

# CAN orders nationwide Christian protest over killing of Deborah Yakubu Samuel

By **GABRIEL OMONHINMIN**, Religion Editor

Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) has called on all adherents of the faith in the country to embark on a one day peaceful protest

to ask for justice for Deborah Yakubu Samuel, a student of Shehu Shagari College of Education Sokoto who was gruesomely murdered by extremist Muslims.

Mr. Joseph Daramola, CAN's General Secretary,

in a letter dated 14th May, 2022, addressed to All Block Leaders, Zonal Chairmen, States and Local Coordinators, Denominational and Church leader's in the country, said the planned protest is

scheduled to hold on Sunday, May 22, 2022 simultaneously across the country.

He said the occasion should also be used to pray for Deborah's family and friends, for peace and unity of the country, victory for the

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PATRIOTIC VOICE

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# Conspiracy, dark horses theories beset APC ahead of primaries, 2023 elections

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# Conspiracy, dark horses theories beset APC ahead of primaries, 2023 elections

By **TUNDE JOSHUA**,  
Politics Editor, Abuja

Conspiracy theories and talk of dark horses are assailing the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) ahead of its primary poll to pick its presidential candidate for next year's general elections.

Before the commencement of selling of nomination forms, there was an almost clear indication that the presidential candidate of the APC will emerge from the southern part of the country.

The outcome of the party's national convention in which Senator Abdullahi Adamu, a northerner, emerged as National Chairman gave credence to the political calculation that APC's presidential standard bearer must definitely come from the South.

In line with this thinking, aspiring gladiators from the South started signifying intentions either by outright declaration or being projected by supporters.

Among the notable early signifiers were; Bola Ahmed Tinubu, Dave Umahi, Rochas Okorocha, Yahaya Bello and Ben Ayade while names of personalities like Chibuike Rotimi Amaechi, Chris Ngige and Emeka Nwakuiba, started flying as possible contenders.

Some of them pretended by initially denying their interest in the race but were later unveiled by groups or friends buying the N100 million nomination forms for them in what is now a norm in the polity.

As of the time of filing this story, about 27 voluntary or drafted aspirants are in the race for the APC presidential ticket, although some have reportedly withdrawn. Interestingly, they do not all come from different zones of the south alone as expected. Aspirants from the northern part of the country are now in the race.

As questions are being raised as to whether the

APC has lost its conscience over rotational politics, its national chairman, Abdullahi Adamu, sealed the hope of agitators for a southern presidential candidate for the 2023 poll when he declared that the party has not zoned its presidency.

Adamu's statement, no doubt, opened the floodgate of declarations and surprisingly, increase in number of northern aspirants interested in the race.

Some party stakeholders in defence of the new development advanced reasons for the gate being thrown open, saying it gives APC the latitude of selecting the best among those in the race.

This, however, raised a question as to whether APC leaders are tinkering with possibility of finding a consensus candidate ahead of its May 30th presidential primary election.

Should the party be considering consensus arrangement? This question has thrown up other concerns about who decides the 'anointed candidate' and by what consideration?

President Muhammadu Buhari had at any given opportunity assured the party of his intention to ensure that APC has a transparent primary. He said he has no preference among the aspirants while always urging them to up their game of consulting delegates that will vote at the primary.

But with a few latest entrants into the race, suspicion is ripe that there may be a 'dark horse' capable of disrupting the old order. The party is known for springing such surprises. Some have even spoken of "dark horses" being considered.

The APC disappointed bookmakers with the emergence of Adamu as party consensus chairmanship candidate because of the mileage already achieved by former governor of Nasarawa State, Tanko Al-Makura and Senator Sani Musa among other frontline contenders for the position. Buhari was



Adamu

alleged to have had his way.

Should the party be looking towards Buhari's direction for the choice of APC candidate, then there are some aspirants being seen as 'anointed candidates.'

Names associated with Buhari and seen as dark horses include Ogbonnaya Onu, Ibikunle Amosun, Timipre Sylva, Godwin Emefiele, Ahmad Lawan, Goodluck Jonathan and Babagana Zulum who is yet to obtain nomination form.

Both Emeka Nwajuiba and Onu are said to be old associates of Buhari in the defunct Congress for Progressive Change (CPC) but the duo to some extent does not have wide acceptability in the southeast zone which makes it difficult to canvass Igbo presidency through them.

Amosun is believed to be closer to Buhari than most top notchers of APC in the South West. It was believed that he might be a better option to Tinubu should the presidential pendulum swing to the South West.

A dark horse from the South South is Sylva who is believed to be the president's henchman from the geopolitical zone. However, Buhari is said to be more comfortable with Chibuike Rotimi Amaechi who contributed immensely to the president's campaign both in 2015 and 2019 as director-general.

Two personalities from the North East that cannot be ignored are Senate President Lawan and

Borno Governor Zulum.

It is obvious that APC is in search of a credible candidate whose acceptance cuts across and whose clout can withstand the popularity of a northern PDP candidate, possibly Atiku Abubakar.

A party source said there is consideration of a North/South joint ticket with Zulum as the arrowhead and possibly Amaechi or Sylva or Nwajuiba or Onu as running mate.

The theory on the consideration of a northern anointed candidate may be in tune with the idea of elder statesman, Tanko Yakasai, who claimed that some cabals in the presidency with negative missions have been sponsoring some aspirants from the southern part of the country to declare for the 2023 presidency.

He added that some of the aspirants who have purchased the presidential form were sponsored by the cabals.

Yakasai said "the north has always posited jokingly that they are "Cows" but the south is the "Grass" they eat". Is the assertion not true? Is the south not behaving like grass now? When they were to wrest power from Jonathan, the north was so united that Jonathan didn't survive their unity. Look at the south now, they want to wrest power from the north and their disunity is second to none. It's a pity!"

Lawan is believed to have built bridges of political relationships

across geopolitical zones in his 23 years stay in the National Assembly; hence his being drafted into the race. Many senators and members of the House of Representatives have enlisted their support for Lawan's presidency, should the party eventually pick him.

The amendment by the Senate to section 84 (8) of the Electoral Act 2020 last week, it was learnt, might be part of the ploy by the APC to rally votes for the preferred candidate at the primaries.

The amendment was done to allow statutory delegates to participate in political parties' congresses and conventions.

The change in the electoral act would allow them, in addition to delegates elected by various political parties, to vote during congresses and conventions to elect candidates for various offices.

Statutory delegates include councillors, local government chairmen and their deputies, political party chairmen in all the 774 LGAs, state and federal lawmakers, governors and their deputies, president and vice president, political parties' National Working Committee members, state party chairmen and secretaries.

The decision to amend that part was reached on Tuesday by the lawmakers after the Deputy Senate President, Ovie Omo-Agege sponsored the move.

Speaking after the bill was passed, Lawan said the "unintended clause" had to be amended before the commencement of party primaries.

According to Lawan, the House of Representatives led by Rt. Hon. Femi Gbajabamila will also sign the bill before transmitting it to President Muhammadu Buhari for assent.

Lawan added that the electoral act was amended to ensure that no one is denied his rights during political parties' activities.

The Electoral Act which was assented to by President Muhammadu Buhari in February

2022, prevents statutory delegates from taking part in party primaries.

APC aspirants re-strategize as Jonathan, Emefiele quit race

As at closure of returning of duly completed expression of interest and nomination forms of APC last Friday, 25 aspirants stood to be counted to be in the May 30 and 31 presidential primary race.

Names conspicuously missing on the form submission list are, former President Jonathan and CBN Governor Emefiele.

Forms were bought for the duo by different interested persons that wanted them to run, but while Jonathan denied knowledge of the identity of the cattle breeders and nomadic communities, Emefiele thanked rice farmers for their good intention.

While Jonathan left Nigerians in suspense till the end of forms submission as to his intention or otherwise, Emefiele's bid was never in doubt, having taken legal steps to forestall his disqualification by both APC and the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC).

Jonathan's rumoured ambition petered away into thin air but Emefiele's aspiration slumped to heavy pressure from the opposition and other Nigerians leveraging on the provisions of the law on partisanship.

Before the new twist to the APC presidential race, some of the aspirants were apprehensive of the proposed drafting of Jonathan, thinking or believing that he was likely the 'anointed' candidate.

Rumours were spread of an unwritten pact between Buhari and Jonathan as the driving force while others hinged it on presumed scheming by the north to take a short cut back to power after a purported four-year single term by the former PDP president.

The Trumpet gathered that a new order of alignment and re-

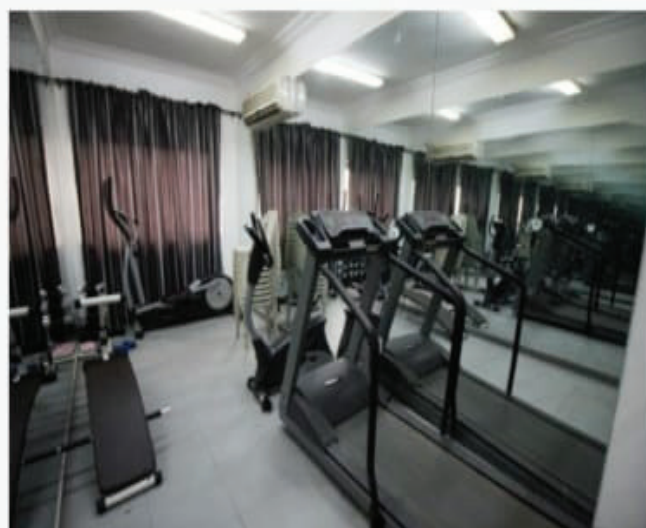
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## Court halts sharing of derivation funds to oil states

By CHARLES ONYEKWERE,  
South-East correspondent

**A** Federal High Court sitting in Abuja has ordered the Accountant General of the Federation to immediately halt the distribution of more than One trillion naira due to oil-producing states pending the determination of the suit before it.

The court, presided over by Justice Ahmed Mohammad, in an interim

injunction held that the distribution of the derivation funds without the indices of the Revenue, Mobilization, Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC) was injurious to the applicant which is Imo State government.

Imo State attorney general and commissioner for Justice, had in a suit No FHC/ABJ/CE/415/2022, against RMAFC and others challenged the distribution of the said funds without unambiguous indices by RMAFC as provided by in

Nigeria's Constitution.

In his submission before the court, counsel to Imo State Government, Chief Olusola Oke argued on the need to protect his client pending the determination of the suit.

After granting the exparte order, Justice Mohammed ordered the imo state to join other oil producing states as respondents to the suit.

He consequently adjointed the matter to June 15, 2022 for hearing of the motion on notice.



Mbam

## Nigerian security architecture needs review, minister affirms

By GABRIEL ELOZINO, Asaba

Minister of Defence, Major-Gen. Bashir Magashi (retd), has called for a review in the operations of the Nigerian security architecture to enable it defeat current challenges facing the country.

Magashi made the call at the 2022 Defence Retreat with the theme "Shaping the Armed Forces of Nigeria for Current and Future Security Challenges" held in Asaba, the Delta State capital.

The minister who was the special guest of honour at the event, said the review has become in view of the Federal Government's huge investment

on military equipment, adding that there was still a lot to be done in spite of the successes recorded so far.

He also called for a review of the armed forces laws to ensure that they were in tandem with prevailing realities.

He said, "The Ministry of Defence will continue to provide administrative support and place premium on defence procurements.

"We look forward to deliberations that will produce implementable solutions to the myriads of security challenges facing the nation."

In his remarks, Delta State Governor, Senator Dr. Ifeanyi

Okowa, called on the military authorities to prioritise the welfare of officers and men of the armed forces to motivate them in the fight against insurgency and other violent crimes in the country.

He said that the armed forces may possess sophisticated weapons but that without a motivated personnel, they would not achieve desired result.

"As we try to evolve ways in tackling multifaceted security challenges in our nation, another matter requiring priority attention is the welfare of our soldiers at the frontlines.

"It is my considered view that we can have all the sophisticated

weaponry and excellent logistics but without motivated and satisfied personnel all our efforts will come to naught.

"It is, therefore, imperative that we place premium on their welfare so that they will discharge their duties with utmost pride and enthusiasm.

"In the same vein, honouring soldiers who die in the battlefield is the most powerful message we can send about serving our country sacrificially.

"It has the potential to ignite the fire of patriotism in our people and become an inspiration for many others to want to wear the uniform with pride and assurance," he said.

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church and for Godly political leaders.

The Archbishop of Sokoto Diocese, Most Reverend Matthew Hassan Kukah, has commended Sokoto State Governor Alhaji Aminu Tambuwa and the security agencies for their prompt response to put the ugly development under control.

A Muslim cleric based in Abuja,

Abu Jabir Abdullah Penabdu, in his reaction to the incident said: "The role of the scholars and government in preventing bloodshed that might result from blasphemy against the Prophet (SAW) is a major task that must be taken seriously. In doing this, government at all levels and scholars must ensure anything or utterance that will lead to bloodshed is avoided at all times.

"We need government at all levels to criminalize blasphemy because of its apparent negative effect on our drive for peaceful coexistence.

"The incessant cases of mob actions across the country over blasphemy could be attributed to the slow nature of our justice system. So government needs to be deliberate in strengthening its justice system so that the masses can have confidence in it.

"The scholars on their part also need to look at a balanced approach on this issue, lest

it escalates and lead to many unfortunate events such as the Deborah's case.

"On sensitive issues like blasphemy, I am of the opinion that government should recognize the voice of our scholars who are known to stand for the truth and are elderly. Their wisdom and experience will help a lot in taking a pragmatic step in this regard.

"When there is speed in justice delivery in matters like blasphemy and punishment meted out appropriately, it will reduce jungle justice and help bring about sanity in matters like this.

"People have over the years taken to jungle justice and this has led to more violence rather than solve the problem. This is the main reason why government needs to be deliberate about the issues that trigger mob actions."

Our Shaykh @DrMSaniR\_Lemo has made known his position on this issue. He stated what the government needs to do and the limit the scholars have in controlling mobs.

He said: "As religious representatives we must strive to take hold of our emotions in moments like this because once we lose our emotional balance we can mislead a lot of people. It is always better to be calm and calculating in our response.

"A sensitive issue as blasphemy against the

Prophet SAW is something that government should take seriously. Only government has the instrument to prevent these repeated cases of blasphemy and mob actions."

Rev. Fr. George Barde of the Catholic Archdiocese of Jos, in his reaction to Deborah's death, said "The problem I have with Christians is that they use their own religion to judge another religion. This explains why they can never understand certain things that happen in this country.

"To be honest a typical Muslim knows that blasphemy carries the sentence of execution. The only issue here is who determines blasphemy? Just anyone?

"Islam as a religion is a comprehensive guide on how to do everything and what to believe in life. "It is very detailed about every day life issues including how you copulate etc. When Yerima Bakura Ahmed Sani of Zamfara introduced Sharia mostly Christians shouted but most of his people saw no problem with it. Eventually most northern states have sharia law today. They like it because it is a direct and fast justice system. When again he decided to marry a young teenager from Egypt people shouted but her parents and his religion permits a minor to be married off.

"Actually a family can kill their own child son or daughter

who perhaps converts to another religion or marries a non-Muslim. It is called honour killing. It is rampant in Pakistan.

"The Atheist Dadiata was kidnapped for blasphemy and till date we don't know what has become of him.

"What happened to Deborah is very infuriating if you don't understand the religious sentiment of an average Muslim. The Qu'ran and hadith of course are his rule of life. No matter what you think and know once it says it then it can be done notwithstanding what you think or feel.

"So many Muslims might be embarrassed and ashamed at what has happened and keeps happening but they know that those people that committed that despicable and horrendous act of murder in the most inexplicable way in this modern world can justify their actions.

"It is difficult for some because they are a minority voice of reason in all of these. Whether it is to abduct and marry a Christian girl by force or demolish a church or revoke land ownership to Christians can be justified. Boko Haram feels more Muslim than all other Muslims and they can justify it.

"I don't blame anyone but those who have accepted responsibility of office in the name of all of us. We have seen this many times in this country. Tell me the outcome of the investigation."

## Conspiracy, dark horses theories beset APC ahead of primaries, 2023 elections

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Former Governor of Abia State and current Senate Chief Whip, Orji Uzor Kalu, is an unrepentant campaigner for Lawan's presidency. He insisted power must be ceded to either the South East or North East, where Lawan comes from.

Those who submitted forms included Osinbajo, Tinubu, Onu, Lawan, Akinwumi Adesina, Amaechi, Godswill Akpabio, Amosun, Okorocho, Tunde Bakare, Ayade, Umahi, Kayode Fayemi and Nwajiuba.

Others are Ken Nnamani, Yahaya Bello, Abubakar Badaru, Ahmad Yerima, Ajayi Borroffice, Uju Kennedy, Nicholas Felix Nwagbo, Dimeji Bankole, Sylva, Ikeobasi Mokelu and Tein Jack - Rich.

A close source in the party hinted that this new development buoyed the confidence the aspirants have in Buhari's pledge not to favour any aspirant but to join hand with party leadership in ensuring a transparent primary.

The source said the Tinubu's campaign which has not done much of consultations in the South South because of the rumoured interest of Aso Rock in either Jonathan or Emefiele, is now ready to traverse the states of the region namely, Bayelsa, Rivers, Edo, Delta, Cross River and Akwa Ibom in the next one week ahead of the primary.

Aside his South West base, Tinubu's campaign train has toured northern zones of West, Central and East.

With Jonathan and Emefiele out of the way, it is believed that most of Tinubu's allies in the South South can now boldly identify and campaign for him.

Likewise, one of the surprise entrants in the race, Lawan may now enjoy the full and open support of his admirers from the South South and other zones.

The Trumpet learnt that lists of ministerial, ambassadorial and board appointments as well as principal officers of a new 10th Senate have already been drawn by Lawan and his loyalists with the expectation that they will work towards his emergence first at the APC primary and later at the election proper.

Former Governor of Abia State and current Senate Chief Whip, Orji Uzor Kalu, is an unrepentant campaigner for Lawan's presidency. He insisted power must be ceded to either the South East or North East, where Lawan comes from.

Kalu in a recent comment said "Lawan is from the North East and has similar sympathy with the South East that is yet to produce a president."

The Chief Whip also said nine APC presidential aspirants are set to step down for the Senate President ahead of the primary.

The Trumpet further learnt that Kalu is clandestinely paving the way for his emergence as Senate President in the next dispensation should Lawan win the presidential election.

However, an aide to a PDP senator from the South West said these are just political permutations as "none of these politicians knows their fate until after the primaries as some of them who bought forms for higher positions already have plan B to fall back on should they fail to realize their ambitions."

He said: "will you be surprised to later learn that a few of these presidential aspirants collected another form to run for other positions should their presidential ambitions fail?"

He specifically said both Lawan and Senate Deputy Leader Ajayi Borroffice collected senatorial forms to return to the Senate if they fail.

Likewise, an unconfirmed source said Governor Bello also obtained forms to contest the Kogi Central senatorial district election.

Niger Delta Affairs minister, Godswill Akpabio, also was said to have collected senatorial forms to return to regain the position he lost in 2019 following his defection from PDP to APC.

Also mentioned is Transportation minister Amaechi who was said to have bought and submitted a senatorial form.



# Envoy lauds USA-Nigeria cultural, educational ties

By **OROWO VICTORIA OJIEH**,  
Foreign Affairs Correspondent

Washington is committed to strengthening the burgeoning United States-Nigeria cultural ties through music, arts, film, cultural heritage and professional and educational

## ABUAD leads in 2022 impact ranking of Nigerian varsities

Afe Babalola University, Ado Ekiti, ABUAD, has emerged the leading university in Nigeria, following the release of the 2022 Times Higher Education Impact Rankings, which was released recently.

Covenant University, Ota and the Premier University, University of Ibadan, came second and third respectively, in the ranking.

The THE Impact Rankings is measured against the SDGs.

Congratulating ABUAD on achieving this rare feat, and other universities that made the ranking, the Executive Secretary of the Nigerian Universities Commission, NUC, Prof. Abubakar Adamu Rasheed, entreated that the NUC should arrive to get many more Nigerian universities in the top 200 in the next few years.

Rasheed said, "By our strategic plan 2022 to 2030, the Nigerian Universities Ranking Advisory Committee, NURAC, will work with all universities in the system to ensure that we are no pushover on the global league table from 2023."

Other universities in the ranking include: University of Lagos, fourth; Landmark University, fifth; Alex Ekwueme Federal University, sixth; Babcock University, seventh; Edo State University, eighth and Lagos State University, ninth.

Reacting to the development, the founder of ABUAD, Aare Afe Babalola, SAN, expressed delight and happiness saying that "the purpose of setting up ABUAD is to prove that individuals can achieve such feat.

He added, "I have finally achieved my life ambition, which is to establish a pace-setting tertiary institutions, that can compete with the best in the global scene. Topping the ranking is an icing on the cake. I am happy ABUAD has achieved this feat and we will ensure that we remain at the top for many years to come."



