

# Four confirmed dead in Kano explosion

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

■ **Govt launches investigation**

**K**ano State Police Command has confirmed the death of four persons in an explosion in **Aba Road** situated in

Sabon Gari area of the city, saying the blast was from a gas cylinder.

There was anxiety after a blast went off in the Sabon Garib area of Kano

on Tuesday. There was confusion regarding the cause of the explosion as some sources alleged that it was a bomb blast. Details of casualties were also sketchy.

Speaking during a visit with his

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# The Trumpet

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# Preparations in top gear for PDP primaries

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PDP presidential aspirants: L-R: Bauchi State Governor, Bala Mohammed; former senate president, Bukola Saraki; Rivers State Governor, Nyesome Wike; Sokoto State Governor Aminu Tambuwal and Mohammed Hayatudeen in a group photograph during a recent visit to the Rivers State



# Preparations in top gear for PDP primaries

By **TUNDE JOSHUA**,  
Politics Editor, Abuja, **Isaac  
Olamikan** (Benin City),  
**CHARLES ONYEKWERE**  
(Abakaliki), **CHRIS  
EZEONOH** (Port Harcourt)

**P**reparations are in top gear for the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) presidential primary election. Party chieftains led by chairman of the Convention planning committee, Senator David Mark inspected MKO Abiola Stadium, Abuja venue of the primary election.

Members of the planning committee, Governors Samuel Ortom of Benue, Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi of Enugu, Ifeanyi Okowa of Delta and a former Katsina State governor, Shehu Ibrahim Shema on Tuesday inspected facilities at the 7,000 capacity Velodrome section of the stadium granted for the May 28 / 29 event.

The Trumpet gathered that the PDP had earlier applied for the use of the Eagles Square, Abuja but the request was rejected because the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) is billed to hold its presidential primary on May 30/31 at the venue.

To ensure proper allocation of the MKO Abiola Stadium, Sports Minister, Sunday Dare conducted the PDP chieftains round the stadium on Tuesday.

Meanwhile, the party has extended dates for Congresses and primaries.

A statement from the office of the National Publicity Secretary, Debo Ologunagba indicated that National Working Committee (NWC) of the party approved the extension.

The party, consequently wrote the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to notify it of changes in dates.

In the letter jointly signed by both the national chairman, Dr. Iyorchia Ayu and national Secretary, Senator. Sam Anyanwu and addressed to the INEC chairman, Prof. Mahmood Yakubu, the PDP fixed Saturday May 21, 2022 as date for State House of Assembly primaries and Sunday May 22, 2022 for House of Representatives primaries.

Primaries for Senate seats now hold on Monday May 23, 2022 and Governorship primaries in states hold on Wednesday May 25, 2022.

With the letter, it is expected that there is no change to the May 28 and 29 date fixed for the presidential primary election.

Meanwhile, a social-political pressure group under the aegis of Esan South East for Justice, Tuesday, condemned reports reaching it over what it described as the criminal delisting of Barrister Ken Imansuagbon (aka Riceman) as a national delegate of the party for the council area.

Imansuagbon had last weekend at a Congress conducted at Ubiaja, the administrative headquarters of Esan South East Local Government Area and supervised by INEC officials won with 156 votes against his opponent Giwa Agbomere who scored 50 votes.

While appealing to Governor Godwin

Obaseki to intervene in the matter, they also called on Independent National Electoral Commission, INEC, the Police and the DSS to investigate and ensure those behind the



**PDP National Chairman, Iyorchia Ayu**

dastardly act are exposed to save our democracy.

In a statement released by the Coordinator of the group in Benin, Imafidon Ernest, said the report to disenfranchise the former PDP governorship aspirant from the delegates' list is undemocratic and called on Senator Iyorchia Ayu and the National Working Committee (NWC) of the party to call to order the state chairman of the party, Tony Aziegbemi and his cohorts.

They also expressed shock that despite the fact that the Congress was conducted in a conviviality atmosphere and the people elected their preferred representative to the forthcoming national convention of the party and certificate issued to the winner, Imansuagbon, some dubious characters went ahead and submitted fake list to the national leadership of the party and delisted the delegate for Esan South East.

"It is no longer news to our group that Tony Aziegbemi is out to do the hatchet bidding of his pay masters to the detriment of the people of his locality. What a shame.

"We are however using

the opportunity to call on the national Chairman of the party, Iyorchia Ayu, to intervene quickly against this impunity. It is clear that the action of the perpetrators is fueled by greed, political gangsterism, criminal tendency and selfishness to continue to fuel crisis and division in the state PDP.

"As a group, we are drawing the attention of the leadership of the party to address this anomaly. The people of Esan South East have spoken loud and clear last weekend with their votes for choice of Imansuagbon as their delegate."

Also, Ikeoha Campaign Organisation, says it has uncovered plans to frame, arrest, and detain supporters of a former Deputy President of the Senate and governorship aspirant in Enugu, Senator Ike Ekweremadu, ahead of the PDP primary election in the state. It also alerted the public to alleged plans to unleash cultists on Ekweremadu's supporters.

The campaign organisation revealed this on Monday in a statement signed by the Director-

General, Charles Ogbo Asogwa, calling on the heads of security agencies and the leadership of the PDP in Enugu State to take note and nip the plots in the bud.

He said: "Credible intelligence has alerted us to sinister plans to plant arms, ammunitions, and other implicating items on the properties of notable Enugu and PDP chieftains resolutely supporting Senator Ike Ekweremadu's gubernatorial ambition. The aim is to arrest, arraign, and have them consigned to Correctional Centres to ensure that they are out of circulation until after the primaries and 2023 general elections.

"Nigerians should recall that the Chairman of the PDP in Okpatu Ward, Udi LGA, Paulinus Ugwu (Ayaya), is still detained in the Enugu Correction Centre on trumped-up charges and refused bail by the Enugu State Judiciary for many months now. His continued detention is primarily to keep him away from the primaries where he is a statutory delegate. Likewise, several of our supporters have been charged to court for baseless offences to weaken our struggle for a New Enugu State."

The Organisation said it was equally in possession of credible intelligence pointing to plans to use a confraternity group to intimidate and attack its supporters.

"They also plan to unleash a particular confraternity group on Ekweremadu's supporters to intimidate and muscle them out of their legitimate political convictions and choices," the group said.

"It is recalled that during our May 6th, 2022, press conference, we projected graphic footage and images of attacks unleashed on our supporters at the instance of or by government officials some of whom were clearly shown or confessed in that footage and pictures. This was most dastardly and widespread during the April 30th, 2022, three-man delegates election and all the incidents dating back to 2021 have been formally reported to the law enforcement agencies.

"Consequently, we wish to alert the Inspector-General of Police (IGP), Director-General of the Department for State Security (DSS), Commandant-General of the Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps, the military service chiefs, the General Officer Commanding (GOC) 82 Division of the Nigerian

Army, and all the security agencies with a view to relating with their relevant commands to ensure that the evil plots do not come to pass.

"Likewise, this is a call on the leadership of the PDP in Enugu State to work with the relevant security agencies and party leaders to ensure that every plot capable of jeopardizing the party's cohesion and chances in the forthcoming elections is thwarted," the campaign organisation concluded.

In a related political development, a High Court sitting in Port Harcourt, the Rivers State capital, has adjourned to May 20, 2023, ruling on bail application by the embattled PDP governorship aspirant, Farah Dagogo.

The federal lawmaker was brought into the court room on wheel chair having been reported ill while in police detention and was admitted in a hospital.

It would be recalled that Dagogo was declared wanted by Governor Nyesom Wike who gave orders that he (Dagogo) should be arrested after the Reps member had mobilized some youths to disrupt the screening exercise for the state and national assembly aspirants in Port Harcourt.

He was subsequently charged to court on two count charge of felony and attempted disruption of PDP national and state assembly aspirants screening exercise at the state party secretariat along Aba/PH express Road in Port Harcourt

When he appeared on Monday before Justice Chiwendu Nwogu he pleaded not guilty to the charges. His legal team, led by Emmanuel Rukari, a Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN), tried to move motion for his bail, but it was blocked by the prosecution, led by the State Attorney General and Commissioner for Justice, Prof. Zaccheus Adango, who insisted on responding to the motion.

According to Adango, the defense counsel had served the prosecution with the bail application even before the defendant was formally arraigned before the court stressing that the practice direction was wrong and subject to reply. After hearing from both parties, the court adjourned for ruling on the arguments.

Justice Nwogu ordered that the accused be remanded in Correctional Centre, but allowed access to his doctors to continue with his treatment pending the next adjourned date.

## Four confirmed dead in Kano explosion

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

team to the scene of the incidence on Tuesday, the State Commissioner of Police, Suma'ila Dikko, said the explosion was not a bomb blast.

Dikko said a one-story building was destroyed, while a private school in the area was also affected by the explosion.

"It is not a bomb explosion; it is a gas cylinder explosion caused by a welder and he is the first victim. Three men and a lady lost their lives as a result of the explosion."

Dikko further said

security agencies at the scene will continue the search for other victims trapped under the building, and stressed that the Command has commenced an investigation to ascertain the real cause of the explosion.

The police boss, however, assured residents in the area of their safety and urged all and sundry in the state to be calm.

"We will continue the search for the victims trapped in the building.

But right now, we have commenced an investigation on the real

cause of the explosion, but certainly, it is not a bomb blast.

"All the security agencies are here to control the situation, but I am calling residents in Sabon Gari to be calm and law-abiding", he said.

Earlier, the Commissioner for Information in the state, Muhammad Garba, said in a statement that the blast happened at an animal feed store opposite a school.

Garba, however, said the cause of the explosion and the damage it caused had not been ascertained.

According to him, an investigation has commenced to determine the cause, impact, and measures to be taken.

He called on people in the state, particularly those living in the area where the incident occurred to remain calm while the government works with relevant agencies on the matter.

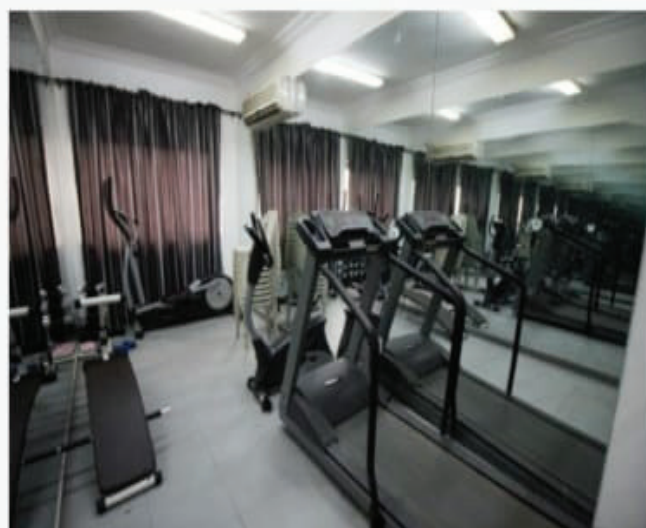
He cautioned the public against spreading unsubstantiated news and gave the assurance that the government would keep the public updated on any development on the matter.





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# NGO, The Trumpet hold leaders, media forum

## ■ Ex-VP, govs, others to speak

Political leaders and media professionals are gathering in Abuja on May 19th, 2022 to brainstorm on national and other issues.

Tagged "Leaders-Media Forum for National Development," the forum which will hold at National Merit House, is being put together by a non governmental body, Good Circle

International Organisation, in partnership with The Trumpet newspaper.

The theme of the forum is PROMOTING CITIZENS UNITY AND ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

Editor-in-Chief of The Trumpet Omokioja J. J. K. Etò, said that "there is no better time to hold this event as

there is the need for leaders and the media as well as the general public to interact and bring lasting solutions to the challenges facing our society."

International President of GCIO, Engr. Esanerovo Agbodo, in a statement, said: "The forum is meant to beam searchlight on issues bordering on the unity and empowerment of Nigerians toward

building a virile nation. The Forum is deliberately formulated to bring leaders from different political parties under one roof as a way of promoting unity among Nigerians irrespective of political parties affiliations. All Nigerian citizens are one in their search for good governance and economic empowerment. So, what we need in Nigeria is good governance and Nigerians under any political party that have what it takes to govern the country effectively

should present themselves and state clearly their visions so that Nigerians can make informed decisions in the 2023 elections."

Leaders expected at the forum as speakers include former Vice President Atiku Abubakar, Senator Rochas Okorochoa as well as Governor Yayaya Bello and Nyesom Wike of Kogi and Rivers states respectively.

The 2019 Presidential Candidate of All Progressive Grand

Alliance (APGA), Major-General John Gbor (Rtd) will be the chairman of the forum to oversee deliberations.

The forum will also examine the use of philanthropy as a way of complementing government efforts in the development of citizens in order to reduce poverty and crime rate in Nigeria.

For more details, contact Esanerovo Agbodo via [esanerovoagbodo@yahoo.com](mailto:esanerovoagbodo@yahoo.com) and 07036893533.

## Journalists to shun Delta govt

By **KELVIN OHOROR**, Warri

Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ), Warri Correspondents Chapel, has resolved to boycott all Delta State government activities.

The decision was made during its monthly Congress held at the Correspondents Chapel Press Centre, Warri, Delta State.

The Congress berated the state government over its failure to give proper account of its activities to the people, especially in Delta South and Delta Central senatorial districts of the state which fall within the jurisdiction of the chapel.

Arising from the Congress, a communique jointly signed by the chairman and secretary of the chapel, Comrades Victor Okpomor and Dele Fasan, as well as the Communique Drafting Committee, Comrade Joe Ogbodu, Sylvester Idowu and Ebenezer Adurokiya, members expressed frustrations in meeting up with expectations of their headquarters.

Congress, in the communique, decried a situation whereby Journalists from the Chapel are kept in the dark as to government functions and activities within these senatorial districts.

The Delta State government appeared far from the people in Warri, the Congress lamented, saying that



NUJ Chairman, Warri Correspondence Chapel, Comrade Victor Okpomor

there were a lot of issues that needed the government's attention were left unattended.

"What the Delta Government is good at is to keep churning out press releases upon press releases about issues and programmes bordering on governance in the state with journalists not given an ample opportunity to ask first-hand questions.

"The Congress has been inundated with series of calls and accusations alleging compromise on the part of journalists covering this part of the state over failure to acquaint the government with the plight of the people, especially in the area of some abandoned and neglected projects.

"Since we are not accessible to government's policies, challenges and programmes except what is contained in its press releases, we've been finding it difficult to meet the expectations

of the people.

"Information managers of the state government, who are supposed to acquaint the people with update of its activities, appears evasive making the job cumbersome for members of the fourth estate of the realm," Congress further noted.

## Edo vigilance group gets new boss

By **ISAAC OLAMIKAN**, Benin City

Governor Godwin Obaseki has approved the appointment of Col. Kole Oshoriamhe Omomia (Rtd) as Coordinator, Edo State Security Vigilante Network.

In a statement, Secretary to the State Government, Osarodion Ogie Esq., said the appointment is part of the Edo State Government's reorganization of the State Security Vigilante Network for better service delivery to Edo people.

The statement reads: "It is hereby announced for the information of the general public that the Governor of Edo State,

His Excellency, Mr. Godwin Nogheghase Obaseki has approved the appointment of Col. Kole Oshoriamhe Omomia (Rtd) as Coordinator, Edo State Security Vigilante Network.

"Until his appointment, Col. Kole Oshoriamhe Omomia (Rtd) had held various positions including: Battalion Adjutant, 177 Battalion, Ibadan, Oyo State; Company Commander, 146 Amphibious Battalion, Calabar, Cross River State; Company Commander, (UNAMSIL NIBAT 8) Agenebode, Edo State; Commanding Officer, Admin Battalion, Nigerian Defence Academy, Kaduna; Company

Commander, 195 Battalion, Sierra Leone; Platoon Commander, (UNPROFOR NIBAT 1) Yugoslavia; Senior Special Assistant to Edo State Governor on Security and Coordinator, Edo State Special Constabulary Police Force, amongst several others.

"This appointment is part of the Edo State Government reorganization of the State Security Vigilante Network for better service delivery to Edo people.

"Mr. Governor appreciates the services rendered to the State by the outgoing Coordinator, CSP Yusuf Haruna (Rtd) and wishes him well in his future endeavours," Ogie noted.

## Boy beaten to death for allegedly stealing phone

By **GABRIEL ELOZINO**, Asaba

A young boy has been beaten to death for allegedly stealing an android phone in Ighwrovie Community in Ughelli, Ughelli North Local Government Area of Delta State.

Locals say the young man, simply identified as 'Fine Boy' was killed by a mob following his failure to own up to the crime despite 'concrete' evidence against him.

A source who does not want his name in print told The Trumpet that the victim stole the phone and hid it not knowing he was already discovered by

the owner who raised the alarm by shouting "thief ooh thief ooh" which attracted the mob.

He said, "when they caught him, he was denying because by then he has hid the phone inside some blocks that were arranged close to where he stole the phone.

"Instead of saying the truth, he took them to the completed building where he stays with his friends, by he time they got there, they caught one while the others fled. What really angered the people was that, this same boy had been caught before

and beaten and they let him go.

"But this time he was claiming to be innocent. It was after much beating, when he was at the point of death, that he confessed that he stole the phone and told them where he hid it, inside the blocks. When they searched the place, they saw the phone but by then he had already collapsed and died. The friend was beaten but was later left alone because he was not part of the operation. He too is in critical condition in the hospital."

The source further applauded the actions of the mob, saying

they no longer sleep comfortably due to the activities of criminals in the area. He added that, "we cannot enjoy breeze even when everywhere is hot because we have to close our windows otherwise before you wake up, something must miss from your house. Many houses have been burgled, especially on Sundays when the occupants go to church. So to me it serves them right. If they are treating them like this, criminality will reduce drastically."

The source revealed that the corpse of the victim was later taken away by men of the police force.



## We constructed gas conversion plant, not NGMC, say fabricators, welders

By ISAAC OLAMIKAN

Edo State chapters of the Fitters Senior Staff Association of Nigeria (FISSAN) and the Nigeria Welders Association (NWA) have said the Osiomo Gas Plant in Ologbo, Ikpoba-Okha Local Government Area is not owned by Nigeria Gas Marketing Company Limited (NGMC), a subsidiary of the Nigerian National Petroleum Company (NNPC).

Speaking to journalists in Benin City, the associations who are fabricators of the gas plant said the project is the brainchild of the Managing Director of Osiomo Power Company, Dr. Uwa Igihon.

Chairman of Edo FISSAN, Comrade Uyi Harrison said the union and their welders counterpart were responsible for the fabrication, building and construction of the gas conversion plant under the invitation of Dr. Igihon.

He said, "We did the welding, fabrication and installation of the Osiomo Gas Conversion Plant. Dr. Uwa was the person who invited the two unions to join in the building of the gas plant."

"Recently, also, he invited the two unions to fabricate another four-inch pipeline which was done and he is the one who pays us and the person we know as the owner, not NGMC."

"The materials we used in the fabrication, building and construction of the gas plant were brought from Warri in Delta State, as well as Lagos and Port-Harcourt in Rivers State," he added.

On his part, Chairman Edo NWA, Comr. Enoma Osaro said when Dr. Uwa wanted to employ their services, was not sure about our competencies and professionalism, adding, "When he interacted with the unions, he was satisfied and gave us the job."

He said, "We know Dr. Uwa as the owner of the plant. We don't know any other person but him. He engaged us throughout the process of the fabrication and construction of the gas plant."

