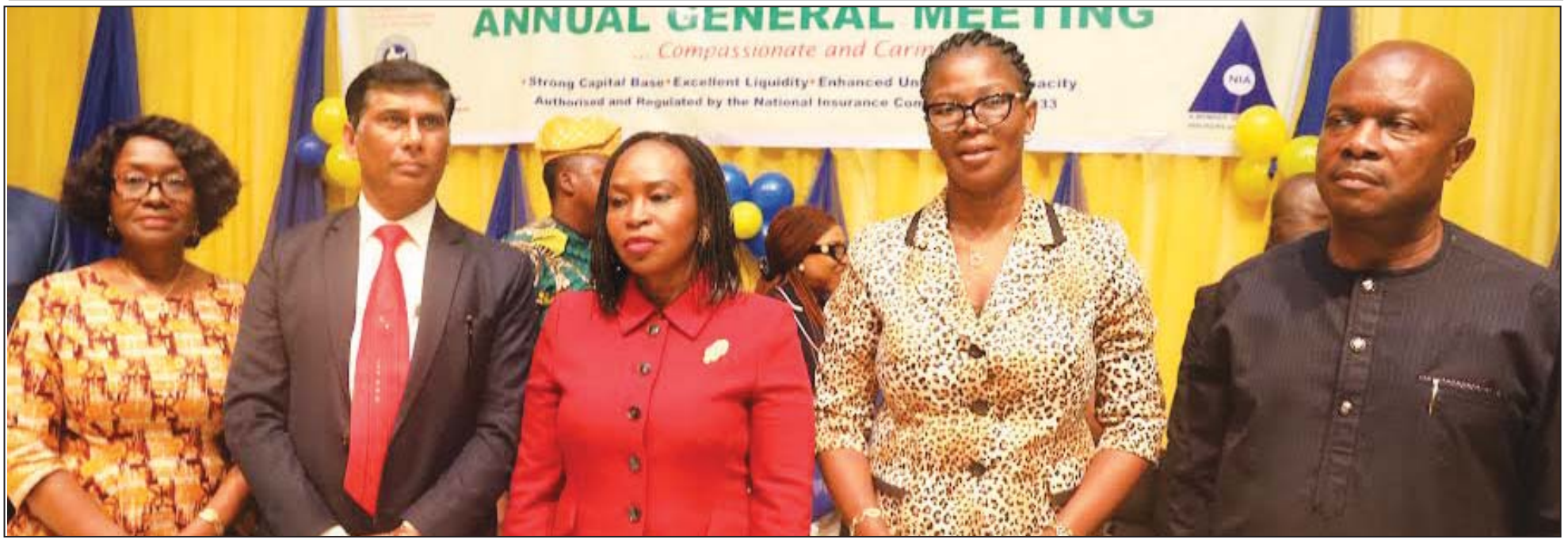
Kwara Gov Sends Names of 20 Commissioner-nominees, 10 Special Advisers to Assembly

Hammed Shittu in Ilorin

The Kwara State House of Assembly yesterday said it has received an executive communication from the state Governor, Mallam AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq, for the confirmation of 20 commissioner-nominees.

A statement issued in Ilorin by the Speaker of the state House of Assembly, Rt. Hon. Yakubu Danladi-Salihu, which was signed by his Chief Press Secretary, Mr. Sheu Abdulkadir Yusuf, said the governor also sought legislative approval for the appointment of 10 Special Advisers to work with the administration in various capacities.

The statement, however, said the members of the state House of Assembly would diligently attend to the governor's request in due course.



PRESENTING THEIR SCORECARD…

L-R: Executive Director, Prestige Assurance Plc, Mrs. Aderonke Adedeji; Managing Director/CEO, Mr. Rajesh Kamble; Chairman, Mrs. Funmi Oyetunji; Company Secretary, Mrs. Chidinma Ibe-Louis, and Non- Executive Director, Dr. Nosike Agokei, at the 53rd Annual General Meeting of Prestige Assurance Plc held in Lagos…recently ETOP UKUTT

We'll Consolidate on Okowa's Legacies and Do More, Says Oborevwori

Omon-Julius Onabu in Asaba

Governor Sheriff Oborevwori of Delta State has said that his predecessor performed very well by reaching all parts of the state with his development programmes , stating that his administration would not only consolidate on the legacies of Okowa administration but would earnestly strive to do more.

Oborevwori reassured Deltans that his government would be equitable in the distribution of infrastructural projects and political appointments across the state.