Prof. Abubakar Adamu

exchanges, according to its ambassador in the African country.

As part of this, U.S. Mission Nigeria has hosted a reception to honour the 15th Annual Headies Music Awards, which will be held for the first time in Atlanta later this year.

United States Ambassador to Nigeria, Mary Beth Leonard commended the growing ties of the two countries in the creative industry while delivering remarks at the event.

She explained that the choice of Atlanta to host the Headies symbolizes the growing relationship between the music industries in the United States and Nigeria and the growing popularity of Nigerian music in the United States.

"This year's Headies awards will highlight the growing U.S.-Nigeria ties and the vast potential of Nigerian musicians as cultural exporters to the African continent and beyond," Ambassador Leonard said.

The Ambassador noted that cultural exchange advances U.S.-Nigeria strategic partnership by forging lasting ties between American and Nigerian artists and shining a spotlight on the vibrant creative community in Nigeria and the United States.

"The U.S. government has long recognized the role of music in diplomacy, with its emphasis on free expression, improvisation, and democratic and collaborative teamwork. Sharing music is one of the best ways to find common ground with people on an exchange program. The appeal of music is truly universal," she added.

In his welcoming remarks, Acting U.S. Consul General Brandon Hudspeth stated that cultural and artistic exchanges are just one way the United States partners with the people and government of Nigeria.

"We continue to explore innovative ways to foster valuable people-to-people connections

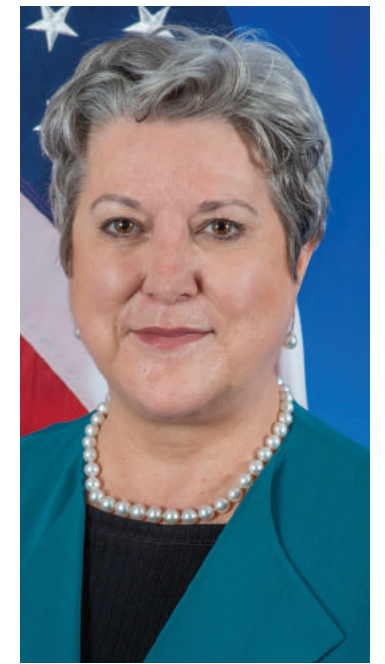
between our two countries," Hudspeth said. "The U.S. Mission is honored to partner with the Headies. This year's Headies Awards will highlight the Nigerian music industry's creativity and growing global reach."

Ayo Animashaun, the executive Producer of the Headies Music Awards, noted that it's the first year the Headies will be held outside Nigeria. He described Atlanta as home to many prominent hip-hop and R&B artists and their record labels.

"The Headies recognizes outstanding achievements in the Nigerian music industry. Our goal is to continue to support the development of talent and nurture innovation in the music industry," Animashaun said.

The Public Affairs Sections of the U.S. Mission in Abuja and Lagos support programs that connect American creatives with their Nigerian counterparts. Through these people-to-people connections,

the U.S. Mission hopes to foster a deeper relationship between the people of Nigeria and the United States.



Mary Beth Leonard

# Innoson close to huge gas find in S'Leone

By **SHARON O. ISAALAH**

Innoson Oil & Gas limited has announced that it is on the verge of discovering a huge deposit of 8.2 trillion cubic feet (TCF) and 234 MMbbl of gas and condensate in its Sierra Leonean basin.

The company's findings were confirmed from a rigorous hydrocarbon exploration campaign it conducted in the Sierra Leonean basin

A statement by Cornel Osigwe, head of Corporate Communications of the company, said that an independent energy consulting firm, Ryder Scott Company, confirmed Innoson Oil & Gas Ltd's findings from a rigorous hydrocarbon exploration campaign it had been conducting in the Sierra Leonean basin since 2020.

"IOG was awarded nine graticular provisional blocks in May 2020," the statement said, adding that the following year, the parliament of Sierra Leone ratified a petroleum exploration



Andrey Sergeev

and production license in favour of IOG as confirmed in a letter of conveyance to IOG in April 2021.

The company disclosed that the said the Sierra Leonean basin has a working petroleum system, corroborated by oil deposits

encountered during previous exploration activities amongst others by Anadarko, Repsol, and Tullow Oil that achieved the Venus B1 discovery and Mercury wells.

Martin Nweke, IOG's administrative director noted that boldness, and the willingness to deploy unconventional technology, constitute foundational propositions that drove the campaign of the industry novice.

The statement noted that with cost, time, and precision quintessential, the IOG exploration team led by Andrey Sergeev, Project Director and Chief Geologist, deployed a robust earth remote sensing (ERS) method for basin reconnaissance.

Innoson said Saturday that a development opportunity is currently being appraised.

Similarly, the company said that asset evaluation, a field development plan, and the setup of a data room are vigorously pursued with the immediate objec-

tive to engage a partner with the financial strength, technological and management competencies to accomplish joint discovery, development, and production.

IOG says it has a 100% working interest on the prospect with a 10% carried, plus an optional 5% paid interest(s) for the state of Sierra Leone. Attractive fiscal and tax regimes by the state of Sierra Leone offer a flexible and robust environment for operations, it added.

Innoson Oil and Gas Ltd is a company under the IVM Innoson Group, a multi-dimensional business organization that has various business interests in automobile manufacturing and assembling, plastic production oil and gas, ICT, wood processing and hospitality.

The oil and gas company located in Uru Umudim, Nnewi, Anambra State was incorporated in 2019 as an expansion of Innoson Petrochemicals Ltd which has been in operation for 10 years.

# Technology sector driving non-oil export agenda

By **SHARON O. ISAALAH**

Nigeria is regarded as Africa's largest ICT market with 82% of the continent's telecoms subscribers and 29% of internet usage. Sub-Saharan Africa is also projected to be the fastest growing region with a compound annual growth rate of 4.6% and an additional subscriber enrollment of over 167 million in the next five years. Nigeria is expected to account for over 55% of this. The NCC estimates that the country has about 76 million subscriptions on broadband (penetration of

40%) and 187 million lines in the voice segment as of May 2021, representing 97.9% teledensity.

The government of Nigeria recognizes ICT as the enabler for developing other critical sectors including education, healthcare, agriculture, and manufacturing. In its drive to diversify the economy from oil and gas, the GON is encouraging partnerships between local ICT companies and foreign investors. To promote these partnerships and grow an entrepreneurial ecosystem in the technology sector, GON has supported creating government- or private-sector led incubator hubs,

youth innovation programs, and science technology parks.

Abuja Technology Village, which serves as an example, received government support to become a destination for research, incubation, development, and commercialization of ICT. Construction has begun at the site, and the government has granted Special Economic Zone status to Abuja Technology Village and other hubs to enable duty-free shipments and elimination of labor issues as a fiscal incentive to investors and entrepreneurs.

Speaking at a 2-day National Conference on Non-oil Export

with the theme, 'Export for Survival: Optimising Nigeria's Non-oil Export Potential', organised by the Nigerian Export Promotion Council (NEPC), Nigeria's Vice President, Professor Yemi Osinbajo said "some of the country's best stories are in the tech sector, with companies valued over \$1billion each and all of these between two recessions."

He said the tech sector is growing so well because there is a very large hand of the regulator upon it and added that "the country must seek to achieve a situation where regulators see themselves as facilitators of business."



# Kukah suspends Catholic mass in Sokoto

By **OROWO VICTORIA OJIEH**

Catholic Mass in Sokoto metropolis has been suspended until the curfew imposed by the state government is lifted.

The 24-hour curfew was imposed by the state government after protests rocked parts of Sokoto city over the detention of two persons linked to the awful killing of Deborah Samuel.

Hundreds of placard-carrying Muslim youths began a protest in Sokoto on Saturday demanding the release of the two suspects.

The suspension of mass by Catholic Diocese of Sokoto Bishop Mathew Kukah was contained in a statement signed by the Director, Social Communications, Rev. Fr. Christopher Omotosho.

Omotosho stated that Kukah's residence was not attacked though protesting hoodlums vandalised and torched two of the parishes.

The statement reads: "The Sokoto State Government has declared 24-hour curfew to help stem the ongoing protests embarked upon by Muslim youths in the state capital today.

"During the protest, groups of youths led by some adults in the background attacked the Holy Family Catholic Cathedral at Bello Way, destroying church glass windows, those of the Bishop Lawton Secretariat were

also attacked and a community bus parked within the premises vandalised.

"St. Kevin's Catholic Church Gidan Dere, Eastern By-pass, was also attacked and partly burnt; windows of the new hospital complex under construction, in the same premises were

shattered.

"They were promptly dispersed by a team of Mobile policemen before they could do further damage.

"The hoodlums also attacked the Bakhita Centre located along Aliyu Jodi Road and burnt down a bus within the premises."

Bishop Kukah has called for calm and applauded Governor Aminu Tambuwal for acting promptly by declaring the curfew.

He also commended the security forces for quickly rising to the occasion to prevent further damages to the church's facilities,

adding that no life was lost.

"All Masses in the Sokoto metropolis have been suspended until the curfew is lifted," the statement added.

The Bishop appealed to Christians to remain law-abiding and pray for the return of normalcy in Sokoto.

## NPA threatens to revoke port concession pacts of operators over facilities decay

•World Bank, IFC, Afri-Exim I, others express interest

By **ADAKU WALTER**

Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) has threatened to revoke the concession agreement of five terminal operators over purported collapse of infrastructures.

It said currently all affected terminal operators at the nation's seaports are under close watch to ensure they keep to all commitments and obligations as agreed under the Port Concession Agreement.

The Federal Government had in 2005-2006, entered into concession agreement for several bulk, breakbulk and container terminals, partly on a competitive basis (13 terminals) and partly through negotiation (12 terminals).

Addressing maritime reporters on Saturday, the Managing Director of NPA, Mohammed Bello-koko, disclosed that the affected terminal operators have been granted six-month grace to

enable them meet up with the condition for renewal, before their concession agreement will be renewed permanently.

The NPA boss said the introduction of the Infrastructure Concession Regulatory Commission (ICRC) Act meant that renewal of concession agreement for terminal operators is no longer done the way it used to be done.

"Tin-Can Island Port, we all know what is happening there. The port is practically collapsing. We need to focus our budget towards the rehabilitation of those quay walls at the Tin-Can port. We have taken a holistic review of decaying infrastructures at our ports and have decided that it is very important that we rehabilitate Tin-Can and Apapa port.

"What we have done is to start talking to lending agencies, even though we don't intend to lend. We are asking the terminal opera-



Mohammed Bello Koko

tors, you people have operated these port terminals for about 10 to 15 years; how much money are you going to invest in this port terminals? We are asking some of them that their leases have expired, how much will they be investing in the ports?"

"For us to renew these concession agreements that have expired, about five of them, we need to have categorical commitment from the affected terminal operators on the development of these port terminals. If the terminal operators cannot give us such commitment, then we either give the terminals to someone else or go and borrow money to rehabilitate those ports," he said.

According to Bello-Koko, if money is borrowed to rehabilitate those ports, then what the terminal operators are paying will have to change as the rates will have to go up.

He said of this is not done, these terminal operators will keep managing those places and the ports will keep collapsing.

He noted that because of the terminal operators financial interest, they don't want NPA

to re-construct the affected port terminals because that will mean stopping them from operating.

"We have had interest from the World Bank, IFC, Afri-Exim Bank and others. Surprisingly, it was the World Bank that actually gave money to the NPA to construct part of Apapa port so many years ago. The World Bank has come again to tell us that if we need funding, they will give it to us," he stated.

Bello-koko while explaining the process of renewal of the port concession agreement, said the ICRC Act introduction meant that the process of renewal can no longer be done the way it used to be done.

"At the point of expiration of any concession agreement, the then Legal Agreement says that the terminal operators can apply for renewal and we will renew. It was after the concession agreement that the ICRC Act came onboard. The ICRC Act requires that there should be a new owner, a new bid and so on and so forth. So you can see there is conflict.

"Again, the Minister also said that the port terminals are in their worst state; asking what is the plan of the terminal operators to invest more. Also, the NPA asked the terminal operators about their development plans for the port terminals," he noted.

"The affected terminal operators have been given temporary extension of six months. If today, we revoke the current concession agreement and bring new people onboard, the new bidders will naturally pay the NPA far higher than what the current terminal operators are paying. We know this, but we are not yet saying that. What we are saying is that let us sit on the table and create a concession agreement that is fair. We need an agreement that holds the terminal operators responsible for their actions," Bello-Koko added.

## Why Nigeria needs me, by Hayatudeen

By **ISAAC OLAMIKAN BENIN** City

Alhaji Mohammed Hayatudeen, who is gunning for the Presidency in 2023 on the platform of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), has promised to lift the



Alhaji Mohammed Hayatudeen

fortunes of the country from the pit it has been dumped into what is obtainable in highly successful economies of the world.

He made the pledge when he came on a consultation visit to national delegates of the opposition party from Edo State in preparation for the national primaries/convention slated for 28th and 29th May.

A respected player in the country's corporate sector, Hayatudeen described the PDP as the largest political party in Africa which accommodates ventilation of ideas from all members.

He asserted that presently the country is so divided that brethren are fighting against brethren "to the point that our common heritage has been

completely destroyed and shred into pieces."

Going forward he stated that access to good living which is taken for granted in other climes is not applicable to Nigeria despite the human and natural resources that we are blessed with.

He promised that if elected as President next year he will immediately engage in finding a lasting solution to insecurity that is a major challenge at the moment.

Dr. Hayatudeen stressed that he has garnered enough experience in his long years of experience in the corporate that will stand him in good stead to handle with ease all the problems that Nigeria is facing.

## Police begin medical screening of applicants for recruitment

By **PAUL MICHAEL**, Defence Editor, Abuja

Nigeria Police Force (NPF) has announced the commencement of medical screening for applicants of its constables recruitment across the country.

This was confirmed by the Public Relationship Officers of Delta and Zamfara Police Commands in press statements.

According to DSP Edefe Bright of Delta Command, the exercise would hold from Tuesday 17th

May to Monday 23rd May 2022.

He added that the venue shall be Magnus Eweka Police Cottage Hospital, plot 15 Dennis Osadebey Avenue, GRA Benin city, Edo State. Adding that the time shall be between 0800hrs to 1500hrs daily

He said, "Delta State Police Command wishes to inform members of the public, particularly indigenes of Delta State who were successful in the recently conducted Computer based test (CBT) which took place on 20th April 2022 at WEST GATE CBT, Asaba in the ongoing 2021

Police recruitment exercise.

"That the next stage of the exercise which is the medical screening for successful candidates is slated to hold from Tuesday 17th May to Monday 23rd May 2022."

SP Mohammed Shehu of the Zamfara Command said that the Medical screening exercise is scheduled to commence from 17th May to 31st May, 2022.

He said, "Similarly, the centre of the medical screening will be at the Zone 10 Police Headquarters, Sokoto.

"All applicants are to appear at the screening venue in their clean white T-shirts and shorts with the following mandatory basic requirements: National Identity Number (NIN); Original and duplicate copies of credentials - O' Level Result(s), Certificate of Origin and Birth Certificate/Declaration of Age - neatly arranged in two white flat files with recent passport photographs attached; Printout of application submission confirmation page and duly completed Guarantor's form.



## Fear of epidemic mounts as heaps of refuse litter P'Harcourt streets

By CHRIS EZEONOH, Port Harcourt

Residents of Port Harcourt, Rivers State capital, are living in fear of out-break of an epidemic following heaps of refuse that litter the nooks and crannies of what was formerly known as 'Garden City.'

When *The Trumpet* visited some major markets within the state capital where foodstuff and other consumables are sold, heaps of refuse were seen competing for space with where the traders keep their wares.

At the Town market in Borikiri, Port Harcourt Local Government Area, a foodstuff dealer, Mr. Martins Nduaguba, told *The Trumpet* that despite the toll they pay to the authorities of Port Harcourt City Local Government, the council could not provide commensurate services to keep the environment clean for the daily activities in the market.

"My brother this is where you see us. What can we do? It is the duty of government to provide a good environment for businesses and for life. A place where people buy what they eat is not supposed to be left in this condition," he lamented.

A lady who came to the

market to buy some food stuff expressed disgust at the general poor sanitary condition in the market and the state as a whole. She lamented that since Governor Wike declared intention to contest the presidential election in 2023, governance "took a flight" in the state. The lady advised people who come to buy things like fresh meat, fish, tomatoes, vegetables and other consumables to ensure proper washing and cooking to escape contacting some "deadly" infections.

Other places visited like the Old Aba Road, Rumuomasi, Rumuokoro, Oil Mill Market, Slaughter, etc, the story is the same as the city of Port Harcourt once prided as the "Garden City" of Nigeria is fast becoming the opposite with serious health implications.

The general outrage the situation has provoked had attracted the attention of the opposition All Progressives Congress (APC) in the state. A chieftain of the party and former Publicity Secretary of the defunct New Peoples Democratic Party (nPDP), Chief Chukwuemeka Eze, in his usual blistering attacks on the Wike led administration, had urged

the governor to abandon his pursuit of presidential ticket of PDP and return to Port Harcourt to fix up things. Eze said Wike should "bundle himself back to Port Harcourt and concentrate on evacuating the humongous waste that now adorn major highways and streets in Port Harcourt, turning the once Garden City and pride of Nigeria to Garbage City."

The ex-nPDP Spokesman feared that residents of Port Harcourt may be endangered species given the horrible environmental situation in the city which "in all honesty calls for a serious health emergency."

He said "the mountainous heap of dirt and pollutants have fouled the air and turned the once serene city into a garbage city" and called on Wike to channel the energy he uses in displaying "crass ignorance and flamboyant idiocy" to clear the wastes that line up on major roads and streets. The city once prided for her serenity and greenery has been reduced to a ground for waste disposal."

The situation may not have gotten this bad if the authorities saddled with the responsibility of waste disposal had been up to



Gov. Wike

their game, *The Trumpet* gathered.

The Ministry of Environment in the state is currently without a serving commissioner. Since the last man who superintended over the ministry was sacked by Governor Wike, new one has not been appointed, *Trumpet* further gathered.

## Parties in Deeper Life School sex scandal settle for peace

By ISAAC JOB, UYO

Parties in the sex scandal have resolved to settle the lingering court case between parents involved and management of Deeper Life High School, Akwa Ibom State.

Speaking in Uyo Akwa State capital on Sunday during the reconciliation between parents of the allegedly abused student identified as Don Davies and management of Deeper Life High School, the Lead Defence Council for the school, Barrister Taiwo Olati (SAN), said the judge who initiated the reconciliation had visited the school before both parties agreed to make peace.

"The Judge sought consent of the parties and a consent judgement was delivered because the parents and the school realized that students in the matter are the future of the society and there was need to follow the path of peace."

The Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN) appreciated parents of the allegedly abused boy for their determination to settle the matter out of court. He said the peace deal which was struck without financial cost to the school management and appreciated the parties for understanding the principle of peace.

He explained that it was necessary to put away conflict and negative publicity attracted by the incident and advised the school to put those things behind and forge ahead in the task of building responsible citizens for the future.

The mother of the alleged victim in the sex scandal, Mrs Deborah Archibong, said she had lost eight children in the past and did not take incident for granted when it concerns her only child. Deborah, who admitted that Deeper Life was the church she attended from childhood, stated that peace has reigned between her family and Church at last.

Her words: "Today, peace has reigned between Don Davies family and Deeper Life at large. God is awesome. Thank you very much. I have every reason to glorify God because some people's children went to school and never came back. I thank God that my son is alive."

However, Counsel to the applicant Barrister Sampson Awuche, appreciated all parties for accepting peace and ended the litigation.

The school authority presented a parting gift to Don Davies and wished him well in his educational career.

## Okowa urges security agencies, local population collaboration

### •Calls for better welfare for military, others

By PAUL MICHAEL, Defence Editor, Abuja

To end the spate of insecurity in the country, Governor of Delta State, Dr. Ifeanyi Okowa, has proposed a stronger collaboration between security agencies and the local population. According to him, there is need for strategic engagement by security agencies, particularly the military and civil population.

Okowa made the proposal at the round-off of a four-day defence retreat held at Asaba the state capital city.

Speaking at the retreat tagged 'Asaba 2022', the governor added that such synergy would build trust and make Nigerians to truly work together in securing the nation.

He further stressed that security was not limited to the military, the police or other security agencies, but included civilians since they also had roles to play.

"I believe that it is well with this nation and that a strong collaboration between our security agencies and the local population would continue to help us achieve greater peace in this nation," he said.

While commending military officers and men for the great job that they had been doing for the nation, Okowa lauded the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), Gen Lucky Irabor, for holding the defence retreat in Asaba.

He said, "First, we thank God for a very successful defence retreat in Asaba, Delta State and I want to use this opportunity

to again, register our pleasure that the CDS brought this retreat down home to Asaba.

"There is no doubt that God has made it possible for us to have relatively peaceful state and the fact that we are able to attract this retreat to Asaba is in itself, a testament to the fact that the state is peaceful.