## Edo progresses on deployment of smart waste mgt technology

By ISAAC OLAMIKAN

Edo State Government has said it is recording remarkable progress with the deployment of its newly launched smart waste management technology, e-TRASH, extending the novel initiative to communities following the success recorded in the pilot phase.

The e-TRASH plastic and aluminum waste redemption scheme is a brainchild of the Edo State Nigeria Erosion and Watershed Management Project (Edo-NEWMAP) to curtail the indiscriminate disposal of plastic waste into stormwater infrastructure and natural moats, among others.

The e-TRASH technology eliminated over 400 kilograms of plastic waste clogging drainages in its first week of

deployment to communities across the state.

Project Coordinator of Edo NEWMAP, Dr. Tom Obaseki at a one-day training for members of the project Community Interest Groups (C.I.Gs) on waste management said the state government's commitment to mitigating the adverse effect of waste materials threatening to render drainages and such similar flood infrastructure ineffective informed the development of the initiative.

The Edo NEWMAP also sensitized waste managers in Gpiona, Iguosa, Ogiso, Queen Ede and Uroa flood erosion catchment areas in Benin City on the novel waste management redemption scheme, e-trash, as part of efforts to extend the scheme to more communities in the state.

Obaseki said the e-TRASH which stands for Electronic Transaction in Waste Resources for all Users and Household, was developed in collaboration with some relevant MDAs and various sponsors for waste compliance, adding, "This is aimed at assisting in the reduction of plastic and aluminum wastes that ends up deposited and clogging drains and other infrastructure."

He further noted, "This workshop was convened to encourage residents who are users of these waste products to embrace their redemption and recycling instead of indiscriminately disposing them into drains, which in turn, ends up rendering the state flood infrastructure useless during yearly rainfall."

The Project Coordinator described the app as a user-

friendly electronic device that enables uninterrupted payments within the value chain, noting, "A recycle bank allows participants to receive payments for plastics and aluminum wastes redeemed at designated redemption centres, besides rewards at every accumulation point level reached on every transaction completed."

He said following the positive feedback from the pilot phase of the project deployment, "participants are expected to intensify efforts at sensitizing more residents other than those of the immediate community where the project has intervened so as to be able to reach out to residents of flood feeder communities generating and bringing wastes through floods into drains."

## NDLEA arrests wanted baroness, seals mansion, drug bunks in Delta

By PAUL MICHAEL, Abuja

Suspected backbone of a major cartel distributing drugs in Delta and adjoining states has been broken following the arrest of a wanted 59-year-old alleged baroness, Bridget Oghenekevwe Emeka, a.k.a Mama, by operatives of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency, NDLEA, at her palatial mansion. She allegedly cooks and distributes Crack Cocaine, Methamphetamine and other illicit substances.

Nine of her staff and associates were also arrested in coordinated simultaneous operations at her expansive residence and drug bunks where she accommodates drug users and sells illicit substances to them and others in parts of Warri, Delta state.

According to a statement on Tuesday by NDLEA's Director of Media and Advocacy, Femi Babafemi, "Apart from various quantities of Crack Cocaine, Methamphetamine, Molly, and Loud seized from her home and drug bunks; a pump-action gun, 15 cartridges, documents, two



Mohamed Buba Marwa

cars, mobile phones, and drug paraphernalia such as sodium bicarbonate and polythene wrappings were also recovered for

further investigation."

Babafemi added that five of her staff who cook, cut, package, and distribute the drugs were found

in her house located at Favour Street, Otukutu, Effurun Warri while four of her associates were equally arrested at her drug bunks in other parts of the town during the raids by Strike Force officers of NDLEA supported by the military.

"The drug baroness has been under surveillance for weeks after her identification as a major distributor of illicit drugs in the South-South state. Bridget cooks Crack Cocaine into Crack Cocaine for local distribution and consumption in drug joints."

"Some of the paraphernalia for making Crack recovered from her house include sodium bicarbonate, which is the main adulterant and recipe for making crack cocaine, as well as transparent nylon used in wrapping the finished product," Babafemi added.

Chairman/Chief Executive of NDLEA, Brig Gen Mohamed Buba Marwa (Rtd) commended the officers and men involved in all the processes leading to the eventual execution of the operation plan. He also appreciated the Armed Forces for their unwavering support for the agency.

## Suit against NDDC, minister stalled

By AHERHOKE OKIOMA, Yenagoa

Absence of counsel of Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) on Tuesday stalled hearing of a suit challenging the use of sole administrator to administer the interventionist agency.

Odighonin Nwadiighi Adienbo and 10 others had filed a suit at a Federal High Court sitting in Yenagoa presided over by Justice Isa Dashaen opposing the use of sole administrator to

run the NDDC. The plaintiffs contended that the concept of sole administrator was alien and contrary to the NDDC Act which provides for a board constituted of representatives of all states of the Niger Delta.

The Attorney-General of the Federation (AGF) and NDDC are listed as first and second defendants in the suit marked FHC/YNG/CS/135/2021. When the case was mentioned, Samuel Brisibe, told the court that he was mandated by Counsel

to NDDC in the suit, Ume Kalu (SAN), to inform the court of his absence following cancellation of his flight.

Brisibe, further appealed to the court to adjourn the case to enable Kalu to personally argue the case as he was not abreast with developments and was merely drafted to inform the court of the reasons behind Kalu's absence in court.

Goodness Onuoha, Counsel to the plaintiffs, however frowned at the reason advanced by Brisibe adding

that the Counsel ought to have arrived at Yenagoa on Monday ahead of Tuesday's hearing date. Onuoha urged the court to prevail on the defence to refrain from delaying the dispensation of justice. Dashaen adjourned the suit to June 28 for continuation of hearing.

Dashaen had on April 5th, 2022, granted an interim order restraining the Federal Government from using sole administrator to run the NDDC pending the determination of the pending suit.



# Lagos rehabilitates, reintegrates sexual offenders

By Benjamin Omoike, Metro Editor/Lagos Bureau Chief

A programme to rehabilitate and reintegrate sex and domestic offenders if they eventually get back into the society is ongoing by the Lagos State Domestic and Sexual Violence Agency, DSVA.

It is to provide psycho-social support for willing sex offenders.

The programme is being held in sessions and groups at the Kirikiri and Ikoyi Maximum Security Custodial Centre.

The agency says the programme is facilitated by a group of its trained

psychologists and the Institute of Counseling, on a weekly basis where inmates are expected to take responsibilities for their actions and enlightened on healthy sexuality.

The sex offenders rehabilitation programme is as a result of partnership with the Nigerian Correctional Service, Lagos State Command and the Institute of Counseling of Nigeria.

The agency further highlighted that offenders are also armed with peer and professional support to manage thoughts, feelings and behaviours that lead to inappropriate sexual behaviours.

DSVA noted that it is



imperative that incarcerated adult sex offenders are rehabilitated and supported to reduce the possibility of them perpetrating the same crime if eventually they are reintegrated into the society.

Stating also that the

inmates would also learn specialised strategies to deal with sexual addiction and sexual compulsive behaviours, amongst many other positive coping skills.

While the rehabilitation programme does not offer

amnesty or excuse abusive acts, it seeks to reduce any reoccurrence of child sexual abuse and rape cases from sex convicts in future.

Providing Psycho-social support is in line with Governor Babajide Sanwo Olu's

commitment and resolve to provide holistic response to Sexual and Gender Based Violence in the State and this rehabilitation programme is targeted at convicts from the Maximum Security Custodial Centre, Kirikiri Apapa and Maximum Security Custodial Centre, Ikoyi, the statement added, noting that the Lagos State Government continues to reiterate its commitment to winning the war against Domestic and Sexual Violence, as it encourages victims and survivors of these heinous crimes to take advantage of support services which can be accessed via its toll free line- 08000-333-333.

## Gunmen kill PDP chieftain in A'lbom

By ISAAC JOB, UYO

Gunmen have shot dead a former chapter Chairman of the People Democratic Party (PDP), in OrukAnam Local Government Area, Sir S.J Ntefre, at his residence in Ekparakwa and escaped leaving behind a Toyota Jeep used in the operation.

The Trumpet gathered that the incident occurred on Sunday morning, as the gunmen attempted to abduct the former party chieftain in his compound.

An eyewitness, Mrs Sarah Williamson, told our Correspondent that the gunmen arrived at the residence of the deceased in a black jeep and dragged him outside, while other members of the gang were shooting to scare neighbours.

Continuing, she stated that the gunshots attracted youths who raised alarm against the gunmen, causing the whole community to chase the hoodlums.

She said by the time the youths started to chase the suspected kidnapers, they had already abducted and

taken the party chief into the nearby bush and shot him severally, while some members of the gang, who were waiting in a standby black jeep, abandoned it, ran out of the car and escaped through the bush.

"Community people came out and rolled the jeep way from that place. I don't know where they took it but I am sure they ran away leaving the car behind."

It was gathered that the youths quickly searched the bush and discovered the corpse of the party chieftain lying in a pool of his blood.

A resident of the area told our Correspondent that last Sunday, the Catholic Priest of X Parish, along Ekparakwa - Etinan Road, was abducted and later regained freedom after three days in the kidnapers den.

The resident, who pleaded anonymity, said the killing of the party chieftain may not be unconnected with forth coming House of Assembly party primary election coming up within the week, as the deceased party chieftain never sup-

ported the ambition of one of the contenders.

"This incident has some political contents. The deceased was known for being upright in his stand against some contenders in House of Assembly race in the area."

"This one has surprised everybody. Though kidnapping has been rampant in this community in the last eight months, but this one is politically motivated."

"Every person kidnapped in this community pays ransom and regains freedom but this is being killed," he queried.

In a telephone interview, AKwa-Ibom State Police Public Relations Officer, SP Odiko Mcdon, said he has not received official report on the incident but promised to react once the Command is briefed.

"We have not received any report on the incident. Let me confirm from our men in the area. I cannot comment on any incident I am not fully briefed. Once I have the report, I will comment accordingly," he said.

## Oyo tasks monarchs on anti-graft war

By BENJAMIN OMOIKE

Oyo State Anti-Corruption Agency (OYACA) has called for the support of traditional rulers, in order to win the ongoing war against graft.

Its chairman, Hon. Justice Eni Esan (retd.), said this during a courtesy visit to the Olubadan of Ibadanland, His Imperial Majesty, Oba Lekan Balogun, at his residence in Ibadan.

She noted that local com-

munities will enjoy more dividends of democracy, if traditional institutions play active roles in the fight against corruption.

Justice Esan insisted that for the fight against corruption in the state to be effective, traditional institutions must be involved, considering their influence in the society.

She equally noted that the Governor Seyi Makinde led-administration, in line with its pledge to rid the state of

corruption, is determined to win the war; hence, the establishment of OYACA in 2020.

"We need to involve traditional institutions, because you have strong influence over the people within their domain. We are certain you receive complaints from members of the public, so we earnestly appeal to you to refer any complaints on corruption to OYACA," she said.

## Varsity supports security operations in Ogun, Lagos

By ALEX OLISE

In line with its social corporate responsibility to host communities, Covenant University, owned by Bishop David Oyedepo of the Living Faith Church (otherwise known as Winners Chapel), has donated separate Toyota Hilux patrol vehicles to the Police and Navy.

The patrol vehicles were donated to the Sango - Otta Area Command and the Navy Music and Operational Command, all located within Sango - Otta, where the Covenant University is sited.

The Trumpet gathered that the higher institution, which is adjudged to be one of the best in Nigeria, took the decision to support the

Police and the Navy, following decisive steps the two agencies have taken to reduce crime in Sango - Otta and its Lagos environs.

It was gathered that Bishop David Oyedepo, who owns the higher institution, has also commended the new Area Commander in Sango - Otta, Musa Mohammed, an Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP), who, since assumption of office, has taken bold steps to embark on familiarisation tour to the University, as well as other higher institutions in the area.

The Area Commander has continued to employ community policing strategy to reduce crime in the area, in line with the vision of

the Commissioner of Police, Ogun State, (CP) Bankole, who has continued to ensure that Ogun State is crime-free, which is the focus and objective of the Inspector General of Police, (IGP) Alkali Baba Usman, who was on courtesy visit to the state, shortly after he was appointed the Inspector General of Police.

It would be recalled that before now, major crime-related issues had been recorded in Ogun State, which prompted the adoption of new strategies, especially deployment of crack police operatives to monitor the bad roads, which criminals usually use as a spot to attack and rob road users and residents of the state.

## 'Yahoo boys' reveal how they force women to sleep with dogs for ritual

By ALEX OLISE

A video posted on the microblogging site, Twitter, has shown a suspected internet fraudster, known as 'Yahoo Guy', detailing how he and others generate money through ritual.

The Trumpet understands that in the video, the suspected Yahoo boy could be heard advising another person to join him, saying that the individual simply needed to spend N4 million to obtain the charm, which

could 'reward' the person up to N100m.

The suspected Yahoo boy was heard saying in the video that they buy dogs and make sure a lady sleeps with them, and that the more the dog sleeps with a person, the more money the yahoo boys make.

Meanwhile, this comes amid an alleged trend in the Lekki area of Lagos, Nigeria's commercial hub, of ladies sleeping with animals for N1.5 million.

The Trumpet had previ-

ously stated that a woman had come out to explain her actions, claiming that she simply slept with a dog and did not murder anyone. The Nigeria Police Force had initiated a manhunt for her, only for reports to say she had died some days ago.

Although bestiality (sex with animals), is legal in many nations; in Nigeria, anyone caught sleeping with animals, such as dogs, goats, cows, sheep, and so on, faces a 14-year prison sentence.

## Poly student allegedly dies after 11 rounds marathon intercourse

A final year Civil Engineering Student of Polytechnic Ibadan, identified as Oromidayo, has allegedly died after he allegedly had an 11-round marathon sexual intercourse with his girlfriend, Aramide.

The two students were reported to have vacated the

school yesterday, following the cancellation of their semester examinations by the school management due to protest staged by students and drugged themselves before the engagement.

Oromidayo was later found dead in the room, while his partner was

barely alive and was rushed to University Teaching Hospital, Ibadan, where doctors confirmed she had a five percent probability of surviving.

Meanwhile, there is no means of communication with Aramide's parents at the point of filing this report.



# Coalition backs ongoing NANS nationwide protests

## •Deplores slaying of female student

By **TUNDE JOSHUA**, Abuja

An amalgamation of youths organisations within and outside Nigeria, advocating a better society, has backed the ongoing protest by students in states of the nation over the prolonged strike action by university teachers.

The Coalition for A Better Nigeria, with base in the South West, which expressed serious worries about the six months' strike of the Academic Staff Union of the Universities (ASUU)

said academic calendar in the institutions have been greatly distorted.

Member organisations of the coalition unanimously commended the Nigerian students for coming out to protest this stalemate, deadlock and academic impasse.

The Coalition was disappointed that upon all frantic efforts made so far by the ASUU, Federal Government and National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS) to resolve this logjam in good time, it is not yet Uhuru!

While we are seriously appealing to the Federal Government to take this matter serious more than ever before, the Coalition bemoaned the demand by ASUU that it's members be fully paid salaries due to them while the industrial action lasts.

"We must also remind the ASUU members of their inalienable right to get their 6 months' salary paid to them for work not done, which will be to the disadvantage of the Nigerian economy.

"This simply means, the tax payers' monies are being used to pay for the zero service being rendered by the

members of the Academic Staff Union of the Universities," the Coalition cautioned.

It stressed that the main victims of the crisis are the students, students' Communities and society at large.

"The summary of this is that while the Federal Government is trying to meet up with a reasonable number of the 2009 agreement which it made with the ASUU, it's also important for the ASUU to soft pedal for the time being, if it really has the interest of the above victims at heart.

"Otherwise, we may need to come in fully

and join hands with our NANS Comrades to quickly unravel this unpalatable situation. "Enough is enough" and "A stitch in time saves nine."

Commenting on the dastard killing of a female student, Deborah in Sokoto, the Coalition strongly warned individuals to desist from taking laws into their hands or encourage jungle justice.

"We sympathise with the bereaved families, friends, associates and the government of Sokoto State on the beating and burning to death of a 200 level student of

Shehu Shagari College of Education, Sokoto State, Deborah Samuel, which occurred last Thursday in broad daylight. While the 2 holy books, Bible and Quran, preach love, peace, and harmony, some people with ulterior motive always go to the extreme in the name of religion.

"The brutal killings are just on the increase in Nigeria simply because nobody has ever been logically prosecuted and punished for such inhumane treatment. Therefore, it is high time we brought this to an end in the interest of peace," said the Coalition.

## Varsity donates patrol vehicles to police, navy in Ogun, Lagos

By **ALEX OLISE**

In line with its social corporate responsibility to host communities,

the foremost Covenant University owned by Bishop David Oyedepo of the Living Faith Church (otherwise known as Winners Chapel) has donated separate Toyota Hilux patrol vehicles to the Police and the Navy.

The patrol vehicles were donated to the Sango – Otta Area Command and the Navy Music and Operational Command all located within Sango – Otta where Covenant University is sited.

The Trumpet gathered on Monday morning that the higher institution adjudged as one of the best in Nigeria decided to support the Police and the Navy following decisive steps the two agencies have taken to reduce crime in Sango – Otta and its Lagos environs.

It was gathered that Bishop Oyedepo who owned the higher institution also commended the new Area Commander Sango – Otta, Musa Mohammed, an Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP) who since assumption of office has taken bold step to embark on familiarization tour to the university as well as other higher institutions in the area.

The Area Commander had continued to employ community policing strategy to reduce crime in the area in line with the vision of the Commissioner of Police Ogun State (CP)



Alkali Baba Usman

Bankole who has continued to ensure that Ogun

State experiences crime-free on the focus and objective of the Inspector General of Police (IGP), Alkali Baba Usman, who was on courtesy visit to the state shortly after he was appointed as the IGP.

It could be recalled that before now, major crime related issues had been recorded in Ogun State which prompted the adoption of new strategies, especially deployment of crack police operatives to monitor the bad roads which criminals usually use as a spot to attack and rob road users and residents of the state.

Recently, the Agbara Police Division arrested the runaway ritualist who cut off the head of his girlfriend after conniving with his two other friends to practice the act of money ritual.

The two friends were earlier arrested but the main suspect fled until he was caught inside a village in Ogun State. The three are currently facing court charges for murder.

## Fuel scarcity looms in Ondo, Ekiti over petrol tankers driver crisis

By **FRIDAY OMOSOLA**, Akure

The management crisis quaking the Ore Unit of the drivers wing of the Nigeria Union of Petroleum and Natural Gas Workers (NUPENG) in Ondo State has worsened as the executive members of the union were reported to have been locked out of their offices by aggrieved members.

The crisis was said to have been followed by the refusal of the current leadership of the union to leave office after spending eight years. The leadership was also accused of intentionally opposing conducting an election for the emergence of new leadership

Following this crisis, it was confirmed that fuel scarcity might be home to ring in Ondo and Ekiti

states as Ore units supply both states with fuel.

The Trumpet gathered that the unhappy members shut off the Unit office in Ore, and pledged not to allow the leaders who have spent eight years to return to the office as well as demanded for a new election that would create a new administration for the association.

Some of the aggrieved union members in Ore Unit who were under the Warri Zone further denounced the zonal leadership of the association in Warri of conspiring with Ore Unit leadership to enable them continue rolling without conducting fresh election.

The Former chairman of Akure branch, Akintomide Olatutja while speaking with journalists said the zone leadership has been endangered not to authorize any tanker

to hold up fuel supply to Ondo and Ekiti States to leave the depot.