The governor made the remarks at a public presentation, in Asaba, of a book on Dr Ifeanyi Okowa's stewardship as Delta State governor from May 29, 2015 to May 29, 2023, titled, "Hope and Fulfilment" in Asaba.

"All parts of the state would be adequately carried along in his M.O.R.E Agenda for Deltans, he said, noting that promotion of peace and unity through the policicy of inclusiveness was the hallmark of the success story that Okowa's governorship was," he said.

While saying that more appointments would be made in due course, the governor enjoined those who have not been given appointment not to despair, adding that they should continue to work with the state government in order to expand the frontiers of sustainable development in the state.

According to him, some of the commissioners designate are people with vast wealth of experience in public life as well as the younger ones, adding that those with immense wealth of experience were expected to mentor the younger ones in the discharge of their duties.

He applauded the authors for their painstaking research and efforts in putting together such a comprehensive book, which chronicled the massive developmental strides of the Okowa administration in the state, even as he commended Okowa for his humility, wisdom and outstanding accomplishments in the governance of the state for eight years.

Radda: Katsina Govt to Establish 361 Clinics

Gov. Dikko Radda of Katsina State has announced plans by his administration to establish 361 clinics to enhance quality healthcare service delivery in the state.

Radda stated this while inaugurating the distribution of 198 motorcycles to routine immunisation officers and ward focal persons.

He said the clinics would be established before the end of his tenure across the 34 local government areas of the state.

The plan, he said, was part of his commitment towards enhancing access to quality healthcare services at the grassroots.

He said the distribution of the motorcycles was aimed to enhancing immunisation coverage and other primary healthcare services in the state.

"I am fully committed to strengthening the health sector to meet the aspirations of the people of Katsina State.

"And also, we are dedicated to improving healthcare services for the citizens," he said.

The governor enjoined community and religious leaders as well as other stakeholders to create awareness in their communities on the importance of healthcare intervention.

Pioneer Movement Iseyin Hails Appointment of Adeyemo as Oyo SSG

The foremost pro-education/ development association in Oke Ogun area of Oyo State, the Pioneer Movement Iseyin (PMI) has joined the horde of well-wishers felicitating the newly appointed Secretary to Oyo state Government (SSG), Prof. Olanike Adeyemo.

In a statement signed by the President of PMI, Abimbola Ojedokun, and released by the Public Relations Officer, Razaq Asaju, the group described Prof. Adeyemo's appointment as well-deserved and a recognition of Iseyin's worth in the current dispensation in Oyo state.

Extolling the virtues of the new SSG, Ojedokun said Professor Adeyemo is an exemplary academic and Iseyin indigene, being the first female Deputy Vice-Chancellor in the Premier University and a leading carer during the dreaded COVID -19 period, where she distinguished herself and served selflessly.

Ojedokun therefore, expressed optimism that Prof. Adeyemo would excel in her new position and raise the banner of governance in Oyo state as is her hallmark in whatever assignment she had been given.

According to him, Prof. Adeyemo and PMI have come a long way, and she is a regular face at the PMI annual lecture in Iseyin where she was the Chairperson at the 2018 edition.

She was also recognised by PMI with distinguished merit award.

Jelani Aliyu Receives Diaspora Merit Award

Onuminya Innocent in Sokoto

The Director General of National Automotive Design and Development Council, Mr. Jelani Aliyu, has received the Diaspora Merit Award 2023 for his significant and enormous contributions in Engineering and Automobile sector, and as a role model to other Nigerians in the Diaspora to emulate.

Aliyu, an international automotive designer, studied at the College for Creative Studies, Detroit, Michigan, United States, and worked with General Motors in both the United States and Germany.

He designed a number of successful vehicles for the company, including the Pontiac G6, Chevrolet Silverado and the world acclaimed Chevrolet Volt Electric Car, which is a high-tech Renewable Energy vehicle that has revolutionized the global Automotive Industry.

He is currently driving the National development of E-mobility in Nigeria: enabling the production of Electric Vehicles and the development of solar powered EV Charging Stations.

Aliyu led the development of 21 Automotive Training Centres (ATC) across the nation to provide effective platforms for automotive technology transfer and empowering young Nigerians.

National Security: FRSC, NCS Partner on Vehicle Information Database

The Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) and Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) have agreed to integrate vehicles information on their databases to enhance national security and curb revenue losses.

This was made known when the Acting Comptroller General, NCS, Bashir Adeniyi visited the Corps Marshal FRSC, Dauda Biu, yesterday in Abuja.

Adeniyi said that the NCS was committed to working with FRSC, especially in data integration and management, human resources, sports, as well as information and communication technology.

