

Kenyan President increases minimum wage as inflation bites

By **OROWO VICTORIA OJIEH** with agency report

Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta on Sunday announced a 12 per cent hike in the minimum wage as

the country confronts a surge in the cost of living.

Inflation in the East African economic powerhouse jumped to a seven-month high

in April, mainly as a result of skyrocketing fuel and food prices, according to official figures.

"As a caring government, we find

there is a compelling case to review the minimum wages so as to cushion our workers against further erosions," Kenyatta said at a

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How elites undermine Igbo presidential bid

Many observers believe that Nigeria's Southeast geopolitical zone has a mountain to climb in its bid to produce a president of Igbo extraction in 2023.

But many also believe that although it is a daunting task, it is not insurmountable if certain factors or issues are properly addressed.

Some think that the major problems facing the Igbo presidential bid are disunity and sabotage hinged on greed on the part of their political class or elites cutting across all parties.

Prominent Igbo people occupy top positions in the major political parties and federal government but this is seemingly an albatross as none of them aspiring to be president is willing to accept consensual arrangements that will put them in a position of strength to negotiate with others for the office. This has thrown up many aspirants in the parties that will split the Igbo votes at the primaries that might lead to defeat and abortion of the bid.

Another problem dogging the Igbo presidential bid is sabotage as some among them are available to be hired for a fee by others against the common interest.

The third problem is national and rooted in Nigeria's lopsided federal system that has led to strident calls for restructuring as well as separatist agitation and groups.

The discord and other problems have recently manifested ahead of the political parties' primaries and the 2023 general elections.

For example, while incarcerated leader of the proscribed group, Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), Mazi Nnamdi Kanu, opposes elections being held in Igbo land despite the fact that the area has many aspirants in the race,

some of the elites of the ethnic nationality are supporting outsiders for the job.

For example, Senate Chief Whip Orji Uzor Kalu says he may withdraw from contesting to be the president of Nigeria if major political parties do not zone their tickets to the South-East.

Kalu in a statement he issued in Abuja, however, said that it was his desire and intention to run for the Presidency.

According to him: "I am committed to this pursuit, but I can't make an official declaration to this regard without the full support of other regions.

"Everywhere in the world, politics is situational and that of Nigeria is exceptionally situational.

"The situation in Nigeria is that without the support of other regions, it would amount to a shadow chase for a South Easterner to be President.

"This is the reason I have been in the frontline of the call that the two major political parties, the All Progressives Congress (APC) and the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) should zone their presidential tickets to the South-East as they did for the South-West in 1999.

"In the absence of this zoning, I shall return to the senate and stay away from the presidential contest."

He said that the North has more advantage to win elections in the democratic setting.

"I am even shocked with the number of aspirants coming from the South-West and the South-South.

"It is embarrassing that these aspirants (APC and PDP) have no single respect and concern for the South-East.

"I had thought they would think about the South-East; I thought they would support us. The amount of money being spent by these aspirants is alarming



Ohanaeze President-General, George Obiozor

and they have forgotten that money alone cannot buy the Presidency.

"It has become a joke to an ordinary Nigerian who hears Southern commentators and aspirants rooting for a Southern President on the premise of fairness, equity and justice," Kalu said.

He further said that if there was anything like "fairness", "equity" and "justice", it should be the entire South pushing for a president of South-East extraction.

According to him, anything less than that is "hypocritical", "unjustifiable" and "inordinate."

"Some 'persons' are even claiming God's anointed choice in 2023. Unfortunately, it is not all prayers that God answers; at least not inordinate ones.

"What moral justification does a Southerner who refused to be fair to his brothers have against a Northerner running for president?"

"It will be very insensitive, unreasonable and disrespectful for any Southern man to criticise a presidential aspirant from the North on the ground that the North has done eight years and power should return to the South," he said.

Kalu also said that while the South-West and the South-South successfully completed their tenures as 'President' and 'Vice President', they should have the courage to support the South-East.

"If the next president after President Muhammadu Buhari does not come from the South-East, there would be nothing unfair and unjust if he/she comes from Daura," Kalu said.

He said that the two regions that are yet to produce a President are South-East and North-East.

"If this means anything to Nigerians, the APC and PDP should be fair enough to prioritise these regions. If power should come to the South and not the South-East or North and not the North-East, the essence for which the six geopolitical zones were created is long dead.

"This country belongs to all of us and the unity of the country should be paramount.

"If not for selfishness and greed, how can you say that where a president comes from does not matter simply because you don't want to support a president of Nigeria from the South-East, but turn around to clamour for a power shift to the South?"

"How do we explain this to the younger generation? Let the wise and courageous stay firm on their convictions and not swing on the two sides of the Atlantic," Kalu said.

"To Pa Ayo Adebajo, Chief Edwin Clark, Deji Adeyanju and a host of others who have stood firm in their support for their brothers in the South-East, posterity

will be kind to you," Kalu said.

'I don't believe in zoning'

On his part, the leader of the Movement for the Actualisation of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), Chief Ralph Uwazuruike, at the weekend led thousands of South East youths in a solidarity march in support of the candidacy of the Governor of Kogi State, Yahaya Bello, in the 2023 presidential election.

The youth, who started the procession from the MASSOB leader's House in Owerri, marched through the streets, carrying different placards, with inscriptions such as "Power to the Youths, Support Yahaya Bello", "Youths Can Also Lead", and "Yahaya Bello for the Youths", among others.

They made it clear that the only solution to Nigeria's political quagmire was for power to go to the youths.

According to them, in this regard, Governor Bello is the right fit for the position of President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Recall that Bello picked his Expression of Interest and Nomination forms at the All Progressives Congress national secretarial on Wednesday.

Bello, who was the first to pay the N100 required for the forms, was received by a mammoth crowd of party faithfuls and support groups from across the country, who have been urging him to run for President.

Uwazuruike, who advised Nigerians and party leaders to shun zoning, saying it had no place in the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, said his MASSOB/BIM would support Governor Bello to become the next president of

Nigeria because he had the leadership qualities to lead Nigeria effectively.