He said: "We have petitioned the commissioner of police and copied the Director of DSS, Civil Defense and the Special Adviser to the Governor on Union matters because we are demanding that an election should be conducted and nothing else."

H added that after the petition, the Commissioner of poliswor-evited the two parties and settled the matter amicably with agreement that the zonal leaders will come from Warri on the 29th of April and address us, adding that why they were waiting for the date to come, they realized that on the 21st of April some people in Warri were sworn in by the leadership in the Warri

as caretaker members.

The people were: chairman, Waheeb abilo-ye; Tajudeen Aduwo, deputy chairman 1, Henry Akinmoladun, Deputy chairman 2, Sunday Akindasha, and others, were already in Warri and the leadership in the Warri sworn them in as caretaker members.

Akintomide maintained that unless an election is conducted the office will be closed down and they will not allow the leaders to go into the office, adding that some in the executive have spent 16 years.

He said, "We have it on good authority that the Warri leadership was bribed them."

Akintomide further accused the former member of the National Assembly who is the patron of our association in the Southwest as the one masterminding the crisis, saying he doesn't want any election to hold.

"Unless an election is held, we are not allowing them to enter this office. We are determined to see this to the end.

He revealed that tankers have been stopped to get to ore, especially if the waybill carries Ore, adding that they tried using the Ekiti waybill but now they have started stopping Ekiti too.

According to him "They have stopped tankers from bringing fuel to Ondo and Ekiti states.

## Suspected hoodlums attack student union bus

By **FRIDAY OMOSOLA**, Akure

Suspected hoodlums have attacked a Toyota Hiace bus belonging to the Students' Union Government of Adekunle Ajasin University Akungba-Akoko.

They were attacked while on the way to join the organized protest over the prolonged ASUU strike by students of Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba Akoko, AAUA, Olusegun Agagu

University of Technology, Okitipupa, OAUSTECH, and the Federal University of Technology, Akure, FUTA.

The Trumpet learnt that the incident occurred along Ogbese road in Akure North Local Government Area of Ondo State.

A video of the incident received by our correspondent showed that the rear glass of the vehicle was broken by the attackers.

An eyewitness told The

Trumpet that "the students were bashed by an Okada rider who was confronted for hitting the bus but he was said to have slapped one of the students

"His action annoyed the students which later resulted in unrest in Ogbese."

President of the union, Ogunsanm Kolade, confirmed the incident.

He alleged that the hoodlums damaged the bus.



## Nigerian varsity students block major roads in Oyo and Ondo

Stories by **OROWO VICTORIA**  
**OJIEH** Education Correspondent

Tertiary institution students in the country have taken to the streets on Monday to block major roads in Oyo and Ondo States.

This was done in protest against the prolonged industrial action by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU).

Students have staged rallies in these states to express their dissatisfaction with the ongoing strike, as part of their efforts to bring the Nigerian government and academia to a sensible conclusion after several failed negotiations by both parties.

While protesting students of the University of Ibadan blocked the school's entrance in the state capital, those from Ladoké Akintola University of Technology (LAUTECH) barricaded the major road where the institution is situated in Ogbomoso.

LAUTECH students also

called on the state governor, Seyi Makinde, to ensure public universities in the state back out of ASUU just as it was done in some states for academic activities to resume.

According to them, LAUTECH has been through a series of industrial crises in the past and should not be made to face more hardship.

Students of the Federal University of Technology (FUTA), Akure, Ondo State, barricaded the Akure-Ilesa Highway, protesting the prolonged strike by the Academic Staff Union of Universities.

The action of the students forced many motorists and travellers to be stranded, many commuters travelling along the Ife/Ibadan expressway were delayed in Ile-Ife because varsity students blocked the road in protest.

The protesters were chanting different solidarity songs and displaying placards with various inscriptions.

Some of the placards read,



Gov. Seyi Makinde

"End ASUU Strike", "Save our future", "Stop Toying with our Future".

In Oyo, some of the placards are addressed to the state governor, one of the placard read, "Gov. Seyi Makinde save our future, rescue LAUTECH".

The protest came a week after NANS president Sunday Asefon declared nationwide protest. A mass action tagged 'Operation Test Run' in all 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT).

Asefon made this known following the Academic

Staff Union of Universities announcement that it has extended its strike for 12 more weeks.

NANS leadership also condemned the strike extension by ASUU and had directed all its members to block all federal roads in protest against the continued shutdown of public universities in the country since February.

"The national action tagged 'Operation Test Run' shall be held in all the 36 states of the federation. Federal roads across the 36 states shall be occupied for a minimum of three hours".

On February 14, ASUU began a four-week warning strike to stress its demands. Some of the demands that led to the industrial action include renegotiations of the 2009 agreement, payment system for members, and revitalisation of the public universities, among others.

ASUU extended the action by another two months on March 14 to give the government more time to address all of its demands.

Last Monday, the union's president, Prof. Emmanuel Osodeke said the ongoing strike would be extended for another 12 weeks.

## ABU student renounces Studentship over killing of Deborah Samuel

A Post Graduate student of the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, has renounced his Studentship, over the murder of Deborah Samuel, a student of the Shehu Shagari College of Education, Sokoto.

In a letter addressed to the Vice Chancellor of the University, the postgraduate student of Political Science, Oyeniyi Oyewole Iwakun, stated that he no longer felt safe at ABU, Zaria, Kaduna.

Iwakun said the incident that happened in Sokoto state makes his stay in the institution skeptical because he no longer felt safe being a student of the university.

Kaduna state has similar features of religious and tribal intolerance, orchestrated insecurity and uncurtailed activities of bandits and terrorists.

He also said he was withdrawing to protest the murder of Deborah.

"I, Oyeniyi Oyewole Iwakun, a Political Science postgraduate student with the admission number:

P21SSPS8018 wishes to inform you of my decision to renounce my studentship at the Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria the letter states.

"This decision is in protest of the gruesome murder of an innocent 200 level student, Miss Deborah Samuel of Shehu Shagari College of Education, Sokoto on Thursday, 12th May 2022 by some uncultured and evil minded religious extremists.

"I opine that no matter her offence, nothing justifies the action of her murderers. More worrisome as shown in the online video in circulation on the social media is the supervised and organized manner of her killing and cremation in a broad day light" Iwakun added.

Deborah, a 200 level student of Shehu Shagari College of Education, Sokoto, was on Thursday, May 12, killed for alleged blasphemy. Her murderers videod the gruesome murder and posted on Social Media.

## Apostle Chibuzor Chinyere finally contacts family of slain girl Deborah Samuel, offers scholarship to siblings

The General Overseer of Omega Power Ministries, Chibuzor Chinyere, has finally spoken with the bereaved family of the late Deborah Samuel, a female student who was killed by a mob in Sokoto.

The Port Harcourt-based clergyman made a post where he requested to speak with the family and promised to get a job for the father of the deceased and open a shop for her mother.

The Pastor got to speak with the family through a video call and disclosed that they agreed to move down to Port Harcourt to start a new life where they would live in the church's free estate.

He also promised to sponsor the rest of Deborah's siblings in school up till university level.

Last Thursday, Deborah Samael, a 200-level student of Shehu Shagari College

of Education, Sokoto, was stoned and burnt on the school grounds for alleged blasphemy.

The bereaved parents who spoke to newsmen following the tragic incident said none of their seven surviving children will attend school again.

Reacting to this, the clergyman took to his social media platforms to ask those who are in contact with Deborah's family to reach out to him, promising to relocate the entire family to Port Harcourt and enroll Deborah's siblings in school.

Sharing photos of his video chat with the grieving family, Apostle Chibuzor Chinyere wrote:

"GOOD NEWS!!!!

APOSTLE CHIBUZOR FINALLY CONTACTS THE FAMILY OF LATE DEBORAH SAMUEL AND OFFERS EDUCATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP

ABROAD TO HER IMMEDIATE YOUNGER BROTHER.

Apostle Chibuzor Chinyere has been able to contact the family of the slain Girl, Deborah Samuel of Shehu Shagari college of education in Sokoto state.

Deborah's parents agreed to relocate to port Harcourt to begin a new life and In a video call, Apostle Chibuzor offered Deborah's immediate younger brother an educational scholarship abroad.

He also promised to give Deborah's other siblings automatic scholarship to university level. In addition, free housing, job for the father and a business for the mother was promised to the family of Deborah.

Deborah's family who was with their pastor, neighbors and extended family members were grateful and thanked Apostle Chibuzor immensely."





## 'Defection threat in Kano APC forced Ganduje to drop senatorial ambition'

By TUNDE JOSHUA, ABUJA

**K**ano state governor, Dr. Abdullahi Ganduje was said have dumped his senatorial ambition ahead of the 2023 election.

Ganduje who obtained the All Progressives Congress (APC) senatorial expression of interest and nomination forms may not contest the party's primary election.

His decision, it was learnt, is a personal sacrifice to salvage the APC from likely looming political haemorrhage due to the spread of a new political platform, the New Nigerian Peoples Party (NNPP)

The APC, it was further learnt, is fast losing members, particularly those ag-

grieved by alleged neglect by Ganduje and Kano State chapter leadership, to the new party formed by a former governor of the state, Senator Musa Rabi'u Kwankwaso.

Determined not to encourage further depletion of APC in Kano, the governor was compelled to shelve his ambition to pave way for a serving senator, Barau Jibrin representing the Kano North senatorial district.

Sen. Jibrin who is chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriation, was angered by the truncating of his governorship ambition by Gov. Ganduje.

With the resolution reached at an Abuja parley by Kano APC stakeholders, it was believed that tension will be doused and stability will return to the party.



Ganduje

## PDP can maintain its winning streak in Taraba, says gubernatorial aspirant

By SURU CHARLES, JALINGO

For the People's Democratic Party (PDP) to retain power in Taraba State in the next political dispensation, one



Mafindi

of the numerous governorship aspirants, Halkiah Bubajoda Mafindi, has said that it must ensure that all the contestants are given a level play ground.

Speaking in an exclusive interview with The Trumpet in Jalingo, the state capital, the new Electoral Act (as amended) he said has "improved on our electoral process meaning that the political parties are going to be guided by this law."

The aspirant who said he sees a "possibility that there will be a level playing field for all aspirants" also claimed to have confidence in the leadership of the party at the state level "at least as at today".

Stressing that "I cannot predict the future or shy away from the fact that the dynamics keep changing" one, as opined by him "can not vouch that the changes can not throw up challenges."

"You can only hope that even where there are challenges, the synergy that

exists between the stakeholders and the leadership of the party will ensure that the right thing is done." He said.

Believing that the party has all the needed structures on ground to return power to the state, that, according to him, can only be actualized when internal democracy is allowed to strive.

"On the whole" as made known by him,

"I think the People's Democratic Party (PDP), has the responsibility to return power in Taraba state and the best way to do that is to ensure that every aspirant is given the opportunity to do that.

Mafindi, who also spoke exclusively on the present security challenges confronting the state, said if given the mandate, Tarabans will be going to beds with their two eyes tenaciously closed.

Citing the recent bomb blasts in the state, which he viewed as the "footprint

and Hallmark of terrorism that seems to be the order of the day" the challenge, according to him "has always been that the governors are constrained by the Nigerian structure because as Chief Executives of their respective states, they have no control over the security agencies operating in their domains and they are unable to grapple with the situation."

Admitting that he sees that as a challenge, he quickly accepted that "but there is a window of opportunity that exist which is a home grown security establishment."

"When there is a synergy between the security agencies and the subnationals" he believed "they can operate more effectively" adding that "We have seen states that have collaborated with these agencies and have enabled them to be more proactive and effective by providing logistical aids to them."

## 'No change in APC's schedule of activities'

By TUNDE JOSHUA, ABUJA

All Progressives Congress (APC) has denied purported changes in its 2023 election timetable and schedule of activities as reported in some quarters.

National Publicity Secretary, Felix Morka therefore asked the public to disregard the purported adjustment making the rounds on social media.

Morka in a statement described the unauthorized report in circulation as fake and should be treated as such.

He said "our attention has been drawn to a story of purported adjustment to the

APC timetable and schedule of activities for 2023 general elections which is making the rounds on social media.

"The story should be disregarded as fake news," the APC scribe said.

He added that the party's timetable and schedule of activities for 2023 general elections remained as earlier published.

He restated the approved schedule as follows: Governorship primaries to be held on Friday, May 20th, 2022, State House of Assembly on Sunday, May 22nd, 2022, House of Representatives on Tuesday, May 24th, 2022 and Senate on Wednesday, May 25 2022.

## INEC warns against electoral misconduct

By KELVIN OHOROR

Delta State Resident Electoral Commissioner (REC) of Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Rev. Monday Udoh Tom, has warned that the Commission will not hesitate to cancel the results of primary elections conducted under questionable circumstances.

Speaking at the INEC Consultative Meeting with political parties and Head of security agencies in Asaba, Rev Udoh said the decision became imperative to prevent a likely breakdown of law and order.

According to Udoh, "we want peaceful primaries so that the other elections would be very easy. When we have a turbulent primary, it makes the other elections very difficult. That is why we are calling this meeting to advise all political parties to carry their members along in the processes of congresses and primaries. No one should be shut out; they should not give us a venue for the primaries then go to another location to do their primaries."

He particularly warned against the practice of giving the electoral umpire a particular time for their shadow elections, only to reschedule it for midnight, "and expect INEC to accept their report. If INEC does not monitor what you do, we would write down our own report, we would not accept what they bring to us."

He further stated that no plea of ignorance from political parties over the changes in the 2022 Electoral Act would be entertained because in his words, "you cannot just go to the field without knowing what you are supposed to do."

"If they (the political parties) are not aware, then it is not the fault of INEC. It would be their problem because they do not know what it entails to carry out a political assignment."

"If the political parties fail to go through the Electoral Act as amended, there is going to be litigation, they will be found wanting because they did not do the right thing. The law is a respecter of no man. That is why APC suffered in Zamfara."

"What happened in Zamfara during the 2019 general election is a good example; it is a case that everybody should look at. Why was their winning overturned in the favour of another party? It is because of a faulty congress and primaries. If the foundation is faulty, the preceding elections would be faulty."

"We are trying to ensure all primaries are faultless, so by the time there is litigation, we know it is the party that erred," he asserted.

Meanwhile, Assistant Commissioner of Police, Saad Ibrahim, who represented, Commissioner of Police, Delta State Command, CP Ali Muhammed Ari, declared that there would be zero tolerance for those who set out to disrupt primaries of any political party.



Morka



*You've submitted your forms for the office of the Governor of Benue State; so what do you want to bring to the table that will be new from what is already on ground?*

Thank you very much. My name is Samuel Odeh. And I come from Otopko local government area of Benue State. I want to say that those who could not buy the form didn't do so because they didn't have the means. Our party in Benue held a retreat where a deliberate mechanism was put in place by consensus to trim down the number of people who were contesting this race. So, it doesn't mean that they didn't have the resources to do so. I want that to be established. Secondly, I am not running for the office of governor of Benue State for the sake of running. I am running because I know that I have something to offer to the people. I have been a local government chairman and I have been a special adviser in the state in charge of the entire 23 local governments and the chieftaincy institutions. That was the position I occupied before I was invited by former President Goodluck Jonathan to join his cabinet as a minister. And so I believe that I have cognate experience at the local, state and the national levels to be able to bring that experiences to bear on the development of my state. I have also, with all modesty, prepared myself intellectually and politically, to be able to discharge the functions of office of governor of Benue State. I have held positions, and in those positions I have performed. At least that is the preponderance of opinion. So I believe that out of all the 10 of us who are running under the APC platform, who have bought the forms, the people of Benue know better, they will choose a credible person who will lead the state.

First, at the level of our primaries and then at the general election, I am confident that I will emerge the candidate of the APC in Benue State. In 2019, I was the deputy governorship candidate of the APC in Benue State and in my own senatorial district, we won eight out of nine local governments. And so I think that I'm bringing something to the table.

## My roadmap for Benue State'

A former Minister for Niger Delta Affairs in the President Goodluck Jonathan administration, **Samuel Odeh** is one of the 10 aspirants of the All Progressives Congress (APC) in Benue State. In this chat with journalists in Abuja, he rates his chances of winning the party's ticket as high, says the APC can't be questioned for requesting aspirants to sign withdrawal form while he talks about his blueprint on security in the state. Politics Editor **TUNDE JOSHUA** brings excerpts.



Samuel Odeh

*There has been having a lot of security challenges that has made Gov Ortom to cry out the world. What do you intend to do to ensure that the safety*

*of the people is assured?*

Well, security challenge is something that is of concern to all citizens of our state. It is also a national problem. It

is not only happening in Benue, even at the sub- regional level in Africa, we have a lot of issues from the Maghreb, all the way into the sub - region. So, we need to have a holistic approach to the issue of security. It has to start from the base. We need to provide employment for the young. There are teeming number of graduates or people who are unemployed but not graduates. We need to provide skills to the young people because once you don't do that, there is a large reservoir of people that can be harvested for acts of criminality. And so, the first thing to do is job creation. Put in place a robust system that will provide employment for people and lift the poor people out of the status that they are now. Once you do that, most of these issues will abate.

*People complained about a clause in your party's guidelines, requesting you to sign a letter of withdrawal. Did you sign that letter?*

The party is supreme. And I have signed the form. As people said, the freedom of association is personal. I'm a lawyer and I also know that you are not compelled to join the APC. If the guideline says you should sign that form, so long as it is not something that is illegal, then you have to comply. If you don't comply, it means that you have not completed the form. So I have submitted a completed form including that so called page 18 that you're talking about.

*Does that mean you are ready for consensus? That is the assumption of course.*

Of course yes, I could be a beneficiary of consensus. So why will I be against it, it is less contentious and it is profitable.

## AfDB President Adesina denies interest in APC presidential race

By **TUNDE JOSHUA**, ABUJA

An assumed presidential aspirant of the All Progressives Congress (APC), Dr. Akinwumi Adesina, has ended speculations over his ambition by denying interest in contesting for the 2023 presidency.

The President of the African Development Bank was heavily linked with the APC presidential race after some interested Nigerians home and in the diaspora purchased the N100m nomination forms urging him to run for office.

Adesina instantly denied his association with the person and The Trumpet gathered that it was difficult for them to deliver the form to Adesina.

In a letter he personally signed and dated 17th May, 2023, the AfDB boss said "I have been extremely humbled by several calls from Nigerians at home and abroad that I should consider running for the office of the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

"I am very touched by all who have

gone to great extent, with such huge sacrifices, of their own volition, to consider me worthy to be proposed for potential consideration. The coalition groups of youth, women, farmers, physically challenged and well-meaning Nigerians that have done this have expressed their genuine free will, political right, freedom of expression and association for my consideration, with the interest of Nigeria at heart.

"While I am deeply honored, humbled and grateful for all the incredible goodwill, kindness, and confidence, my current responsibilities at this time do not allow me to accept to be considered.

"I remain fully engaged and committed to the mission that Nigeria, Africa and all the non-African shareholders of the African Development Bank have given me for Africa's development.

"I remain fully focused on the mission of supporting the accelerated development and economic integration of Africa."



Adesina



## 'Why promotion of Magu's illegal, corrupt'

By PAUL MICHAEL, DEFENCE EDITOR, ABUJA

Professor of Criminology, Don John Omale, has said the promotion of former acting chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Ibrahim Magu, to the rank of Assistant Inspector General (AIG) of Police in his retirement would be ultra vires, illegal, corrupt as well as null and void if it falls within the period of his indictment by Justice Ayo Salami's panel.