He said that the NCS would ensure the integration of information on vehicles in the National Vehicle Identification Scheme database domiciled with the FRSC.

This, the CG said would ease tracking of smuggled vehicles, improve revenue generation and enhance national security.

Responding, the Corps Marshal applauded the initiative, saying that data sharing would not only strengthen the bond between the two agencies but also positively impact the fight against smuggling.

Lagos, UN Women Seek More Women Participation in Procurement Process

The Lagos State Government and the United Nations (UN) Women have called for increase in women participation in public procurement process in the state.

Speaking during a three-day training for women-owned businesses, Mr Fatai Onafowote, Director-General, Lagos State Public Procurement Agency (PPA), said that the participation of women in bidding for contract was about 20 per cent.

Onafowote said that this was against the male folk's participation of 80 per cent, a trend which should be looked into.

"The baseline has been to establish that the ratio is 1 to 4. That is, one of women-owned businesses to four of men led businesses, which you can also talk about as 20 per cent to 80 per cent.

"So, what is our wish is that we move beyond that level. Our wish is that if we cannot achieve 50/50, at least let us move away from the 20/80 ratio to say 40/60. So, that way, we see ourselves making the necessary impact," he said.

According to him, some of the issues, challenges militating against women's participation in procurement process include access to credit, the issue of collateral, culture, harassment, among others.

NSCDC Issues Operational Licences to 41 Private Guard Companies

The Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) has issued operational licences to 41 Private Guard Companies (PGCs).

NSCDC Commandant General (CG), Ahmed Audi, represented by DCG Operation, Dauda Mugadi, presented the licenses to the PGCs on Thursday in Abuja.

Audi said the private security industry was an integral part of Nigeria's security architecture hence the need for them to be professional in carrying out their duties.

He charged them to place priority on crime prevention and protection of lives and properties in their areas of operation.

The CG warned that any compromise of national security will be dealt with decisively.

"Use your experience to promote public interest and socio-economic growth, which only thrives in a crime-free environment.

CHANGE OF NAME

I formerly known and addressed as AMIDU HAMINA SALIFU, now wish to be known as and addressed as AMIDU HARUNA SALIFU. All former documents remains valid. WAEC and the General public should please take note.

I formerly known and addressed as SEUN ODUNAYO OGUNBADE, now wish to be known as and addressed as OLUWASEUN ODUNAYO OSINEYE. All former documents remains valid. the General public should please take note.

I formerly known and addressed as MISS ETUWE NWABUAKU ABIGAIL, now wish to be known as and addressed as MRS MGBAKOR NWABUAKU ABIGAIL. All former documents remains valid. the General public should please take note.

I formerly known and addressed as DADA OLUBUNMI OKUYEMISI, now wish to be known as and addressed as OGUNDELE OLUBUNMI MARY. All former documents remains valid. *Nigeria Police Force* and the General public should please take note.

I formerly known and addressed as BELLO ISIBHAKHOMEN FAVOUR, now wish to be known as and addressed as ISIBHAKHOMEN FAVOUR EKE. All former documents remains valid. the General public should please take note.

I formerly known and addressed as MISS BLESSING OMOKENU OBIUWEVBI, now wish to be known as and addressed as MRS BLESSING OMOKENU UTUYORUME. All former documents remains valid. the General public should please take note.

I formerly known and addressed as ANAEDUM EJIKE PIUS, now wish to be known as and addressed as CHINEDU EMMANUEL BLESSING. All former documents remains valid. the General public should please take note.

CHANGE OF NAME

I formerly known and addressed as MISS OJEKALU OPEYEMI BLESSING, now wish to be known as and addressed as MRS AKOSILE OPEYEMI BLESSIN. All former documents remains valid. the General public should please take note.

I formerly known and addressed as SHOGA ADETOKUNBO ABOSEDE STELLA, now wish to be known as and addressed as SHOGA ADETOKUNBO ABOSEDE. All former documents remains valid. the General public should please take note.

I formerly known and addressed as MISS EJIOWHOR HARRY PRECIOUS NKEM, now wish to be known as and addressed as MRS WOLEMONWU HARRY PRECIOUS. All former documents remains valid. the General public should please take note.