"In Delta State, we have been working very closely with security agencies and because of very high level of cooperation and the commitment of the officers working very closely with the civilian populace, we have been able to achieve relative peace.

"And, I am grateful to all the security officers that helped us to maintain relative peace in this state and we pray that God will continue to help us to achieve

lasting peace, not only in Delta but in our nation, Nigeria.

"I believe that this kind of retreat is the best retreat; it is something that should be hosted often in this nation.

"Because it gives room for people to truly share ideas and I think that that is what you have been doing in Delta State in the last four days.

"If we spend more time to interact with ourselves, we can truly better equip ourselves on how best to ensure peace in our nation and how to secure both our borders and to ensure that we are able to maintain peace within the country.

"In spite of all that we do, there is a lot that still needs to be done in terms of equipping our security agencies and providing the needed logistics at the appropriate time for them to be able to tackle the security challenges in the country."

The governor also called for better welfare for security personnel, saying that Nigeria must do everything possible to encourage security officers and men, especially as it concerned their welfare.

He noted that men out there working for all in the society, deserved some level of comfort.

"I believe that they (security officers and men) would also work harder if they are able to take care of their families back home.

"Because when there are pressures from home, it becomes very difficult for any officer to be able to put in his or her best in the duty he or she is called



Gov. Ifeanyi Okowa

upon to do.

"So, I hope that both at the national and sub-national levels, those of us in government would continue to do the best we can to truly encourage our officers and men in the course of their duties," he said.

Earlier in his remarks, Irabor thanked the governor for the very elaborate arrangements put in place by the state government to host the military officers, adding that they had a brainstorming session at the retreat.

He said that the objectives of the defence retreat were achieved, adding that it afforded them the opportunity to look at a broad range of military activities in a bid to ensuring that security was strengthened within the country.

"It was a time that we looked at a broad range of military activities all in a bid to ensuring that we strengthen the disposition of security within the nation.

"And, seeing how best we could ensure that every man or woman, boy or girl and of course, visitors to the Nigerian space, lives out their dreams and aspirations.

"I like to assure, that going forward, there would be indeed, a heightened state of activities within the armed forces; greater sense of interaction with other security agencies and other stakeholders.

"So, that together, the aggregate of our interaction will be for enhanced security of the nation.

"I know that Asaba 2022 will indeed, remain a pillar as we go forward to achieving these set goals," Irabor said.



## Group lauds Soludo for visiting Kanu in detention

By CHARLES ONYEKWERE,  
South-East Correspondent

An organization, Igbo Youths for Positive Change, has hailed Anambra State Governor, Prof. Chukwuma Soludo's visit to detained leader of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), Nnamdi Kanu.

The group described it as a great move aimed at entrenching peace and bringing back the desired security in Anambra and the entire South-East region.

The National President of the group, Chinedu Obigwe, in a statement on Sunday, said Soludo truly has a burning desire to bring peace and security back to the South-East. Obigwe said the governor's visit will ensure two things: the release

of Kanu from detention and putting an end to the insecurity in Anambra and South-East at large.

Soludo had visited Kanu at the DSS custody on Friday, saying that it was part of his wider consultations with critical stakeholders in search of lasting peace and security in the South-East. Writing on his Facebook wall, the governor said, "He was in very high spirits and we had quality and frank discussion in a very convivial atmosphere.

He expressed sadness over what he described as 'sacrilegious killings' of innocent persons, kidnappings and all forms of criminalities, including the brutal enforcement of the senseless 'sit at home' perpetuated by sundry groups, claiming to be acting for or on behalf of IPOB.

"He assured that if the opportunity arises, he will be glad to personally broadcast to his followers to maintain the peace.

"Together, we shall restore peace, security and prosperity in Anambra and the South-East."

Obigwe said the governor deserves to be appreciated and commended for his bold steps at ensuring that peace returns to the region.

He said, "We are proud of our support for Soludo and we know that other of his supporters are proud of him. If you see someone that has a burning desire to entrench peace and security in his state you will know. He truly has a burning desire to bring peace and security in his state and the South-East."



Gov Chukwuma Soludo

## Fire guts private school in Imo

By ATHAN AGBAKWURU, Owerri

A major fire outbreak that occurred at the weekend has gutted a popular private school located at Eziala Umuohiagu in Ngor Okpala LGA of Imo State; near Sam Mbakwe International Cargo Airport, destroying property worth over N18million.

The fire incident which began around 11pm that fateful night lasted for over 02hours and completely destroyed the block housing the library, computer unit and parts of the general hall of the Solid Foundation Schools.

When our correspondent visited the scene Sunday morning, the proprietress of the torched school, Lolo Ngozi Uju Madu was seen supervising some of her family members using water to put out the fire in areas where smoke was still noticed while clearing the debris.

Narrating her ordeal, the proprietress told The Trumpet that the inferno started late night and her attention was drawn to it by neighbours who ran to her home to alert her family of the unfortunate incident.

She disclosed that youths of Umuohiagu Community and other people who rushed to the scene in their numbers made frantic efforts to quench the raging flames for hours before they were able to put it under control adding that their time intervention saved the classrooms for all sections, administrative blocks and other nearby structures from being affected.

Lolo Uju Madu revealed that no fewer than 50 computer sets and accessories, laptops, tables, chairs, ceiling fans, assorted books, book shelves, countless electrical and electronics gadgets and the entire building was razed down from roof to foundation by the inferno.

Although she could not immediately ascertain the cause of the inferno, she stated that the midnight fire was strange as there was no electricity as at the time it started as to suspect electrical fault but thanked God immensely that no life was lost in the incident

"I don't want to suspect anything or anybody for this incident rather I entrust everything into God's hands because He knows all and the best. It was a heavy loss I can't easily count now," she said.

## Pastor for trial over alleged swindling of UK-based woman

By CHARLES ONYEKWERE,  
South-East Correspondent

An Enugu High Court has directed the police to arraign the General Overseer, City of Jesus International Ministry (COJIM), Pastor Christopher Orji for alleged fraud.

Hon. Justice Okey Anike, of the Agbani High Court, dismissed an application brought by the Pastor seeking to stop the police from investigating allegations against him by a United Kingdom based woman, Dr Anyaegbunam A. In the matter with Suit No: HAGB/ 50M/ 2021, the pastor sought the court to enforce his fundamental rights by stopping the police from investigating him on allegations brought to the police by the woman, who alleged that the applicant obtained several gifts and donation from her in the name of his church using misrepresentation of facts, fraud, deceit and undue influence. When the 5th respondent who is based overseas returned to Nigeria, she decided to visit the said man of God, where she received the shock of her life, as she realized that she has

been swindled in the name of God. It was maintained that the woman only realized that all the videos, and information she was being fed while abroad about the said church and its non-existent charity home, were all stage managed. Regrettably, when the said man of God realized that the bubble has burst, as the woman came into Nigeria for a burial, and actually came to visit him, he was so shocked that he refused to see her (the 5th respondent) – his benefactor who supposedly has 'donated' about N29,000,000:00 (Twenty nine million naira) both in cash transfer, and even a new Sienna Car to the supposed man of God, so as to help in charity work.

Realizing that the woman (5th respondent) left their makeshift shanty, in utter disappointment and very disgusted, the said applicant started using all sorts of gimmicks to reach the applicant including threat to her life. Subsequently, the woman made a demand to the man of God, and requested

for the return of all her supposed donations including her computers, laptops and Sienna which were obtained by false pretense, deceit, fraud and misrepresentation of facts to her. This demand did not go down well with the said Pastor, who conspired with his cabals to report Dr. Anyaegbunam to Okija Shrine, and all sorts of threat and invitation where meted to her; including telling her that she will die in 15days time.

Consequently, she reported to the Nigerian Police Force who invited the said Pastor Christopher Orji and obtained his statement. Rather than resolving the issue, Pastor Christopher Orji went to High Court Agbani judicial Division, to institute Suit No: HAGB/ 50M/2021 praying the court to enforce his fundamental rights, by restraining police from investigating his matter, which he claims is a civil matter, and for police to be stopped from inviting him. The woman - victim - who is seeking to get her materials back from the Pastor then engaged

the services of a fiery Enugu Lawyer, Chief O.A.U. Onyema, of Akpaagu Chambers.

In its judgement the court noted, that while it is not the duty of the police to arrest the applicant in connection with returning the goods which is a civil matter between Pastor - member - relationship, that the Police should charge/arraign the Pastor, if there are prima facie evidence of crime, as the police alluded in their counter affidavit; and as such serve him arraignment Notice to appear in court for criminal proceeding. Counsel to the applicant Chief O.A.U. Onyema, whose brief was held in court by one Sarah Okonkwo Esq, maintained that they have long filed and served the said Pastor civil claims at the Enugu State High Court in suit no E/217/2022 for civil remedies and for return of the materials including the Sienna car, and that due applications has been filed for the entire materials to be brought under the courts custody pending the determination of the substantive suit.

## Police nab suspected spy drone pilot at cleric's home

By CHARLES ONYEKWERE,  
South-East correspondent

Police personnel have nabbed a suspected spying drone pilot, Michael Ali, filming a cleric's home in Alor Unor, Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State.

The suspect, from Aguijeje in Igbo-Eze North Local Government Area of Enugu State, upon interrogation, claimed that he was filming the cleric's home for a documentary, stressing

that he was working on Nsukka landscape. When asked why he chose to stay in the bush to control his drone, he explained to newsmen that he was learning how to fly it, regretting that it was a mistake to have focused his equipment on the cleric's home and church building.

However, the cleric and pastor of Highway to Grace Assembly, Reverend Chikammadu Eze, said he was shocked to see a drone flying around his compound and on top of his church building.

Gripped with fear, the cleric said he monitored it only to discover that the suspect, Ali, hid in a bush close to his house from where he controlled the drone.

He said that he alerted his household who joined him to ensure that the suspect did not escape until Police arrived the scene and arrested him, adding that he instructed his household not to brutalize him before the arrival of police personnel.

"Immediately I walked out of my bedroom, I was surprised to

hear the sound of drone camera hovering around my house and church building. I looked around and could not find the pilot. After some minutes, the operator started recalling the drone and I followed the direction only to see the operator (Ali) hiding in a nearby bush close to my church compound. That is how I caught the operator (Ali) and immediately called police from Nsukka Area Command," he said.

The founder commended the

police for their quick response as well as for arresting the suspect and taking him to their station. Eze vowed to sue Ali to court because he alleged the suspect had evil intention against his family and the church.

"If Ali has no evil intention as he is claiming now that he was doing video documentry, why didn't he inform me before taking pictures of my church, family as well as my personal picture with his drone," he queried.





Prof. Owasanoye

## Youths vital in anti-graft fight, says ICPC

BY PAUL MICHAEL, ABUJA

Chairman of the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC), Professor Bolaji Owasanoye (SAN), has lauded the collaboration between it and the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) in sensitising youths on the advantages of shunning corruption.

He made this known at the launch of Community Development Service (CDS) Activities for 2022 and the NYSC Director General's Award ceremony which took place in Abuja recently, stressing that they play pivotal roles in the fight against corruption.

The event themed "Harnessing the Gains

of Community Development Service for the Socio-Economic Development of Rural Communities", highlighted the achievements of NYSC CDS groups across the nation and also recognised outstanding CDS Groups.

Professor Owasanoye, who was represented by ICPC Board Member, Dr Louis S. Mandama, stated that the collaboration between ICPC and NYSC has been positive and further strengthened under the tenure of the current DG of NYSC, Major General Shuaibu Ibrahim.

The Chairman also explained the 3 phases of collaboration which include anti-corruption orientation camp lectures across the country; establishment of anti-corruption CDS groups; and execution of practical activities which

fall under the umbrella of fighting corruption and promoting integrity.

More so, he stated that ICPC sensitises over 300,000 corps members annually with the hope that they would be front row advocates for good governance, nation-building and integrity.

In his words, "the youth of this great nation would have imbibed zero tolerance for corruption by the time they assume the mantle of leadership and positions of trust as public officials and private operatives".

The ICPC boss congratulated the DG NYSC for the launch of CDS activities and expressed his desire that the partnership will outlive everyone in the interest of the nation and humanity.

Earlier in his welcome address, the DG NYSC, Major General Shuaibu Ibrahim, expressed delight with the numerous collaborations that had aided the objectives of youth service in striving to make the country better.

According to him, "there is no gainsaying the fact that nation building is a cooperative enterprise for which all and sundry must play a role."

He concluded by encouraging a deeper relationship with collaborators - including ICPC - to ensure an improved impact on communities nationwide.

## SERAP drags Buhari to court over N1.48 trillion refinery maintenance

BY PAUL MICHAEL, ABUJA

Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP) has filed a lawsuit against President Muhammadu Buhari "over his failure to probe allegations that over N1.48 trillion reportedly spent on maintaining the country's four refineries between 2015 and 2020 may have been stolen, mismanaged or diverted into private pockets."

The government reportedly spent N10.23 billion in June 2020 on three refineries that processed zero crude. Also in 2021, the government approved \$1.5 billion (about N600 billion) to repair the Port Harcourt refinery. Despite the huge spending, the refineries are still not working while fuel scarcity persists.

In the suit number FHC/L/CS/806/2022 filed last week at the Federal High Court, Lagos, SERAP is seeking "an order of mandamus to direct and compel President Buhari to investigate the spending on Nigeria's refineries, and alleged mismanagement of public funds budgeted for maintaining the refineries since 1999."

SERAP is also seeking "an order of mandamus to compel President Buhari to ensure the prosecution of anyone suspected to be responsible for the importation and distribution of dirty fuel into Nigeria, and to identify and ensure access to justice and effective remedies to affected victims."

According to the organisation, "It is in the public interest to ensure justice and accountability for alleged corruption and mismanagement in the oil sector, which has resulted in the importation and distribution of dirty fuel and protracted fuel scarcity in the country."

"Nigerian Constitution 1999 [as amended], and international standards impose clear obligations on the Buhari administration to take effective accountability measures to



Buhari

weed out, expose and punish allegations of corruption in the oil sector, and to ensure effective remedies for victims.

"Ensuring justice and accountability in the spending of public funds on refineries would improve the availability of petrol and the enjoyment by Nigerians of their right to natural wealth and resources.

"Impunity for alleged corruption in the oil sector has contributed to the importation and distribution of bad fuel, violating the human rights of many users, including to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment.

"The Buhari administration has legal obligations under Section 15(5) of the Nigerian Constitution to abolish all corrupt practices and abuse of power, and article 26 of the UN Convention against Corruption to ensure effective prosecution of allegations of corruption.

"Alleged corruption and mismanagement in the oil sector and the importation and distribution of dirty fuel have continued to deprive Nigerians of economic opportunities, subjecting

them to cruel and degrading treatment."

SERAP is also seeking "an order of mandamus to direct and compel President Buhari to instruct appropriate anti-corruption agencies to jointly track and monitor the spending of public funds to rehabilitate, operate, and maintain Nigeria's refineries."

Joined in the suit as Respondent is the Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Mr Abubakar Malami, SAN.

The suit filed on behalf of SERAP by its lawyers, Kolawole Oluwadare and Ms Adelanke Aremo, reads in part: "Nigeria has made legally binding commitments under the UN Convention against Corruption to ensure accountability in the management of public resources. These commitments ought to be fully upheld and respected.

"Directing and compelling President Buhari to probe allegations of corruption and mismanagement of the money meant to repair the country's refineries would advance the rights of victims of corruption to restitution, compensation and guarantee of non-repetition.

"Combating the corruption epidemic in the oil sector would alleviate poverty, improve access of Nigerians to basic public goods and services, and enhance the ability of the government to meet its human rights and anti-corruption obligations.

"Despite the country's enormous oil wealth, ordinary Nigerians have derived very little benefit from their own natural wealth and resources, primarily because of widespread grand corruption, and the impunity of perpetrators.

"High-ranking public officials, including officers of the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited suspected of complicity in the allegations of corruption and mismanagement in the oil sector, and the importation and distribution of adulterated fuel have continued to enjoy impunity.

## How Jang, others diverted Plateau State's MSMEs funds, by witness

By PAUL MICHAEL, ABUJA

A prosecution witness 13, PW13, in the trial of former Governor Jonah David Jang and a former cashier in the Office of the Secretary to the State Government (OSSG), Yusuf Pam, has told a High Court that the former allegedly diverted funds meant for the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Plateau.

The witness, Mr Musa Olashuko, an Assistant Director in charge of Development with the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), told Justice C.L Dabup that funds meant for artisans, small holder farmers, market women and entrepreneurs were diverted into the account of the Plateau State government and its agencies.

He said, "We made an enquiry on the regular flow of funds between the credited account communicated to us by the state government and the Plateau State Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency (PLASMEDAN)'s account, and we noticed that funds were diverted to accounts related to the state government and its agencies and that no disbursement was made through the initial beneficiaries, i.e. the SME's (Artisans, traders, small holder farmers, entrepreneurs and market women.), where about 60% of the funds was supposed to go to."

Olashuko further revealed that when CBN noticed the inappropriateness of the deal, a recommendation was made that the Issuance of Irrevocable Payment Standing Order (ISPO) issued by the state government be taken over in order to recover the funds.

While cross-examining the witness, counsel for the first defendant, E.G Pajwok, a Senior Advocate of Nigeria, asked the witness whether, in the course of their investigation in Jos, they went to the PLASMEDAN office or contact any of the officials.

He responded that the CBN later found out that "PLASMEDAN was just a paper creation. No building, no officials. The creation was not supported with any structural or operational framework".

## EFCC secures conviction of five fraudsters

By PAUL MICHAEL, ABUJA

Benin Zonal Command of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) has secured the conviction of five internet fraudsters before Justice Efe Ikponmwonba of Edo State High Court, Benin City.

The convicts, according to a statement by the EFCC, include Amogie Julius, Omogbon Friday Harry, Osaze Okoro, Lucky Tegiri and Omokhua Destiny.

They were arraigned on one count charge each for fraudulent impersonation and obtaining by false pretence. They had sometimes between 2020 to 2022, impersonated foreign nationals with intent to defraud unsuspecting members of the public of their hard earned money.

The charge against Amogie Julius reads: "that you, Amogie Julius between 2020 to 2022 at Wisdom Street, off Egba Road, Benin City, Edo State within the jurisdiction of this Honourable Court did fraudulently personate the identity of Gloria Hernandez Ortiz, with intent to obtain money from her and thereby committed an offence contrary to Section 484 of the criminal Code Law Cap 48 Laws of Bendel State of Nigeria (as applicable in Edo state) 1976".

The charge against Lucky Tegiri reads: "that you Lucky Tegiri on or about 22nd February 2022 in Benin City, Edo State within the jurisdiction of this Honourable Court did with intent to defraud falsely represented yourself to be one Mark Linda by creating two fraudulent email accounts, with user

names dcluck75@gmail.com and company, giveaway7610@gmail.com, by sending text messages to some unsuspecting Chinese ladies, so as to obtain money, a representation which you knew is false and thereby committed an offence contrary to and punishable under Section 484 of the Criminal Code Law Cap 48 Laws of Bendel State of Nigeria (as applicable in Edo State) 1976."

All the defendants pleaded guilty to the charge preferred against them, thereby prompting the prosecution counsel, A.A. Ozigbu and KY Bello, to prayed the court to convict and sentence them accordingly.

However, counsel to the defendants prayed the court to temper justice with mercy as the defendants have become remorseful for their actions.



# Danger looms in Lagos as women, children sleep on railway tracks

By **BENJAMIN OMOIKE**, METRO EDITOR/LAGOS BUREAU CHIEF

For some women and their children, the narrow and standard gauge railway tracks in Agege have become bedrooms.

A visit to the location showed some of the women and children just waking up and getting set for the day's business, while some were still sleeping on mattresses spread on the railway track.

Enquiries by our correspondent revealed that these mothers and their children go to bed on the rail tracks as late as 11pm when they are sure that the last Iddo to Ijoko train has passed.

Also, they wake up from 'bed' before 7am, just before the first Ijoko to Iddo train passes through Agege.

Speaking to our Correspondent, one of the mothers explained that it is very expensive to get an accommodation in Agege, giving the nature of their means of livelihood.

According to the nursing mother, who

identified herself as Rukayat, "Getting an accommodation in Agege is very expensive, so we sleep on the railway track. Everybody has their own space, just enough to accommodate them with their children.

"We know the schedule of the trains (Lagos-Ibadan and Ijoko-Iddo), so we go to bed when the last train has already passed, and we wake up first thing in the morning just before the first train passes towards Ikeja.

"We survive through begging for alms and there is no way we can raise enough fund to get an accommodation here in Agege."

When asked where the father of the children sleep and work, Rukayat explained that he works in a factory along Oba-Akran in Ikeja and occasionally sleeps with them on the rail track.

"My husband works in a factory in Ikeja and occasionally comes here to sleep. Most times, he hangs out with friends and pass the night in market stalls or shops," Rukayat said.