He noted that power should go to the best in the race, adding that the Kogi State Governor was the best for the job.

"All Nigerians should rally round the youthful Governor, Yahaya Bello. Today, April 30, 2022 is all about Nigerian youths. We are supporting Yahaya Bello for this and no one else. That he has the capacity to solve the problem of insecurity and a host of others facing the nation is not in doubt.

"This is a crucial time in the history of the country. We must give youths a chance, especially one that has demonstrated uncommon capacity, in the person of Yahaya Bello," he said.

Uwazuruike, who is also the Founder of Biafran Independent Movement, said that he does not believe in a president of Igbo extraction, insisting that the contest should be thrown open.

Addressing the mammoth crowd that had come to welcome him at the APC Secretariat last Wednesday, Bello had said, "Right now, what we have ahead of us is a task of canvassing and consulting all party faithfuls, leaders, delegates and stalwarts, members and all Nigerians, at home and even in the diaspora to support us so that we become the flagbearer of this great party come 30 and 31 of May 2022. And by the special grace of God, I am confident I shall become victorious and the party shall become victorious."

"Yahaya Bello is coming on the table to restore hope for Nigerians, for the entire black Africans and for the entire black nation across the world. That is the hope that we are coming on board with. To Unite, to secure, and to put the country and our people on the path of prosperity."



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Another Fulani can't succeed Buhari, group tells PDP

By TUNDE JOSHUA, Abuja

Southern and Middle Belt Alliance (SaMBA) has rejected alleged plans by the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) to present a Fulani presidential candidate ahead of the 2023 presidential election.

It described as unjustifiable for President Muhammadu Buhari to hand over power at the end of his eight year rule to another Fulani.

SaMBA warned that should the PDP leadership allow a northern Fulani to emerge as its candidate and eventually succeed Buhari, people of the Middle Belt region will hold the party's National Chairman, Iyorchia Ayu responsible if herdsman killings continue.

Consequently, SaMBA knocked PDP's northern aspirants such as former Vice President, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, former Senate President, Bukola Saraki, Governor of Sokoto State, Aminu Tambuwal, and Governor of Bauchi State, Bala Mohammed for their "displayed greed and selfishness on the issue of zoning the Presidency by the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP).

The Group in a statement

signed by its Spokesman, Prince Rwang Pam Jnr. after reviewing political horse-trading ahead of the 2023 Presidential elections wondered how the likes of Atiku, Saraki and Tambuwal who are Fulani by tribe have the effrontery to come out and declare for Presidency in 2023 when a northerner, Fulani and a muslim is about completing his eight years in power in 2023.

SaMBA also described Atiku, Saraki, Mohammed and Tambuwal as selfish and greedy leaders who are only desperate to grab power, asking what they have done with the offices they have occupied so far.

The group added that for the likes of Atiku, Saraki, and Tambuwal to talk down on zoning is like laying a foundation for the disintegration of Nigeria because the country's constitution was established on the basis of equity, fairness, and justice.

SaMBA also said that politicians that still believe that they have the population and therefore must hold on to power, display stone-age mentality adding that if the Northern politicians believe that they can hold on to power because of their large population, then



Ayu

the Southern part of the country should also hold on to their natural resources.

The statement reads in part, "the recent declaration by the trio of former Vice President, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, Former Senate President, Bukola Saraki, and Governor of Sokoto State, Aminu Tambuwal is an indication of selfishness and greed.

"The country was established on the principle of fairness, equity, and Justice. This presupposes that every part of the country will be treated fairly and be given a sense

of belonging.

"But, the recent declaration by the trio of Atiku, Saraki, and Tambuwal is an indication that they don't believe in that principle.

"How could a Northerner, a Fulani, and a Muslim spend eight years in power and people from the same ethnic group are warming up to govern again, thereby aiming for 16 years of back to back Fulani rule.

"To us, their ambition to rule is not about service to the country, but about grabbing power with the

sole aim of plundering our resources.

"If we critically review their administration, when they were at the corridors of power, what development did they bring to the nation?

"For them to think that they have the population at their disposal is stone-age thinking which can severe the relationship between the South and the North if they are not careful.

"What about the Southsouth and the Southeast regions that are making provisions for the running of the country?

"We, therefore, urge the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) to consider our unity and take a firm and transparent position on the issue of zoning rather than hiding behind one finger because any attempt by the party to throw the presidency open could pave way for another Fulani man; and that will backfire immediately.

"A Fulani man cannot complete eight years and another Fulani be nursing a Presidential ambition in a country of 250 million people with more than 300 tribes.

"We believe this cannot stand unless we do not believe in one Nigeria".

Ubani picks free NYDP presidential forms, presents them to NYCN head

By TUNDE JOSHUA, Abuja

A youth, Hon. Vincent Ubani, has joined the 2023 presidential race as he picked the expression of interest and nomination forms of the Nigeria Youth Democratic Party (NYDP,) in Abuja at the weekend.

He said with the teeming millions of Nigerian youths behind him, he is set to become the party's standard bearer and defeat the All Progressives Congress

(APC) and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) candidates in February 2023 and come to power as the next President of Nigeria.

Ubani picked the free Expression of Interest and Nomination form for as the the choice of Nigeria Youths, Students and Women Constituency Global/ Nationwide Mandate at the Transcorp Hilton, Abuja.

He was accompanied by the National Chairman of NYDP Barry Avotu

Johnson, Comrade Prince Atuma, Bala Katung and some other party dignitaries.

Ubani said as the President General Coalition of All Young Candidates and Youth Leaders in Nigeria and Diaspora comprising of young candidates from all political parties in Nigeria urged all interested young aspirants to avail themselves of the opportunity of free nomination forms provided by NYDP to achieve their political

ambitions.

He said the youth constituents will provide 100% support for campaign activities of all young candidates in the 774 LGAs of the 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT).