Salami's seven-man panel was inaugurated on July 3, 2020, with a 45-day mandate to conclude its findings and submit a report on alleged infractions by Magu as acting Chairman of EFCC from 2015 to May 2020.

Magu's suspension from office was announced on July 10, by the Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Abubakar Malami.

A 22-point allegation against Magu titled "Flagrant Abuse of Office and Other Infractions Against EFCC Chairman, Ibrahim Magu" was previously submitted by Malami to Buhari.

According to Malami, "the Acting Chairman of EFCC is not acting in the overall best interest of the country and the policies of this administration due to its mismanagement and lack of transparency in managing recovered assets; diversion of recovered assets for personal enrichment; neglecting to investigate the P & ID case as directed by the President; flagrant disobedience to directives and to court orders due to the following;

"Final Report of the Presidential Committee on Audit of Recovered Assets (PCARA):



Magu

mismanagement and lack of transparency in managing recovered assets: mismanagement of recovered assets and diversion for personal enrichment: an investigation of P&ID: failure to provide timely response on the investigation of cases/ individuals relating to legal/consultancy fees in The Paris Club Refunds to states & LGAs: threatening of judicial officers: and petitions against the acting chairman."

It, however, took the Salami panel over three months to conclude its findings with lots of drama that followed the leaking of its activities to some online mediums despite being done in secrecy. The report of the panel, which was submitted on November 20, 2020, to President Muhammadu Buhari, is still undisclosed to the public. Sources, however, said Magu was indicted on the White Paper.

Despite his indictment and retirement from the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) on May 5, the Police Service Commission (PSC)

on Monday said Ibrahim Magu and seven other Commissioners of Police have been promoted to AIG.

Ikechukwu Ani, PSC spokesman, announced Magu's elevation, adding that his promotion alongside other senior officers was approved at the 15th Plenary Meeting of the commission on Friday.

He added acting DIG John Ogonnaya Amadi was appointed a substantive Deputy Inspector General of Police, while Zama Bala Senchi was also appointed a Deputy Inspector General of Police.

He said, "The Plenary Meeting which began on Wednesday, May 11, 2022 was presided over by Alhaji Musiliu Smith, Chairman of the Commission and former Inspector General of Police. DIG Amadi, currently acting,

replaced late DIG Joseph Egbunike and will be representing the South East in the Force Management team while DIG Senchi was the most senior in the AIG cadre.

"Other decisions taken by the Commission at the Plenary were the promotion of 57 Superintendents of Police earlier skipped when their mates were promoted to the next rank of Chief Superintendents. Other categories of Superintendents of Police such as the Administrative Staff College of Nigeria, Course 4, Inspectors Course 37 and regular ASP's course 25 and 26 were also promoted to Chief Superintendents having met established requirements.

"The Commission also promoted 1698 Assistant Superintendents of Police (ASP) to Deputy Superintendents of Police, 6119 Inspectors who attended the recent Departmental Selection Board (DSB) were promoted to ASP11

while 1965 ASP11 were confirmed ASPs. The Commission also approved the conversion of 19 Engineers from General Duty to Specialists and upgraded to the rank of Deputy Superintendent of Police which is the statutory entry level for Pilots and Aircraft maintenance engineers in line with Aviation scheme of service."

The eight Commissioners of Police promoted to AIGs with Magu include Abraham Egong Ayim, Okunlola Kola Kamaldeen, Andrew Amieengheme, Akeera Mohammed Younous, Celestine Amechi Elumelu, Ngozi Vivian Onadeko, and Danladi Bitrus Lalas.

Reacting to the promotion, Prof Omale who spoke exclusively to The Trumpet, said Magu's promotion would be in order if he was due for the promotion before his indictment.

He, however, said the PSC would be promoting and glorifying corruption in NPF if Magu's became due for promotion within the period of his indictment.

He said, "If Magu was due for promotion from Commissioner of Police to the rank of AIG before his indictment and had taken all the qualifying course examinations and interviews but the promotion was delayed or was not released before his indictment, he is legally qualified to be promoted to the said rank of AIG with effect to the due date.

"This is possible because his indictment can't affect what he was due for before the indictment, because the law (or his indictment) can not take retroactive effect.

"However, if his due date for promotion from Commissioner of Police to AIG falls within the period of his indictment, then the promotion to AIG, is procedurally ultra vires, illegal, corrupt, and null and void."

## 'Why EFCC arrested Accountant-General'

By PAUL MICHAEL, ABUJA

Accountant General of the federation, Ahmed Idris, was arrested by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) for an alleged fraud of N80 billion.

Idris was reportedly arrested after his failure to honour the invitation of the commission on several occasions.

This was revealed by the EFCC in a statement, noting that the Accountant General raked off the funds through bogus consultancies and other illegal activities using proxies, family members, and close associates.

The statement reads: "Operatives of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) on Monday, May 16, 2022, arrested serving Accountant General of the Federation, Mr Ahmed Idris in connection with diversion of funds and money laundering activities to the tune of N80billion (Eighty Billion Naira) only.

"The Commission's verified intelligence showed that the Accountant General raked off the funds through bogus consultancies and other illegal activities using proxies, family members, and close associates.

"The funds were laundered through real estate investments in Kano and Abuja.

"Mr Idris was arrested after failing to honour invitations by the EFCC to respond to issues connected to the fraudulent acts."

## Court jails fraudsters

By PAUL MICHAEL, ABUJA

Justice Darius Khobo of the State High Court sitting in Kaduna, has convicted and sentenced two fraudsters to six years imprisonment for impersonation and cybercrimes.

The convicts, Mmadubionwu Tochukwu Kingsley and Samuel Ngode Wobin, were jailed on Monday, May 16, 2022, after pleading guilty to a one-count separate charge bordering on impersonation, upon their arraignment by the Kaduna Zonal Command of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC).

The one-count charge reads, "That you Mmadubionwu Tochukwu Kingsley (m) sometime in April, 2022 at Kaduna within the jurisdiction of this Honourable Court, in an attempt to commit fraud falsely presented

yourself as one Gerald Keith, a white man and an entrepreneur on Instagram App (a social media online network), when you knew you were not, and thereby committing an offense contrary to and punishable under Section 142 (1) of the Kaduna State Penal Code Law, 2017."

"That you, Samuel Ngode Wobin (M), sometime in April, 2022 at Kaduna within the jurisdiction of this Honourable Court in an attempt to commit fraud falsely presented yourself as one Thomas Broussard, American military personnel stationed in El Segundo, Los Angeles, California to Jessica R. Brownskin, when you knew you were not and thereby committed an offense contrary to and punishable under Section 142(1) of the Kaduna State Penal Code Law, 2017."

They both pleaded guilty to the charge

when it was read to them individually.

Based on their pleas, EFCC Counsels, M.E Eimonye and E.K Garba prayed the court to convict them accordingly.

In his ruling, Justice Khobo convicted and sentenced Kingsley and Wobin to three years imprisonment each. They were also offered an option of a fine of N150,000 (One Hundred and Fifty Thousand) each.

The judge ordered them to forfeit the phones used to commit the crimes to the Federal Government.

The convicts' journey to the Correctional Centre started when they were arrested by operatives of the Kaduna Zonal Command of the EFCC, based on credible intelligence on their involvement in cybercrimes in the Kaduna metropolis. They were subsequently charged to court and convicted.

## IPMAN seeks EFCC support to curb oil theft

By PAUL MICHAEL, ABUJA

In a bid to curtail the menace of crude oil theft and pipeline vandalism in the Niger Delta, the Independent Petroleum Marketers Association of Nigeria (IPMAN) has sought the intervention of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC).

A statement by the EFCC said the request was made in Port Harcourt, Rivers State by the Chairman of IPMAN, Hon Bello Binna, while paying a Courtesy Visit to the Port Harcourt's Zonal Commander of the EFCC, ACE Nwanneka Nwokike, in his office.

Binna said that the EFCC is the only

agency trusted to give solutions to issues of pipeline vandalism and oil theft in the Niger Delta region.

"In the past, our efforts have been wasted, we were advised that the agency who has the mandate to make our job effective is the EFCC," he said.

He stressed that the association is more comfortable with what the EFCC is doing. According to him, "We are here to collaborate with the Agency which we are more comfortable with and we believe that with your support, our jobs will have a headway."

In his response, Nwokike said that the EFCC is working tirelessly to put an end

to the menace of illegal oil bunkering in the Niger Delta region,

He said, "I assure you that the EFCC has the desire to reduce, if not bring to an end, the menace of illegal oil bunkering."

Nwokike also stressed the need to educate youths within the region on the ills of illegal oil bunkering.

According to him, "We will educate our youths on the dangers of this, which is part of our mandate, educating our youths on why they must leave these illegalities. We must all come together to see how we can tackle this menace. I want to assure you that we will work together."



## Labour Day blues: what hope for the Nigerian worker?

**M**ay 1 every year is International Labour Day. The Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) uses the day to promote the ideals she represents as a trade union, especially in the struggles for the common good of all workers. This year it was no different. Parades were held and solidarity messages were sent to workers. Some State Governors stayed away from the parades for fear of receiving jeers from angry workers. Yet, the celebration was dark, gloomy, and filled with despair. Reason: The Nigerian worker is hungry, angry, and weary of unfulfilled promises!

The Nigerian worker is either poorly paid as a civil servant or exploited and enslaved as an employee in the private sector, especially by foreign firms and employers. He has little rights in the workplace. Many are casual workers who are underpaid and maltreated. They are ferried in inhuman trucks to and from work sites by construction firms enjoying mega contracts from the government. Today many workers are not sure about receiving their gratuity and pension at retirement. They fear joining the existing queue of suffering pensioners. The poor living condition of the Nigerian worker is exacerbated by high inflation, poor infrastructure, and official corruption. Many firms are either suffering from poor performance or are on the edge of going under. Many government-owned firms were killed by corruption. The first and only victims have been the workers who become jobless!

The history of the labour movement in Nigeria has been a chequered one; both as a body, and in its leadership. It has been a story of conflicts with colonial, military and democratic governments. It has also been a story of betraying and of unholy romance with the powers that be. This depends on the dispositions of the leaders of the labour movement an epoch has produced. The NLC

started in December 1978. It emerged from the merger of four trade union organisations, the Nigeria Trade Union Congress (NTUC), Labour Unity Front (LUF), United Labour Congress (ULC) and Nigeria Workers' Council (NWC).

From the Nigerian Trade Union Act (Section 1 of the Trade Union Act of 1973, as amended in 2005), the major aim and purpose of a union is the representation of workers in the regulation of workers' wages and working conditions. The first industrial action of workers in Nigeria was recorded in 1897. The labour movement in Nigeria has contributed immensely to the general welfare and well-being of workers. Its leadership, especially the doyen of the Movement in Nigeria, Michael Athokhamien Omnibus

Imoudu, were at the fore in the fight for independence from Britain. Labour leaders like Frank Kokori fought for the restoration of democracy in Nigeria. Comrade Hassan Adebayo Sunmonu is a renowned leader of labour in Nigeria.

Many believe that the working condition of workers would have been better if the leadership of the labour movement in Nigeria were ideological clear-headed and morally upright. They have betrayed the average Nigerian worker and masses. They stand by and watch politicians and directors loot the country's wealth into one of penury. Labour is most unconcerned when these once viable firms are put down by corruption. The list of killed firms is endless in Nigeria. They include those in the textile, aviation, manufacturing, energy, oil and gas, journalism, hotel, hospitality and entertainment, etc. sectors. The health and education sectors are sick and dying. Where is the voice of labour?

It is high time the NLC realised that freedom comes by struggle! The May Day celebration today is borne out of struggle. Lately, the leadership of labour has been only associated with fuel increase as if that is the only problem in the country. They are less concerned about the non-existence of refineries in a country that once boasted of four refineries.

NLC must wake up and be at the forefront in the fight against corruption; she must champion the fight for human rights and the right of unionisation of workers. Many in the private sector are glorified slaves working under inhuman conditions. NLC must not be contented with a situation where children of the average worker – except those who have accessed corrupt funds – are left to attend poorly funded schools, colleges and universities by the government while those of politicians, directors and permanent secretaries are abroad. The NLC must fight for the rights of all Nigerian workers by reinventing itself in contemporary Nigeria.



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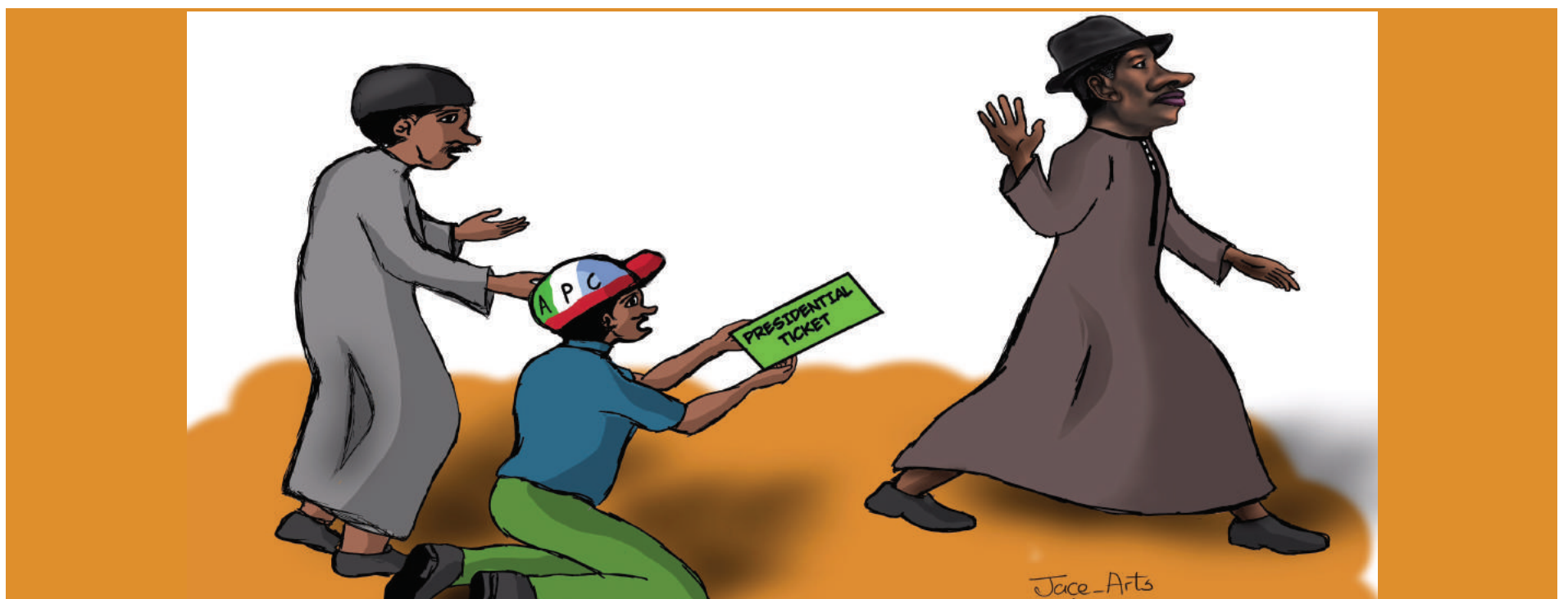
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On your marks, set... is a familiar tone of command during athletic competitions. Immediately the starter fires his pistol, the athletes take off. Some run with a genuine zeal to win the race. Some run with no conviction beyond participation and undue craving for popularity. Some are so confused they do not know exactly what they want. Some are sure they will lose, so they resort to distracting the spectators from recognizing committed contenders. At the end of the race, only one athlete will brace the tape of victory. Indeed, the foregoing concise metaphor describes Nigeria's current political terrain which has formalised the race to Aso Rock in a strange rehearsal of the Absurdist Theatre ... a regular designate of the abasement of reason and logic where purpose lacks meaning.

The race has opened new vistas to the country's internal political complexities. First, it has shown that the wealth of the country is comfortably harboured in the inner recesses of few Nigerians, who through crafty, devious opportunism have enriched themselves to stupefying dimensions. Second, it has exposed the chameleonic nature

of some Nigerians who scream lion at night but are themselves proven, marauding wolves during the day. I see Nigerians who have pretended to care for the impoverished masses, those who pretended to be guided by a Socialist, Marxist philosophy in the past shamelessly display unsteady, filthy byways of the mind in the race to Aso Rock. While at it, these people could not inspire their fictitious friends to help impoverished Nigerians with 100 million naira but could easily earn the sympathy of these friends to pay 100 million naira for party presidential forms. To understand the race to Aso Rock better, let us at once examine the different categories of the aspirants.

Some aspirants are stupendously wealthy, those who have held political positions earlier and amassed wealth to mystifying levels. Some people describe this category of politicians as greedy, plundering, insatiable knaves who do not have any meaningful intention in Aso Rock beyond fulfilling a deep-seated life-long ambition to answer Mr. President. These aspirants share some similarities with the current emperor who knew ab initio that he didn't have anything to offer Nigeria

than to drag it, by his admission, from top to bottom. Regrettably, these aspirants have all the war chest to manoeuvre their ways in Nigeria's slippery political space. In this group, you will find the infirm, those whose health conditions carry a big question mark. Nigerians can't be so stupid again. The motive of aspirants in this category does not go beyond a morbid libidinal yarning for power but unfortunately, they carry with them self-thwarting, inhibiting adornments which will ultimately submerge them down the ocean of oblivion. No, they can't make it to Aso Rock. The race was lost before it started.

There is another category of aspirants, those who have criticised APC, calling the party a church of Satan. So eventually, they have returned to their vomit, kneeling to worship at the temple of Satan simply because of their deprived hankering for power. These people know too well that in the race to Aso Rock, they can't even make it halfway before they will ignominiously lose out. The question is – if this group of aspirants know too well that they will not win the primaries much less the race to Aso Rock, why did they expend the colossal amount of 100 million naira to purchase forms? Perhaps they are banking on a settlement scheme which will see them smile away with 500 million naira in which case they will be approached by the financial behemoths to step down and turn in their supporters to them. This kind of poor degraded politics is never far away from figure and fantasy. Yet the race to Aso Rock is alive and well and some people

have already lost out.

The next categories of aspirants in the race to Aso Rock are those who stand a slim chance of succeeding the current but inactive head. Nigerians across ethnic and religious divides agree that out of these people one person has what it takes to pull Nigeria from bottom to top. It is easy to know a few in this category. They have the mathematical indices of global economic realities at their fingertips. They would not enthrone a system of power control that will see them transmute to an ultimate emperor. In these kinds of aspirants, it appears that the missing puzzle in the Nigerian equation has been found. Yet, Nigerians are wary of our political gymnastics where white can easily become black overnight. We know that in Nigeria, with the benefit of hindsight, the best do not always emerge as winners. But this time, we sincerely hope that the Almighty, the God of Heavens, will deliver us from the hands of serial political predators as we make the much-needed move to national recovery from the abyss of drudgery.

The last categories of aspirants are those who will never get to Aso Rock under any circumstances and they know it. Their indication of interest to become Nigeria's next president is in itself a huge insult to Nigerians. These are people who have been rightly accused of criminal complicity, stealing, financial impropriety, incompetence, lack of accountability and many other demeanours in their present and former positions. As governors, some of these people have not paid salaries for months in their states, they have not paid pensioners,

they have not improved the civil service sector in their states, and they have not commissioned one project in their states too, yet they have been travelling all over the country, sharing millions of naira. Hallucination is indeed real. In this category also, you find those who are still holding public offices yet refuse to resign as stipulated in the electoral law. They use the largess of their offices to induce voters and delegates toward the party's primary elections. For these people also, there is a hidden, undisclosed reason why they have gone to purchase the presidential forms when they are far from winning the election.