## 'Baba Kekere' set to serve fourth Alaafin

By **BENJAMIN OMOIKE**

The Trumpet has learnt that one Morenikeji Lasisi, popularly called Baba Kekere, is about to serve the fourth Alaafin of Oyo.

He has served three Alaafins.

His duty is to run errands for the king he served.

Lasisi served Oba Adeniran Adeyemi II, father of Lamidi, who recently joined his ancestors between 1945 - 1956.

He also served Oba Gbadesin Ladigbolu II between 1956 - 1968.

The third was Oba Lamidi Adeyemi III, between 1970 - 2022.

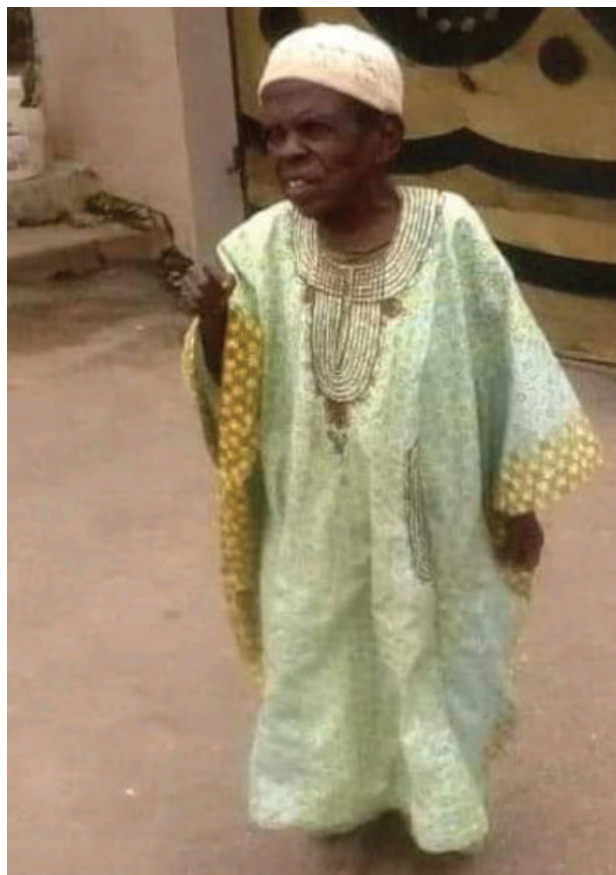
According to information made available to this medium, Late Lamidi Adeyemi was given birth to while Lasisi was serving his father and he used to be the one to take Lamidi to school.

Baba Kekere walks briskly in and around the Alaafin of Oyo's palace. He is very popular not only because of his diminutive figure but because of his humility and he does not

get angry. Some call him a man with repository of knowledge of the Palace, for he has the history of by heart and some call him the Palace library or an archive.

He is called Baba

Kekere possibly because of his height. His age is unknown because his birth was not recorded but it is assumed that he should be over 100 years now. His real name is Morenikeji Lasisi.



## Masquerade, two others die in auto crash

By **BENJAMIN OMOIKE**

In spite of myths surrounding 'spiritual powers' around masquerades in Lagos and other southwest states, a truck has been confirmed to have crushed one.

Two other persons, a driver, and his motor boy, were also crushed and confirmed dead during the auto crash, which could have resulted in clashes among some residents but for the intervention of policemen from Area D Command in Lagos.

The tragedy that claimed the lives of the masquerade and the two others was said to have occurred along the Isolo Road around 2:30pm.

It was learnt that the truck, which was loaded with plywood, crushed the driver, as well as his motor-boy and masquerade, while on a display around the market axis on Isolo Road.

Following the tragedy, the angry traditionalists gathered and attempted to lynch the driver, setting the truck ablaze to express their anger over

the development.

The driver of the ill-fated truck reportedly fled to the nearby Area D Command, while the mob stormed the police station to demand that he should be handed over to them for jungle justice.

The request was, however, turned down by the police and it resulted in chaos at the station, as vehicles were making detours from the area with the expressway blocked by the traditionalists.

With the crowd was becoming unruly and

riotous, the police fired teargas cannisters to disperse the crowd, causing protesters and other road users to scamper to safety.

The sound of the teargas and effect on their eyes forced many residents to run, covering their nostrils and mouths with their hands to further minimise the effect of the teargas.

The Lagos State Police Command spokesman, SP Benjamin Hundeyin, confirmed the incident but added that the situation had been brought under control.





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# Inducing party delegates: Implications for democracy

The Nigerian polity is agog as we approach the 2023 general elections. The party primaries will start soon. Inducing delegates with mouth-watering gifts is the order of the day. Career politicians, technocrats, businessmen, retired civil servants, pastors, and people from different backgrounds are committed to resuscitating their ebbing personalities by plunging headlong into the murky waters of Nigerian politics. This period has witnessed an obscene display of money never seen in Nigerian politics since the country embraced democracy.

Stupendous display of money to horrifying levels is the new normal in Nigerian politics. It is more confounding because the country is in the throes of poverty, economic hardship, infrastructural decay, and a collapse of the educational and health sectors. The race to occupy various political positions seems to be a clarion call for many political participants to bare their fangs, obliterate all rules of financial propriety, and indulge in inordinate disgrace of the local currency. The two leading political parties, APC and PDP pegged the cost of their presidential nomination forms at 100 million naira and 40 million naira respectively. In the manner that politicians are buying the forms, one would think that they pick money on the roads. Nigerians are bewildered by this gaudy display of wealth.

Money is indeed a huge factor in politics, but the lack of control and regulations towards its display in Nigeria now calls for great concern. The greatest worry is that these politicians have commenced the inducement of party delegates in different guises. Many political office aspirants have started sharing expensive cars, huge sums of money, and other items to influence party

delegates. The grave implication of this reckless practice on the polity is that party delegates can be swayed or influenced to choose the wrong candidate who has the biggest war chest. Certainly, not all political office aspirants are competent and qualified for the offices they are seeking to occupy. At the juncture where Nigeria has found itself, it is in the interest of everyone that genuine, compassionate, and competent persons emerge as leaders. If these competent persons do not have the financial wherewithal to share among delegates, it follows that the country will inevitably find itself in the hands of incompetent opportunists who will further drag it down the tunnel. Given the number of many aspirants for the post

of president, there is a deep concern in many quarters that money will ultimately decide who will emerge as flag bearers for the two leading political parties.

All the party delegates across the country have a huge role to play to save Nigeria. This is the time for these party delegates to answer the call to deliver Nigeria from the stranglehold of political predators. Let the party delegates demonstrate a rare sense of integrity, patriotism, and uprightness by refusing to yield to any form of inducement from politicians. While one can argue that it is difficult to turn away from money in a country like Nigeria, it is also possible not to succumb to moral blackmail. It is also possible for the delegates, those who lack the will and moral fortitude to reject inducement, to collect money but vote for a candidate they know can deliver Nigeria from poverty.

The current poverty situation in Nigeria is affecting everyone irrespective of region, ethnicity, religion, and diverse persuasions. Bearing this in mind, party delegates should, for the sake of posterity and the millions of people in the country, jettison inducement. Politicians who indulge in the despicable act of inducement understand money and other material items used for inducement are never returned. Therefore, if after inducing party delegates they lose, they will not have any moral or legal justification to ask for a return of material items given or a refund of various sums of money.

Party delegates should stand up and be counted now. They should be bold to save Nigeria. If there are still persons of integrity in this country, if there are those with the milk of integrity flowing in their veins, if party delegates can be found among such people, then there is no better time for them to uphold the tenets of sincerity and uprightness than now.



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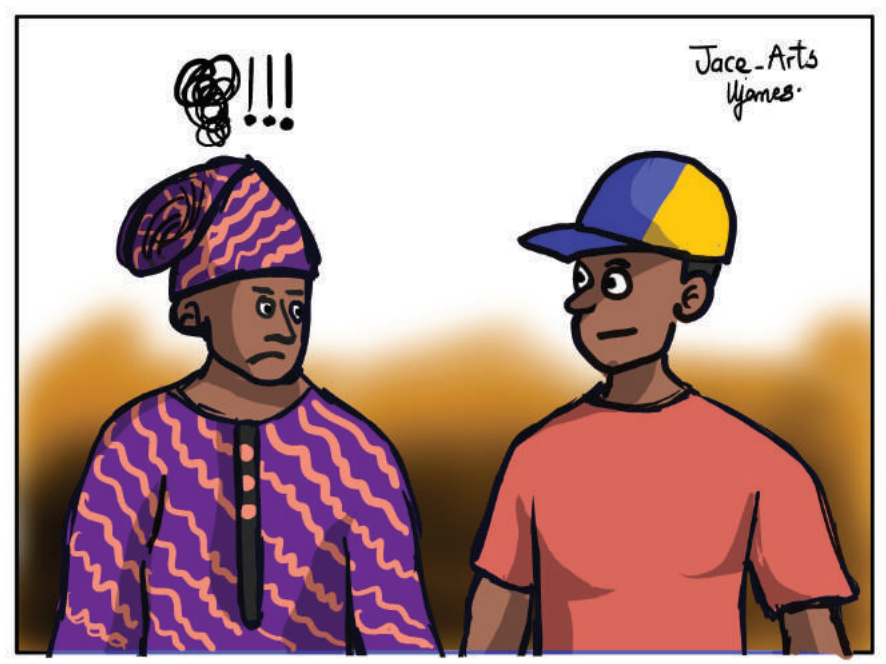
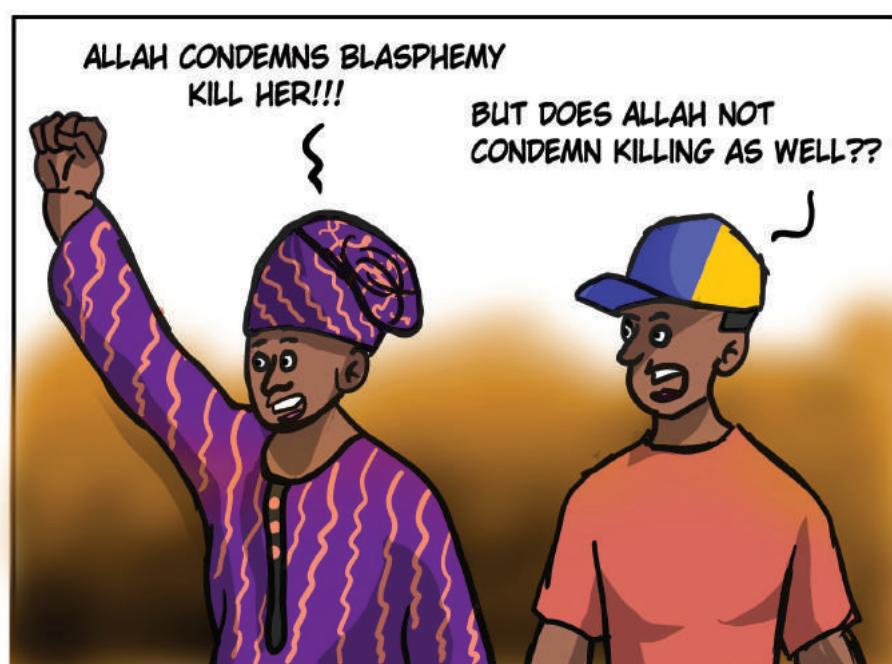
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## The killing of Citizen Deborah, our own Malala

Last week the video of a body set ablaze by a mob went viral on social media. It was preceded by the still picture of a lady dressed in red lying on the ground in a grotesque manner. Life was no longer in her. She had succumbed to savagery and jungle justice by overzealous morons who accused her, found her guilty and executed in a most barbarous manner reminiscent of the Stone Age. She died a most horrendous death in the hands of her class or school mates. She was stoned to death by students at a College of Education. The barbarous act was carried out by some teachers of tomorrow. What kind of educators would these teachers be in future? Do they recognize Nigeria? Do they realise that Nigeria is not an Islamic Republic, that is, supposing an Islamic Republic will tolerate such a murder? How are the killers better than bandits or terrorists currently plaguing the northern part of Nigeria? We have allowed a monster out of religion, fighting wars for God who obviously did not ask us to fight for Him!

It turned out that it was the body of Citizen Deborah Yakubu, a student at Shehu Shagari College of Education Wamako Sokoto, who had been murdered because, according to her traducers, she blasphemed the name of Prophet Mohammed. In a class WhatsApp platform, she had complained that the platform had been inundated with religious posts and that the platform should be used for what it was created for. Her traducers claimed she made some uncomplimentary remarks about Prophet Mohammed. Later a sweaty nincompoop, with the dark looks of a savage, released a video in which he claimed gleefully that he was the one that killed the lady in question. This in 21st century Nigeria?

This is unacceptable. It is indicative of the deep division between world view of extremists in the north and the rest of the country.

The ugly news has not been carried by cable network stations. If it happened in Afghanistan or the Middle East, her death would be on the airwaves. Fortunately, and appropriately, the Sultan of Sokoto, leader of Muslims in the country, has spoken against the murder. But he should not stop there. We expect him to personally get involved and ensure that the killer is paraded before the press as a common criminal. Except he does this, we would see the condemnation as mere lip service. The irrepressible Father Matthew Kukah has also condemned the murder and called on the government to fish out the perpetrators for the right punishment, stating that "the only obligation that is owed her immediate family, her fellow students and the school authorities is the assurance that those who are guilty of this inhuman act, no matter the provocation, are punished according to the laws of the land". Writer Gimba Kakanda wrote on a Facebook post: the barbarism that transpired in Sokoto today has no basis in Islam, and it indicts us all. This culture prevails because past self-appointed punishers of blasphemers got away with their crimes. Whether in Islamic jurisprudence or our secular law, there's no place for jungle justice, no matter how any offended mob feels'.

But the misguided zealots don't feel any remorse. Some posts which followed the gleeful announcement on social media are instructive. The killer whose photograph is prominently displayed on social media boasted: 'I killed her. I burnt her. You can see the matchbox I used in setting her ablaze'. One Muhammed Mode Gagi wrote,

just as Bilyaminu Ladan, Sirajo Isiya and Balkisu Umar Ibrahim that: 'You have done well, may God increase the status of Prophet Muhammed (s.a.w). Sufiyenu Yabo then concluded it: 'Praise be to God. May Allah reward you with paradise! Which God? My question is if the head of Muslims has called it murder, from which book did the young Muslim boys and girls learn that to inflict jungle justice on a woman who supposedly blasphemed is carrying out a divine injunction?

I must state from the outset that no one has the right to insult another religion, either directly or indirectly. Christianity and Islam are the two major religions in Nigeria. Adherents must their boundaries. To insult Prophet Mohammed is unacceptable. But it also unacceptable for an individual to take the life of another citizen in the name of religion. This is how religious wars start. Pause for a minute and imagine what it would be if Christians in Sokoto decide to take the life of a Muslim youth in vengeance. Or if in the Christian-dominated south a Christian family carries out a reprisal attack. An endless cycle will start, the end of which no one can predict. Therefore, the Sokoto State government must rise to the occasion and bring the culprit to book.

There had been other killings in the name of religion in the past. In 1995, one Gideon Akaluka was decapitated by Muslim fanatics for blasphemy. Nothing came of it in the form of punishment on her killers. In June 2016 Mrs. Bridget Agbaheme was brutally murdered by suspected Islamic extremists in Kofar Wambai market Kano state, over allegations that she blasphemed the name of the Holy Prophet. Except the government takes a decisive action against such criminals, more of such acts will occur in future.

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The killing is most incendiary. It is provocative. It could trigger off sectarian war. As we know, religious wars are difficult to contain. Christian Association of Nigeria should get actively involved to ensure that Deborah does not die in vain. Justice must be pursued to serve as a deterrent. The NBA and allied associations must rise to the occasion. Ebun-Olu Adegboruwa (SAN) as urged NBA-SPIDEL not to hold any conference in the State where a Nigerian citizen has been brutally murdered and burnt to death...we should make a statement to the government by cancelling the Conference and hold it in a neighbouring State in the North'.

What has given Pakistani activist Malala Yousafzai an international stature? It is the attack on her person by religious extremists because of her stance on education. Deborah is our own Malala, and she should be accorded that status. Her death in the hands of ignorant and defiant zealots diminishes all of us. I expect the President, the State governor and high-ranking state officials from the North to condemn the killing and order the arrest of the killer. The College management should suspend the suspect pending full investigation. There will be no love lost between

the killer squad leader and other Christian members of the class and indeed all other Christian students in the College. Some acts, small as they are, help to define a nation. Except the government punishes the killer, the government would inadvertently be promoting the emerging narrative that there is no 'One Nigeria'!

POSTSCRIPT: After submitting the essay, further developments made me return to my submissions. The culprits were appropriately arrested, leading to mass protests. There have been riots in Sokoto, with houses and properties belonging to non-Muslims being targeted. Alhaji Atiku has withdrawn his condemnation of the killing of Citizen Deborah. He has lost votes, thereby. The State government has imposed a 24hour curfew. But soldiers ought to be drafted to quell the riots that have led to destruction of lives and property. This is no way to grow a federal republic! Government must stand firm! Mr. President must condemn the arsonists.

•Professor Hope O. Eghagha (BA, Jos; MA; PhD, Lagos) MNAL, Department of English, Faculty of Arts University of Lagos, Akoka Lagos Nigeria

## Deborah Samuel Yakubu: Using Hate for Parochial Unity

upon the former's macrostructure. The Nigerian system is such that we have among in the Fulani north what Henri Bergson called the 'close society.' Whereas many other parts of the country are progressively heading towards being an 'open society.' An open society is an accommodating society that receives and permeates. It tends to both absorb and create spaces for various interests within a given community. This society can be likened to the sulphur that is diverse. The closed society is like mercury. Always bound, even when stretched. It repels. It protects its own. Both societies require a common thread to run across their boundaries to enable them exist harmoniously. This is like the salt of the wider community. It is supposed to unify society, and make it stronger and better. We may say sweeter and edible!

Bertrand Russell, the British analytical philosopher, pointed out that Karl Marx built his philosophy on the construct of 'hate' between two classes. He created the notion of a lower class that is being punished and oppressed by a higher class of people. This higher class must be set aside if the lower, dehumanised, alienated, exploited, and pauperised class must gain happiness and freedom. Using the construct of hate to unify a set of people is commonplace in the history of political philosophy. We find it in religion. Christians are made to see Satan, the devil and Lucifer as the one who makes life miserable for believers. They are therefore made to hate the devil and all that he represents. There is no problem with this for the devil is

truly satanic. The problem however only emerges if the believer fails to see their leaders as added devils when they themselves become a Satan in their affairs. This is a difficult thing for followers to know given the fact that the painter of the devil on the canvass before the followers are the leaders. They own the paint, brush and canvass. They can therefore ensure that only their approved devil is painted on the canvass for others to see.

Our early fathers that led the fight against colonial rule and colonialism in Nigeria created a Satan in the persons of the British. Nigerians were told happiness, progress and development will come their way as soon as the British are removed. Today, we know better. Not even neo-colonialism can be flagged as responsible for our failures. The military has been set aside, even though many of them quickly transformed into becoming politicians and fake democrats. Given this, there is a need for those in charge to continuously put Satan before us as objects we must hate and fight against.

Having assessed what transpired, and the consequent murder of Deborah, one cannot but come to a conclusion that hate has been used to unify one set of people against another. This hate has been built into these people for a long time. It is now intrinsic in their being. Many points bring us to this viewpoint.

For the sake of argument, let's assume that Deborah blasphemed. How did the ordinary trader from southern Nigeria in Sokoto become collaterally guilty such that they would deserve to be terrorised? How come all Christians become objects

of mob attack? Why would those people who have done a holy act be afraid to submit themselves to the authorities for further explanations? The killers of Deborah are persons simply enamoured by some higher forces that have failed them but use a created Satan to veil their thinking.

Christianity is not the problem. Islam is not the problem. Being Igbo, Yoruba, Fulani, Tiv, Isoko, Ijaw, Igbira or Hausa are not our problems. Our problems lie in the hate narrative put into us by those who are our real problems. They have ruled over us since independence and have brought into ruins. Their governance is a plague upon us. They have killed all that is good in governance. Because we are all black-skin in colour with them, they cannot use our being black as an 'object for hate' on the canvass on which they paint the Satan we should hate. They use religion. They use the north-south divide. They use our ethnic divide. We all must strive to repossess the canvass, the paint and the brush. Then we shall draw the real Satan that we must hate for a politically correct mob attack. This is the Satan that has used their greed and corruption to underdevelop and impoverished Nigerians. They have their hearts and souls in European countries but make us fight and kill ourselves here. But the day is nigh when many will realise that a criminal has made them wrongly kill a saint.