The presidential aspirant later visited the National President of the National Youth Council of Nigeria NYCN Amb. Solomon Adodo in his office to secure endorsement as youth representative in

the coming presidential election.

"The struggle for a better Nigeria has kick off today as all young candidates are to rush faster in ensuring they get themselves prepared to be eligible to vote because of the time limit in our new electoral law," Ubani said.

Photo Caption: Hon. Vincent Ubani(second left), presenting his NYDP presidential nomination forms to Amb.Solomon Ado, President of NYCN (second right), in Abuja

Kenyan President increases minimum wage as inflation bites

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1
Labour Day rally.

The president said the 12 percent increase would come into effect from May 1. It takes the minimum monthly wage from 13,500 Kenyan shillings (about \$116.5, 110.5 euros) to 15,120 shillings (\$130.5, 124 euros).

However the hike falls far short of the 24 percent that had been sought by the Central Organisation of Trade Unions Kenya

(COTU).

Kenyatta said the high cost of living was due to factors "beyond my control like the coronavirus pandemic and the Russia - Ukraine conflict".

He berated rival political leaders including Deputy President William Rut for seeking to blame the government for the economic woes, as the country prepares for crucial elections in August.

Kenyatta cannot run for office after serving two terms but has endorsed his former arch-rival Raila Odinga for the top job.

The August 9 presidential election is expected to be a two-horse race between Odinga and Ruto, who was initially anointed by Kenyatta as his successor, but found himself frozen out after a shock 2018 pact between Kenyatta and Odinga.

Kenya's finance minister last month unveiled a \$28 billion budget aimed at helping the economy recover after the Covid-19 pandemic threw hundreds of thousands of people out of work.

Kenyans are struggling to cope with rising costs of basic goods such as food and fuel, a crisis worsened by the Ukraine war, while several parts of the country are

also suffering from a severe drought.

The statistics bureau announced last week that the inflation had reached a seven-month high of 6.47 percent last month from 5.56 percent in March and 5.76 percent in April last year.

Last month the country was also hit by a fuel shortage that triggered long queues at petrol stations and strict rationing.

Uphold lessons of Ramadan, DG of NOA tells Muslims

As Nigerian Muslims join their counterparts across the world to celebrate the end of this year's Eid-el-Fitri, the Director-General, National Orientation Agency (NOA), Dr. Garba Abari, has felicitated with the faithful (Ummah), urging them to uphold the lessons of love, selflessness, tolerance, patience and perseverance which Ramadan signifies.

Abari sees the Eid-el-Fitri as an opportunity for Muslims, and indeed all Nigerians, to demonstrate the spirit of tolerance, brotherliness, love and peace that exists among us. These, he believes, should be imbibed as examples of lessons learnt during Ramadan which promotes peace and unity among citizens to facilitate the peaceful national coexistence which we all desire as Nigerians.

He also urged the Ummah to continue to pray for God's guidance and wisdom in tackling the current challenges faced by the country as we also draw nearer to the 2303 general elections.

While admonishing the Ummah to remain true to their civic responsibilities and maintain support for government towards fulfilling its obligations, the NOA Director General calls on the faithful to be law abiding and

security conscious both during and after the celebrations as progress and development can only thrive in a secure and peaceful society.



Abari

SERAP sues FG at ECOWAS Court over Kaduna train attack victims

Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP) has sued the government of President Muhammadu Buhari over “the failure to protect the rights to life, security, and dignity of the victims of the Abuja-Kaduna train attack, and the failure to secure the safe release of those held captive by the terrorists.”

Terrorists had on March 28 attacked the AK9 Abuja-Kaduna train, killing at least nine people, wounding several others, and abducting an unknown number of passengers. The victims have remained with the terrorists for a month, despite repeated appeals for the government to free them from captivity.

The suit followed reports that the Federal Executive Council (FEC) failed to approve funds for surveillance equipment that could have helped to prevent the train attack.

In the suit No ECW/CCJ/APP/20/22 filed last week before the ECOWAS Court of Justice in Abuja, SERAP is seeking “a declaration that the train attack, abductions and killings of passengers by terrorists amount to a failure by the government to protect Nigerians, and to prevent these grave human rights violations.”

SERAP is also seeking “an order directing the Buhari government to protect, promote, and fulfil the human rights of Nigerians, including travellers across the country, by ensuring adequate security and taking measures to prevent attacks.”

SERAP is seeking “an order directing the Buhari government to urgently find and identify all the passengers, victims and their families, and to pay adequate monetary compensation of N50 million to each of the passengers

and victims and their families.”

In the suit filed together with an application for expedited hearing, SERAP is arguing that, “The Buhari government has a legal duty to protect individuals from real and immediate risks to their lives and security caused by actions of third-parties such as terrorists.”

SERAP is also arguing that, “A fundamental notion of contemporary human rights law is that victims of violations such as the victims of the Abuja-Kaduna train attack enjoy an independent right to effective remedies. Rights without remedies are ineffectual, rendering illusory the government’s duty to protect such rights.”

According to SERAP, “The Buhari government has failed to protect the constitutionally and internationally guaranteed rights of the victims of the train attack to life, dignity and security, and their right to an effective remedy.”

The suit filed on behalf of SERAP by its lawyers Kolawole Oluwadare and Opeyemi Owolabi, read in part: “The Buhari government is under a legal obligation to protect the life of every citizen in the country.”

“Remedies logically should be proportionate to the gravity of the harm or violations caused by the government and its agents or by terrorists or unknown perpetrators.”

“Human life has a special value and dignity which requires legal protection. It is the principle of international law, and even a general conception of law, that any breach of an engagement involves an obligation to make reparation.”

“The officials of the Buhari government have publicly



President Muhammadu Buhari

stated that they knew or had information that an attack on the train was imminent but the government failed and/or neglected to take measures to prevent the train attack.”

“The government will still be held accountable for failing or neglecting to guarantee and protect human rights regardless of whether such violations are directly or indirectly attributable to the government or its officials.”