I Formerly known and addressed as MISS THEODORA UWANIMBIYE EGEDE, now wish to be known and addressed as MRS. THEODORA UWANIMBIYE UGO, All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

I Formerly known and addressed as MISS ANYIAM OGOCHUKWU OLIVIA, now wish to be known and addressed as MRS ASEKHAMEN OG OCHUKWU OLIVIA., All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

I Formerly known and addressed as MISS ELEFE DEBORAH, now wish to be known and addressed as MRS OSEZUAH DEBORAH ELEFE, All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

I, EMMANUEL ETIM ANIEDI wishes to notify the general public that my Date of Birth was wrongly written as 29TH JUNE 1982 INSTEAD OF *30TH MAY 1984* during my BVN enrolment. My correct Date of Birth is 30TH MAY 1984. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

FRIDAYSPORTS

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Waldrum: Why Oshoala Started from Bench Against Australia

Duro Ikhazuagbe

After shocking co-hosts Australia 3-2 to move to the top of Group B of the ongoing women's World Cup in Brisbane, Super Falcon' Head Coach, Randy Wadrum, has given an insight on why the team's jewel, Asisat Oshoala started from the bench.

Against the run of play and expectations, the nine-time African champions came back from a goal down to tie the match 1-1 at half time before two more goals in the second stanza moved the Super Falcons away from the Matildas.

Speaking shortly after the epic match in which the Falcons were clearly the underdogs, Waldrum revealed that keeping the Barcelona Femeni forward till the last 30 minutes of the game was strategic.

"I told Oshoala before the match that I needed her to give us the last 30 minutes. I felt very strongly she was going to get a goal, and she got the game-winning goal," revealed the American coach to reporters covering the tournament Down Under.

He admitted that Oshoala who came to the World Cup barely recovering from injury again picked up a knock in Nigeria's opening game with Canada that ended in a draw.

"We know Oshoala is very key to us (Falcons) and we've tried to be careful and manage her time.

"She came to the World Cup off a long injury sideline. And so, when she got here, we knew we had to use her in a way that will keep her in the tournament. We planned never to get her out for the entire duration of a game. But we unfortunately played her longer than we probably should have done against Canada," Waldrum noted.

He however commended Super Falcons for the ability to come back strong after giving away the opening goal to Australia.

"I think two things happened. One is, after giving up the first goal before halftime, we were able to respond and get it back. I think that was huge from a confidence standpoint.

"We tried to sort out a little bit of a problem that (Emily) Van Egmont was causing for us in midfield, finding a lot of pockets of space. And then it was just a matter of telling the players, you know, go for it. Don't be afraid to go out. I think the changes that we made worked out, the subs that we put in changed the game as well," observed Waldrum.

Meanwhile, Australia coach, Tony Gustavsson, has revealed that his team's inability to recover second balls was the major reason for losing to the Super Falcons.

"All three goals they (Nigeria) scored were because we lost the second balls. We knew that was going to be massive in this game," Gustavsson said after the game that has left the co-host country in a precarious state of missing out of the knockout stage.

Goals from vilified Uchenna Kanu, Osinach Ohale and Oshoala sealed victory for Nigeria to go top of Group B on same four points as Canada.

Nigerian only need a draw in the final Group game with Republic of Ireland on Monday to book a place in the Last 16.