Good night Deborah!  
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Like a hurricane, the murder of Deborah Samuel Yakubu has swept all discourses out of the Nigerian social-political space. No one reads of the 100 million naira intention forms politicians are acquiring. ASUU's problems are put aside. Not even Putin's Russian destruction of cities in Ukraine is now before us. Many are perplexed that persons undergoing learning and education; young Nigerians of impressionable age could go this length of religious intolerance and atavism. The actions of those who willfully killed Deborah without trial – mob killing and lynching – have been described as shocking, barbaric, distressful, etc. Why should would-be teachers go this inhuman way? Some psychology may help us find answers. Who helped murderers into such actions if not persons like Prof I. A. Maqari, who is reported to have said "it should be known to everyone that we Muslims have some redlines beyond which must not be crossed. The dignity of the Prophet (PBUH) is at the forefront of the redlines. If our grievances are not properly addressed, then we should not be criticized for addressing them." This is shameful

for a man of high position.

People must learn to respect and tolerate the cultures, norms, mores and values of others. This is mutual. It is a two-way thing. Nevertheless, if you open your community to outsiders; if you desire to live with others and aspire to build a common bigger community for yourselves then you should be able to take a bend and accept some forms of infelicities from one another. Dialogue and education are required in multiculturalism. You stoop to conquer. One thing is sure to happen in the post-Deborah episodes! Regrets. The culprit may see themselves as heroes of their faith, but the stains of the blood of Deborah will always be visualised by them through the mirror of their existence in this part of eternity. They are more of a product of an education system that is broader than the National Certificate of Education programme they have chosen to undertake at the ShehuShagari College of Education, Sokoto.

All education is carried out within, first, an informal system; and second, a formal system. The latter is a microsystem that is foisted



**'Ayu working for Atiku'**By **TUNDE JOSHUA**, ABUJA

Criticism continue to dog last week's decision of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) to abandon zoning in picking its presidential candidate for the 2023 polls.

A member of the PDP in Edo State, Kassim Afegbua accused the leadership of the party of playing games with the zoning decision.

He said the party's National Working Committee (NWC) threw open the presidential ticket for pecuniary reasons.

In a statement titled "PDP and the Zoning Formula", Afegbua said the national chairman's first major assignment of following the dictates of the party constitution has ended up in abysmal failure.

"How do you jettison your constitutional provisions because you want to crookedly plot the ticket of the party for Alhaji Atiku Abubakar," he asked.

Afegbua categorically stated that "it is obvious that Dr. Ayu is pretentiously working for Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, and in the process trying to upturn the zoning arrangement.

"How can you abandon your constitutional provision as if it was an unnecessary provision, simply because you want Alhaji Atiku Abubakar to contest the election against the run of play?

"For jettisoning zoning, PDP will pay dearly for it some day. It may not be now, but certainly later. Give us the wrong candidate, and you all will see how Nigerians will return APC back to power. An injustice of this nature cannot endure the test of time."

He said, if by political accident, the party succeed in their plot to feature a Northern candidate, adding that Iyorchia Ayu should be prepared to resign his position immediately without further delay. "He cannot eat his cake and have it, or take the Southern part of the country for granted," he added.

He vowed that all those Southern PDP Governors who are part of the plot to foist a Northern candidate on the party will soon be exposed to all.

Speaking further, he said that "how do you reconcile the hypocrisy in asking the Central Bank of Nigeria Governor Godwin Emefiele to resign because you feel he didn't respect the CBN Act, when you have also jettisoned the party's constitution; such double standard posturing.

"Nigeria democracy has a long way to go because people are never honest and altruistic. Due to corruption, some will even forget their names or where they come from."

The Trumpet recalls that at the 96th meeting of its National Executive Committee (NEC) Wednesday the party "noted the recommendation of the Zoning Committee that in the interest of justice and fair play, the Party should take decision on Zoning timeously so as to prevent complications to the process.

"NEC ratified the conduct of the Presidential Primary (Special National Convention) to elect our Party's Presidential Candidate on Saturday May 28 to Sunday May 29, 2022 in Abuja

"NEC approved the setting up of the National Convention Organizing Committee and approved the appointment of His Excellency, Senator David Mark as Chairman, His Excellency Rt. Hon. Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi as Deputy Chairman and His Excellency Barr. Ibrahim Shema as Secretary.

**Emefiele can't continue as CBN governor, PDP insists**By **TUNDE JOSHUA**, POLITICS EDITOR, ABUJA

Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) has reiterated that Dr. Godwin Emefiele cannot continue as Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), demanding his immediate resignation.

The party's demand is hinged on a comment attributed to Emefiele that he is "having a lot of fun." PDP described as "reckless, irresponsible and unpardonable" actions which are in violation of the CBN Act 2007 and the Public Service Rules.

"This comment by Emefiele who also stated that Nigerians can go ahead and 'have heart attack' over the widespread anxiety in the country arising from his involvement in partisan politics, is provocative and enough to trigger a nation-wide restiveness, pitch Nigerians against the CBN, shut down the economy and destabilize the polity," said the party in a statement by its spokesman, Debo Ologunagba on Saturday.

The PDP asserted that despite Emefiele's alleged withdrawal from the Presidential race due to the pressure, he still cannot continue as CBN Governor having become partisan as a card-carrying member of the All Progressives Congress (APC).

The PDP said: "the CBN which keeps all sensitive materials for elections cannot be trusted with the custody of such materials with a biased Mr. Emefiele at the helm of affairs.

"It was despicable to watch Mr. Emefiele on Thursday May 12, 2022 at the Presidency, brazenly and derisively spit at the concerns of millions of Nigerians, the International Community and the Corporate World when he said of Nigerians, "let them have heart attack. It's good to have heart attack. I am having a lot of fun."

"Mr. Emefiele has crossed the red lines; he is provoking and daring Nigerians to do their worse especially in the face of huge allegations and revelations of massive looting, manipulations and doctoring of the books in the CBN under his watch as recently exposed in a leaked phone conversation and for which he ought to

be behind bars.

"His unthinking and insensitive comment further establishes that he is not a fit and proper person to hold public office and continue the coordination of our national commonwealth as the CBN Governor, having exposed his lack of the required professionalism, code of conduct and regard for public concerns on issues that affect our economy and the electoral process.

"It also underpins the thoughtlessness and endemic corruption in the Buhari-led APC government and further shows the decadence in the CBN under Mr. Emefiele.

"The fact that President Muhammadu Buhari has failed to decisively rebuke and sack Mr. Emefiele only confirms that impunity is an official policy of the APC administration.

"Emefiele should know that Nigerians

will never have heart attack because of APC's impunity. Instead, they are now, more than ever before, ready and resolute to confront the situation and rescue our nation from the stranglehold of the APC.

"Now that he has been confirmed to be a card-carrying member of the APC, Mr. Emefiele must forthwith steer clear of the CBN as he cannot continue as the Governor. Anything short of that amounts to testing the will of the people and the PDP will not hesitate to call out our members and teeming supporters across the country to, within the ambit of the law, defend and protect the integrity of the CBN and our electoral process."

The party warned that Emefiele should be ready for investigation, prosecution and possible conviction for the atrocities allegedly superintended by him as the CBN Governor.



Emefiele

**Ebonyi community tackles Umahi's aide over alleged fake endorsement**By **CHARLES ONYEKWERE**, ABAKALIKI

Ezzagu in Ishielu local government area of Ebonyi has tackled the Special Assistant to Governor David Umahi, Chief Emmanuel Igwe over his claim that stakeholders and Leaders of Thought from the community have endorsed some aspirants for the 2023 general election in the state.



Umahi

In a statement issued by the National President of Ezzagu Zone General Assembly, Mr Tobias Offia and National Secretary, Mr Michael Mbaba, the people of the community noted that they were never consulted or reached before taking the resolutions.

Titled "2023: Ezzagu Community Has Not Spoken", the people said it was ridiculous and vote of incompetence that Umahi's aide lacked the capacity to convene stakeholders meeting in Ezzagu community.

"How can a political appointee lie to a government he is serving? Who does he want to impress by claiming he held meeting with stakeholders when he did not? It's deceitful and misleading to the government he is serving because his presentation is fake".

"We are aware that the plotters are merely seeking attention of the state government either to secure their jobs or justify any gratification for that purpose. However, the exercise is a total nullity and failure as the people of old Ezzagu zone were never consulted or reached

before taking the resolutions".

"It is interesting to note that the said meeting was never held as the Special Assistant to the Ebonyi State Governor on Lands and Survey, Chief Emmanuel Igwe only conscripted two other persons to endorse the communique".

"The resolutions are not only absurd but a mockery which should not be taken seriously, as it was a handiwork of a self serving individual who wanted to be noticed".

"It is also ridiculous and vote of incompetence that Chief Emmanuel Igwe lacks the capacity to convene stakeholders meeting in Ezzagu community which made him and his cohorts to hide in one hotel at Abakaliki to draft out resolutions intended to represent the decision of the entire community when he has no electoral value in Ezzagu Community", the people said.

The Ezzagu community directed that all the endorsements should be cancelled and nullified until the people of the zone review the political situation in the State before taking a definite stand.



# Why I didn't sign APC withdrawal form - Andoaaka

Mr. Michael Kasse Aondoakaa, Senior Advocate of Nigeria, is a former Attorney-General of the Federation and Minister of Justice under the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) administration between July 2007 and February 2010 before defecting to the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) on which platform he seeks to contest the 2023 governorship election in Benue State. After returning his nomination forms, he tells journalists his mission in the race and why he did not sign the APC mandatory withdrawal form. Politics Editor, TUNDE JOSHUA brings excerpts.

**What's your vision?**

First of all to make Benue a very peaceful state with its neighbours. My dream is to make sure that all citizens living in Benue have equal rights, opportunities to do their activities. Those who are doing business, farming, and farming is not restricted to only crops farming, all forms of farming, they should do their business harmoniously. That is number one. Once we secure the state effectively and we also ensure that people live in peace with one another without saying this man is Hausa, this one is Igbo this one is Tiv, then we can make progress in the state. You know agriculture requires peace, if you don't have peace, you can't do it. Then, my first task is to have a peaceful Benue so that people will hear Benue as peace loving people, there will not be so much shouting. We will try to manage our crisis and minimize communal clashes amongst the people. Then, the next thing is to aggressively transform potentials we have in agriculture and try to make sure that we export agriculture. Our agricultural produce will be exported. We produce literally everything but because we have not been able to harness our potentials in terms of exporting agriculture. We have not been able to do that. So, if we achieve that, it will contribute to agricultural development of the nation. Our dream is to feed the country.

*Your party included in the forms for each aspirant, a letter of withdrawal meant to be signed by all. As a lawyer, what does this letter portend and did you sign it and if not, why?*

Unfortunately, I did not sign and I sought clearance. The implication is a two way traffic. If you sign that agreement now and you win election and the opponent come to know that you signed the agreement, I can bet you, your elec-



Andoaaka

tion will be invalidated. If you sign an agreement that you have withdrawn from the race, assuming you win the election, you participated in the general election, the opposition party will file an action that you did not partake in the election and when that form is subpoenaed and produced, it stands before the law that you have withdrawn from the election. So you can not be part of it. So, I think what the leadership of the party intended is to have that withdrawal in the case at the time of primaries people want to withdraw in compliance with the Electoral

Act, they just fill in there and a Commissioner for Oaths will endorse it. It can not be intended that you withdraw before you participate, it looks absurd because if you win the election, the election will be invalid.

**What will you do to improve the security situation in Benue State?**

Benue is not the only one with insecurity. Insecurity is all over the country. The insecurity started during our time when I was in the office. Because of the collapse of the government in Libya, people moved

with small weapons down to South Sahara, down to our region. And most of them who were in the Libya Army were blacks. So, after Gaddafi was overthrown, the new government and you know that there was no strong government in Libya and there was kind of persecution and most of the soldiers ran with light weapons and they came in. The insecurity is an external aggression that is spreading within the country but it is something that after some years it will go. Because we had the great wild wild west in America that it was so frightening that people thought America will tear but what happened? It dissolved (and finished). We will overcome it and that is why I will not expect insecurity to be something a politician will use against others. There are many valid things to use. You don't talk security on the pages of newspaper and you also don't shout security. It is something that governors should join hands with the federal government to find a solution. It is a delicate issue. It is something that started during our time and we were not loud about it. We had cooperation from the governors that time. I was the Attorney General, we have issues and we were resolving them. I don't know why others make news out of it. Because if you say it is only Benue, it is not correct. You have happenings in Plateau, Katsina, Zamfara. The next set of governors in the north, which I hope to be part of, should come together and form a strong security buffer to protect our northern part of the country because the influx of these criminals is coming more to us. It is not something you will say I am APC, I am PDP, then you start looking for a tribe to blame. In Benue if you say Fulani are killing us what will Masari say in Kastina? They are Fulani but the attacks are more vicious. It is something that goes beyond accusations amongst ourselves and we should be able to solve the problem once and for all.

# Yahaya Bello started presidential journey years back, says Hafsat

By TUNDE JOSHUA, ABUJA

Director-General of the Governor Yahaya Bello presidential campaign organization, Hafsat Abiola Costello, has revealed that her principal has been preparing to venture into Nigeria's presidential race a few years back.

Costello who led a team of the campaign organisation to submit both expression of interest and nomination forms on behalf of Bello at the APC collation centre in Abuja said Bello did not just started the dream and journey to

restore hope to the people of Nigeria this year.

In view of this, she said Governor Bello as an aspirant cannot be intimidated by the calibre of personalities in the APC presidential race because he is well prepared and equipped to restore to the Nigerian people progress through prosperity.

The Director General said "and we want to encourage all Nigerians to keep faith.



Bello

Governor Yahaya Bello did not start this effort this month. He did not start this effort this year. He started many years ago. He has convinced the whole country and he has signaled to the Nigerian people that his capacity is competence.

"He has built his credibility within



Hafsat

the party. And he has built allies across religion, across zones, across every divide that we have in this great country. So he has nothing to fear from other candidates, especially from candidates that are just appearing now.

"We see that some candidates are going

around, meeting with delegates. He has been doing that religiously for years. So we are fully confident in the movement that he represents.

"As you see I'm not here by myself. I'm with many members of his team. And we have because we're so proud. We're so tired of Nigerians complaining and we're so proud to give Nigerians something great to look forward to.

"We have no reservations whatsoever about this great candidate. We have no reservations about his competency. We have no reservations about his qualifications from his first day in office. As governor of Kogi state. He started working to unify a state that was polarized. He started working to bring security to a state that had insecurity.

"He started working to diversify the economy and to restore sanity to the civil service system. This is all what he will do as president and we look forward to all the Nigerian people welcoming him as the candidate come June 1 2022".



## NCC alerts all to new ways hackers unlock, steal vehicles, android apps

By SHARON O. ISAALAH, Head, Science, Technology and Health Desk

Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) has alerted telecom consumers and members of the public to an ongoing cyber-vulnerability that allows a nearby hacker to unlock vehicles, start their engines wirelessly and make away with them.

It said that the fact that car remotes are categorized short range devices that make use of radio frequency (RF) to lock and unlock cars informed the need for the Commission to alert the general public on this danger, where hackers take advantage to unlock and start a compromised car.

According to the latest advisory released by the Computer Security Incident Response Team (CSIRT), the Cybersecurity Centre for the telecom sector established by the NCC, the vulnerability is a Man-in-the-Middle (MitM) attack or, more specifically, a replay attack, in which an attacker intercepts the RF signals normally sent from a remote key fob to the car, manipulates these signals, and re-sends them later to unlock the car at will.

The Commission said that with this latest type of cyber-attack, it is also possible to manipulate the captured commands and re-transmit them to achieve a different outcome altogether.

"Multiple researchers disclosed a vulnerability, which is said to be used by a nearby attacker to unlock some Honda and Acura car models and start their engines



Prof. Umar Danbatta

wirelessly.

"The attack consists of a threat actor capturing the radio frequency (RF) signals sent from your key fob to the car and resending these signals to take control of your car's remote keyless entry system," the advisory stated emphatically.

However, the NCC-CSIRT, in the advisory, has offered some precautionary measures that could be adopted by car owners to prevent falling victim to the attack.

According to the cyber-alert unit of the Commission, "When affected, the only mitigation is to reset your key fob at the dealership. Besides, the affected car manufacturer may provide a security

mechanism that generate fresh codes for each authentication request, this makes it difficult for an attacker to 'replay' the codes thereafter."

It said that vulnerable car users should store their key fobs in signal-blocking 'Faraday pouches' when not in use.

Importantly, the Commission said that car owners in the stated categories are advised to choose Passive Keyless Entry (PKE) as opposed to Remote Keyless Entry (RKE), which would make it harder for an attacker to read the signal due to the fact that criminals would need to be at close proximity to carry out their nefarious acts.

It explained that the PKE is an automotive security system that operates automatically when the user is in proximity to the vehicle, unlocking the door on approach or when the door handle is pulled, and also locking it when the user walks away or touches the car on exit.

The RKE system, according to the Commission, on the other hand, represents the standard solution for conveniently locking and unlocking a vehicle's doors and luggage compartment by remote control.

Additionally, in a related advisory, the NCC, based on another detection by CSIRT, informed the general public about the resurgence of Joker Trojan-Infected Android Apps on Google Play Store.

This arose due to the activities of criminals who intentionally download legitimate apps from the Play Store, modify them by embedding the Trojan malware and then uploading the app back to the Play Store

with a new name.

It said that the malicious payload is only activated once the apps goes live on the Play Store, which enables the apps to scale through Google's strict evaluation process.

Once installed, these apps request for permissions that once granted, enable the apps to have access to critical functions such as text messages and notifications.

As a consequence, it explained further that a compromised device will subscribe unwitting users to premium services, billing them for services that do not exist. A device like this can also be used to commit Short Messaging Service (SMS) fraud while the owner is unaware.

"It can click on online ads automatically and even use SMS One Time password (OTPs) to secretly approve payments. Without checking bank statements, the user will be unaware that he or she has subscribed to an online service. Other actions, such as stealing text messages, contacts, and other device data, are also possible," the Commission said.

It warned that to avoid falling victim to the manipulation of hackers deploying Joker Trojan-Infected Android Apps, Android users must avoid downloading unnecessary apps or installing apps from unofficial sources.

The NCC also said it wishes to advise telecom consumers to ensure that apps installed from the Google Play Store are heavily scrutinized by reading reviews, assessing the developers, perusing the terms of use and only granting the necessary permissions.

## Govt's Executive Order 5, tech innovation in Nigeria

By SHARON O. ISAALAH

Deepening knowledge-based economy that is innovation-driven and ensuring rapid movement of Nigeria towards becoming an industrialised nation are the two most important elements missing in the country's quest towards attaining economic buoyant status, according to some technology and economic experts. Without these two elements, they said, the country may find it difficult to climb the economic and technological ladder of development.

In 2018, when President Muhammadu Buhari signed the Executive Order 5, the Federal Government hinted that the executive order will take care of the two missing elements. But this has yet to happen, four years after.

In a proclamation entitled "Presidential Executive Order for Planning and Execution of Projects, Promotion of Nigerian Content in Contracts and Science, Engineering and Technology," President Muhammadu Buhari, pursuant to the authority vested in him by the constitution, signed on Friday, February 2, 2018 the Executive Order No. 5 ("EO5") by which all Ministries, Departments and Agencies ("MDAs") of government were directed to engage indigenous professionals in the planning, design and execution of national security projects and maximise in-country capacity in all contracts and transactions with science, engineering and technology components.

The thrust of the EO5 is the recognition of the vital role of science, technology and innovation in national economic development, particularly in the area of promoting Made in Nigeria Goods and Services ("MNGS"). Strategically, the main objectives of the EO5 are the harnessing of domestic talents and the development of indigenous capacity in science and engineering for the promotion of technological innovation needed to drive national competitiveness, productivity and economic

activities which will invariably enhance the achievement of the nation's development goals across all sectors of the economy.