“The Buhari government has an obligation to promote and protect the rights to life, security and dignity. This obligation means that the government must create an enabling environment that facilitates the enjoyment of these rights by the people.”

“The failure of the Buhari government to protect and guarantee the rights to life, security, liberty and dignity of the passengers and victims of the train attack violates the provisions of the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights to which Nigeria is a state party.”

“The Buhari government and the Nigeria Railway Corporation

had ignored several warnings in the past to take preventive measures to provide adequate security for the train services, and to suspend late rail services to prevent attack by terrorists and to ensure the security and safety of passengers.”

“Few days before the train attack, some terrorists had gained control of and entered the Kaduna airport in a daring attack. The Buhari government failed or refused to take preventive measures to ensure adequate security in the airport and its surrounding, and to prevent the attack on the train.”

SERAP is also asking the ECOWAS Court for the following reliefs:

1. A DECLARATION that the Abuja-Kaduna train attack amounts to a failure by the government to exercise due diligence to prevent the attacks, abductions and killings, and cannot be justified, and therefore constitutes a serious breach of Nigeria’s obligations under the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

2. A DECLARATION that the failure of the government to exercise due diligence and to take steps to prevent the train attack, abductions and killings by terrorists is unlawful, as it amounts to breaches of obligations under the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights and International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

3. A DECLARATION that the failure of the government to conduct prompt, impartial, thorough, transparent and effective investigations into the attacks, and to find and hold those responsible to account, is unlawful, as it amounts to breaches of obligations to protect, promote and fulfil human rights.

4. A DECLARATION that the failure of the government to provide an effective remedy and reparation for the passengers and victims of the train attack is unlawful, as it amounts to breaches of obligations to respect, protect, promote and fulfil human rights.

5. A DECLARATION that the failure of the government to provide an environment to secure and protect the human rights to life, dignity and security anywhere in Nigeria is unlawful, as it amounts to breaches of obligations to protect, promote and fulfil human rights.

6. AN ORDER directing the government to promptly, thoroughly, transparently and effectively investigate the attacks on the train, and to find and bring perpetrators to justice.

7. AN ORDER directing the government to respect, protect, promote, and fulfil the human rights of Nigerians, including travellers across the country.

8. AN ORDER directing the government to provide effective remedies and reparation, including restitution, satisfaction and guarantees of non-repetition that the Court may deem fit to grant to the victims of the train attack.

No date has been fixed for the hearing of the application for expedited hearing, and the substantive suit.

Fayemi declares for president

By **GABRIEL OMONHINMIN**, Southwest Bureau Chief

Ekiti State Governor, Dr. Kayode Fayemi, will on Wednesday May 4, 2022 declare to contest the

2023 presidency under the All Progressives Congress (APC).

He has concluded arrangements for the formal declaration at Abuja Transcop Hotel that will attract his political associates and friends from across the country, especially a large number of traditional rulers from the South West geopolitical zone of the country. Also expected is a large number former students of the University of Lagos, Fayemi’s alma mater, who are already mobilising for him.

Fayemi who will unfold his agenda for Nigeria has in the past two weeks crisscrossed the Southwest, meeting with traditional rulers and key political actors in the region.



Dr. Kayode Fayemi

Why Nigerians should reject APC, PDP, by AAC’s Sowore

Media entrepreneur and activist politician, Omoyele Sowore, has urged Nigerians to vote for his party in the 2023 general elections.

He is a presidential aspirant on the platform of the African Action Congress (AAC).

Sowore, publisher of SaharaReporters, made the plea in Akure, Ondo State while speaking with journalists during a rousing welcome by the party faithful.

He said that Nigerians, especially the youths, should challenge those seeking political office in 2023 general elections.

Sowore’s words: “This is the right time to challenge those in power and bring those with fresh blood, ideas and initiatives that can change the narratives for Nigeria.

“The time for the nation to work for Nigerians has also arrived. Other political parties are even going into extinction and we would help to consign them into the dustbin of history as soon as possible.

“For the people of Ondo State, and those who have not heard, I, Omoyele Sowore is going to be

the next president of Nigeria.”

He was happy to have been received by the mammoth crowd from his country home, Kiribo in Ese-Odo Local Government Area of the state.

Dismissing his incarceration by the Department of State Services as “a complete waste of time,” Sowore said he was stronger and bolder now that he has been released to move around the country.

The presidential hopeful vowed to continue speaking against injustice.

Obaseki increases minimum wage to N40,000

• Approves payment of harmonised pension from May 2022

By BENJAMIN OMOIKE

Edo State Governor Godwin Obaseki has approved N40,000 as the new minimum wage for workers in the state, in commemoration of this year's Workers' Day.

The governor, who made the announcement while delivering his 2022 Workers' Day speech, said his government will continue to prioritise the welfare of Edo workers, equipping them with the capacity and environment to deliver efficient and quality service to the people.

Obaseki noted, "As we all know, the minimum of N30,000 can barely sustain a family. It will be immoral and mindless of us to continue to pretend that we do not know that our workers are suffering."

"The government of Edo has now decided to review the minimum wage for Edo workers from N30,000 to N40,000 a month. Undoubtedly, Edo is the first state since the current outbreak of coronavirus to take this initiative."

He continued: "Even though we would have loved to pay more, we hope that this little adjustment would enable us to cushion the impact of the inflation that we are faced

with. There is no doubt that the financial implications will be heavy and put another burden on the government.

"But as a government, we are prepared to make the sacrifices so that the workers can live a better life. Your welfare is our number one priority."

Reassuring his government's relentless support to senior citizens in the state, Obaseki lamented the hardship experienced by pensioners and other senior citizens as a result of rising cost of food and other items.

He stated, "I am particularly interested in our senior citizens because they are one of the most vulnerable in our society. We took interest in payments of outstanding pensions to our pensioners in spite of the fact that these pensions were held by the previous administration."

"In view of the prevailing economic circumstances, I have now approved, effective this May, the agreement we reached with the Union of Pensioners that the harmonized amount would be paid from May 2022."