As 2023 approaches, every Tom, Dick and Harry wants to race towards Aso Rock. 100 million and 40 million have been rubbished and continue to be rubbished in a country generally known as the poverty capital of the world. It is gratifying to know that a few people in this country can easily donate money to fund the country's budget but it is also depressing that they will not do it. A few people can donate money to pay ASUU and have millions of youths return to school. A few people can come together and resuscitate electricity in Nigeria, thereby attracting foreign investments and creating employment. No, they will not do these things. We wait with anger and frustration to see who will win the race to Aso Rock.

•Dr. Adiele is Convener of the Third Force Movement and a member of The Trumpet's Editorial Board.

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It's been a few days now after Deborah was killed in Sokoto, Nigeria, allegedly for uttering certain words that majority of her fellow students considered blasphemous against the Prophet (SWS). Debby was killed certainly because her opinion was unpopular. I am about airing my own unpopular view at this point, but please, not about the Prophet (SWS) or any other figure in any religion. It is about religion itself: the evil created by man and that man manipulates to bring evil upon himself. Humanity will never know peace until man puts religion in the private realm where it belongs.

Many of us often read the First Amendment in the United States' Constitution: "Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion or prohibiting its free exercise". It forbids Congress from both promoting one religion over others and also restricting an individual's religious practices. We perhaps wonder why a country whose well known slogan is 'In God We Trust' turns around to forbid her people

from making any law respecting establishment of religion? So, if not respect, contempt? Or even blasphemy against the prophet(s) as in the Sokoto allegation?

The many signals in Nigeria's history ought to have compelled us to make a semblance of America's First Amendment. The May 1953 Kano Riot was first. Dominant literature says it was a clash between Northerners who were opposed to Nigeria's Independence, and Southerners who supported it. But the riot that lasted for four days and claimed many lives was very much linked to religion, specifically claim of superiority of Islam over anything. Then came the major Islamic uprising led by Maitatsine and his followers, Yan Tatsine. Many died; and I mean many. Since that time Nigeria has had no peace, and in most cases the sad stories often weave around some individuals just like the current Deborah. In 1991, Reinhard Bonnke attempted a crusade in Kano- to cure the blind and make the lame walk as he claimed.

The German evangelist nar-

**Deborah: Henceforth in Nigeria, congress shall make no law...**

rowly escaped being killed by Islamic extremists, but not without more than 12 lives as casualties. What caused killings in Kaduna and Jos around year 2000 was linked to the appointment of a Muslim politician, Alhaji Muktar Mohammed, as local coordinator of the federal programme to fight poverty. Nigerian journalist Isioma Daniel's 2012 article led to riots that caused the deaths of over 200 people in Kaduna. I recall that for that reason, the 2002 Miss World contest was moved from Abuja to London. There was this reaction to the Prophet Mohammed's cartoons that provoked serious violent protests from Islamists, leading to the death of more than a hundred people. And by 2009, the Islamist movement Boko Haram took over the fight and assumed the terrorist dimension. Today the news is about one Deborah that was gruesomely murdered by supposedly educated Islamic fundamentalists who claimed the lady was blaspheming against the prophet.

But for the fact that religion itself abhors rational thinking and promotes extreme dogmatism, there is no reason for its practice to cause chaos in the society. The world has roughly 4,200 religions, churches, mosques, religious bodies, faith groups and belief movements and they will be countless at some point in the future. Each of them holds extreme views of their prophets and claim certain supernatural potencies

and ability of their gods to act

and protect them. So, why do we fight for the gods if indeed they are real and can take actions on social issues? Christians, Muslims, Buddhists alike people prosper and live long around the world. At the same time, they meet disasters, fall sick and die. Religions' claims of superiority over one another is unintelligent. Isn't it high time we saw it as fashion in which you wear shirt and the other wears agbada but both fulfil the need to cover their nakedness? 'As in, I don't understand' as today's guys will casually yell.

To continue to promote and fund religion in public places is to breed extremism and inflict anomie. In the 2021 Budget Nigerian govt voted N2.6 billion for pilgrimage commissions amid COVID-19 constraints. That was from taxpayers, half of whom aggressively opposed it. We say religious prayers in public schools, universities and other places. Political leaders make crooked and unaccounted donations to religious projects and we fold hands crying wolves!

The signal of the evil of religion is what the US Congress saw in 1925, so, make no mistake, the First Amendments never came from the blues. It was a product of several social processes one of which is the Scopes Trial, formally The State of Tennessee v. John Thomas Scopes. In this case a high school teacher, John T. Scopes, had been accused of violating Tennessee's Butler Act which had made it lawful to prioritise

'the world of God' (bible) over

any other source of knowledge. The Modernist Scope taught human evolution using Darwinian Theory but Fundamentalists insisted it was against the Word of God as revealed in the Bible. Resulting riots soon gulped the State of Tennessee and other parts of the US. Lesson learnt from this led to the first amendment to the Constitution.

The religions- inflicted calamities that have befallen our nation are enough for us to change our constitution, and like the US declare expressly that our 'congress, immediately stop the making of laws that promote the respect for any established religion in the public place, or prohibit the practice of same.

Fela in Movement Against Second Slavery so declared as far back as the 80's. This is clearly an unpopular demand, but, make no mistake, it is like the First Amendment. The Amendment is what protects freedoms of speech, religion, press, assembly, and the right to petition the government as expected in any democracy. It is what makes the people of the United States of America the freest in the world. It is why the endless visa queues in many of American embassies in the world worth the stress. Until we toe this

path of wisdom our nation will know no peace, and of course the Debora cases we see today will be child's play in future. Sad.

•Dr. Eesuola is a member of The Trumpet's Editorial Board e-mail: foomoterribly@yahoo.com



## Lawyers berate Tambuwal over slain student's alleged killers' trial mode

### 'Charges insult to parents, Nigeria' ■ 'Charge culprits with culpable homicide'

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

Some Lawyers and human rights activists have accused Sokoto State Governor Aminu Tambuwal of being complicit in what they regard as the unsatisfactory trial of the alleged killers of Deborah Samuel, a 200-level Home Economics student of Shehu Shagari College of Education, over alleged blasphemy.

She was lynched by her schoolmates for allegedly insulting Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

Operatives of the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) had on Monday arraigned two suspects, Bilyaminu Aliyu and Aminu Hukunci, who had been arrested in connection with the lynching of the young lady.

The suspects were docked at a Sokoto Chief Magistrates' Court for their alleged participation in the crime and charged with Criminal Conspiracy and Incitement of Public Disturbance.

Reacting to the charges, a Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN) and rights activist, Ebun-Olu Adegboruwa, said the charges against the suspects insult the parents of the deceased, Nigeria and God.

In a statement titled "Conspiracy in Sokoto," Adegboruwa said Tambuwal's political ambition should not override his sense of responsibility for the life of a citizen entrusted in his care.

Giving a background to the murder, which has attracted widespread condemnation, the learned silk said he is disappointed in the governor, a supposed lawyer, life bencher, and former Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Adegboruwa said: "This crime took place in an enlightened environment in a higher institution, under the watch of security men, who were said to have been overpowered. It all started from a WhatsApp group, which has identified leaders. There are students who sent messages and threats of death on that platform. Their phone numbers are registered with NIN identification. They belong to a class in the school so they are known individuals. Images of persons who openly and boastfully confessed to partaking in the murder abound, with one displaying the match stick with which the deceased was set ablaze.

"The government of Sokoto State has by these charges shown itself complicit in this whole drama and it is most unfortunate, for a State that is headed by a lawyer, a

former Speaker of the House of Representatives and who is aspiring to rule Nigeria as its President. It is most uncharitable of His Excellency to have condoned this baseless charge. It is better to set the suspects free rather than claim to try them."

He further stressed that the aftermath of the gruesome murder, the watery charges filed and the consenting attitude of those concerned have depressed him more than the act itself.

"Nigeria cannot work this way at all. I'm truly saddened by this development. I expected the Governor as Visitor to that school to have visited the parents of the deceased, who trusted the authorities and sent their ward to school from Niger to Sokoto State, in furtherance of the mantra of a United Nigeria," he added.

While concluding he noted that if the impression gotten with all these charges is that the State itself endorsed the murder of the deceased, then we are sowing the seeds of discord and fragmentation.

"It is better for His Excellency to resign now, rather than go down in history as the Governor under whose watch a citizen was murdered and the Governor could not enforce the laws of the land but rather aided and abetted its cover-up. It is Governor Tambuwal who is actually on trial in this case," he said.

In a related development, a human rights lawyer, Inibehe Effiong, said the trial of the alleged killers of Deborah Samuel should be handled by the Sokoto Attorney-General if the state government was serious about the prosecution.

According to him, the Attorney General of Sokoto State should have taken over the matter and not the police.

He condemned the manner with which the police were handling the matter noting that the charges filed against the two suspects were trivial.

While speaking to newsmen in an interview, Effiong queried the rationale behind having the case charged at a Magistrate Court, stating that only the High Court had the jurisdiction to hear such matters. He added that the State government was unserious with the case.

He said, "At this time, the terms are not quite clear on the role they played in the case. Given they actually took part in killing her, they should be charged with culpable homicide.

"The term is the same with murder but that's what they call it over there. If they took part in the commission of the offense, they should be charged and, in any event, culpable homicide



**Gov Tambuwal**

can only be tried at the High court; the fact that this case was taken to the Magistrate court is also questionable but then, the North has its own process, they have what is called the first information report which is basically a complaint before a formal charge is made.

"From what I've read, it appears the police are either not serious about the case or they are still hunting to get the culprits because this lady was murdered in the full glare of the public and there are videos of people who confessed to taking part in killing her. All of them should be tracked down and arrested and charged for culpable homicide, except that is done, except people are



**The late Deborah Samuel**

actually convicted for killing Deborah, justice will not be said to have been done.

"The charge that they have filed against these two suspects is very trivial and it does not underscore the seriousness of the crime. Since this is a case of culpable homicide, the Attorney-General of Sokoto should take over. If Governor Tambuwal is actually serious, he should have directed the AG, actually, the Attorney-General should be the one prosecuting. I don't understand how the police are going to prosecute culpable homicide. It is not a matter for the Magistrate court.

"I have also read that over 30 lawyers appeared for them, that is an indication that a large

section of the society supported the barbarism of these suspects who killed Deborah and that is particularly troubling and that is the more reason why the state government should take up the matter because if they only stop at these two individuals with the unserious charges they filed, then they would have made nonsense of the case."

Meanwhile, the suspects, who pleaded not guilty to the crime, were represented by a team of 34 lawyers including Prof Mansur Ibrahim.

One of the defense lawyers identified as Zayyanu Aliyu Dinyadi took to his Facebook page to announce that the accused persons were charged with criminal conspiracy and inciting public disturbance, offenses that could be bailed under the Nigerian law.

Dinyadi, who claimed to be a solicitor, advocate of the Supreme Court, and human rights activist, in a now-deleted post on his Facebook page, wrote, "I was opportune to be among many Muslims Lawyers that appeared in Court today (Monday) in defense of two suspects charged by the Police in connection with the last Wednesday's Protest at SSCOE leading to the Death of Deborah Samuel (La'anatullahi

Alaiha) for Blaspheming the name of our Noble Prophet (S.A.W).

"The Suspects were charged with Criminal Conspiracy and Inciting Public Disturbance, which are bailable offenses under the Nigerian Laws.

"The matter was adjourned to the 18 May 2022 (Wednesday) for ruling on their bail application as prayed by the learned Lead Counsel Barr Mustapha Abubakar Mada."

The police in Sokoto have declared the men seen in the viral video of the murder of Deborah Samuel wanted for culpable homicide.

Public Relations Officer of the Sokoto Command, ASP Sanusi Abubakar, disclosed this in a statement on Tuesday.

"Prime suspects that claimed the murder of Deborah Samuel in the viral video were declared wanted," Abubakar said.

He called on members of the public to cooperate with the police and report to the command or any security outfit in their domain if they have information on the suspects.

Abubakar gave the assurance that the Sokoto Police Command is committed to apprehending the suspects.

"The command has already deployed all its intelligence and is on the lookout for the suspects," he added.

## Security experts task journalists on objective reportage, forward-looking laws

By **ALEX OLISE**

Foremost expert, Mr Matthew Ibadin, and public relations officers of various security agencies who spoke at a recently concluded workshop have tasked journalists to use their power to promote the enactment and implementation of laws that would favour the generality of the populace while also ensuring that they report the news objectively.

In his lecture delivered at the media workshop, Ibadin, who is the MD/CEO of Badinson Security, established that journalists have a duty to use the profession to rebrand Nigeria through positive reportage, that is, there must be collective effort deployed in projecting the good image of the country.

"This is the time for every journalist to celebrate Nigeria and we must practice the kind of journalism targeted at rebranding the country and not chasing out investors. There is what is called National Security which must come first in every reportage so as not to drive away Investors, development, or put the country in a bad light.

"This means that there is information not meant to be reported, especially matters with National Security implications, and also resist the sharing or reporting of fake news," he said.

Mr Ibadin also tasked journalists to use their media to advocate for

forward-looking laws.

"The National Assembly must be nudged to pass laws which prohibit elected government officials, appointees from the use of Generators, solar system, and other alternatives to generate power for use except for the National power source (Electricity).

"This is because Nigeria has continued to experience epileptic power supply and in many parts of the country, non-existent supply, while those who use power occasionally, pay exorbitantly for it.

"The lack of Electricity/Power supply has forced many investors and companies to relocate to other countries thereby putting millions of able-bodied youths out of employment, causing inflation of commodities and ultimately, increasing the rate of crime.

"Past and Present Governments have spent billions of naira in trying to fix this chasing all to no avail because the government, the elites, and appointees can easily afford other alternatives to the National Electrical Power Source. It is high time that practitioners of this noble profession (Journalism) use their professional pens to change the narratives.

"The media must push for laws through the National Assembly that prohibits senior government officials, appointees, and other senior

public holders from using generators and/or other alternatives to National Power in their offices and homes.

"Having a constant power supply is not rocket science. It is time to demand it and have it so that investors and artisans who have been negatively affected and chased out of business can return to their businesses, increase employment opportunities, and production, and ultimately, grow the economy. With a constant power supply, I can assure you that the rate of crime will drastically reduce as millions of our youths will become gainfully engaged."

He also wants Journalists/Media to demand that the National Assembly pass a law that prohibits elected officials or appointees from sending their children/wards to private schools/Institutions but to public schools and institutions because they are public officials.

Also, he advocated for a law that prohibits all elected government Officials, Civil servants, Appointees, and directors from using private hospitals or traveling abroad for medical treatment. Adding that the law should specify that they and their family members use public hospitals and if the need arises to travel abroad for medical attention, such individual must resign his/her appointment or position.

He said, "A typical example was the intended strike action by the Nigerian Local Airline Association due to the high cost of Aviation Fuel and which was suddenly called off because it will negatively affect the activities and life of the Elite, the Politicians and government and expose them to the dangers, insecurity experience through land travels.

"The government, the Elites, and the Politicians were quick to resolve and compromise with the Airlines. But have failed to resolve and find a long-lasting solution to the unending faceoff with the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), simply because most of the Government officials and Politicians have their children/wards schooling outside the Shores of Nigeria and have very little or no concerns for the education system here.

"The media must continuously highlight the education system until it becomes competitive and sit side by side with foreign education systems."

Ibadin also used the opportunity to tell journalists to press for constitutional reforms in areas such as the removal of State of Origin from the constitution and replacing it with the State of Residence as well as local government policing not state policing because crime is locally perpetrated.





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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	
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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	
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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	
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## PMI, BAT, others shouldn't spearhead end of child labour in tobacco farms

Stories by **EDU ABADE**,  
Business Editor

Activists have advocated that Philip Morris International (PMI), British American Tobacco (BAT), Japan Tobacco International (JTI) and Imperial Brands should not be part of activities relating to ending child labour in farms since they remain active in promoting cultivation in countries where they operate.

They also canvassed elimination of the tobacco giants and their associations with governments and United Nations' (UN) agencies in their environmental, social and governance reports of such activities.

They stated this at the fifth Global Conference on Elimination of Child Labour in South Africa which commenced on May 15, 2022 and ends on May 20, 2022, insisting that the tobacco industry has historically used child labour to infiltrate the global development agenda and portray a good image of the giants.

A report made available to The Trumpet by Executive Secretary of the Africa Tobacco Control Alliance (ATCA), Leonce Sessou, said: "The industry has tried to influence policy by partnering with various UN agencies. While it strives to be part of the global tobacco control discourse around child labour, its involvement so far has not ended the practice, but has rather ensured that tobacco companies fund such activities."

He explained that the International Labour Organisation's (ILO) integrated strategy for the tobacco sector has underscored that efforts to end child labour in tobacco farms must not be funded by entities with links to the tobacco industry like Eliminating Child Labour in Tobacco-Growing (ECLT) Foundation.

"So as representatives of governments, trade unions, the private sector, civil society, regional and international organisations, think tanks, academics and youth and children from all over the world host plenaries, presentations and side events at the fifth Global Conference on the Elimination of Child Labour, it is vital that an outcome be to integrate real solutions as provided by the World Health Organisation's (WHO) Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC).

"This primarily involves regulating bad tobacco company practices, and financing economically viable alternatives that's comprised of initiating activities that can be sourced from tobacco taxation. The tobacco companies must not be allowed to continue hindering progress in eliminating child labour and instead be made to pay for damages caused.

"Child labour in tobacco falls under "worst forms of child labour. Globally, it is estimated that 1.3 million children undergo child labour in tobacco farms. While the practice cost the global

economy an estimated US \$760 billion, the world stands to gain up to \$5 trillion if child labour is eliminated," he said.

He further explained that the hazards of tobacco handling and toxic exposure to pesticides used in tobacco farming are undisputed. Child labour in tobacco falls under the category worst forms of child labour due to the hazardous nature of work in the tobacco sector.

According to the ILO Conventions, child labour in such sectors should be prohibited along with forced labour and commercial exploitation of children including prostitution and pornography. In Africa, some countries like Malawi have laws that prohibit or penalise people that allow children to work in tobacco fields.

A 2021 WHO report on the status of tobacco production and trade in Africa also revealed that tobacco leaves production decreased globally by 13.9 per cent but increased by 10.6 per cent in Africa. In 2018, global tobacco leaf production was 6.3 million tons and in Africa it was 722,187 tons, representing 11.4 per cent of global production.

As regulations tighten in middle-and high-income countries, tobacco companies are increasingly targeting African countries to scale-up tobacco leaf production. Unfortunately, a lot of this increase comes at the detriment of children from poor households who miss school to be employed in tobacco farming to boost the family income.

For decades, the tobacco industry established and nurtured an alliance with the ILO. The industry also sought to influence the FAO, positioning experts on various FAO/WHO committees and working to directly fund research and policy groups sympathetic to the industry. Industry documents revealed how the industry worked found a way to avoid meaningful tobacco control measures of the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF).

Many of these agencies, however, have since cut ties with the

industry, thus safeguarding their initiatives and policies from Big Tobacco's commercial interests. However, the issue of child labour remains a fertile ground for the industry to remain influential within the global tobacco control space. Until 2019, tobacco industry entities had funding partnerships the ILO. It took a multitude of efforts from sustainable development and public health groups and several international non-governmental organisations, for the ILO to finally end tobacco industry funding.