The EO5 makes certain specific directives which include the following:

All procuring authorities shall give preference to Nigerian companies and firms in the award of contracts, in line with the Public Procurement Act, 2007;

Where expertise is lacking, procuring entities shall give preference to foreign companies and firms with demonstrable and verifiable plan for indigenous capacity development, prior to the award of such contracts;

MDAs shall engage indigenous professionals in the planning, design and execution of national security projects and consideration shall only be given to a foreign professional, where it is certified by the appropriate authority that such expertise is not available in Nigeria;

Nigerian companies or firms duly registered in accordance with the laws of Nigeria, with current practising licence shall be lead in any consultancy services involving Joint Venture (JV) relationships and agreements, relating to Law, Engineering, ICT, Architecture, Procurement, Quantity Surveying, and etc.;

MDAs shall ensure that before the award of any contract, Nigerian counterpart staff are engaged from the conception stage to the end of the project and shall also adopt local technology that meet set standards to replace foreign ones;

The Ministry of Interior is prohibited from giving visas to foreign workers whose skills are readily available in Nigeria;

The Federal Government shall introduce Margin of Preference ("MoP") in National Competitive Bidding, in the evaluation of tenders, from indigenous suppliers of goods manufactured locally over foreign goods (MoP shall be 15% for both international competitive bidding for Goods and domestic contractors

for national competitive bidding for Goods. For Works for domestic contractors, the MoP shall be 7.5%);

Foreign companies or firms shall not be engaged in contracts for Works, Goods, and Services in the country in violation of the standard international best practices as provided for under relevant statutes such as the Companies and Allied Matters Act (CAMA), Council for Regulation of Engineering (COREN) Act, Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply Management Act, Public Procurement Act, and the National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA) Act as well as other relevant Nigerian laws and regulations on acquisition of technology and conduct of public procurement;

MDAs shall ensure that all professionals practising in the country are duly registered with the appropriate regulatory bodies in Nigeria, and shall ensure, in collaboration with the Head of the Civil Service of the Federation, that all foreign professional certificates are domesticated with the relevant professional bodies before being considered for any contract award or employment in Nigeria;

Agreements involving any Joint Venture and Public Private Partnership (PPP) between a foreign firm and a Nigerian firm, for technology acquisition or otherwise, shall be registered with the National Office for Technology Acquisition ("NOTAP") in accordance with the provisions of the NOTAP Act, before such contract are signed by the MDAs;

A Nigerian company or firm shall not be disqualified from an award of contract by any MDA on the basis of the year of incorporation except on the basis of qualification, competence and experience of the management in the execution of similar contracts;

NOTAP shall develop, maintain and regularly update a Data Base of Nigerians with expertise in science, engineering, technology and other



Buhari

fields of expertise while the Ministry of Interior shall take into consideration the NOTAP Data Base together with other similar data from the Nigerian Academy of Engineering; Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board; Federal Ministry of Science and Technology and other relevant Ministries; in determining the availability of local skilled manpower in Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) for the grant of Expatriate Quota;

The secretariat is domiciled in the Federal Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (FMSTI), managed by the Strategy Implementation Task Office for Presidential Executive Order No. 5 (SITOP-5) and headed by a national coordinator.

The mandate of the secretariat includes overseeing a complaints/appeal board that will receive administrative complaints and appeals from communities, stakeholders, professional bodies, contractors, manufacturers around MDAs planning and execution of projects, promotion of Nigerian content in contracts and science, engineering and technology for remediation.

Continue online at [www.thetrumpet.ng](http://www.thetrumpet.ng)



## Nigerian Firm, other African start-ups make WEF's Technology Pioneers' List

By SHARON O. ISAALAH

World Economic Forum (WEF) has listed six African startups, including Nigeria's Okra among its global Technology Pioneers of 2022.

They are among the 100-strong WEF global list of innovative tech startups for its 2022 Technology Pioneers cohort.

According to the WEF, the Technology Pioneers' list is an assemblage of leading, "early-to growth-stage companies from

around the world that are pioneering new technologies and innovations."

This year's cohort consists of 100 startups from across the world, including the six from Africa – Okra, Access Afya, Sendy, Pula Advisors, Ejara and Ampersand.

Following their unveiling, the technology pioneers would now join an alumni community that comprise some of the world's most valuable tech companies, including Google, Twitter, Spotify, Wikipedia and Mozilla, among others.

"By joining this community, Technology Pioneers begin a two-year journey where they are part of the World Economic Forum's initiatives, activities and events, bringing their cutting-edge insight and fresh thinking to critical global discussions.

"Technology Pioneers are an integral part of the Forum's Global Innovators community, which is an invitation-only group of the world's most promising start-ups and scale-ups that are at the forefront of technological and business model innovation," the statement by WEF added.

Okra is a Nigerian Application Programming Interface (API)/fintech startup which specialises in digitalising financial services across the continent.

It does this by making it possible for fintechs and even banks to easily access customers' financial information/data.

Okra – which was founded in 2019, by Fara Ashiru Jituboh and David Peterside, is described as a "one-stop-shop" platform that "empowers companies and developers to build products with seamless access to inclusive financial data and secure payments," according to its website.

The other five African Technology Pioneers are three Kenyan firms, Access Afya, Sendy and Pula Advisors.

Access Afya specialises in the provision of quality and affordable healthcare for the global mass market.

Using technology, the healthtech startup leverages available "patient data to facilitate efficient diagnostic, operational and follow-up care pathways."

Sendy, another Kenyan startup specialises in building Africa's ecommerce fulfilment infrastructure for consumer brands. In other words, the company

makes "trading in Africa easier and more beneficial to more people" according to information available on its website.

Pula Advisors doubles as an insurance and technology company, designing innovative insurance and other digital products farmers. The goal is to de-risk all agricultural investments and guarantee profit.

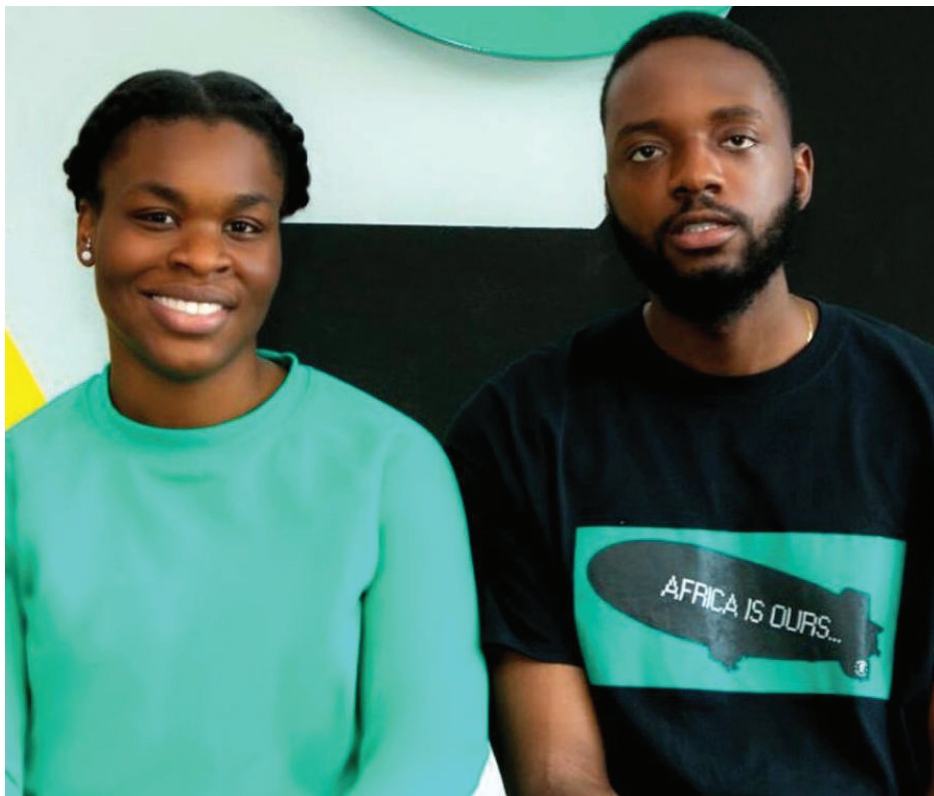
Others are Ampersand of Rwanda, a startup that has been described as the leading battery-swap energy network for light vehicles. Information available on its website says: "we offer East Africa's five million taxi motorcyclists a commercial electric motorcycle that is cheaper from day one, provides better overall user experience and requires minimal customer behaviour change."

Ejara, the Cameroonian startup specialises in helping Africans at home and in the diaspora to invest in different forms of investments including equities, cryptos and commodities, among others..

Last year, eight African startups were named in the WEF 2021 Technology Pioneers list. The startups are: Cambridge Industries (Ethiopia), FlexFin Tx (Zimbabwe), Kuda (Nigeria), Moringa School (Kenya), mPharma (Ghana), Sokowatch (Kenya), 54Gene (Nigeria), and Gro Intelligence (Kenya).

According to WEF, the Technology Pioneers' list is an assemblage of leading "early-to growth-stage companies from around the world that are pioneering new technologies and innovations."

These startups are at the forefront of their industries, leading change and solving some of the world's most pressing problems, including climate change, food security, cybersecurity, among others.



Fara Ashiru Jituboh and David Peterside

## Zinox to take over Jumia

By SHARON O. ISAALAH

There are indications that Nigerian billionaire and Chairman of Zinox Group, Leo Stan Ekeh, might be planning a takeover bid for Jumia.

Ekeh, a former disc jockey, plans to use Zinox as the vehicle in ramping up shares in Jumia indirectly for a possible acquisition.

In 2001, the serial digital entrepreneur was not content with just distributing in Nigeria, systems that were manufactured in other countries, an idea that led him to the founding of Zinox computers. Zinox manufactures the first truly Nigerian-made Personal Computers, Laptops, Servers and UPSes.

Ekeh is credited with pioneering e-commerce in Africa with his now-defunct BuyRight Africa over 12 years ago, and he is replicating the same strategy that he deployed successfully in acquiring Yes Mobile, a cosmopolitan high-value retail outfit, Ashour Corporation, a foremost telecommunications services provider headquartered in Dubai, UAE and more recently, Konga to acquire Jumia.

Ekeh acquired Konga, another latter-day e-commerce pioneer, at a dying stage in 2018 and turned it around to the point of profitability in barely three years, becoming the first e-commerce brand to achieve this feat which industry experts have termed a miracle.

Sources claim Ekeh is supporting Konga's massive investment in technology,

logistics with a recent investment of over N4b and other infrastructure, including acquiring the single largest warehouse in Lagos, Port Harcourt, Abuja and Onitsha not too long ago, with the brand also attracting concrete interest from a horde of potential investors.

On the other hand, Jumia remains the largest ecommerce platform in Africa, despite its financial troubles.

Last year, the company reported a loss of \$227 million. This is one in a series of losses over the years. These losses, coupled with the declining share price, a drop in valuation to \$477 million and a further drop in net equity to \$413 million, raise insolvency concerns.

Jumia appears to be battling severe headwinds after its share price – which once traded at record highs of \$59.96 tumbling down and currently trading at less than \$5 – prompting speculations of a loss of investor confidence and a surprise takeover by Sub-Saharan Africa's leading tech conglomerate, the Zinox Group.

In April 2019, Jumia had listed on the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) with an eye-catching IPO which witnessed share prices opening at \$14.5 and rising as high as \$26. However, two weeks after, a damning report by Citron Research had accused Jumia of fraud, describing its stock as worthless. Specifically, the report had highlighted discrepancies in financials between investor presentations and SEC filings by Jumia, accusing its management of fraudulently inflating



Leo Stan Ekeh

order numbers, while also labelling it a company burdened with inefficiencies.

Although Jumia denied any wrongdoing, the allegations from Andrew Left, founder of Citron Research, resulted in a class-action lawsuit which Jumia recently settled out of court for \$5m.

However, the debacle appeared to have seen investor confidence in Jumia take a huge bashing, with the likes of Rocket Internet and MTN Group, among others, exiting. Several reports and articles in local and international media also detailed how the company which prided itself as the continent's first

unicorn fell from grace and how Jumia's misadventure had tainted the potential of African e-commerce.

Ekeh, a restless but very passionate e-Commerce enthusiast, is rumoured by sources to be keen on consolidating the e-Commerce brand with a presence in 15 African countries under Konga to actualize his great but very silent ambition to alter the destiny of Africans.

Zinox Group's Head of Corporate Communications, Gideon Ayogu, neither officially confirmed nor denied the speculation. He did, however, say that "nothing positive is impossible".





# Refineries top Nigeria's forthcoming 109 oil and gas projects in 2023

Stories By **EDU ABADE**,  
Business Editor

A new report released by Global Data has indicated that downstream projects will top upcoming oil and gas investment in Nigeria by 2026.

The report said that more than 100 oil and gas projects

will initiate operations in Nigeria in the coming four years accounting for over 24 per cent of the estimated total projects starting during that time.

According to Global Data, a data and analytics firm Africa Oil and Gas Projects Analytics and forecast by project type sector, countries development

stage, capacitor and cost from 2022 to 2026, disclosed that of the 109 projects expected to commence operations in Nigeria, petrochemical will account for 14, upstream 26, midstream 31 and downstream refineries will have the highest amount with 38.

An oil and gas analyst with Global Data, Teja Poppula said:

"Nigeria is primarily investing in oil and gas production storage projects during the next five years."

He said these forthcoming projects would increase Nigeria's economy and help the country to change from an importer to an exporter of refined products, particularly to neighbouring countries.

The oil expert averred that amid the upcoming projects being started in Nigeria, Lagos is a crucial project with a total capacity of almost 650 thousand barrels daily expected to initiate in 2022, it will be the most significant individual refinery in the whole of Africa and it is presently in the stage of construction.

Poppula further added that

Midstream projects account for about 28 per cent of oil and gas processing projects compressing the majority of upcoming midstream projects with ANOU-Seplat, ANOH-SPDC and Brass, being the key projects with capacity of over 300 million cubic feet per day each.

The nation is also making major investment in natural gas processing pipelines as well as liquefied projects to decrease its dependence on oil, which presently drives the majority of revenue in the country.

He said that through this Nigeria will be accounting for 24 per cent of oil and gas projects by 2026 in Africa continent.

## NIMASA, Navy, ICC canvass sustained security in Gulf of Guinea

•Collaboration crucial for safety, says Jamoh

The Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA), the Nigerian Navy and the Inter-regional Coordination Centre (ICC) have advocated the need for continuous collaboration with regional and international stakeholders to ensure the sustainability of security in the Gulf of Guinea (GoG).

This was the thrust of presentations at the fifth plenary of the Gulf of Guinea Maritime Collaboration Forum, Shared Awareness and De-confliction meeting with the theme: Enduring And Sustainable Security.

Director General of NIMASA, Dr. Bashir Jamoh, who noted that collaboration and co-operation remain crucial in attaining enhanced security in the GoG in recent times, restated NIMASA's commitment to providing all logistics required for members of the SHADE Forum to thrive and maintain the momentum.

He said: "Two years ago, we connected virtually with our unhappy stakeholders, with challenges of piracy attaining its peak in the GoG between 2019 and 2020. But today, even the International Maritime Bureau (IMB), has affirmed that piracy is at a 28-year all-time low in the region.

"The SHADE must be nurtured to remain a force for good. As members we owe a collective duty to this forum to keep its dialogue robust and guard it from slipping into complacency as to become a toothless bulldog. It must be strengthened through

cooperation, coordination, collaboration and communication. Security success can never be by solitary achievements.

"There must be cooperation between regional navies like we saw recently between Nigeria and Benin. We are all contributors to the success we are currently experiencing in the area of maritime security."

Secretary General of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), Kitack Lim, who addressed the forum, congratulated Nigeria on the efforts at improving security in its territorial waters and the entire GoG domain, challenged members of the SHADE Forum to keep the momentum in sustaining the gains of the past one year.

"Maintaining the momentum of the gains made so far is the main challenge for the regional navies. To do so, we must address the root causes of piracy including the plight of coastal communities in order to reach sustainable solutions to piracy," he stressed.

Speaking at the forum, representative of the Chief of Naval Staff (CNS), Chief of planning, Navy Headquarters Abuja, Rear Admiral Garba, noted that the successes recorded in the Gulf of Guinea was due to the collaboration, information and data sharing among the GoG countries.

He stressed the need to sustain the momentum through institutional capacity building for maritime governance.

"There is still room for greater



Bashir Jamoh

collaboration in the areas of Information sharing, increased presence of naval assets and strengthened legal frameworks among the GoG nations as well as international partners, which are all crucial in ensuring success of the Yaounde Architecture. The safety and security of shipping in the GoG is a vital enabler in the recovery process of global economy and trade disruptions due to COVID-19 pandemic," he said.

Other stakeholders at the plenary are Director, Inter-regional Coordination Centre (ICC-Yaounde), Admiral Narciso Fastudo, Co-chair, SHADE-GoG/Maritime Collaboration Forum, Rear Admiral Solomon Agada and Special Advisor to the chairs of the GoG Maritime Collaboration Forum, Simon Church.

## Manufacturer sues NDLEA, demands N200m, apology over alleged N22b tramadol deal

Managing Director of Mallinson & Partners Limited, Mallinson Afamefuna Ukatu, has sued the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) at the Federal High Court, Lagos in an attempt to prevail on the NDLEA to release him unconditionally, or on terms the court may deem fit.

It would be recalled that NDLEA alleged that Ukatu imported two containers containing 1,284 cartons of Tramadol worth N22 billion in 2021 and also fingered him in a N3 billion shipment of Tramadol linked to the embattled senior police officer, Abba Kyari, who is being tried for sundry offences.

Besides insisting on his innocence, Ukatu also argued that the NDLEA not only failed to arraign him in court, despite

the fact that there is a federal High Court within 40 Kilometers radius or where he was being held, but also failed to grant him administrative bail since his arrest on April 13, 2022.

Ukatu prayed the court to declare that his arrest by the NDLEA on April 13, 2022 at the Murtala Mohammed Airport terminal in Ikeja, Lagos, and his continued detention in the NDLEA office at NAHCO facility, was without reasonable cause or reasonable suspicion of a crime, which violates his fundamental rights.

He further prayed for an order of perpetual injunction restraining the NDLEA from re-arresting and further detaining him, contrary to his fundamental rights to liberty and freedom, as

enshrined in section 35 of the 1999 Constitution as amended, among other legal provisions in the country.

The applicant made the prayers in his originating summons in a suit marked: FHC/L/CS/696/2020 before Justice Nicholas Oweibo, filled by his counsel, Victor Opara (SAN) of Victor Opara Chambers and in the alternative, prayed for an order admitting him to bail on liberal terms pending the conclusion of NDLEA's investigation or his arraignment.

He further sought an order directing the NDLEA to apologise to him publicly for the unlawful arrest and detention to be published in three national newspapers and an order directing the NDLEA to pay him N200 million damages for his unlawful arrest and detention.

## CRFFN, Tanko debunk purported inauguration of governing board by Amaechi

Chairman of the 100% Compliance Team of the National Association of Government Approved Freight Forwarders (NAGAFF), Alhaji Ibrahim Tanko, has debunked claims that the Minister of Transportation, Rotimi Chibuike Ameachi, has inaugurated the Governing Board of the Council for the Regulation of Freight Forwarding in Nigeria (CRFFN).

Tanko also stated that there was nothing like imposition of a Chairman on the board and that the selection of principal officers was done by consensus of all the elected and appointed members, who were present at the meeting.

He told *The Trumpet* that contrary to reports that the board had been inaugurated, what took place was a meeting with the Minister of Transportation on the election of principal officers, including the Chairman.

"I've just returned from Abuja. While there, I heard people saying that the Governing Board of the CRFFN has been inaugurated, but that is not true. They invited us to a meeting with the minister. To me, the purpose of the meeting was to elect the chairman and the vice chairman," he said.

He informed that as they settled down for the meeting, the minister walked in saying he had not more than one minute to spend with the members. He said the purpose of the gathering was to see if all could agree that "the status quo should remain" to which everybody chorused "yes."

He stated that as the minister was about leaving, one of them asked him about the formal inauguration of the board to which he answered that left to him, the body was as good as having been inaugurated.

At this juncture, he disclosed that a lawyer representing the ministry clarified that the forum was not for inauguration and that formal letters to communicate when the exercise would take place, would be written to them.

He said thereafter, the minister

left and that the Chairman, Alhaji Abubakar Tsanni, addressed the members, thanking them for their support and promised to work with them all the meeting ended after that.

According to him, what happened was that as we settled down for the meeting, the minister walked in and told us that he did not have more than one minute to spend with us, because of other engagements. He said the essence of convening the meeting was "to find out if we all can agree that the status quo should remain and by that he meant that if the chairman and the vice should continue and we all said yes.

"Nobody objected to his suggestion. If anybody had objected, we would have conducted the election there and then, but nobody did. I'm surprised to hear people saying he imposed the Chairman on us. There was nothing like that. I challenge anybody who says this is not what happened to come out and prove me wrong."

In its letter of invitation to elected members for the meeting dated April 21, 2022 signed by an Assistant Director, Inland Container Depots for the minister, Ekanem U. David, the meeting was slated for May 4, 2022 at 1:00p.m., stressing that nothing was mentioned about inauguration.



Rotimi Chibuike Ameachi,



# SIFAX Group names Taiwo Afolabi new board chairman

SIFAX Group has announced the appointment of Dr. Taiwo Afolabi as the new Board Chairman of the company, following the death of the former Chairman, the late Olowu of Owu, Oba Adegboyega Dosunmu.

Afolabi was Vice Chairman of the company until Dosunmu's demise on December 12, 2021.

Group Executive Director, Bode Ojeniyi, said the appointment takes immediate effect to consolidate the company's natural progression for Afolabi, who has worked hard in the last 33 years to build and lead the company to become one of the leading conglomerates in Nigeria.

He explained that his choice was unanimous among the board members as Afolabi had given all his resources-financial, goodwill, mental and social capital, among

others, to see that the company continued to retain impressive business growth and profitability year-on-year.

"The success story of the company cannot be divorced from his rigour, leadership, strategic thinking and foresight. Taking all these into account, the board found him worthy of the appointment for sustained entrepreneurial leadership and better service delivery to our clients, as well as improved returns to stakeholders," he said.