"Government is aware of the difficulties faced by the pensioners due to the non-payment of pension and gratuities to pensioners by previous governments. This responsibility is huge and it will

require a substantial part of our resources to settle them.

"However, we are not a government that is known for running away from challenges; we will look for a way to tackle these challenges," the governor added.

Obaseki however urged workers in the state to take advantage of opportunities offered by his

administration in the agricultural sector to increase food production in the country.

Earlier in his address, the state Chairman of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC), Mr. Odion Olaye, charged the federal government to step up efforts to tackle the high rate of insecurity, unemployment and hunger in the country.



Gov Godwin Obaseki

Don't take Workers' dedication as sign of weakness, PDP cautions FG

By TUNDE JOSHUA, Abuja

Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) has commended Nigerian workers for their resilience and patriotism which it said the Federal Government should not take for granted as sign of weakness.

The party said the nation's organised labour has been patient and supportive towards nation building in spite of the asphyxiating environment under the "vicious, rudderless, inhumane and corrupt All Progressives Congress (APC)-led administration" that has no regard for Nigerians and the workers.

In a message to Nigerian workers on the occasion of the May Day, PDP's spokesperson, Hon. Debo Ologunagba said the workers as real drivers of the national life represent the Nigerian resilient spirit and fight for survival in the resolve to move the nation forward despite the misrule of the APC.

"It is lamentable that the arrogance in failure and insensitivity of the APC government towards the welfare of workers continue to dislocate our social order and cripple our major productive sectors with grave negative ripple effect on millions of families and the nation at large.

"The deliberate general stagnation on issues of the welfare of workers reflects the ugly reality in our nation under a government that apparently relishes the suffering of its citizens.

"Such selfish inattentiveness, corruption and incompetence of the APC administration is responsible for the closure of our public universities as the government continues in its brazen failure to attend to the demands of striking university lecturers and millions of stranded university students in our country," the party said.

The PDP called on the Federal Government to immediately resolve the industrial action by lecturers in public universities to halt an imminent collapse of the public education sector.

The statement said "party however cautions the APC administration not to continue to take the calmness and patriotism of Nigerian Workers, as they eagerly await the exit of the APC from government in 2023, as a sign of weakness.

"Our caution is predicated on the clear signals that the APC in its arrogance in failure has not demonstrated any concrete commitment towards improving on the welfare of the people. Instead, the APC administration, typical of its style continues to renege on the promises for improved workers' welfare.

"Our Party however calls on the workers and indeed all Nigerians to remain calm and keep hope alive as the PDP takes strong steps to democratically return to power in 2023 to Rescue and Rebuild our nation from the misrule of the APC."

NDLEA intercepts N1.1billion travellers' cheques, 10.89kg cocaine at airport

• Seizes 2.3million Tramadol tabs, 2,919 bottles of Codeine in Kaduna

By PAUL MICHAEL, ABUJA

Operatives of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) have intercepted a Travellers' cheques in different foreign currencies with a total value of N1,157,670,469.92 at the Murtala Muhammed International Airport (MMIA), Ikeja Lagos.

NDLEA spokesperson, Femi

Babafemi, disclosed this on Sunday, adding that at least, a suspect, Oguma Richard Uchenna has been arrested in connection with attempt to export the cheques, which were neatly concealed inside four bound hard cover books disguised as academic project literatures, to the United Kingdom.

According to him, "The finan-

cial instruments suspected to be counterfeits were discovered on Wednesday 27th April at NAHCO export shed of the Lagos airport during cargo examination of some consignments meant for export to the UK on a cargo flight."

He further disclosed that a breakdown of the cheques shows they have "monetary values of Two Hundred and Eighty Seven Thousand, Six Hundred and Twenty Three Dollars, Thirty One Cent (\$287, 623.31); One Million Four Hundred and Fifty Six Thousand Three Hundred Canadian Dollars (\$1,456,300) and One Million Two Hundred and Ninety Seven Thousand Eight Hundred (1,297,800) Euros."

In a similar development, operatives of NDLEA at the airport have foiled attempt by drug traffickers to smuggle into Nigeria 10.89kilograms of cocaine through a Qatar Airways flight. The illicit drug was hidden in seven children duvets packed in an unaccompanied bag from Brazil.

He further said raid operations in Kaduna, Ondo and Akwa Ibom states have led to the seizure of about 2,000kg of Tramadol, Codeine, Cannabis and Heroin.

"In Ondo state, 401kg of cannabis was recovered and

two suspects: Julius Dapo, 56 and Emeka Ikebuaku, 32, were arrested at Ipele forest in Owo area on Sunday 24th April.

"On same day, a transborder drug trafficker, Chigbo Chinonye, 42, was arrested with amphetamine weighing 2.5kg and heroin weighing 0.5kg during stop and search operation conducted along Oron- Ibaka road on his way to Cameroon. He concealed the drugs using false bottom packaging.

"In Kaduna, a total of 47 cartons of suspected fake Tramadol, comprising 2,350,000 tablets, weighing 1222kg were seized in Zaria on Monday 25th April while a dealer, Chinedu Asogwa was arrested the following day 26th April along Abuja-Kaduna express road, with 2919 bottles of cough syrup with codeine, measuring 291.9litres and a gross weight of 396kg," Babafemi stated.

Chairman/Chief Executive of NDLEA, Brig Gen Mohamed Buba Marwa (Rtd) while commending the officers and men of the MMIA, Ondo, Akwa Ibom and Kaduna Commands of the Agency for the seizures and arrests in the past week, charged them and their compatriots across the country to remain steadfast and vigilant in their areas of responsibility.



Mohamed Buba Marwa

PDP holds special convention, NEC meeting

• Zoning, disqualified aspirants on agenda

By **EDWARD ADAMIDENYO**, Deputy Editor

People's Democratic Party will on Monday May 2 and Wednesday 4th May, 2022 hold a special convention and National Executive Committee meeting in Abuja to decide on critical issues.