WOMEN'S WORLD CUP

GROUP B

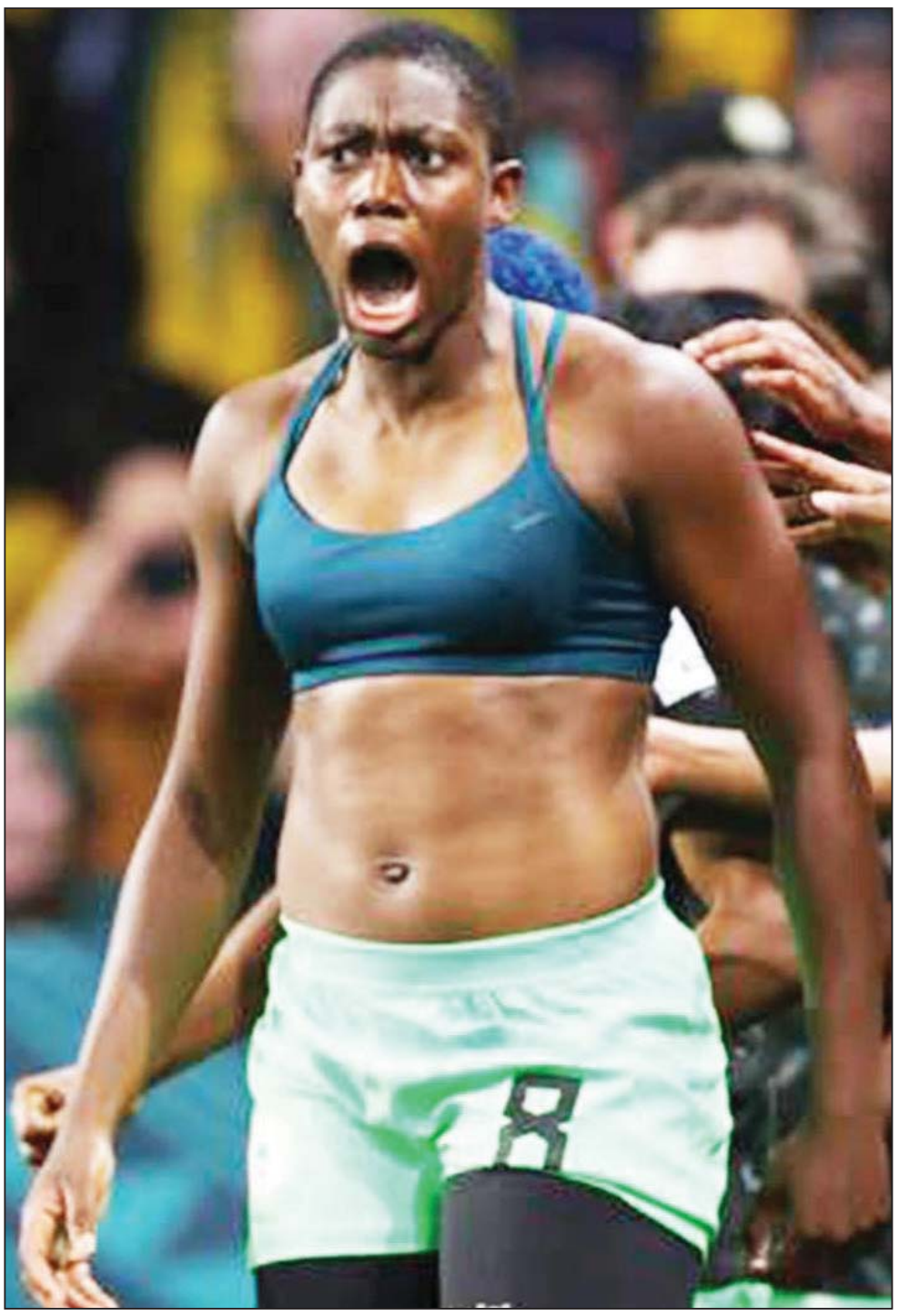
	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Pts
Nigeria	2	1	1	0	3	2	1	4
Canada	2	1	1	0	2	1	1	4
Australia	2	1	0	1	3	3	0	3
Ireland	2	0	0	2	1	3	-2	0

RESULTS

Australia	**2-3**	**Nigeria**
USA	**1-1**	**Netherlands**
Portugal	**2-0**	**Vietnam**

TODAY

England	**v**	**Denmark**
China	**v**	**Haiti**
Argentina	**v**	**S'Africa**



Asisat Oshoala celebrating scoring Nigeria's third goal in the 3-2 defeat of Australia at the ongoing Women's World Cup in Brisbane, Australia...yesterday

...Obaseki Hails Victorious Super Falcons

The Edo State Governor, Mr. Godwin Obaseki has congratulated Nigeria's Super Falcons for the 3-2 victory over co-hosts, Australia in the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup in Brisbane.

The governor, in a statement, said: "It was a nerve-wracking end to an intriguing encounter, but our amazing Super Falcons emerged victorious! Congratulations to our girls for earning a hard-fought three points against the Australian Matildas, who were the bookies' favorite for the match.

"We are proud of our girls and will be rooting for them as they go for another victory in their next game against Ireland, and secure a place in the knockout phases of the Women's World Cup."

Goals from Uchenna Kanu, Osinachi Ohale, and Asisat Oshoala secured the win for Super Falcons in Brisbane.

Chukwueze Signs Five-year Deal at AC Milan

TRANSFER NEWS

Super Eagles winger, Samuel Chukwueze, has completed his switch from Villareal to Italian Serie A giants, AC Milan, in a deal reported to be worth €28m plus add-ons. Milan announced the signing of the Nigerian international in a statement released on their website on Thursday.

Chukwueze signed a five-year contract that will run till 2028.

"AC Milan is delighted to announce the signing of Samuel Chimerenka Chukwueze from Villarreal CF. The Nigerian forward has signed for the Rossoneri until 30 June 2028," Milan stated.

Born in Umuahia (Nigeria) on 22 May 1999, Samuel came through the Diamond Football Academy Youth Sector before moving to Villarreal in 2017.

"With the Spanish club's B team, he played 20 games and scored four goals before making his debut with the senior team in September 2018, going on to feature 207 times, scoring 37 goals, and winning 1 Europa League.