In his acceptance speech, Afolabi said his immediate goal would be to drive the five-year strategic growth plan of the company to a logical conclusion.

He said: "Without doubt, the company has achieved so much, but there are still so much grounds to cover. Interestingly, my appointment coincides with



Dr. Taiwo Afolabi

the midway point of our five-year strategic growth plan designed to improve the profitability of our various businesses and expand to new territories locally and internationally.

"We are already doing well with the growth plan and we will see if there is a need to recalibrate

our approach and deliverables for improved performance. I am confident that with the quality of human resources on the board, as well as the cooperation of our stakeholders, we will position SIFAX Group well for its next growth phase and achieve its mandate."

## ABCON unveils roadmap on save the naira campaign

•Empowers BDCs to bridge rising exchange rate gaps

By **JONHMARK UKOKO**

The Association of Bureaux De Change Operators of Nigeria (ABCON) has developed a campaign plan to save the naira from further decline and enhance exchange rate stability of the country's currency.

National Executive Council (NEC) of ABCON said the move to save the Naira was agreed upon at its meeting in Lagos, where it unveiled strategies for save the local currency, bridge the exchange rate gaps and curb volatility in the Forex market.

The naira exchanges at N596 to the dollar at the parallel market and N415.83 to the dollar at the official market, thereby creating a gap of N180.17 per dollar.

ABCON President, Dr. Aminu Gwadabe, said there was urgent need to enhance dollar liquidity in the market and ensure stability of prices in the economy, saying the steps would save the local currency and economy from the impact of election spending that has kept inflation at double digits.

He disclosed that the deprecia-

tion of the naira against global currencies was due to pressure from rising dollar demand without sufficient liquidity to meet the demands from retail end users, manufacturers and other key players in the economy.

"The Naira has consistently come under serious pressure due to dollar scarcity, making it difficult for Forex end users, manufacturers and industry players to access dollar to meet their needs. ABCON under my leadership will continue to encourage our members to play the vital role of closing the exchange rate gaps in the market and reducing widening premium between the parallel market and the official window," he said.

Gwadabe listed several factors that continue to undermine the Naira stability and the local currency's value against other currencies called for the creation of BDCs Autonomous Foreign Exchange Trading Window (BAFEX) with determined maximum daily limit for legible BDCs to access dollars from banks, autonomous market and Diaspora Forex widow at prevailing market prices.

## Naira crashes as Emezie's presidential quest suffers setback

By **JONHMARK UKOKO**

The Naira saga across the foreign exchange (FX) nosedived just as presidential ambition of Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria, Godwin Emezie, seems to have suffered a major setback.

At the investors and exporters



Oluwarotimi Akeredolu

foreign exchange window, the Naira was sold for N418.75 kobo.

*The Trumpet* checks showed that the Naira has suffered serious loss amid the Monetary Policy's FX market intervention.

The parallel market rate inches higher to N598 to one United States of America dollar, though it moderated to N59\$.

In 2019, the official exchange rate was N197 but low export receipts, high import bills and export receipts, high import bills and scarcity of dollar inflows bills and scarcity of dollar inflows have weakness the local currency which hit N420 per one United States dollar in the official window in March 2022.

Godwin Emezie the CBN governor has surreptitiously made himself available to contest the 2023 presidential election.

However, critics, led by Governor of Ondo State, Oluwarotimi Akeredolu and Femi Falana (SAN) described Emezie's action, as absurd and against CBN's

Act for a serving governor of the apex bank, just as Akeredolu said Emezie's action was a joke taken too far and advised him to resign to contest the presidency.

On their part, financial journalists had advised Emezie, who is serving his second tenure at the apex bank, to resign his appointment to enable him to face his political ambition and for President Muhammadu Buhari to appoint a non-partisan professional to run the CBN.

To further advance his presidential ambition, Emezie had moved to the Federal High Court to seek an interpretation from the court.

Emeze, who has been engrossed in partisan politics and maintained good rapport with the Federal Government had widened the apex bank's independence in his attempt to keep his position as governor, while seeking to actualise his bid to rule Africa's largest economy come 2023.

## Access Corporation to unlock new opportunities for intra-Africa trade, says Wigwe

By **JONHMARK UKOKO**

Access Holding Plc, trading as Access Corporation has disclosed that it has started its operations with initial portfolio companies and future strategy.

The proration which builds on Access Bank PLC's scale and ethical standards will have portfolio companies with significant complementarities allowing the ecosystem to walk with customers across their life-cycle, while delivering value to all stakeholders.

Its Group Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Herbert Wigwe, who stated this on the Group's debut said: "Many of you would have heard us talk about Access Corporation earlier this year. This natural evolution of our company will ensure that we continue to use digital tools and our partnership

with Fintechs to support our customers' life styles outside the banking system.

"We have set our sight on and delivered ambitious plans to transform the African financial services sector in the last 20 years. We have concentrated on banking with the goal of becoming the world's most respected African bank.

"Our banking subsidiary is now Nigeria's largest bank by assets and Africa's largest in terms of customer base. It is now time for us to take the next transformative step, where we provide our customers with delivery new interconnected financial services across customers' needs."

He explained that the corporation would comprise verticals cutting across banking, payments, consumer lending, insurance brokerage and asset

management.

He also pointed out that Access Bank Group would continue to operate in Nigeria through its subsidiaries and business offices in Africa, Europe and Asia, adding: "When combined, these businesses will position Access Corporation to provide banking services including intra-and inter-Africa trade consumer lending, payments services and insurance services to our customers, thereby improving wealth diversification and preservation.

"Looking ahead, Access Corporation will be a leading financial and ecosystem player with services spanning B2B and B2C market places, B2B services health, housing, digital, mobile IT content, mobility, core banking offerings and other financial services such as insurance and wealth management."

## SON, NCDMB pledge to improve Nigeria's oil and gas local content

By **JONHMARK UKOKO**

The Standards Organisation of Nigeria (SON) and the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) have committed to a marked increase and improved quality of the local content of materials and products used in the Nigerian Oil and Gas industry in Nigeria.

A statement made available to *The Trumpet* by Head of Media at SON, Maji Aileku, at the weekend, revealed that the agency made the commitment during a visit of the Executive Secretary of NCDMB, Simbi Kesiye Wabote to SON's headquarters in Abuja.

Wabote acknowledged the existing collaboration of NCDMB with SON in the area of standards development, but expressed the desire to enhance the cooperation into certification of all local content including materials, machinery, products and services used in the oil and gas sector to assure higher quality and greater value.

He outlined his organisation's challenges in executing its mandate of guiding, monitoring and coordinating the Nigerian

Oil and Gas Industry Content Development (NOGICD) Act as including confirming the certification and quality status of equipment, materials, products, goods and services in the Nigerian oil and gas industry.

Wabote canvassed further collaboration between the NCDMB and SON to achieve uniform standards for all locally fabricated/ manufactured equipment, materials, goods and services that would be acceptable to all players in the industry, as well as necessary certification and confirmation procedure between both organisations.

"SON should amplify the circulation of information relating to existing standards for the Nigerian oil and gas industry as this will go a long way to improve the standards of local content," Wabote stressed.

Responding, Director General of SON, Mallam Farouk Salim, expressed delight at the visit and willingness for collaboration, stressing that it aligned with the organisation's publicly expressed desire to fess greater attention to improved quality of activities, products and services in the oil and gas sector in 2022.



## NDLEA seizes Italy, Dubai-bound drugs, 203,879 Tramadol tabs in Lagos, others

### ● Busts fake employments syndicate

By PAUL MICHAEL, DEFENCE EDITOR, ABUJA

Operatives of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) have frustrated fresh bids by drug cartels to export Tramadol, Ecstasy MDMA and Cannabis to Milan, Italy and Dubai, United Arab Emirates through the Murtala Muhammed International Airport (MMIA), Ikeja Lagos.

Spokesperson of NDLEA, Femi Babafemi who disclosed this said the agency seized 203, 879 tablets of various pharmaceutical opioids and illicit substances in raids across Abia, Kaduna, Yobe and Kogi state.

He said: "At the Lagos airport, a female passenger, Oda Emiliana Efe was arrested on Monday 9th May why trying to board Royal Air Maroc flight from Lagos via Casablanca to Milan, Italy with 1000 tablets of Tramadol 200mg concealed in food items.

"Five days after, Friday 13th May, a freight agent Kareem Ibrahim was arrested at the SAHCO cargo shed of the airport for attempting to export food items in which were hidden blocks of cannabis weighing 6.65kg and 24grams of ecstasy drug, MDMA to Dubai in UAE.

"In Abia, three trucks loaded with drugs coming from Lagos and Onitsha, Anambra were intercepted in Aba, Abia state. When properly searched in the presence of the owners on Wednesday 11th May, 67,100 tablets/capsules of Tramadol and 12,650 ampules of pentazocine, morphine and dopamine were recovered.

"On the same day, NDLEA operatives in Kaduna arrested a notorious drug dealer, Shehu Kabiru a.k.a Dan-Zaira, wanted by the Kastina Command of the Agency for jumping bail. Recovered from him include: 45,000 tablets of Diazepam weighing 41.5kg; 50,000 tablets of Exol, weighing 15.6kg; 1,500 tablets of Rohypnol weighing 700 grams and 300 bottles of codeine weighing 41.5kg.

"In Yobe state, no fewer than 7,029 tablets of Tramadol, D5, and Exol as well as 1.5kg cannabis were recovered from a drug dealer, Ibrahim Yakubu when his hideout was raided in Unguru town on Sunday 8th May, while in Rivers state, one Chekiri Richard Obomanu was arrested at Eleme area on Wednesday 11th May with 207.2kg cannabis.



Babafemi

"No less than 19,600 tablets of Tramadol coming from Onitsha, Anambra state to Abuja were intercepted and recovered along Okene/Abuja highway on Wednesday 11th May by NDLEA operatives in Kogi state."

Meanwhile, five members of a syndicate, which conducts fake recruitment into security agencies,

have been arrested in coordinated operations in Zamfara, Kebbi and Bauchi state, Babafemi further stated.

"Leader of the gang, Yakubu Sani was first arrested in Gusau, Zamfara state. His criminal gang issues fake NDLEA employment letters and identity cards to unsuspecting members of the public for the sum of N400,000 per person.

"A follow up operation in Zuru, Kebbi state led to the arrest of another gang member, Ibrahim Isah, while three others; Dahiru Musa Limanchi, Gambo Danladi and Umar Abubakar were nabbed in Bauchi state. Recovered from them include: a fake NDLEA ID card; NDLEA guarantor form; INEC offer of appointment letter; Nigerian Customs Special Replacement Form and appointment letter; Nigerian Correctional Service Replacement Form; Credentials of some Applicants; Receipts and passport photos; Five sim packs and one MTN SIM card," he states.

While commending officers and men of the MMIA, Abia, Kaduna, Yobe, Rivers and Kogi for the arrests and seizures, the Chairman/Chief Executive Officer of NDLEA, Brig Gen Mohamed Buba Marwa (Rtd) charged all men of the agency not to rest on their oars but continue to aspire to beat previous records.

He equally acknowledged the well-conducted operations in Zamfara, Kebbi and Bauchi that nailed five members of a criminal gang scamming innocent job seekers with fake employment letters.

## Soludo meets Kanu, says IPOB members to maintain peace

By PAUL MICHAEL

In the quest for lasting peace in the South Eastern part of the country, Prof Chukwuma Charles Soludo, Anambra State Governor, has met the leader of the proscribed Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), Mazi Nnamdi Kanu, in detention in Abuja.

Soludo disclosed this on his social media handles, stressing that he is searching of lasting peace and security in the southeast.

The Governor said that the IPOB



Soludo

leader described killings in the southeast as "sacrilegious" and promised to call him supporters and followers to maintain peace in the region.

He added "I visited Mazi Nnamdi Kanu, yesterday, (Friday, 13th May, 2022) to felicitate with him and also as part of the wider consultations with critical stakeholders in search of lasting peace and security in the South East.

"He was in very high spirits and we had quality and frank discussion in a very convivial atmosphere. He expressed sadness over what he described as "sacrilegious killings" of innocent persons, kidnappings and all forms of criminalities, including the brutal enforcement of the senseless "sit at home" perpetuated by sundry groups claiming to be acting for or on behalf of IPOB.

"He assured that if the opportunity arises, he will be glad to personally broadcast to his followers to maintain the peace. Together, we shall restore peace, security and prosperity in Anambra and the Southeast."

## Group asks Buhari to declare state of emergency in Sokoto

### ● As Kaduna bans religious protests, to punish violators

By PAUL MICHAEL

Nigeria Ethnic Nationalities Youths Leaders Council (NENYLC) has called on President Muhammadu Buhari to declare a state of emergency in Sokoto due to religious riot and protests that followed the condemnation and arrest of suspects behind the gruesome murder of Deborah Samuel.

Some placard-carrying Muslim youths began a protest in Sokoto on Saturday morning and demanded the release of two suspects arrested in connection with the gruesome murder of Deborah, a 200-level Home Economics student of Shehu Shagari College of Education in Sokoto.

Some of the protesters besieged the palace of Muhammad Sa'ad Abubakar, the Sultan of Sokoto and the highest spiritual figure among Muslims in Nigeria, after he condemned the killing and demanded those involved face justice. Governor of the State, Aminu Tambuwal has already declared a 24-hour curfew.

Deborah was mauled and burnt to death on Thursday on the school premises for alleged blasphemy of

Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

NENYLC, a coalition of over 407 Ethnic groups, condemned the murder and called for justice, saying all the perpetrators should be brought to book accordingly.

In a statement signed by its president general, Comr Terry Obieh and Secretary, Aare Oladotun Hassan, the group called on Nigerians to shun religious and ethnic bigotry and embrace tolerance and harmony while asking the President to declare a state of emergency.

The statement reads, "As we all reflect and condemned the gruesome murder of Deborah in an institution of higher learning in Sokoto, over religious intolerance, very important to call Nigerians to shun all forms of religious and Ethnic bigotry, while maintaining peaceful coexistence, religious tolerance and harmony respectively.

"We condemn in strong terms this dastardly act, while calling on the authority to prosecute and melt out appropriate sanctions to everyone involved in the heinous crimes.

"It's worthy of note that Sokoto

State being the supreme custodian of Islamic religious practices in the northern part of the country is highly sensitive to ignite religious and consequential Ethnic wars and uncontrollable attritions, if the current hydraheaded spiral mass protests leading to burning of the Sokoto Arch Diocese Catholic Church headed by Rev. Father Matthew Kukah, while private homes and lives of innocent Nigerians are being attacked by the rampaging youths in Sokoto, precipitating our unanimous resolution to call on President Muhammadu Buhari to declare State of Emergency and Dusk to Dawn curfew in the entire Sokoto State and any other vulnerable States respectively.



Deborah

## MNJTF kills terrorists in Lake Chad axis

By PAUL MICHAEL

Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) has said it has killed about 300 Boko Haram/Islamic State West African Province (ISWAP) fighters in the Lake Chad axis.

This was disclosed by the Chief of Military Public Information, Lt-Col. Kamarudeen Adegoke, in a statement issued on Saturday At Maiduguri. The terrorists were killed in 30 separate encounters.

Adegoke in the statement said that the Force Commander, Gen Abdul Khalifa had made the revelation during an appraisal meeting with all Commanders of the MNJTF drawn from all sectors.

According to him, Khalifa said the meeting was designed to appraise the operations so far in preparation for the next decisive stage.

He said that an increasing dependence on Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) by the insurgents was

noted and necessary counter measures were proffered.

"About four IED making factories were destroyed in the course of the operations so far," he said.

He praised the decisive role of the Air component of the MNJTF/ Operation Hadin Kai for the remarkable role it played in taking out several enemy camps, equipment and commanders.

The force commander said the latest being Abu Ibrahim, an ISWAP

leader (Khalifa) in the Lake Chad Tunbumas, who was a leader before in the Timbuktu General areas.

He said that the achievement was recorded due to the synergy and cooperation with Operation Hadin Kai. According to him, more than 52,000 terrorists comprising fighters, those conscripted by force, and their families have surrendered in the MNJTF and Op Hadin Kai areas of operational responsibility.

He called on the terrorists be they

Boko Haram faction or ISWAP to abandon the criminal organisation and surrender like thousands of their compatriots had done before it becomes too late.

"The entry of the Chadian contingent provides additional firepower in terms of armoured personnel Carriers, MRAPS and other combat enablers and urged the criminal Boko Haram Terrorists/ ISWAP be hunted and wiped out wherever they are," he said.





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2 x 2	24,941.96	26,812.61	2 x 2	22,588.91	24,283.09	2 x 2	18,349.89	19,716.64	2 x 2	15,147.94	16,284.03	
3 x 2	37,413.09	40,219.07	3 x 2	33,987.48	36,622.04	3 x 2	27,524.84	29,589.20	3 x 2	22,721.91	24,426.05	
4 x 2	49,884.02	53,625.42	4 x 2	45,177.83	48,566.17	4 x 2	36,700.09	39,452.60	4 x 2	30,295.53	32,657.70	
5 x 2	62,355.15	67,031.71	5 x 2	56,472.29	60,707.71	5 x 2	45,866.19	49,315.34	5 x 2	37,863.00	40,710.09	
6 x 2	76,142.50	81,853.18	6 x 2	67,975.12	73,073.25	6 x 2	55,049.68	59,178.41	6 x 2	45,443.82	48,852.10	
7 x 2	87,297.21	93,844.50	6 x 3	101,962.78	109,609.99	6 x 3	54,074.55	61,200.90	7 x 2	53,017.79	56,993.61	
7 x 3	166,172.00	179,229.37	6.5 x 3	110,459.64	118,744.11	6.5 x 3	89,455.78	96,164.94	8 x 2	60,591.76	65,136.14	
7 x 4	197,125.00	211,909.37	7 x 2	79,304.29	85,252.11	7 x 2	64,224.63	69,041.48	9 x 2	80,454.83	86,488.95	
8 x 2	99,768.24	107,250.85	7 x 3	128,456.43	138,090.67	7 x 3	96,336.94	103,562.21	10 x 2	86,147.92	92,609.02	
9 x 2	112,183.69	120,597.47	7 x 4	158,608.73	170,504.38	7 x 4	145,965.10	156,912.48	14.5 x 2	124,915.92	134,284.61	
9 x 3	168,358.90	180,985.39	7 x 5	198,260.25	213,129.77	7 x 5	182,500.19	196,187.71	5 x 3	56,804.77	61,065.13	
10 x 3	187,065.45	201,095.35	8 x 2	90,633.42	97,430.92	8 x 2	73,399.58	78,904.54	6 x 3	68,170.86	73,283.67	
14.5 x 2	260,395.00	279,924.62	8 x 3	135,950.22	146,146.48	8 x 3	125,871.78	134,674.05	7 x 3	79,526.68	85,491.18	
8 x 4	199,536.48	214,501.71	8 x 4	181,266.93	194,841.95	8 x 4	167,043.40	179,022.80	8 x 3	103,375.58	111,130.80	
9 x 4	224,478.54	241,314.43	8 x 5	226,238.74	254,477.52	8 x 5	208,805.79	224,469.23	6 x 4	100,634.10	110,944.41	
10 x 4	299,302.72	321,752.57	8 x 6	271,900.48	292,008.02	8 x 6	250,284.32	269,911.09	7 x 4	120,404.56	129,434.90	
14.5 x 4	520,790.19	559,849.45	9 x 2	101,962.78	109,609.99	9 x 2	93,773.60	100,872.44	8 x 4	137,692.17	148,019.082	
7 x 5	218,243.02	234,629.74	9 x 3	152,944.01	164,414.81	9 x 3	141,108.54	151,691.68	10 x 4	172,301.37	185,224.22	
8 x 5	299,304.72	321,752.57	9 x 4	203,925.29	219,219.69	9 x 4	187,921.52	202,015.71	14.5 x 3	187,057.43	201,086.73	
8 x 6	359,165.65	386,103.08	9 x 5	305,373.04	328,276.02	9 x 5	281,288.07	303,022.10	14.5 x 4	249,838.03	268,575.88	
9 x 5	404,061.37	434,365.97	9 x 6	367,065.92	394,595.86	9 x 6	337,805.68	363,141.11	7 x 5	141,001.98	161,793.93	
10 x 5	448,957.08	482,628.86	10 x 3	169,651.36	182,375.21	10 x 3	156,602.81	168,348.02	8 x 5	172,116.65	185,025.40	
11 x 5	493,852.78	530,891.74	10 x 4	226,258.00	243,176.28	10 x 4	208,808.58	224,469.23	9 x 6	278,649.91	299,548.66	
9 x 6	484,873.39	521,239.16	10 x 5	354,037.54	380,590.16	10 x 5	325,815.11	349,966.25	11 x 5	295,636.20	317,808.91	
10 x 6	538,748.49	579,154.53	10 x 6	424,845.04	456,708.42	10 x 6	390,978.13	420,320.48	11 x 6	340,573.10	340,466.08	
11 x 6	592,622.16	637,068.82	11 x 5	389,441.887	418,650.01	11 x 5	358,396.62	385,276.37	HP7.25 X 6	218,226.87	234,593.89	
HP 7.25 x 6	317,178.40	340,337.5	11 x 6	447,303.49	480,851.24	11 x 6	412,916.45	443,885.19	FP14.5 X 6	379,943.00	408,438.72	
FP 14.5 x 6	560,500.00	602,537.50	14.5 X 2	197,128.09	211,912.70	14.5 x 2	151,178.45	162,516.84				
			14.5 X 4	394,256.19	423,825.40	14.5 x 4	362,827.71	390,039.79				
			14.5 X 5	472,286.06	507,707.52	HP7.25 X 6	246,131.63	264,591.50				
			HP7.25 X 6	269,191.05	289,380.38	14.5 X 5	431,525.39	463,889.79				
			FP 14.5 X 6	460,275.00	594,225.62	FP14.5 X 5	423,373.39	455,126.39				
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Page 5 (Full Page)	1,064,000.00	1,143,800.00	2x6 Under Mast Head	3,990,000.00	4,289,250.00
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## Inadequate footage to showcase 8 NPFL players, Nigerians react

By **OVIRI KELVIN**, Sports Editor, Abuja

**E**yebrows have been raised over the inability of the League Management Company (LMC), organisers of the Nigeria Professional Football League (NPFL), and clubs to provide sufficient video clips to showcase the new eight Nigerian talents to the world, The Trumpet gathered.