The National Publicity Secretary of the party, Hon. Debo Ologunagba said the Party has decided to hold its special national convention, where it will pick its presidential candidate.

He confirmed that whoever the National Working Committee picks will be ratified by NEC on Wednesday.

"We have decided to hold the convention, where our candidate will emerge, in Abuja. That was where the National Working Committee chose, but the National Executive Committee will ratify it at our meeting on Wednesday," he said.

It was gathered from top party sources that the party's leadership rejected lobbyists, who wanted the convention to hold in their preferred states.

According to its timetable, the presidential candidate of the main opposition party will emerge on May 29.

In its 'Schedule of Activities and

Timetable for the Year 2022/2023 Elections' released last month and signed by the National Organising Secretary, Umar Bature, the party said its presidential primary would commence on May 28. It was silent on the venue.

There were 17 presidential candidates in the party, but two of them were dropped after their screening in Abuja on Friday.

The party has yet to reveal the identities of those cleared and disqualified from the race.

The aspirants included a former Vice-President, Atiku Abubakar, and two former Senate Presidents, Bukola Saraki and Pius Anyim.

Others were governors Bala Mohammed of Bauchi State, Aminu Tambuwal of Sokoto State, Nyesom Wike of Rivers State and Udom Emmanuel of Akwa Ibom State.

Also on the list were two former state governors, Peter Obi of Anambra State and Ayo Fayose of Ekiti State.

Those who also bought the N40m nomination and expression of interest forms for the race were Dele Momodu, Mohammed Hayatu-Deen, Sam Oluwabunwa, Ugwu Okwudili, Chikwendu Kalu, Ndukwe Cosmos, Nwachukwu Amakwenze and Mrs Oliver Tariela Diana.

"In 2018, the party held its



Ayu

convention in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. At that time, the governor of Rivers State was not an aspirant. He merely supported an aspirant. Atiku won then.

"Now that Wike is an aspirant, we cannot take the primary to his backyard.

"Also, Udom is interested; we will not go to his area as well. We also cannot go to the North, because of the interest the issue of zoning has generated. That is a foreclosed issue.

"So, there were interested power blocs, who wanted us to take the convention to the areas they consider safe for them, but we had to reject them," according to one of the NWC member.

In 2018, Atiku polled 1,532 votes, while Tambuwal polled 693 to come

second. Saraki got 317 votes; Jonah Jang, 19; Datti Ahmed, five; David Mark, 35; Tanimu Turaki, 65; Sule Lamido, 96; Attahiru Bafarawa, 48; Ibrahim Dankwambo, 111; Ahmed Makarfi, 74; and Rabiu Kwankwaso, 158.

Ologunagba gave an assurance that the party would be fair to all the aspirants, noting that no member of the NWC had preference for any of them.

He said, "We are going to be fair to all. We have no candidate among the aspirants. They are all distinguished members of our party, who have done well for the party and the country.

"In all the positions they have held, they have done well. We will work together and send the incompetent All Progressives Congress out of power."

We'll disclose those disqualified soon, says party

Meanwhile, the party has promised to disclose the identities of those disqualified after Friday's screening.

Shortly after the conclusion of the exercise at the Legacy House, Abuja, the presidential campaign headquarters of the PDP, the Chairman of the Screening Committee, Senator David Mark, told journalists that two aspirants were disqualified. He however declined to reveal the identities of the affected aspirants or the reasons for their disqualification.

He simply noted that the aspirants did not meet the requirements set by the panel.

When asked about the identities of those not cleared, he merely said, "Now, don't ask me those who have been cleared and those who have not been cleared, because I won't tell you. We haven't released the result to them. So, if you ask a question in that direction, you are wasting time."

Asked what the committee found wrong with the disqualified aspirants, Mark said, "They didn't meet the requirements and I can't be more specific about that."

But Ologunagba said, "Yes, we did not reveal their identities, but that will be done and you will know soon. Don't forget that the appeal committee is still going to meet on the issue." The committee is expected to sit on Monday. NEC to decide zoning on Wednesday

On the issue of zoning, Ologunagba said the NEC would also review the report of the committee set up on the issue. "The NEC meeting will look at it and take a final decision," he said.

The issue of zoning had polarised the party and its aspirants as some were of the opinion that it would be wrong for another northerner to succeed the President, Major General Muhammadu Buhari (retd.), whose second term ends on May 29, 2023.

Majority of those in favour of zoning were from the southern part of the country, while their northern counterparts were of the opinion that the PDP had produced more southern presidents than the North

JAMB directs candidates to print notification slips

By **OROWO VICTORIA OJIEH**

Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) has directed all candidates who registered for the 2022 Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) to start printing their UTME notification slips from Saturday 30th April, 2022.

This was disclosed by Fabian Okoro, the Director of Information Technology Services, via a statement released to JAMB Bulletin ahead of the exercise.

The director said the printing of examination notification slip is compulsory for all candidates, as it would guide them in making necessary arrangements.

He explained that the slip would enable candidates to know their venue, date, session and time of their examination. The examination exercise is scheduled to hold from May 6, 2022 to May 14, 2022.

In the statement, "All candidates are advised to print slips on time so as to know the location of their examination centres, date of their scheduled sessions and time of the examination beforehand, especially with the adjustment in examination schedules this year," he said.

"This would guide them in making necessary arrangements ahead of the exercise as the board frowns at lateness to its examination; no excuses would be entertained from any candidates as a stitch in time, saves nine".

The statement also informed candidates that they do not need to visit any CBT centres for the printing of the notification slip as it can be done at any available internet point, be it private or public.

"Candidates need not visit any CBT centres for the printing of the notification slip as it can be done at any available internet point, be it private or public. To print the slip, candidates are to visit <https://www.jamb.gov.ng> then click on 2022 UTME

slip printing then insert registration number to print."

The slip contains candidates' important details such as registration number, the centre to which they were to sit the examination within their chosen examination town, and the expected time to be at the centre.