Despite these important steps in keeping the tobacco industry out of the public health community, a disturbing exception is the tobacco industry-funded ECLT Foundation, which is a member the UN Global Compact (UNGC), a voluntary initiative based on CEO commitments to implement universal sustainability principles and to take steps to support UN goals.

Sessou, stated that the tobacco

industry derives huge profits in part because it pay as little as possible for the crop that is the basis for its products. Bottom of Form He states that the practice is unfair and propagates child labour and a cycle of poverty. He adds that the world's children would be better served if the tobacco industry and its front groups-organisations that claim independence from the industry but are established, funded, or controlled by the industry's corporate interests, thereby influencing policymakers and the public in its favour-are fully excluded from the UN system.

He maintained that ECLT's activities confirm that the industry refuses to police itself, noting that ECLT does not call for changes in business practices that could alleviate poverty among tobacco farmers, and consequently, diminish the rate of child labour.

Furthermore, ECLT does not advocate for the improvement of tobacco workers' conditions

through unionisation and collective bargaining, neither does it support the external audit of tobacco companies and their supply chains, which could help identify and hold accountable those who profit from child labour.

ECLT also does not oppose industry interference in the implementation of the WHO-FCTC, which recommends that governments help tobacco farmers switch to more economically viable livelihoods.

"National governments must stop permitting children to work in tobacco fields and start holding the industry accountable if they want to deliver a better future for children in Africa and other tobacco-growing regions.

"Governments and the U.N. system need to reject partnerships and donations from the industry. That includes ECLT, which should be treated for what it is: a smokescreen for the tobacco industry's public relations," he added.



Chairman of Seplat Energy, Chief Ambrose Ojiakor (left); Minister of State for Petroleum Resources, Chief Timipre Sylva and Chairman, Board of the Nigeria National Petroleum Company Limited, Senator Margaret Okadigbo during Seplat's Tree4Life launch at the Yar'Adua Centre in Abuja...on Tuesday.

## Focus more on agriculture to boost economy, expert tells FG

By **JOHNMARK UKOKO**

An economist, Tope Fasua, has charged the Federal Government to focus more on developing the agricultural sector to address global food crisis occasioned by the Russia and Ukraine war.

The Trumpet recalled that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) earlier warned that sub-Africa needed to painstakingly initiate policy response to address the challenges of the new economic disruptions being caused by the war in Ukraine.

He said that the African Continent had been faced with an economic crisis long before the global crisis caused by COVID-19

and the war in Ukraine.

Fasua, who said even before the COVID-19 pandemic, Nigeria was not doing well, maintained that the economies of some African countries were growing at seven or eight per cent, adding that the growth trajectory of African nations remained questionable

His words: "The shock is not that new, it may be a little more enhanced than it used to be, but it is not particularly new. Now, they are talking about Russia and Ukraine war, and how African countries depend on the two countries for food and grains in this instance, wheat for bread.

"In a country like Nigeria,

a bit of wheat is grown here, but if you look at the terrain the typography from the North to South, perhaps we can grow anything in the country. What we cannot grow in the North can be grown in the South."

Fasua, who contested the presidency in 2019, said Nigeria had used perhaps 30 per cent or less of its arable land, so the question was what was been done with the rest land?

"Nigeria is largely an agricultural country, yet 62 years after independence, we cannot do better than merely grow rice. We are also not growing the crop properly despite the presence of several universities

of agriculture and many other agricultural higher institutions across the country. We are not even growing enough crops and diversifying across board, not even ones we need.

"So, one place to start is to do more and deploy some science into agriculture and recognise our lack of capacity that we have inbuilt and go for it. We should also add value and stop exporting things that are not giving us enough deals for the kind of things we need," he stressed.

He also stressed the need for Africa to take charge of its growth and development, adding that the teaching of economics must change, as it pertained to Africa.



# Prices of foodstuff soar as NBS decries rising inflation

## •GDP improves by 3.98% in Q4 of 2021

Stories by **JOHNMARK UKOKO**

National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) has reported that prices of foodstuff have continued to increase in the country as inflation rises by double digits.

It explained that since 2016, the inflation rate, which has been sustained on double digit rose by 0.9 percentage points from 15.92 per cent in March, 2022.

NBS said it was a result of spill over from higher global prices of agricultural products on the heels of the Russia-Ukraine war, which may worsen inflation coupled with the continued slide of the Naira.

Nigeria's double-digit inflation climbed to 16.82 per cent in April, rising for the third straight months, the statistics office said a readiness that could prompt a Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) rate hike next week and further squeeze companies already struggling with high cost of running their businesses.

A Lagos-based Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) operator, John Okoroh, said in an interview with The Trumpet that the soaring cost of items in the market coupled with growing hardship in Nigeria

has affected his once booming business, which has made him to cut down his workforce to lower the margins, as input costs has continued to soar since this year.

He lamented that the overhead cost of small businesses was increasing daily and that assurances being given by the authorities have not changed anything.

Inflation, which has been in double digits since 2016 rose by 0.9 percentage points from 15.92 per cent in March as prices for foodstuffs and none food items rise in Africa's biggest economy, the NBS said adding that Nigeria imports most goods and services, thereby putting much pressure on the Naira, which value continues to drop against other currencies.

The Federal Government has linked persistent inflationary pressure to structural deficits and not solely to money supply, having introduced various restrictions to cushion the effect of dollar shortage, which has put severe pressure on the Naira.

The NBS explained that the rising prices of foodstuff and inflation constituted the major headline components as they increased by 1.17 percentage points in April to 18.37 per cent.

It said the inflationary trend could put pressure on the CBN to reconsider its dovish stance at a rates-setting meeting next week, adding that four of 10 rate-sellers in March voted to raise rates in order to curb inflation.

The NBS also reported that Nigeria's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) increased by 3.98 per cent in the fourth quarter of 2021.

It stated this in its quarterly

report releases in Abuja, which highlighted the status of GDP with regard to foreign trade, capital importation, consumer prices index and social statistics.

According to the report, Nigeria's GDP grew by 3.98 per cent year-on-year in real terms in the fourth quarter of 2021, which showed sustained growth for the fifth quarter since the recession of 2020 when output contracted by 6.10 per cent in Q2 and Q3 of 2020.

Nevertheless, quarterly real GDP grew at 9.63 per cent in Q4 of 2021, reflecting a higher economic activity when compared to the previous year.

The report said real growth of the real sector was 8.06 per cent points and increased in Q4 of 2021 by 11.71 per cent points compared to the corresponding quarter of 2020.

The report said growth increased by 2.68 per cent points when compared to the third quarter of 2021, translating to 10.73 per cent, adding that the non-oil sector grew by 4.73 per cent in real terms in Q4 of 2021.

"The rate was higher by 3.05 per cent compared to the same quarter of 2020 and 0.71 per cent lower than Q3 of 2021," it said, adding that the services sector recorded the highest year-on-year growth rate of 5.58 per cent in the fourth quarter of 2021, follow by agriculture with 3.58 per cent while industry had 0.05 per cent growth.

On contribution to the total GDP, the NBS said agriculture contributed the most to the GDP with 26.84 per cent followed by trade with 15.66 per cent and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) with 15.21 per cent.

"Administrative and support services contributed the least with 0.02 per cent, followed by water supply, sewage management and remediation with 0.16 per cent and Arts, Entertainment and Recreation sector with 0.2 per cent," the report added.



NBS boss Simon Harry

## European demand shift to upset oil market

Demand shift from anticipated drop in the European consumption of Russia's oil will begin to reshape forces in the market during the coming weeks and possibly propel a new direction in prices.

The International Energy Agency (IEA), which provides market intelligence for the European economic block, hinted that the major international trading houses in Europe would have to halt all transactions with state controlled Rosnet Gazprom.

Analytical notes from industry consultancy firm, Rystad Energy, confirmed that European traders might from Sunday, May 22, 2022, stop deals in purchase of oil from Russia firms unless where it becomes absolutely necessary for the continent's energy consumption security.

The company's analysts said European Union (EU) traders would stop buying oil from Russian firms beginning from this week, as the western economic block consider additional sanctions against Russia for invading Ukraine and its continued bombardment of the country.

It would be recalled that

thousands of civilians comprising mostly women and children, have been killed since the war started in February 2022.

According to oil market watches, Russia would have to cope with low crude oil exports, cuts in refining activities and export of fuels, stressing that these would demand drastic cuts in crude oil production by the world's second largest producer.

Russia's pre-war production level stood at over 11 million barrels per day, while its crude oil export was put at about seven million barrels per day.

According to IEA's estimates, Russia's crude oil production could drop to lowest levels since 2004 if the EU places an embargo on the country's oil imports, adding that oil embargoes could force Russia to shut in more production.

"Following its invasion of Ukraine, Russia is deepening as the EU and G7 contemplate tougher sanctions that will include full phase out of imports from the country. If agreed, the new embargoes will accelerate a reorientation of trade flows already underway and will force Russian oil companies to shut in more oil wells," it said.

## FIRS lauds top tax paying firms

Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) has commended top taxpayers in the country in 2021 for their efforts and contributions, saying their support and contributions had provided funds for the Federal Government to meet its social contract with Nigerians.

It said the Nigeria Liquefied Petroleum Gas Company Limited, was recognised as the most supportive taxpayer, while the Nigeria National Petroleum Company (NNPC) was the highest taxpayer.

Others are Mobil Producing Limited, Star Deep Water Petroleum, MTN Nigeria Communication Plc, Shell Petroleum Development Limited, Chevron Nigeria Limited and Total EXP Nigeria Plc.

It equally named Dangote Cement Nigeria Plc, Nigeria Breweries Plc, Total Upstream Nigeria Limited, Indorama Eleme

Petrochemical Limited, Nigeria Agip Oil Company (NAOC), British American Tobacco (BAT) Marketing, Guaranty Trust Bank Plc and Lafarge Africa Plc as top performers.

The FIRS also appreciated the Northern Cables Processing and Manufacturing Company Limited (NOCACO) and Ikeja Electricity Distribution Company (IEDC) for being the most improved companies in tax filling and Value Added Addition (VAT) compliance respectively.

In a statement issued by the Executive Chairman of FIRS, Muhammad Nami in Abuja, he commended the companies, saying that without them, the agency would not have been able to record the achievements in 2021 by surpassing its tax collection targets.

Nami said despite the harsh economic conditions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic FIRS

crossed the N6 trillion thresholds for the first time.

"The FIRS is pleased to celebrate the top performing taxpayers who contributed its success in 2021. The feat recorded was made possible by the leadership of President Muhammadu Buhari, support of our supervisory minister and the National Assembly.

"We thank everyone who contributed to FIRS success in 2021, especially our esteemed taxpayers. They defied the harsh global economic conditions imposed by the lingering COVID-19 pandemic to produce a heroic performance in tax payment compliance and support," the statement reads.

He urged all taxpayers to collaborate with his agency to make taxation the pivotal of the nation's development and economic growth and commended them for their support while urging defaulting entities to start paying their taxes.



## FG orders Abuja-Kaduna train to resume passenger operations May 23

The Federal Government through the Federal Ministry of Transportation has directed the Abuja-Kaduna Train Services (AKTS) to resume passenger operations from Monday, May 23, 2022.

In a statement issued by spokesman of the Nigerian Railway Corporation (NRC), Mahmood Yakub, he explained that while the train service resumes, efforts will still be on to rescue the abducted passengers of the attacked Abuja-Kaduna train.

"The government wishes to assure relatives of the abducted citizens still in captivity that the safe rescue of the passengers is a top priority and that they should not misunderstand the directive to resume the train services as abandonment or nonchalant attitude of the Federal Government towards their plight.

"These measures are not only for the AKTS, but also for all the passenger train services, especially on the standard gauge railway lines. The passenger train service between Abuja-Kaduna will commence on Monday, May 23, 2022," the statement reads.

He said the NRC solicited passengers' cooperation to enjoy improved service delivery, safety and comfort and urged passengers to comply with additional measures that would be introduced for their safety, such as requesting for their National Identification Numbers (NIN) as part of internal security checks.

The NRC said presentation of Valid Photo Identification Card (ID), Reachable telephone number of next of kin (NOK) or close relative should be strictly complied with before boarding the train.

It, however, stressed that online and offline purchase of tickets should contain passengers' individual profiles or identification data.

## Airline operators alert to flight disruptions as aviation fuel scarcity persists

### •Nigeria signs MoUs with Rwanda, Sierra Leone on aviation safety

Stories by **ADAKU WALTER**

The Airline Operators of Nigeria (AON) has called the attention of Nigerians to imminent flight disruptions, as the scarcity of Aviation Turbine Kerosine (ATK) also known as aviation fuel (Jet A1) continues to impact the sector negatively.

In a statement issued in Lagos, spokesman of AON, Obiora Okonkwo, said the lingering fuel scarcity was affecting the seamless operations of air transport in the country, saying the development could lead to rescheduling and cancellation of flights.

"The Airline Operators of Nigeria wish to alert members of the public of the impending disruptions to flight operations. The development is being forced on members by the continuing scarcity of aviation fuel, which is impacting negatively on air transport operations and would lead to rescheduling or outright cancellation of flights," he said.

Okonkwo further stated that the AON was working in alliance with product marketers, the Federal Government and stakeholders to ensure availability and proper pricing of the product.

"While soliciting the understanding of the flying public in the face of the reality, we also promise to do all that is necessary, and within our powers, to restore normal flight schedules as soon as possible", he added.

It would be recalled that flight delays and cancellations

had earlier hit the sector earlier in the year, as the price of Jet A1 surged and also became unavailable to operators.

The AON had threatened to suspend flight services across the country from May 9, citing the continuous rise in the price of the product from N190 to N700 per litre.

It, however, shelved the action following appeals by the Federal Government and other stakeholders in the aviation sector.

Meanwhile, Nigeria has signed Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with Sierra Leone and Rwanda for technical support and cooperation to enhance safety standards and security of civil aviation in the region.

The MoUs were signed by Director-General of the Nigeria Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA), Captain Musa Nuhu and the representatives of the two countries at the opening ceremony of the seventh African Indian-Ocean (AFI) Aviation Conference in Abuja organised by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO).

Speaking on the MoUs, Minister of Aviation, Hadi Sirika, stated that the collaboration was aimed at strengthening the safety and efficiency of the sector, as well as deepen cooperation in the region.

He said the cooperation, whether regional or international, speaks volumes of how safe the industry is and how well passengers were facilitated and efficiency of the sector



Hadi Sirika

According to the minister, aviation being an enabler and a positive factor for growth, development and robustness of the economy, informed the sector to enter into partnerships with other countries.

"This is the only way to continue to make these initiatives relevant and sustainable while contributing to the strengthening of safety, security and facilitation in the region, bearing in mind that a safe, secure, and efficient air transport system is a natural impetus for socio-economic development of the region and a means to support trade

and tourism," he said.

While explaining the partnership with the two African countries, Nuhu said it was to assist in bridging gaps or deficiencies among the countries, adding that globally, no individual civil aviation authority has the capacity to do everything.

He stressed that the experience of the last two years underscored the fact that overcoming challenges and achieving growth in the industry could only be done through cooperation, collaboration and coordination among stakeholders.

## ANLCA accuses foreigners of snatching freight forwarding business from Nigerians



Dr. Kayode Farinto,

The Association of Nigerian Licensed Customs Agents (ANLCA) has accused the China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation (CCECC) of snatching freight forwarding businesses, especially those involving the clearing of project cargoes for construction works from Nigerian firms.

It also accused other multinational shipping lines, including Maersk Line, APM Terminal and MSC Shipping of snatching jobs meant for indigenous freight forwarders.

Speaking at the National Executive Council (NEC) meeting of the association in Lagos, Acting President of ANLCA, Dr. Kayode Farinto, said the association was making moves through the National Assembly to change the situation, adding that the association had secured

the services of lawyers and initiated a Bill on the need to indigenise customs brokerage" which he described as "the nucleus of freight forwarding," to be left for Nigerians.

He said if the Bill is passed, Nigerian freight forwarders would be generating 25 per cent employment for the youths on a yearly basis.

In his words: "Foreigners have taken over 90 per cent of our jobs, by engaging in door-to-door services or making non-functional Nigerians to be directors in their companies.

"We are losing our jobs gradually. We now have multinationals like Maersk Line, AP Molar and MSC Shipping, among others as registered freight forwarding firms.

"CCECC is in charge of constructing rail lines in Nigeria,

but the company now has a clearing department, which is not supposed to be? The CCECC imports and also clear the cargoes

"About five years ago, I had a consignment at Cotonou Port. I had my Bill of Lading, despite being a customs broker in Nigeria, I could not clear my consignment at Cotonou Port and so I had to give it to an indigenous practitioner.

"Very few members of the association are currently involved in clearing of project cargoes. We now have a situation whereby Lebanese, Indians are not licensed as customs brokers, controllers of customs even give them more respect than Nigerians. A major issue that is going to be a tsunami in the sector is indigenisation of customs brokerage," he stated.



## IMO issues guidelines to curb wildlife smuggling in Nigeria, others

Stories by **ADAKU WALTER**

The International Maritime Organisation (IMO) has issued new guidelines for the prevention of wildlife smuggling in Nigeria and other member states.

It maintained that the guidelines will send a strong message on rising global engagement against Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) and its impact on international biodiversity threatening the survival of several wild species in Nigeria and other member states.

According to IMO, the guidelines provide extensive recommendations for both government agencies and the private sector to increase due diligence over this criminal activity.

It would be recalled that the United Nations Office on Drug and Crime (UNODC) in its 2020 report on world wildlife crime, stated that Nigeria has been evolving into a primary

transit hub for trafficking in illicit wildlife products, such as pangolin scales, other protected species and forestry products from East and Central Africa that arrive the country through its borders.

Also, the Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) had in a February 2022 raid, intercepted 15 sacks containing 839.40kgs of pangolin scales and four sacks containing 40 pieces of elephant tusks weighing 145kg, with a total value of N3.1 billion in Lekki area of Lagos.

This was the fourth major seizure of assorted wildlife parts in Nigeria in the last 13 months as of the day of the seizure.

The IMO guidelines were formally submitted at the 46th Meeting of the Facilitation Committee (FAL46) by Brazil, Colombia, Germany, Kenya, Tanzania, the Intergovernmental Standing Committee on Shipping (ISCOS), International Chamber of Shipping (ICS), World Wide Fund for Nature



Dr. Margaret Kinnaird

(WWF), the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) and the International Organisation of Airports and Seaports Police (INTERPORTPOLICE).

The efforts started at the

44th Meeting of the Facilitation Committee in 2020 (FAL44) led by the Republic of Kenya with a working group composed of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), WWF, TRAFFIC and the United Task Force for Wildlife Transport.

Speaking, TRAFFIC's Co-ordinator of Transport Sector Engagement, Philippa Dyson, said organised criminal groups were increasingly participating in the illegal activity being

considered as 'low-risk, high-reward.'

He said smugglers exploit the weaknesses in the supply chains to illegally transport endangered species, including live animals, animal products, as well as plants and timber.

According to him, with 90 per cent of global trade being conducted by sea and an estimated 72-90 per cent of illicit wildlife volumes being trafficked through maritime transport, the sector has the responsibility to holding engagements against the transnational crime.

Also, Global Wildlife Practice Leader of WWF, Dr. Margaret Kinnaird, said the guidelines highlight measures and procedures already available to the private sector and government agencies to combat wildlife trafficking within the maritime industry.

She pointed out that the document provided information on the nature and context of maritime smuggling of wildlife, which includes measures to prevent, detect and report wildlife trafficking in the maritime sector, with emphasis on due diligence, responsibility-sharing and co-operation among stakeholders along all supply chains.