This followed the invitation of eight NPFL players to be among the 30-man Super Eagles squad ahead of friendlies with Mexico and Ecuador.

The new NPFL players invited are Victor Mbaoma (Enyimba), Ojo Olorunleke (Enyimba), Isah Ali (Remo Stars), Ibrahim Buhari (Plateau United), Chiamaka Madu (Rivers United), Babatunde Nosiru (Kwara United), Adewale Adeyinka (Akwa United) and Ishaq Rafiu (Rivers United).

According to concerned Nigerians who vented their anger through Twitter after the NFF released a list of the 30 on May 10, 2022, this was an avenue to showcase this crop of NPFL players to European scouts.

They pointed out that the LMC and NPFL clubs do not know the importance of highlights to showcase



these players' spectacular moments in NPFL matches which are key in promoting the country's Premier League.

They highlighted that the LMC and NPFL clubs have done poorly in this regard, stressing that the organizations were supposed to explore the usefulness of the social media TV platform, YouTube to upload highlights of NPFL stars to the world.

In a response to a tweet by Jibola Babs, he said, "This is what some of us are clamouring for. Reels/clips of these guys. It will help people know them the more to help agents get them proper contracts in proper European leagues. The players need to invest a

lot into their craft. YouTube is basically the world TV."

Comparing the NPFL, which he described as being poorly organised, to the English Premier League (EPL), Igebina A. Oghenaogie lamented that they hardly grant pre or post-match conferences.

"The league has to be properly organized. Interview of coaches in EPL alone is enough content. Does NPFL have pre and post-match conferences? This is really a big issue," he said.

However, Jibola Babs, also called for a total restructuring and rejigging of the system while he advised that a Conference format that includes four or eight top-flight clubs competing at the end of the

league season should be adopted.

He said, "This is why I am clamoring for a rejig, restructure and reorganization [of the system]."

"Let's have a conference format and play the top 4 or 8 at the end of the season. It saves cost, time, lives, and the players' careers by reducing incessant travel. This will help," he added.

Meanwhile, the match scheduled to take place in the United States on the 28 of May with Mexico at the AT&T Stadium in Dallas, State of Texas, and on the 2nd of June with Ecuador at the Red Bull Arena in Harrison, provides only 25 spaces for the players that made it into the 30-man provisional squad.

## Heartland stuns Rivers United, Enyimba, Tornadoes record wins

Heartland of Owerri defeated Rivers United in the Nigeria Professional Football League (NPFL) matchday 28 fixture 2-0 in the Dan Anyiam Stadium yesterday.

The relegation-struggling team maintained a goalless draw in the first half with the NPFL league leaders but broke the deadlock 9 minutes into the second half through Sunday Chinedu's header.

Like an omen to the visitors, the first goal created another for the Spartans 7 minutes later which saw Chijioko Mbaoma send goalkeeper Theophilus Afelokhai the wrong way through substitute, Alexander Alfred's defence-splitting pass to double the lead.

However, the wins by Heartland against Rivers United have increased, according to the last 10 meetings between the two clubs since 10 April, 2016, to two while Rivers United have won five with three

draws.

Also, Enyimba of Aba narrowly escaped a two-all draw with Lobi Stars after the Peoples' Elephant secured maximum points at the Enyimba Stadium in a matchday 28 thriller.

The Peoples' Elephant opened the scoresheet in the second half after Ortom Boys put in a relentless effort to force the first half into a barren outcome.

Unfortunately for Lobi Stars, who hover around the NPFL red zone, the two-time CAF Champions League winners broke the deadlock and appreciated their efforts with a second three minutes to injury time through Samuel Kalu and Samuel Stone's goals. The visitors only got a consolation from Samuel Ganda.

Elsewhere at the Ahmadu Bello Stadium, Niger Tornadoes held on to a 1-0 first-half lead to secure maximum three points against Gombe United.



## Al Ahly, Wydad AC for CAF Champions League final

Al Ahly of Egypt will play Wydad AC in the final of the 2022 CAF Champions League after they defeated ES Estif of Algeria 6-2 on aggregate.

The Red Devils of Egypt in the first leg of the semifinals hammered ES Estif four unreplied goals in Cairo and went on to defend their lead with a 2-2 draw in Stade du 5 Juillet, Algeria.

With a 2-minute goal from Ahmed Kader and a 92nd-minute goal from substitute Mohamed Sherif, Al Ahly cancelled ES Estif's double by Ahmed Kendouci and Riad Benayad to ensure they head to the final unscathed.

Also, Wydad AC of Morocco are through to the final to book a cracking showdown with Egypt's Al Ahly after they edged out Angola's Petro de Luanda in a 4-2 aggregate.

Wydad AC had deskinning the Petro de Luanda 3-1 amid their home supporters in the first leg of the semifinals clash of CAF Champions League at the 11 de Novembro Stadium, Angola

and went on to play a one-all draw at Mohammed V Stadium, Morocco.

A 28th-minute canceller from Wydad AC midfielder, Yahya Jabrane, was enough to send the Moroccan club to book a second CAF Champions League final clash in five years with Al Ahly.

Meanwhile, the Al Ahly await the decision of the Court of Arbitration of Sports (CAS) over the CAF's decision granting Morocco the hosting rights for the grand finale of the CAF Champions League.

A statement issued by the Egyptian club after the appeal to CAF was not granted, noted that they have decided to seek a redress, backed up by documents, from CAS and appealed to CAF not to disrupt the judgement.

CAF, defending its decision, noted that Royal Morocco Football Federation was given the right to host the 2022 CAF Champions League finals after their contender, the Senegalese Football Federation, withdrew its bid.

## 'No good sports facilities to help athletes excel'

President of Nigeria Athletics Federation (AFN), Tonobok Okowa, has lamented the lack of standard sporting facilities to support the development of athletes into world-class stars.

Okowa said this in the third edition of the All-Comers National Athletics Championship at MKO Abiola National Stadium, Abuja.

The AFN President appealed to governments at all levels to develop sporting facilities in their territories to serve as springboards to athletes' longtime dreams of excelling on the international stage.

"The major challenge of the athletes in Nigeria is lack of facilities for their training ahead of any major competition," Okowa said in the closing ceremony of the two-day event held in Package A of the stadium.

According to Okowa, this

edition which is the third after the maiden edition was held in Samuel Ogbemudia Stadium, Edo State, in March, followed by a second in April in Yaba College of Technology Sports Complex, Lagos State, serves as an avenue to scout new talents ahead of African Senior Athletics Competition coming up by June in Mauritius.

He said, "The objective of it all is to select the athletes to represent Nigeria at the forthcoming 22nd African Senior Athletics Championships in Mauritius. "Many new athletes have now been discovered and picked. They have been making waves, competing with the older athletes, and coming out with a better time than the earlier one in the grassroots development programme.

"I am therefore happy that this development is making way for the numerous



younger ones who are getting pushed," the AFN President acknowledged.

Okowa commended the event which he highlighted, fast-tracks the development of athletics among the grassroots.

Furthermore, he praised the coaches and athletes for their commitments to the sports and assured them of improved welfare packages.

He said, "The federation is set to come up with welfare

packages, both for the athletes and coaches, and the more they work the better they become."

The AFN, while disclosing that the objective of the event was achieved, conceded that the names of the new talents discovered will be released until Monday.

However, the 22nd African Senior Athletics Championships is scheduled to hold in Mauritius from June 8 to June 12.



# NFF gets ministry's nod over S'Eagles coach

By **OVIRI KELVIN**, and  
**ADAKU WALTER**

Jose Poseiro has been appointed as the Head Coach of Super Eagles after the Federal Ministry of Youth and Sports Development headed by Sunday Dare granted the approval of the nation's football governing body to engage the Portuguese coach.

Several world-class coaches were shortlisted for the Super Eagles' top job after the disappointing outing by the team, led by interim coach Augustine Eguavoen, in the 2021 African Cup of Nations in Cameroon.

Former Barcelona boss Ernesto Valverde, former PSV coach Philippe Cocu, and former PSG and France coach Laurent Blanc were all shortlisted alongside the Portuguese gaffer, but the NFF, after the screening, found Poseiro most eligible for the job.

However, the Sports Ministry unsatisfied with the selection process conducted by the NFF, after the latter forwarded the name of

Jose Poseiro as the chosen candidate, told the nation's football governing body to do a thorough screening and also give a level playing ground to all the candidates.

The Sports Ministry reminded the NFF that the senior men's national team coach would be paid from the coffers of the federal government and as such, demanded that a proper job, devoid of sentiments, favouritism, and partiality, be done.

Snippets from an anonymous source revealed that the Sports Ministry would have preferred a local coach to take over the Super Eagles job, with Sunday Olise in the loop for consideration. This is a move totally in variance with the NFF's position to hire a foreign coach.

According to the NFF, Poseiro is expected to lead out the Super Eagles for the first time during the upcoming tour of the United States of America, during which the three-time African champions will slug it out with Mexico and Ecuador 'A' Teams in prestige friendlies.



The NFF also announced that former Nigeria international forward, Finidi George will now be 1st Assistant to Poseiro, with Salisu Yusuf to be 2nd Assistant as well as Head Coach of the CHAN and U23 National Teams. Usman Abdallah is 3rd Assistant while Eboboritse Uwejamomere will be the Match Analyst and another former Nigeria international, Ike Shorounmu will be the

Goalkeepers' Trainer.

Meanwhile, an unconfirmed report divulged that Jose Poseiro was favoured by the NFF owing to certain criteria that edge him ahead of other contenders.

His willingness to live in Nigeria and the terms of his contract that put the country on a safer side should the sweet romance that exists between both parties goes sour, are all but a few that made him the job's favourite.

## 'United, Juventus target Gravenberch, wishes to leave Ajax'

Dutch holding midfielder, Ryan Gravenberch is ready to leave Ajax to ply his trade in a different club. This is according to Ajax director, Edwin Van Der Sar.

In an interview with De Telegraaf, the former Manchester United legendary goalkeeper noted that several of the club players have received interest from various European clubs.

Van der Sar disclosed that one of its players, André Onana, has undergone medicals to join Inter Milan with right-back Noussair



Mazraoui also on his way out of Johan Cruyff Arena.

According to the Ajax director, the performance of the Dutch top-flight

club, in the domestic and European competitions, has engineered a fleet of clubs to swoop in for their players.

He said that the club will further pay rapt attention to transfers, a resolve to protect the ambition of the club.

"We say goodbye to a goalkeeper and right back", Van der Sar told De Telegraaf, referring to Onana and Noussair Mazraoui.

"And we have a midfielder with a wish to leave.

"When you play so well in the Champions League, there will naturally be

interest in many players. That makes sense, but we also want to maintain our ambitions. We will continue to watch transfers carefully," he added.

Gravenberch has attracted interest from United whose new coach Erik Ten Hag would want to have at the club. Juventus is also targeting the 19-year-old to fill up the void existing in the La Vecchia Signora's midfield.

The youngster still has a contract with de Godenzonen until 2023, but the club will not hesitate to sell if he refuses to extend his contract.

## China relinquishes Asian tournament hosting rights

China has relinquished its hosting rights for the Asian Cup 2023 tournament scheduled to take place in June 2023 over the recent rise of Covid-19 in the Asian country.

The Covid-19 scourge, the worst China have witnessed since the outbreak of the pandemic, has necessitated the Chinese Football Association (CFA) to relinquish its hosting rights having formally notified the Asian Football Confederation (AFC).

AFC, after reviewing China's proposition, conceded that the country's reason to relinquish its hosting rights for Asia's flagship national team

tournament, slated to hold in eight cities including Shanghai, is cogent.

Shanghai, in total lockdown since last month, is the city where the new Pudong Football Stadium was built and unveiled in October 2021.

"The AFC acknowledges the exceptional circumstances caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, which led to the relinquishment (by China) of its hosting rights," the AFC said in a statement.

Although the AFC is yet to decide on succeeds China in hosting the tournament, the Asian football governing body said it will announce details about the tournament in due course.

## 'Retired Tyson Fury trains, does workouts'

Tyson Fury's trainer, SugarHill Steward, said the undefeated professional boxer still trains fervently despite calling it a day after knocking out Dillian Whyte to retain the WBC heavyweight title.

Fury hailed as the Gypsy King, revealed after the bout that saw him extend his undefeated record to 33 in April, that he needed to retire in one piece to spend more quality time with his family.

According to Steward, who trained the 33-year-old boxer to knock out Deontay Wilder in a bout held at T-Mobile Arena, Paradise, Nevada, USA in October last year, he respects the decision taken by the WBC champion.

The boxing trainer noted that they do spend quality time together where they barbecue together, asserting that Fury is still very active in the gym.

"Tyson came to me and wanted to win the Deontay Wilder rematch, I helped him do that, I was okay with that. Now his decision to retire I'm happy to help him with that too," Steward told Sky Sports.

"We barbeque, we take trash out to the tip, we just live regular right now. He still trains, he still works out, it's something he loves to do, I'm happy with his decision and for him to be able to be with

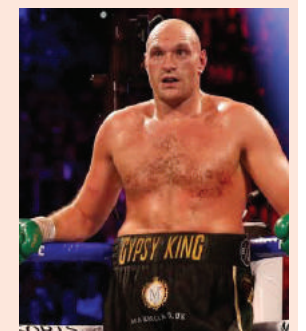
his family and spend time with them.

"This man has been working his whole life doing that to have his family be a part of that. Being able to take care of them, do things and have adventures with them. I'm very happy for him.

"It's just his choice. There's something inside his brain, his head telling him to retire. I have to respect that 100 per cent," he added.

However, sports lovers and boxing promoters are mounting pressure on the adamant Fury to come out of retirement and take on UFC heavyweight champion Francis Ngannou, who was in the ring to cheer him up after he defeated Dillian Whyte.

Moreover, if the Gypsy King had not retired, he would have fought, in a unification bout, whoever wins in the rematch between Anthony Joshua and Oleksandr Usyk.



## Karboubi becomes first female referee to officiate football final in Morocco



Royal Moroccan Football Federation (FRMF) have appointed a female referee, Bouchra Karboubi, to officiate the final of this year's Throne Cup.

This is the first in the history of Moroccan football that a woman would be selected to officiate a football final.

Karboubi, who will be assisted by a fellow female assistant referee, Fatiha Jermoumi, is a CAF and FIFA certified referee.

Interestingly, the female referee, also a police officer, is the first of her gender to have officiated in the

Moroccan Premier League. Karboubi has also officiated in various continental tournaments.

The Throne Cup final fixed at Grand Stade d'Agadir, today, Saturday, May 14, 2022, is between AS FAR and Moghreb Tetouan.

Karboubi, despite playing active roles in the recently concluded 2021 TotalEnergies AFCON in Cameroon, is a notable figure in the women's football competitions.

Following the above, the Moroccan female referee was selected as part of the VAR team in the AFCON final between Egypt and Senegal.

## NOC initiates inclusion of women in sports politics, management

By **ADAKU WALTER**

Nigeria Olympic Committee (NOC) is taking a bold step in ensuring increased participation of women in sports administration and politics by organising a two-day seminar to address the key challenges they face.

The seminar with the theme: "Sports Politics: Women Inclusion," is for women at a senior career level who are interested in Sports Politics.

According to NOC, it is also for women representatives on the Board of National Sports Federations and States Sports Associations, which took place

in Lagos on May 13 and 14, 2022 at Golfview Hotel and Suites, GRA, Ikeja, Lagos.

In a release signed by the Public Relations Officer, NOC, Phemmy Adetula, the objectives include: Understanding and discussing the challenges women face in sports politics.

It will also proffer new solutions to these challenges by helping the women to connect with other colleagues, sponsors, supporters, and mentors that will support them on their career path. It will help them identify short- and long-term career and leadership visions and goals while creating a plan to achieve these visions.



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# Children, soldiers killed by suicide bomber

By **OROWO VICTORIA OJIEH** with agency report

Three children and three soldiers have been killed in an attack on a military vehicle in Pakistan's restive northwestern region bordering Afghanistan. The mountainous frontier separating Pakistan and Afghanistan has long been a hive of militant activity, with fighters using the porous border to escape state security forces.

At the weekend, a suicide bomber detonated in a small market near Miran Shah in North Waziristan, just 26 kilometers (16 miles) southeast of Afghanistan.

Pakistan's army said three children aged between four and 11 years-old were killed in the "suicide blast" alongside three soldiers in the heavily militarized area.

"The bomber came by

foot and blew himself up when a vehicle of security forces passed by," a local government official said.

Pakistan prime minister Shehbaz Sharif said that "murderers of innocent children are enemies of humanity and Islam".

"We will not sit in peace until we hunt down these barbarians and those who patronize them," he added in a statement.

The attack has not yet been claimed by any militant groups.

The Pakistani Taliban -- Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) has a long history of plotting strikes in the region.

The group is responsible for some of the bloodiest chapters of recent Pakistani history. But after a brutal massacre of nearly 150 schoolchildren in Peshawar, a 2014 military offensive crushed the movement and drove its remaining members over the border into



Afghanistan.

Since the Afghan Taliban returned to power in Kabul, Islamabad has increasingly complained that it is offering safe haven to militants staging

attacks on its side of the border.

However, Saturday's blast came in the midst of a ceasefire to facilitate peace talks.

In a letter, TTP leadership had warned fighters "not to violate

the decision taken by the central command."

Separately on Sunday, police said that two Sikh shopkeepers were shot dead by two gunmen riding a motorbike in the northwestern city of

Peshawar, 30 kilometers (19 miles) from the Afghan border.

Local police chief Muhammad Ijaz Khan said that "both the men died on the spot and the gunmen escaped from the scene."

# Stop carnage against Igbo now, Ohanaeze youths tell Tambuwal

By **CHARLES ONYEKWERE**, South-East Correspondent

Ohanaeze Ndigbo has expressed outrage over the reported attacks on Igbo people and businesses in Sokoto State.

Several reports in the media indicated that businesses of the Igbo in Sokoto were subject of attacks as Muslims protested against the arrest of two suspects involved in the killing of Miss Deborah Samuel, a female student accused of blasphemy. The protesters were



**Mazi Okwu Nnabuike**

said to have attacked and looted shops belonging to South-Easterners.

In a statement, Ohanaeze Ndigbo Youth Council

Worldwide said it was enraged that Ndigbo could become subject of attacks over an issue they knew nothing about.

President-General

of OYC, Mazi Okwu Nnabuike, said that it was provocative that such mayhem could be unleashed on the peace-loving Igbo residents. Okwu charged Sokoto State Governor Aminu Tambuwal to ensure that there would be no repeat of such 'mindless attacks.'

"We are enraged that Ndigbo are once more victims of an unprovoked attack in Sokoto State over an issue that has to do with a Christian student from Niger

State. It is quite sad that Ndigbo have remained endangered species in Nigeria, justifying the quest for secession by separatist groups led by the Indigenous People of Biafra, IPOB.

"The news we are getting from Sokoto, which we have confirmed to be true, is totally unacceptable and we demand that there should be no repeat of such carnage.

"Governor Aminu Tambuwal must see to it that Ndigbo and their properties are

protected in Sokoto State. Any further attack on them will come with dire consequences. We also demand that those whose properties were looted must be compensated by the government.

"Ndigbo have suffered so much in this country and we are warning that enough is enough. If they repeat this aggression against our people, it would come with a commensurate reaction," Okwu added.