Jamb stated that all candidates would be checked into the examination hall using the Biometric Verification Machine (BVM), a register of attendance in line with its policy of "no biometric verification, no examination".

The Board stressed that no examination would be rescheduled for whatever reason, saying candidates must prepare ahead and stay close to their examination venues and if possible, pay a prior visit to their centres before the date of the examination.

JAMB asked candidates to be careful not to run foul of the law, especially as it relates to prohibited items, saying necessary sanctions would be meted out to violators of its code of conduct.

The list of the prohibited items within the examination hall include flash drives, smart watches, calculators, recorders, mobile phones, spy reading glasses and jewellery, among others.



Fabian Okoro

NSCDC boss pledges adequate security for Sallah

• Deploys 20,000 personnel

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

Commandant General of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), Dr Ahmed Abubakar Audi, has assured citizens of adequate security of lives and critical national assets and infrastructure in the country during and after the Sallah celebration.

This was made known by the Corps Director of Public Relations, DCC Olusola Odumosu, in a press statement obtained by The Trumpet. The CG charged all citizens to be extra vigilant and security conscious following rising security challenges and threats across the country.

According to Odumosu, "Dr Audi has directed that personnel of the Corps must remain valiant and tactically prepared to neutralize the activities of criminals during the festive period and beyond.

"He noted that, the time to be extra vigilant and more security conscious is now, considering the current security situation in the country which calls for more concerted efforts and adequate preparation against sudden attacks on innocent citizens and Critical National Assets and Infrastructure by bandits, terrorists and other nefarious Individuals who takes advantage of festive seasons to unleash terror in order to make

the country unlivable and the political space ungovernable."

Dr Audi reiterated that the Corps is going to join forces with other security agencies in the country to ensure hitch free worker's day and Eid-el-fitr celebration by declaring total war on all criminal elements bent on circumventing the peace and safety of the country.

He said that 20,000 personnel have been deployed nationwide to every nook and cranny of the country to maintain security and fish out criminals from their hideouts.

Odumosu added, "The Corps helmsman maintained that the covert operations of the Corps ab initio have led to some criminal hideouts and black spots in some parts of the country and to this end, a marching order has been given to all State Commandants and Zonal Commanders to put to effective use all personnel during this period to curtail their excesses.

"The Commandant General affirmed that all hands must be on deck and called for the deployment of well trained officers from the Tactical Unit, Arm Squad, Rapid Response Squad, Agro Rangers, Counter Terrorism unit, Chemical Biological Radiological Nuclear Explosive Unit (CBRNE), Special Female Squad, Anti Vandal Unit and the K9 unit to man all identified flash points, recreation centers,

places of worship, motor Parks and train stations to prevent any act of sabotage or attack on innocent citizens and holiday makers."

According to the CG, all locations hosting the Critical Assets and Infrastructures across the country will be heavily guarded by the Corps to prevent attacks and stop a reoccurrence of such fire incident which led to the death of over a hundred people in an oil bunkering site in Imo State.

Dr Audi also noted that the security situation in the country calls for a robust synergy and collaborations among relevant security agencies to achieve a common goal of security the nation effectively.

"For an effective security coverage during the long holiday leading to the Eid-el-fitr celebration, there is a need for effective collaborations amongst security agencies to stem the tide of criminalities. Therefore all my personnel have been warned to avoid any confrontation with any sister agency; the only confrontation I have permitted for them is against criminals, bandits and men of the underworld" the CG said.

The CG assured the nation of a very peaceful and serene Eid-el-Fitr celebration, urging all muslim faithfuls to imbibe the tenets of love and peace in their relationship with their neighbours because where unity and love reigns, peace and progress is inevitable.

Joel-Onowakpo Thomas gets APC forms for Delta South Senatorial District race

Grassroots politician and technocrat, Hon. Joel-Onowakpo Thomas Ewowazino, MBA, FCA, FCTI (Magidadin Kaigama Katsina), has purchased the All Progressives Congress (APC) Expression of Interest and Nomination forms for Delta South Senatorial District contest. This indicates his readiness to run for the Senatorial seat next year.

Speaking on his senatorial bid, the Harvard-trained business mogul said:

"With my political experiences in various positions held at the local, state, and federal government levels, together with corporate experiences, I believe the Delta South Senatorial District is in safe hands with me. My representation of the 3-i (Isoko, Ijaw and Itsekeri) ethnic nationalities development would be geometrical.

"For instance, I was able to increase internally generated revenue (from 1.2 billion to over 5 billion monthly), human capital development and massive visible infrastructural development across the state in my less than six years appointment.

"My span of experience is huge, and shall come handy.

During my time as local government Chairman Isoko South, I paid contractors that were owed huge money because I believe the strength of the economy is in financially viable citizens. As board member and eventually chairman of Delta State Board of Internal Revenue I sent the staff for regular training both in Nigeria and Abroad. Moreso, as deputy director/State Coordinator Rivers, Edo and Delta states in the Federal Inland Revenue Service, I did not only position the zonal offices, but also increased revenue of the region which affected the total revenue of the Federal Inland Revenue Services.

"As a technocrat, I have built human and material resources from the scratch to a very enviable height.

"I will be bringing this rich resume from the combined private and public sector experiences to Delta South senatorial district. Therefore, with my right to vie for political positions as inalienable to all men. I wish to use this right to the favour of my constituents, believing same as true from my heart to the glory of God.

"Delta South Senatorial District should expect the best of representations."



Joel-Onowakpo Thomas



N100m form: Rep wants EFCC, ICPC to investigate aspirants, sponsors

● CSOs Electoral Act review

BY PAUL MICHAEL, ABUJA

A member of the House of Representatives, Sergius Ogun, representing Esan North East/Esan South East constituency, has called on the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) to investigate presidential aspirants of the All Progressives Congress (APC) and their sponsors over the payment of N100 million Expression of Interest and Nomination Forms.

Ogun said the whopping amount for the procurement of the forms would promote corruption insisting that there is possibility that some of the persons or sponsors buying the forms may have questionable wealth.