"He has been capped 28 times for Nigeria and scored four goals.

"Samuel Chukwueze has chosen the number 21 jersey."

During his time at Villarreal, Chukwueze helped the LaLiga side win the UEFA Europa League title in 2020/21 season.



Samuel Chukwueze...signed a five-year deal worth over $28million at AC Milan...yesterday

Cricket: Junior Yellow-Green Save Face after Stumble in Tanzania

Nigeria's Under-19 male cricket team, the Junior Yellow-Green, won their first game at the ongoing qualifiers for the ICC U19 Men's Cricket World Cup in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, after two–successive defeats in their opening three games.

The team fell to Sierra Leone and Uganda in their first two games before scrapping up a 42 runs victory over host Tanzania, to soothe their disappointed fans who had banked on a bright outing for the team due to their pre-tournament ranking.

Daniel Gim, Coach of the Nigerian side, confirmed that there had been anxiety among the players after bungling their chance and the expectations back home.

"There was pressure after the two loses. This victory, I believe, will boost their confidence and help them chart a new focus in their remaining games."

A brilliant batting effort from Solomon Chilemaya paved the way for Nigeria's victory.

He had 66 runs (not out) off 80 balls, an effort that also stabilised the crumbling batting order, in the first inning.

Damian Okeke and Ridwan Abdulkareem posted 15 and 16 runs respectively, as the other double figures for Nigeria to set the team up for a 149 total in the counter.

In the second innings, Nigeria was able to curtail the East African line-up to a 107 all-out in 48 overs.

Endurance Ofem, the player's representative on the Board of the Nigeria Cricket Federation, believes that the players might not meet the expectations in the performance so far, but the team has shown dedication.

Lakowe Lakes Golf and Country Estate Unveils New Golf Facilities

The Lakowe Lakes Golf and Country Estate, Nigeria's foremost residential golf facility located within Lagos New Town, along Lekki Epe expressway, Lagos, has announced the expansion of its golf facilities which already consists of an 18-hole championship golf course, a 9-hole mashie golf course and driving range.

The driving range's latest features include private golfing booths with flight scope features, a bar/lounge, and a games room.

According to Golf Club Manager of Lakowe Lakes Golf and Country Estate, Femi Olagbenro, "Whether you're trying to improve your game, unwind, have a party or just have some fun, these new facilities will make Lakowe Lakes Golf and Country Estate a more enjoyable destination for golfers and non-golfers alike."

He further stressed that the "Golf X booth is a golfer's paradise with modern technology that allows you to practise your swing on any of the top golf courses in the world from the comfort of our facility.

"The simulator's many games and challenges can keep you entertained for hours. And no worries if you're not a golfer! The private booth is a great place for non-golfers to enjoy a variety of activities," the statement stressed.

"We are thrilled to offer our golfers, hospitality guests, and residents, a new and exciting way to enjoy themselves at Lakowe Lakes Golf and Country Estate," concludes Olagbenro.



THISDAY

TRUTH & REASON

Friday, July 28, 2023 Price: N250

MISSILE

Northern Group to NNPCL, Mele Kyari

"The recent increase in NNPCL's output, without corresponding investment in the company, has instead exposed the pervasive corruption within the sector. The criminals in the Oil and Gas sector are only responding to the body language of Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu's zero tolerance to bad governance, hence, the magical performance by people desperate to keep their offices. This raises serious doubts about the integrity and competence of the current leadership at NNPCL" *–Chairman, Arewa Citizens Watch for Good Governance (ACWGG), Aliyu Sani, threatening mass protest against hunger, rising cost of living in the country.*

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SONNIE EKWOWUSI

GUEST COLUMNIST

PEPC, Please Do Substantial Justice

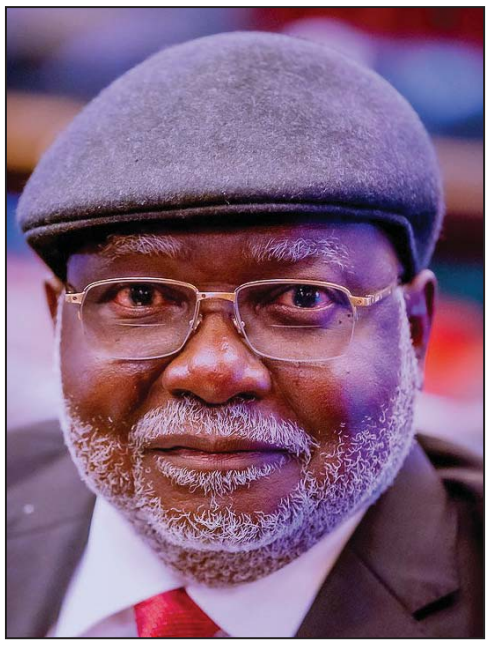
Scathing public criticisms have continued to trail the written address presented by the APC lawyers at the Presidential Election Petition Court (PEPC). It is common knowledge that President Bola Tinubu failed to score 25 per cent of the votes cast in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja, in the last February 25 Presidential election, as required by section 134 of the Electoral Act 2022. Despite the failure to satisfy this requirement, the INEC Chairman, Prof. Mahmoud Yakubu (who allegedly is currently under investigation for how he spent over $50 million in donations from the U.S. and the European Union in organizing the most fraudulent election in Nigerian political history), rushed out in the night while Nigerians were still asleep to announce Tinubu as the purported winner of the February 25 Presidential election.