## NPA to sanction barge operators for unprofessional conduct, unbundle ETO system

The Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) has threatened to sanction barge operators, who use substandard crafts to constitute danger on the nation's waterways.

Managing Director of NPA, Mohammed Bello-Koko, who made the threat in Lagos, decried how rickety barges block the port channels and disrupt movement of vessels.

He said the authority had issued a standards operating procedure (SOP), as it did for trucks, which he said, was aimed at streamlining the operation of barges and ban night movements to avoid collision or impeding navigation

of vessels on the channels.

Bello-Koko said the move would enhance safety and remove encumbrances to quick access to berthing area for oncoming ships, adding: "We are also encouraging the use of barges. We have come up with a standard operating procedure for barge operations, because we have all forms of barges that are not safe.

"Same way we created minimum standards for trucks is what we did for barges, and we have called them for meetings. They have been operating on free tickets for long, and that has to stop and they need to start paying us tariffs.

"We gave them concessions because at least the government generates revenue from it. Most of the barges do not have communication systems and are not identifiable individually, with their sailors often driving with reckless abandon."

He said sometimes vessels blare their horns and it is usually not to signal goodbye, but to tell someone to get off the channel insisting: "In fact, we have had occasions where ships had to anchor in the middle of the channel because a barge is on the way.

"That has to stop, or we will start penalising them. We will be very firm on this. The day a ship sinks in the middle of the channel, we will have serious problems on our hands. We will also insist that they don't operate at night.

"A few weeks ago, a barge sneaked out to operate at night

and almost hit a vessel that was offloading liquid cargo. Imagine if the vessel had gone aflame. You sometimes see them double-banking or even triple-banking, which is not allowed."

On successes being recorded in managing Apapa traffic, he said he recently went to the port with the two Assistant Inspectors General of Police (AIGs) for an on the spot assessment and discovered too many checkpoints.

He informed that the AIG Zone 2 and AIG Maritime assisted in identifying where there should be checkpoints along the port access corridor, stressing that checkpoints outside the designated areas were illegal.

Bello-Koko maintained that properly written signs would be used to identify areas approved as checkpoints and specify the type of checks to avoid repetition of checks already conducted thereby delaying movement along the port corridor.

He added that efforts are on to open alternative access to the Apapa area through the Tin Can axis as NPA had reached out to Dangote Group to get a location between Coconut and Sunrise bus stops ready before the rains commence in earnest.

He commended the ETO app initiative, which he said had a few glitches in the past, but assured that the worse of ETO was still better than the pre-ETO era.

## Saraki takes over at Ministry of Transportation as Amaechi quits

Following the resignation of Chubuike Rotimi Amaechi on Monday as Minister of Transportation to enable him contest the 2023 presidential election, Minister of State for Transportation, Gbemisola Ruqayyah Saraki has assumed leadership of the ministry.

President Muhammadu Buhari had, last Wednesday, ordered all political appointees including ministers, ambassadors and heads of agencies interested in vying for any position in the 2023 general election to resign on or before May 16, 2022.

A statement issued by Kingsley Wali of the Amaechi Presidential Media Committee (APMC) in Abuja, disclosed that Amaechi, in his resignation letter, expressed gratitude to the President for giving him the privilege to serve in his administration.

He also thanked Buhari for the support given him, which he said, was responsible for his achievements in the Ministry of Transportation in the last seven years.

In the resignation letter dated May 16, 2022 and addressed to President Buhari,

"It is with mixed feelings that I resign as the Minister of Transportation to contest the presidential ticket of the All Progressives Congress (APC). It has been a great honour and privilege to serve as a member of your cabinet following your victory at the 2015 polls.

"Under your administration, the Ministry of Transportation has recorded significant achievements, made possible by your visionary support and commitment to ensuring that we deliver on our mandate.

"As I embark on the next phase of our mission to work towards a better Nigeria for all Nigerians, I seek your prayers, blessings and look towards your continuous support and guidance. While seeking your consideration of my request, please accept the assurances of my highest esteem," the letter reads.

Amaechi was first appointed Minister of Transportation in December 2015 and served in that position till May 2019. He was reappointed in July 2019 and had cumulatively held the position for over six years.



Mohammed Bello-Koko



## Mixed grill

# How House of TOMA is taking over fashion industry

By OMONIYI ALLI

Founder of Nigerian-based premium fashion brand, House of Toma, Oluwatoyin Mafoitan, popularly known as TOMA has hinted about its readiness to take over the industry in style.

With huge patronage from clients across the globe, Toma said she has over the years mastered the art of fashion and reached out to many people whose love and taste for style have helped her to understand the terrain better.

Speaking about her dream for the industry, Toma whose brand clothes top Nigerian celebrities including Kcee, Alex Ekubo, E-money among others disclosed that working with some of Nigeria's finest entertainers and socialites has pushed her brand to the top and

is constantly seeking for new ideas that would keep them her clients for a long time.

According to her, "my brand is known for creative and unique designs that speak to how much we have grown over the years. When people visit our showroom at Lekki, Lagos, they hardly believe that we are the brains behind some of the fashion innovations they see around."

She mentioned that the brand is here to take over the Nigerian fashion industry as they plan to unveil their new showroom and some mind blowing designs.

As the brand plans to mark its five years anniversary in July, Toma said, "We are crossing more boundaries and making louder statements," she added.



## Soyinka, others feature on Toyin Adekeye's 'Bigger Than Africa' on Netflix

By OMONIYI ALLI

Nigerian-born Los Angeles-based filmmaker, Toyin Adekeye has launched the screening of his cultural documentary, 'Bigger than Africa,' on Netflix following the private screening which



held at Freedom Park, Lagos.

The cultural documentary features foremost and most prominent Yoruba culture enthusiasts including the late Alaafin of Oyo, Lamidi Adeyemi, Ooni of Ife, the Alaketu of Ketu, King of Port Novo, ex-president Olusegun Obasanjo, Prof Wole Soyinka, Prof. Wande Abimbola, Chief Mrs. Nike Okundaye, Fayemi Elebuibon, Femi Kuti amongst others.

The documentary which is currently streaming on Netflix ex-rays the historical influence of Yoruba culture and how it transcends continents and connects the Black diaspora.

Speaking on the film, Adekeye described the documentary as a necessary legacy for the Yoruba heritage. The Los Angeles Film School alumna has continued to get accolades for 'Bigger Than Africa,' which has screened at film festivals worldwide winning multiple awards including Charlotte Black Film festival, AFI World Peace Initiative Cannes, and Silicon Valley African film festival amongst others.

The documentary is however distributed by KAP film and management agency

## Video on-Demand Platform, Accelerate Plus emerges

By OMONIYI ALLI

Accelerate, Nigeria's leading digital, lifestyle and entertainment platform powered by Access Bank, has launched Accelerate Plus. It is a premier subscription video on-demand platform. The one-of-a-kind platform, which includes fan favorites like The Shade Corner, Visa on Arrival, and The Olive, among many others, is set to feature an ensemble of carefully curated high-quality African content available on your mobile device.

Colette Otusheso, Accelerate's Chief Executive Officer, stated at the launch event: "Accelerate Plus is more than a platform for African content for us. It serves as a catalyst for highlighting and promoting an undiluted African narrative in the face of global misconceptions. For this purpose, we have taken deliberate steps to curate authentic and exciting content for Africa by Africans, as well as to create a portal for the rest of the world to access premium African content from anywhere in the world."

She went on to reaffirm Accelerate's ongoing commitment to the development and support of African filmmakers and the creative industry by encouraging African filmmakers and content creators to collaborate with Accelerate to bring this vision to life.

Accelerate Plus is a diverse and affordable streaming platform that celebrates Africa's beauty, richness, and nuances. Accelerate is determined to create a hub of positive entertainment and empowering content where diverse stories and experiences are told and shared to spark meaningful and transformative conversations. Accelerate Plus is both convenient and affordable, thanks to its unbeatable subscription fees. Payments can be made from anywhere in the world, and any device can connect to a world of exclusive African entertainment (PC, Mobile or tablet). Africa is available to watch from anywhere! The subscription packages are broken down into annual and monthly subscription with an option for auto renewal. If you live outside Nigeria, you can access the Accelerate Plus platform on the website for \$54.99 and a monthly subscription payment of \$4.99. If you live within Nigeria and have an Access bank account, you can subscribe for N100 monthly and for non-Access bank account holders' N 500.



## Magic entertainment can add to tourism, says Ono Mccaulay

By OMONIYI ALLI

Hype Media CEO, Ono Mccaulay has revealed that the art of magic entertainment can boost the country's tourism status. Ono in a chat noted that magic as a form of entertainment is one aspect that has been pushed aside after its stalwarts like Professor Peller died.

He said: ' Since the demise of the Professor Peller, the art had only existed on a very low key and now we are trying to redeem the lost glory through a new celebrated embodiment by name Babs Cardini'.

Speaking further, Mccaulay noted that reviving the magic art will further reposition the country's economy as people, tourist wants to experience something extremely new and through this a lot of spotlight will be given to the country's creative industry as a whole and by extension reposition the face value of Nigeria's entertainment to the world.

Sharing the acceptability level of magic extraordinaire, Babs Cardini, Ono disclosed that his acceptability has been popular among the elite, names that you only get to read

about in the papers. If you look at their age and you trace it back, you will find out that they witnessed late Professor Peller, so they knew what the art was. Seeing something like that in this generation, this modern era has been impressive for them. The calls have been coming because they know what Cardini can do; he doesn't repeat the same trick or illusion. That is the stuff that he is made of.

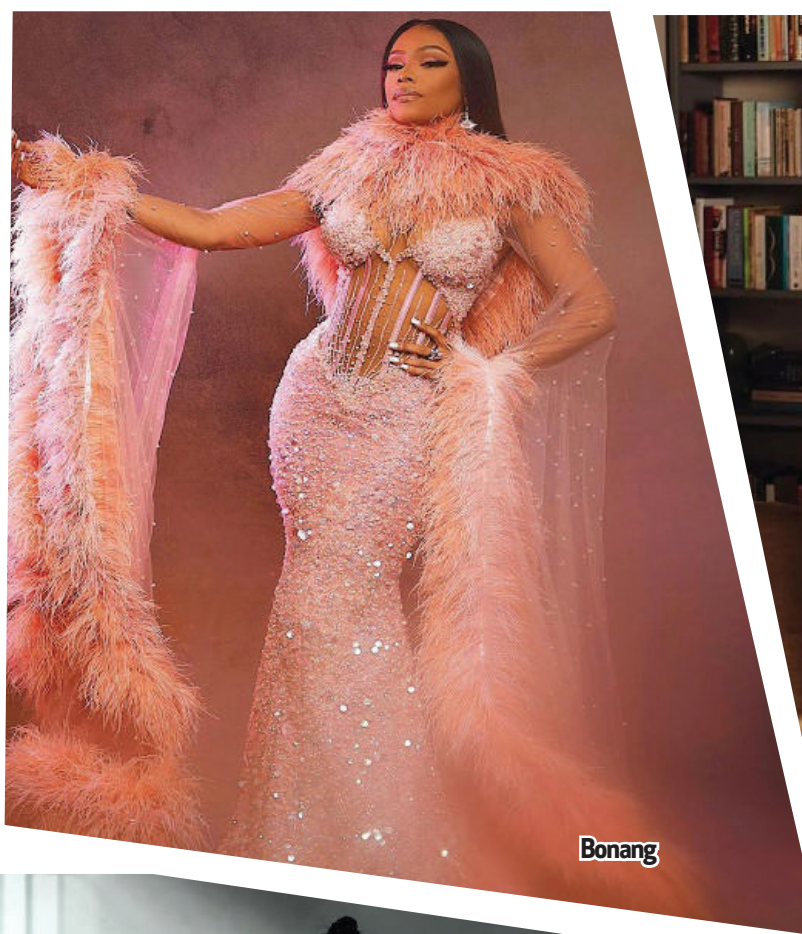
It is however pertinent to note that aside from 2Baba, Mccaulay has worked with other celebrities including Timi Dakolo, right after he left the Idols West Africa competition.



## Fashion & Style: Glitz, glamour at the AMVCA 8

The eight edition of the prestigious Africa Magic Viewers Choice Awards might have come and gone but the high fashion sense of top celebrities that graced the occasion cannot be overlooked.

Here are The Trumpet Fashion top picks of the night.



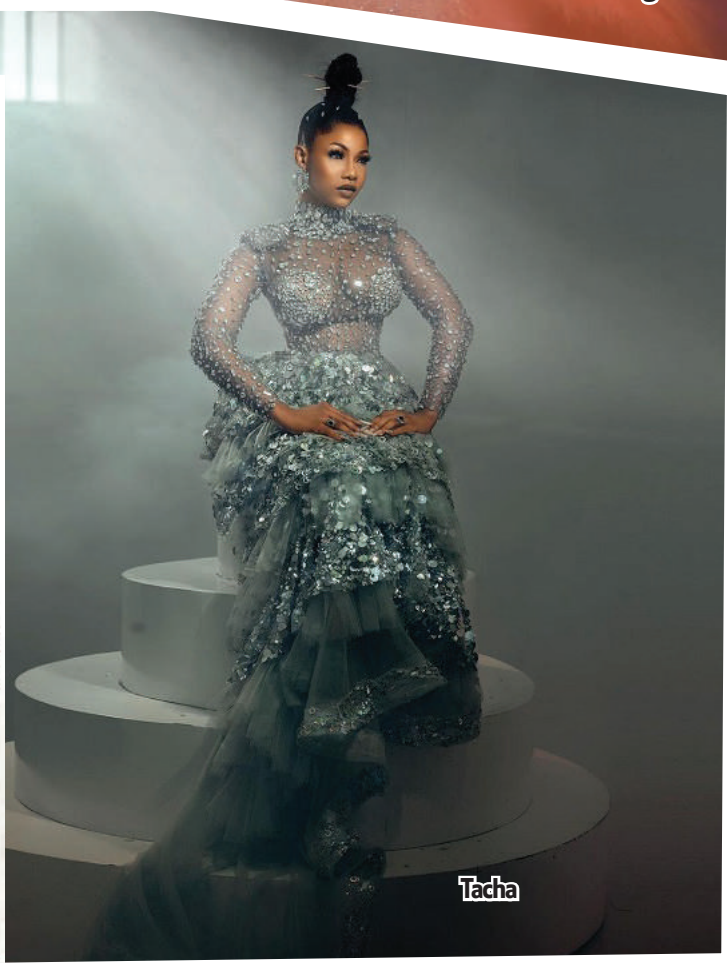
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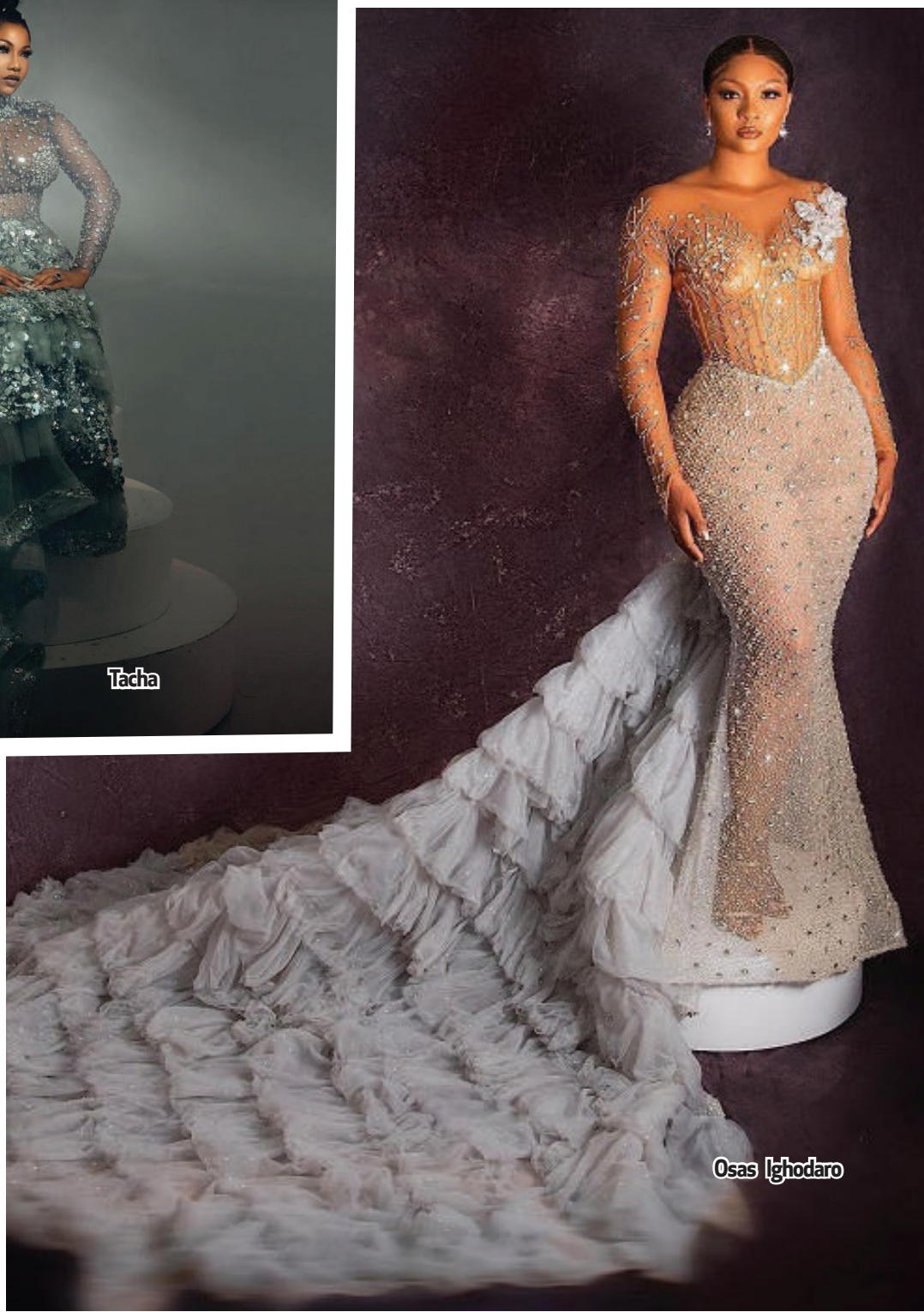
Nancy Isime



Tacha



Uti Nwachukwu



Osas Ighodaro





## 'We've made football 80% self-independent' ■ LMC signs sponsorship deal with Bitnob

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

President of Nigeria Football Federation (NFF), Amaju Pinnick, says its board has restructured the country's soccer at the federal level from being over-dependent on government funds for sustenance to about 80% self-independent.

Amaju made this statement on Tuesday at the unveiling and official signing of the sponsorship deal between the League Management Company (LMC) and Bitnob, a financial tech company, at Radisson Blu Hotel in Ikeja, Lagos.

NFF President conceded that though his administration met a series of challenges that affected Nigerian football for years, his NFF-led board have recorded tangible improvements in the sport.

He said, "Despite the challenges, we have been able to lift the game. When we came on board, football at the federation level was run 100% on government funds, we are now 80% self-independent."

"The NFF will be totally protective of this partnership and ensure that Bitnod get all

the leverages they deserved," he added.

However, LMC Chairman Shehu Dikko, during the event, disclosed that the contract with Bitnob under the Tech category will run for three years adding that there are other sponsors in various categories.

He highlighted that one of the reasons that the LMC had to abolish the title sponsorship deal was to create an avenue for other sponsors to come in.