However, in their written address rounding off their entire defense before the PEPC, learned counsel for President Tinubu submitted that any interpretation of section 134 to the effect that Tinubu must score 25 per cent of the votes cast in the FCT to become President is, inter alia, a recipe for chaos and anarchy in Nigeria. In summary, President Tinubu's lawyers argued that any interpretation of section 134 requiring Tinubu to score 25 per cent in the FCT would "lead to absurdity, chaos, anarchy, and an alteration of the very intention of the legislature."

In denouncing the statement as cheap judicial blackmail and a threat to the rule of law, some Nigerians argue that it is a pre-emptive move by the APC to intimidate the PEPC to deliver judgment in its favor. In their reaction, the PDP stated among other things: "The statement by the lawyers in the said written address, threatening crisis and anarchy in the country in the event of the court ruling that their clients did not meet the Constitutionally required 25% votes in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), is subversive, an affront to democratic order, and an assault on the corporate existence of the nation…the threats, either through counsel or officials of the APC, are calculated to intimidate and harass the judiciary and indeed Nigerians…The APC must, therefore, respect the provisions of the law and allow the judiciary to discharge its duties independently, without threats, intimidation, and coercion."

Without delving into the merits or demerits of Peter Obi & others V INEC & others and Atiku & others V INEC & others, since these cases are still sub-judice, may I respectfully say that it is very unfortunate that Tinubu's lawyers should utter such contemptuous, disrespectful, and derogatory statements capable of bringing the entire judiciary into public odium. It is sad that the Nigerian judiciary has been constituted into an object of derision by some learned Senior Advocates of Nigeria (SANs) who ought to labor to maintain the prestige of the judiciary.

For example, not long ago, a lawyer in the law firm of a very respectable Senior



CJN Olukayode Ariwoola

Advocate of Nigeria (SAN) telephoned their would-be client, telling them that their law firm never loses any law case in court and that most Nigerian judges are more or less in the bidding of their law firm. Imagine the arrogance. Sadly enough, till date, no disciplinary action has been brought against the SAN or his law firm. Where is the much-vaunted ethics guiding the practice of law? Where is the ingrained tradition of the Bar dictating that lawyers should be singled out from the rot by their candor, decency, gentility, and ethics?

No lawyer or group of lawyers representing their client in court should give the impression that they are omnipotent and omniscient and that everything that falls off their mouth is the correct position of the law. Only God is omnipotent and omniscient. Like all mortals, lawyers also have their feet of clay. In the temple of justice, no lawyer is infallible, in the same way, it could be said that no judge is infallible. This was why Justice Chukwudifu Akunne Oputa (of blessed memory) reiterated the famous quotation in the landmark case of Adegoke Motors vs. Adesanya, "We are final not because we are infallible; rather, we are infallible because we are final." So, lawyers appearing before the court should live in self-effacement in representing their clients in court.

As officers in the temple of justice, they should refrain from prosecuting their clients' cases with misplaced over-zealousness to the detriment or scuttling of justice. Their duty to the court is to assist the court in presenting facts and adducing the necessary evidence, which could aid the court in arriving at substantial justice.

Consequently, I respectfully urge the PEPC to ignore the aforesaid offensive portion of the written address of APC lawyers. To begin with, the Supreme Court has held that a written address does not take the place of evidence. Curiously, during the trial, the APC lawyers kept on saying that they would adduce legal reasons why they objected to the numerous documents tendered in court. Paradoxically, rather than adduce such reasons in their written address, they were making conjectural ad hominem arguments that appealed to sentiments and emotions. Anyway, cases are not even won in court on the brilliance of a written address but the brilliance of evidence. In other words, no matter how brilliant a written address is, it cannot take the place of evidence.

Therefore, the PEPC should not be deterred by any open or veiled threat contained in any written address. The essence of the legal system is justice. Justice denied is judiciary aborted. Therefore, the PEPC should not be afraid of doing substantial justice in the election petitions before it. "Fiat justicia ruat coelum" (Let justice be done though the heaven fail).

Judges are called good because of their justice. Without justice, it will be impossible to promote societal aims. "Remove Justice," said Saint Augustine, "what are kingdoms but great robberies." For Justice Chukwudifu Oputa (of blessed memory): "Injustice breeds intolerance, violence, and social disorder; in the same way, justice brings along with it the blessings of peace and mutual understanding." Small wonder Cicero praises justice to high heavens by stating that "the brightest of virtues shines above all in justice." So, contrary to the threats of Tinubu's lawyers, justice does not lead to chaos and anarchy in society. Rather, justice, as Justice Oputa stated, breeds blessings and peace.

The so-called Nigerian question revolves around the failure to do justice. If every Nigerian is given his or her due in the scheme of things in Nigeria, there would probably be fewer social discontent and social strife in Nigeria. So, the PEPC should do substantial justice in the cases currently before it. It should not be afraid to do what has not been before in Nigeria. The law is an ass. If, for example, the Petitioners have proved that President Tinubu did not meet the requirements of the Constitution and the Electoral Act, the PEPC should courageously come to that conclusion without any equivocation, no matter whose ox is gored. Nobody is above the law of the land.

The PEPC should be reminded that it is the cynosure of all eyes at the moment. The whole world is looking at the PEPC to do substantial justice in the election petitions before it. Therefore, the PEPC cannot afford to disappoint the whole world. The PEPC should remember that it is accountable to the Nigerian people, not to any political party, let alone any presidential candidate, in terms of its overall performance and in meeting the justice needs of the people in a timely and efficient manner. It must, therefore, interpret the law in a way that fulfills the needs and aspirations of the Nigerian people, as envisioned in sections 13, 14 (1)(2)(a)(b)(c) of the 1999 Constitution. It must not only dispense justice but must also be seen by the anxious public to manifestly dispense justice. This is why Lord Hewart, the then Lord Chief Justice of England, laid down the dictum in the case of Rex v. Sussex Justices, [1924] 1 KB 256, that "it is not merely of some importance but is of fundamental importance that justice should not only be done, but should manifestly and undoubtedly be seen to be done." The essence of the need for justice to be manifestly seen to be done was observed by Master of the Rolls, Lord Denning, in Metropolitan Properties Co (FGC) Ltd v Lannon when he stated: "Justice must be rooted in confidence, and confidence is destroyed when right-minded people go away thinking: 'The judge was biased.'" To date, the public constantly refers to Imo State Governor Hope Uzodinma, who came fourth in the last Imo State Gubernatorial Election, as the "Supreme Court governor" because they feel that the Supreme Court was wrong in imposing him on the people of Imo State.

Therefore, the PEPC must brave all odds and endeavor to do substantial justice in the election petitions before it. Until now, the judgments of the Supreme Court, especially its recent ruling in the high-profile political cases of Ihedioha V Hope Uzodinma, Lawan V Machina, and Godswill Agbabio V Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and others, are understandably attracting strong, passionate, and scathing public criticisms. Members of the public are holding their heads in shame and stating that justice has departed from the Supreme Court, and all that is left in that Court are open robberies. Their hope in the Supreme Court as the bulwark of justice and an unbiased arbiter in the causes of the citizenry, amid the balkanizing influence of corrupt politicians and public figures, rightly or wrongly, seems to be shattered. In a nutshell, the confidence of the public in the Supreme Court as the last hope of the common man has considerably and regrettably waned.

The international community is disappointed that the Nigerian Supreme Court Justices is slavishly adhering to technical legalisms and formalism at the expense of substantial justice. This is why seven members of Nigeria's Supreme Court, including Chief Justice Olukayode, have been issued a visa ban by the United States government following their judgments in the aforementioned cases. While not rationalizing the visa ban because the U.S has no right to dictate to our Supreme Court the manner in which to deliver their judgments, the visa ban speaks volumes about the social stigma and public opprobrium in which judges (and, in fact, members of their respective families) suffer when they deliver unjust and inequitable judgments.

Therefore, the PEPC judges should save themselves and their respective families from excoriating public criticisms and social stigmas associated with delivering unjust and iniquitous court judgments. They should adorn the breastplate of integrity, transparency, discipline, impartiality, and honor in the discharge of their duty to enhance judicial efficacy and efficiency and to bolster public confidence in the Nigerian judiciary.

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