"I want to congratulate Bitnob for believing in us. Bernard walked into my office and said he won't leave until the deal is closed, that was how much he believed in us," Dikko said at the event.

"When we abolished the title sponsor, a lot of people still don't understand our aims. We open the league to multiple sponsors and different brands. We now have Bitnob under Tech and we have deals with other brand sectors.

"It's a three years contract starting from next season with Bitnob putting up their commitment with the league this season. It's an undisclosed amount as agreed with Bitnob," he added.

Meanwhile, Bernard Parah, Chief Executive Officer



of Bitnob financial Tech Company, has commended the sponsorship deal which will see one of their brands, Fintech, promoted in the Nigerian topflight league.

Parah reiterated that football as the hope of lots of people needs commitment from notable institutions like Bitnob to add value to the sport.

He said, "Today is a big day for me and my team. We are here to work with the LMC as we believe that football, being hope for lots of people cannot be overlooked.

"This partnership takes us to the people that need our solutions and helps us work with the NPFL to develop our league for more possibilities.

"Bitcoin, just like football, is about hope, oneness, and

freedom, and at Bitnob, we are excited to be making this happen to inspire hope and showcase possibilities in our own league. If we don't believe in what is ours, then who will?," he added.

Barrister Danlandi Usman, Chairman of NPFL Club Owners, appreciated Bitnob for the laudable gesture while pledging the full support of the association to the sponsorship deal.

He said, "I want to sincerely appreciate you on behalf of the 20 NPFL clubs for deeming it fit to partner with the LMC, we are 100% in support of this deal as it is an exciting time for us all."

The partnership, further strengthens the core belief of Bitnob by venturing into where no one else in their industry has gone.

## Oshoala, Ebi, 30 Super Falcons for AFCON camp in Morocco

Ahead of the 12th edition of the Women African Cup of Nations scheduled from July 2 - 23, 2022, in Morocco, the head coach of the Super Falcons, Randy Waldrum, has invited Barcelona's Asisat Oshoala, Onome Ebi, and CSKA Moscow's Francisca Ordega and 29 others to camp.

The two weeks training camp which serves to prepare the team intensively for the Women's AFCON finals in Morocco, will help ensure the Super Falcons get acclimatized to the weather condition of the host country before the tournament kicks off.

Asisat Oshoala, Barcelona's prolific striker and winner of this season's Pichichi award in Spain's femini Primera Division, having missed Nigeria's double-tie friendly with Canada last month due to injury, will be available to fly with the team to Morocco.

According to the coach, Goalkeeper Chiamaka Nnadozie, defender and captain Onome Ebi, midfielders Rasheedat Ajibade and Toni Payne, and forwards Francisca Ordega, Desire Oparanozie and Charity Adule are among those called to the two weeks intensive training programme.

The Nigeria Football Federation (NFF) reported that the training camp will start on 18th June in the North African kingdom, with all players already advised to arrive in Rabat on 17th June.

Nine-time champions, Nigeria, will play in Group C of the 12-team tournament alongside South Africa's Banyana Banyana, Botswana and Burundi.

According to the CAF's fixtures, Nigeria's first match of the competition, at which Africa's four flagbearers to next year's FIFA Women's World Cup in Australia and New Zealand will emerge, is against the

Banyana at the Complexe Sportif Prince Abdellah in Rabat on 4th July.

### Super Falcons for training camp in Morocco:

**Goalkeepers:** Chiamaka Nnadozie (Paris FC, France); Tochukwu Oluehi (Maccabi Kishronot Hadera, Israel); Rita Akarekor (Nasarawa Amazons); Yewande Balogun (Coppermine United, USA)

**Defenders:** Opeyemi Sunday (Edo Queens); Glory Ogbonna (Santa Teresa FC, Spain); Onome Ebi (En Avant Guingamp, France); Osinachi Ohale (Deportivo Alaves, Spain); Ugochi Emenayo (Konak Belediyespor Izmir, Turkey); Ashleigh Plumtre (Leicester City, England); Nicole Payne (West Virginia University, USA); Michelle Alozie (Houston Dash, USA); Akudo Ogbonna (Edo Queens)

**Midfielders:** Peace Efih (Kiryat Gat, Israel); Amanda Uju Mbadi (Atasehir Belediyespor, Turkey); Halimatu Ayinde (Eskilstuna FC, Sweden); Charity Adule (Deportivo La Coruna, Spain); Toni Oyedupe Payne (Sevilla FC, Spain); Regina Otu (Minsk FC, Belarus); Christy Ucheibe (SL Benfica, Portugal); Rasheedat Ajibade (Atletico Madrid, Spain); Rita Chikwelu (Madrid CFF, Spain); Suliati Abideen (Edo Queens)

**Forwards:** Anam Imo (Pitea IF, Sweden); Francisca Ordega (CSKA Moscow, Russia); Desire Oparanozie (Wuhan Chegu Jiangnan, China); Vivian Ikechukwu (WFC Gintra, Lithuania); Chinonyerem Macleans (GSK Gornik Leczna, Poland); Chinwendu Ihezuo (Meizhou Hakka Club, China); Ifeoma Onumonu (NY/NJ Gotham FC, USA); Uchenna Kanu (Tigres Femenil, Mexico); Asisat Oshoala (FC Barcelona, Spain)

## 'Invited cricketers to build on T20I gains for Kukwiba 2022'



Head coach, Nigeria senior women's cricket team, Leke Oyede said the invitation of 18 cricketers to the training camp in Benin is to capitalise on the gains of the team's performances in the March-held T20I invitational tournament ahead of Kukwiba 2022 in Rwanda.

Kukwiba cricket tournament is a Rwanda memorial event held to commiserate with the families of the victims of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi.

The event, whose maiden edition was held eight years ago in Kigali, will see Nigeria

contend for the final with Brazil, Germany and other top cricket teams in the world.

However, Oyede, in a statement on Sunday, explained that the team will undergo intensive camp training to create awareness of what should be expected in the tournament.

The coach, who made his T20I debut for Nigeria against Kenya on May 20, 2019, stressed that the women's senior team will play some preparatory matches with other teams in Benin to build the cricketers into good shape.

"One of the things we

are going to be looking at is the game knowledge and awareness. It is how to give a good measure of the acts and scenes on the pitch, which will help them win games," Oyede told NAN in an interview.

"This will help them absorb pressure when the need arises. So, we are going to engage them with matches against some male teams here in Benin and see how to keep them with a positive mindset," he added.

Meanwhile, Chairman Rwanda Cricket Association (RCA), Stephen Musaale, recently told the Rwanda media that this year's event

has witnessed an increased number of teams as against last year's when, due to covid-19, teams withdrew from the competition.

Musaale listed a total of eleven teams including first-timers Brazil who have registered their interest to participate in Kukwiba 2022 event in Kigali.

"It's going to be a very nice but tight challenge this time around and seeing the tournament attracting more countries is an indication that it is growing edition after edition," Musaale told Times Sport.

"The countries coming to participate at the tournament know the rationale behind it," he added.

Aside from Nigeria, Brazil, and Germany, other teams set for the eighth edition of the memorial event include defending champions Kenya, Uganda, Botswana, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Ghana, Zimbabwe and host nation Rwanda.

However, Oyede invited a total of 18 players, who are to arrive in camp on Friday, May 20, 2022, for the Kukwiba 2022 cricket event schedule from June 9 to June 20 in Kigali.





# Nigeria battles Ethiopia for U17 World Cup ticket

**N**igeria's U17 female national team, Flamingos, will square up with Ethiopia in the first leg of the final qualifying round to the FIFA U17 World Cup in India.

According to the report from Nigeria Football Federation (NFF), Flamingos Head Coach, Bankole Olowookere, picked 22 players for Friday's 'no retreating, no surrendering' showdown with Ethiopia.

Consequent to the home-and-away victories over the Democratic Republic of Congo and Egypt, the Flamingos have a final hurdle to negotiate against a team that sensationally sent South Africa's Bantwana packing with a 3-0 win in Johannesburg. Olowookere's girls



are also to be dreaded, having scored 14 goals and conceded none in their four qualifying matches so far. They defeated DR Congo 8-0 on aggregate and spanked Egypt to record a 6-0 aggregate in the third round.

Friday's match will hold at the Abebe Bekila Stadium in Addis Ababa starting from 4pm Ethiopia time (2pm Nigeria time) and will be superintended

by Namibian officials. The return leg is already scheduled for the National Stadium, Abuja, on Saturday, 4th June.

### Flamingos heading to Addis Ababa:

**Goalkeepers:** Faith Omilana; Linda Jiwuaku, Jessica Inyama

**Defenders:** Comfort Folorunsho; Tumininu Adeshina; Olamide Oyinlola; Josephine

Edafe; Miracle Usani; Confidence Nwoha; Mistura Yusuf

**Midfielders:** Blessing Emmanuel; Taiwo Afolabi; Chidera Okenwa; Joy Igbokwe

**Forwards:** Omowunmi Bello; Mercy Itimi; Alvine Dah-Zossu; Anastasia Atume; Opeyemi Ajakaiye; Yetunde Ayantosh; Bisola Mosaku; Raheemot Adebayo

# Oshoala wins Pichichi award

Super Falcons' goal poacher and Barcelona star, Asisat Oshoala, has won the 2021-22 season Pichichi award for attaining the feat as the highest goalscorer in Spain's female Primera Division.

Oshoala, whose season was marred with injuries intermittently, recorded 20 goals to galvanise the team's efforts in lifting the title for a third consecutive time.

Barcelona finished the season with 87 points and 147 goals difference to edge Real Sociedad, Atletico Madrid and Madrid to claim the title and Oshoala was very instrumental to the team's season campaign.

The Super Falcon due to injury could not feature for Nigeria in last month's friendly matches with Canada's female

senior team; a match Nigeria narrowly missed winning the second leg clash.

Despite being out of action for about four months, the Nigerian football superstar, described by Barcelona as "one of the best strikers in the world", still edged her closest contender and Madrid CFF Geysel Ferreira, who scored 19 goals.

Other Barcelona female players like Alexia Putellas and Lieke Martens scored two above 15 goals to occupy the 3rd and 4th position, trailing behind Oshoala and Geysel on the goal chart.

The Super Falcon becomes the third player in Barcelona Femini's history to win the accolade after Sonia Bermudez and Jennifer Hermoso.



# 'Joshua a better fighter after heavyweight title loss'

Olympic bronze medalist, Fraizer Clarke, believes that former boxing heavyweight champion, Anthony Joshua, will put in a surprising performance in the rematch with Ukraine's Oleksandr Usyk.

Clarke, who trains with the British, disclosed that Joshua's loss to Usyk through a unanimous decision in September last year has made the two-time heavyweight champion a better fighter.

The rematch for the WBO, IBF, and WBA heavyweight titles is likely to take place in the summer and the optimistic Clarke is certain that Joshua, a former Great Britain Olympian who has learnt his lesson from the defeat, will put on a better show.

According to Clarke, the heavyweight boxer has done some changes in his camp with Angel Fernandez, a coach, taking over from Rob McCracken as head trainer. MacCracken had nurtured Joshua right from his amateur days to his present heavyweight stratum.

"I think the loss has made him better. He's opened his eyes a bit," Clarke told the British media.

"It's made him mentally better. I think he knows what he needs to do.

"I think he's changed his situation, which he thinks will help him. He's got a team of people that are dedicated for one thing, and that's AJ getting the result.

"You can't write Usyk off, he's an unbelievable fighter. But I'd like to think AJ's in a place where he can go on and get this win," Clarke added.

Although Clarke is undeterred about the outcome of the heavyweight bout, he, however, conceded that Usyk is an incredible fighter.



# Ndah set for CAF Confederation Cup final with Orlando Pirates

Nigeria's international defender, Olisa Ndah, will be in action when Orlando Pirates of South Africa take on RS Berkane of Morocco in the final of this year's CAF Confederation Cup at Godswill Akpabio International Stadium, Uyo on Friday.

Ndah played for the Super Eagles at the Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) final in Cameroon earlier in the year and is on the books of the popular South African club, nicknamed Buccaneers. Pirates won the old-style Africa Champion Clubs' Cup in 1995.

Ndah, who also played for the Nigeria U23 squad at the U23 AFCON in Egypt in 2019, won the Nigeria league title with Akwa United FC before moving to the Rainbow Nation.

To reach the final of Africa's second most important club competition, Pirates defeated Al Ahli FC of Libya 2-0 in Johannesburg in the first leg of their semi-final, before losing by a lone goal in Libya on Sunday.

Berkane were 1-0 losers to TP Mazembe of the Democratic Republic of Congo but turned things



around by winning the return leg 4-1 in Morocco, also on Sunday.

The Godswill Akpabio

International Stadium, Uyo, venue of several FIFA World Cup and AFCON qualifiers involving the Super Eagles, as well as continental matches involving Akwa United FC, will on Friday play host to the first continental Cup Final in Nigeria after 18 years.

The last time an African Clubs' Cup Final was held in Nigeria was on 12th December 2004, when Enyimba FC defeated Etoile Sportive du Sahel of Tunisia on penalties at the National Stadium, Abuja, to claim a second successive title.

# Djokovic wins Italian Open title

World number 1 Novak Djokovic has defeated Stefanos Tsitsipas in the Italian Open to claim his first title in 2022.

Djokovic displayed his mastery of the sport by flushing out Tsitsipas 6-0 7-6 (7-5) to record the sixth consecutive win in a head-to-head contest between the duo.

The Serbian, who has suffered a tumultuous season, was denied entry into Australia to compete in the Australian Open due to his unvaccinated covid-19 status.

The reigning Italian Open champion was also prevented from competing in the Miami Open and the Indian Wells over the same

covid-19 issue.

Djokovic suffered a quarter-final defeat to Czech's Jiri Vesely in the 2022 Dubai Duty-Free Championship and recently ended his Madrid Open campaign in the semi-finals after wunderkind, Spain's Carlos Alcaraz, defeated him 7-6 (7-5) 5-7 6-7 (5-7).

However, the undeterred world number 1 shrugged off the Madrid Open defeat to dislodge all his opponents in Rome, including Greek Stefano Tsitsipas in the final to claim the trophy after a six-months trophy drought.

"I've been building my form the last few weeks," Djokovic said post-match.

"It couldn't be better



timing coming into Roland Garros.

"Perfect scenario for me.

"This year it was a particular situation. With everything that happened in Australia, it took some time. I found my best shape here. I'm going to Paris with a lot of confidence," Djokovic added.

It took Djokovic over six months to win another title (his sixth Italian Open title) after he won the Paris Masters in November, 2021.

# Mauritius plays Nigeria in AFCON qualifiers

Mauritius won an appeal to the Confederation of African Football (CAF) against Sao Tome and Principe to feature in the group A among Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Guinea Bissau in the 2023 African Cup of Nations (AFCON) qualifiers.

In a statement by CAF's Director of Competition, Mr Samson Adamu confirming the development to the

Nigeria Football Federation (NFF), he asserted that the appellant won its case before the Disciplinary Committee of the continental football governing body.

According to Mauritius's appeal, Sao Tome and Principe had featured a player who tested positive for covid19 in the preliminary qualifiers between both countries.

Mauritius' prayers were

that CAF should disqualify Sao Tome and Principe, who have already been drawn into the same group as Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Guinea Bissau.

However, CAF, after a review of the appeal, passed a judgement voiding Sao Tome and Principe's eligibility to feature in the group qualifiers of the 2023 African Cup of Nations.



“Everyone thinks of changing the world, but no one thinks of changing himself.”

— Leo Tolstoy

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## Ailing Queen makes surprise visit, opens Elizabeth line

By **OROWO VICTORIA OJIEH** with agency report

From the Queen has come a surprise appearance to officially open the completed Elizabeth line, named in her honour.

The 96-year-old monarch, who rarely carries out public engagements outside of her royal residences, joined her youngest son the Earl of Wessex at Paddington Station for the royal visit on Tuesday.

Her attendance was not publicly announced in advance, with the head of state facing ongoing mobility problems, but

organisers were told there was a possibility she might be able to attend.

The longest reigning head of state is just over two weeks away from her Platinum Jubilee celebratory weekend to celebrate 70 years as monarch.

She and Prince Edward were welcomed by Prime Minister Boris Johnson, Mayor of London Sadiq Khan and Transport for London commissioner Andy Byford.

The PM said it was fantastic to see her and those that were there are incredibly touched and grateful to Her Majesty for coming to open the Elizabeth line.

The Queen and



Queen Elizabeth

Prince Edward also met train drivers, station staff and apprentices.

The Elizabeth line,

runs across London from west to east, will open to passengers on Tuesday 24 May.

The Queen was given an Oyster card and shown how to use it on a ticket machine.

A Buckingham Palace spokeswoman said, “In a happy development, Her Majesty The Queen is attending today’s event to mark the completion of the Elizabeth line.”

“Her Majesty was aware of the engagement and the organisers were informed of the possibility she may attend.”

Tuesday’s engagement is the Queen’s first one outside of the Windsor area since she attended the Duke of Edinburgh’s memorial service in Westminster Abbey.

The Elizabeth line will boost capacity and cut journey times for travel across the capital.

## Police trail culprits in burning of magistrates court, LG secretariat

By **ALEX OLISE**

Anambra Police Command has launched a probe into the burning down of the Secretariat of Idemili North Local Government in Ogidi, Anambra State and a Magistrate Court.

Those culpable are also being trailed.

Top Police sources disclosed this to The Trumpet saying that they are working on intelligence reports received overnight following the ugly incident which destroyed properties worth millions.

Spokesperson of the command, Toochukwu Ikenga a Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) had earlier

confirmed the incident as handwork of unidentified arsonists.

Video and picture footage circulating online showed that the entire buildings were reduced to rubbles, while vehicles parked inside the Local Government secretariat were also burnt to ashes.

While confirming the incident, the State Police Command attributed it to unidentified arsonists.

“Right now, the fire has been put off, and calm has been restored to the area.”

The attack occurred barely three weeks after another local government secretariat was burnt down in the state

## Communities shut down flow station over road project abandoned by NDDC

By **GABRIEL ELOZINO**, Asaba

Indigenes of Ovwevwe, Opherin and Saniko Communities in Ughelli North Local Government Area of Delta State, have in a protest shut down operations of an oil company operating in their domain over the continued abandonment of a road project by Niger Delta Development Commission, NDDC, for the past 10 years.

The protesters, mainly aged women, and youths, barricaded the entrance of the communities and roads leading to Eriemu flow station held that the contractor handling their road project has abandoned it for over a decade.

Displaying placards with inscriptions such as, ‘Good road is our right as host communities’, ‘We

have the biggest manifold in Africa,’ ‘Flow Station, NGC, 52 Oil Wellhead 3, Lact Unit Campsite yet no road,’ ‘11 kilometer road is not too small for Federal Government of Nigeria to complete.’ They vowed to never give up on the protest until their agitations for good road is met.

Addressing newsmen, the President General of Ovwevwe Community, Philip Akpovukoko, said, “Since 1961, the first oil well head was discovered in Ovwevwe axis and since that time till now many oil well heads have been discovered. The biggest manifold in Africa is located in Eriemu field owned by Ovwevwe.”

He said, “this road was awarded in 2010 to S. O. Olotu Construction company and till date it has



NDDC MD, Pondei

not been completed. We are the major oil producing communities in this region. We also produce gas. We have the biggest manifold in the whole of West Africa, three large units, 52 well heads and yet we are suffering.

“The company did

half of the road and left, which as is standard now has been abandoned. This road is very dear to us that is why we are out here today, to let the federal government, the state government and the entire world know what we are suffering.”