This is coming as members of the House

of Representatives said they may consider the amendment of the Electoral Act to set a benchmark for cost of forms for political parties.

They said though parties should be allowed to regulate themselves, the recent imposition of N100m on presidential aspirants by the APC to obtain nomination and expression of interest forms calls for concern.

A federal lawmaker, Solomon Bob said he might be pushing for the amendment to allow more people to participate in politics.

Bob, who is a member of the House Committee on electoral matters said, "It is something worth considering, given what is happening in the APC. What has happened now is obscene and offensive. So, why not? You know that I am always lending my support to such ideals."

Also, Hon. Nicholas Ossai said, "That is a

proposal that needs to be tested." He however noted that a comparative analysis should be done between Nigeria and other democracies.

However, Hon. Ben Igbakpa said parties should be given some independence, he said leaders of such parties should act like statesmen. He also stated that parties should consider the economic realities before imposing charges and levies.

Meanwhile, several Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) have called on the National Assembly to amend the Electoral Act 2022 by specifying a maximum amount political parties can sell their forms to public office aspirants.

Executive Director, Socio-Economic Rights, and Accountability Project, Adetokunbo Mumuni, stated that the cost of party forms should have been regulated before campaign expenses and donations.

"That should be the starting point. If you are saying that somebody cannot sponsor a campaign more than a specific amount, and somebody cannot spend more than an amount on an election, then it should start from the parties and nomination form is procured," Mumuni stated.

The Convener, Concerned Nigerians, Deji Adeyanyu, on his oart said, "I agree that we should amend the Electoral Act to reflect that political parties should not charge beyond a certain amount of money.

"It is like they are selling the Office of the President to the highest bidder. It is like they are telling people that politics is no longer about sacrifice; it is about money-making and business ventures. They are trying to commercialise public service which was supposed to be sacrificial."

Similarly, the Executive Director, Adopt A Goal for Development and Co-Convener, Centre for Liberty, Ariyo-Dare Atoye, recalled that the 8th National Assembly proposed a restriction of parties on the sale of forms in the amendments to the Electoral Act but the proposal was dropped after the President, Muhammadu Buhari, repeatedly declined assent to the bill.

Atoye said, "The 8th National Assembly listened to the yearnings of the youth and women, and included a cap on the cost of the nomination form, even though the political parties lobbied against and President Buhari declined assent on other grounds. The leadership of the 9th National Assembly should be held responsible for this escalation in the cost of nomination form because they bowed to pressure from the political parties who lack ideas on how to fund themselves; who are lazy about how to sustain their parties.

"These political parties have turned themselves into exploiters. They have made the party structure available to the greedy elite and it is the road to what we call state capture. The moment the political process is monetised to the extent that an average Nigerian cannot participate. That is a total state capture, that only a greedy few will be able to manipulate the dynamics of power."

However, Executive Chairman, Centre for Anti-corruption and Open Leadership, Debo Adeniran, noted that the cost of party forms only reflects the current economic realities in the country.

ICPC tasks INEC officials on graft, good governance

BY PAUL MICHAEL, ABUJA

Imo chapter of the Independent Corrupt Practices and Related Offences Commission (ICPC) has appealed to officials of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) Owerri, the state capital to eschew all forms of corrupt practices in the discharge of their duties especially during and after elections, in order to promote good governance in the country.

The appeal was made by Mrs Chinwe Egbeocha, Assistant Director, ICPC at a sensitization programme organized by the Commission for INEC management team at INEC conference hall on Friday.

She posited that only free, fair and credible elections in any society would guarantee good governance and economic development of that society. She therefore called on INEC officials not to accept bribes or any type of inducement to influence any election because doing so would bring into power the wrong people, resulting in the masses not enjoying the dividends of democracy.

She urged the INEC management to establish a vibrant and functioning Anti-Corruption and Transparency Unit (ACTU) to act as a watchdog against corruption, and an internal check mechanism to identify lapses in operational systems and establish processes



Prof Owasanoye

that are transparent, accountable and free of unethical practices. She said the Unit should be composed of men and women of proven Integrity and impeccable character.

She further encouraged them to place charts and posters bearing anti-corruption slogans in strategic locations around the office premises to remind both staff and visitors that the organization is a corruption-free zone.

In his speech, the Resident Electoral Com-

missioner, Imo state, Prof. Chukwuemeka Francis Ezeonu welcomed the officers of the Commission and appreciated the effort of the ICPC in combating corruption through sensitization of the public.

He lamented that corruption has permeated every sector of the society and contributed to the underdevelopment and bad state of the economy, and advised all in attendance to put in practice what was taught because ignorance of the law is not an excuse.

He further advised that it was time we focused on re-establishing values and norms in all facets of the society, and promised to establish and empower ACTU to help eradicate incidences of corruption in INEC after consultation with their headquarters. He also promised to produce and place at strategic positions posters and stickers bearing Anti-corruption messages to create awareness

Contributing, the Administrative Secretary of INEC Imo state, Barr. T.O.N Ongele thanked the officers of ICPC for the sensitisation and declared that they have benefited a lot from the enlightenment programme.

He stated that INEC Imo state is corruption-free and promised that they would organise a more robust sensitization program that would involve all staff of INEC including those from the local government areas so that everyone would benefit from the sensitization.

How ICPC tackles challenges of constituency projects via tracking

BY PAUL MICHAEL, ABUJA

Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) has clarified that those found culpable of crimes of corruption in the execution of constituency and executive projects are adequately punished.

This was disclosed by the Spokesperson of the Commission, Mrs Azuka Ogugua, during a

Twitter Space meeting organized by the Center for Fiscal Transparency & Transparency Watch, with the theme, "Addressing the Lingering Cases of Corruption in Constituency Projects".

Ogugua explained that after the Constituency and Executive Project Tracking (CEPT) exercise, post tracking activities such as follow up to ensure that contractors of shoddily implemented

projects go back to site to complete the projects, recoveries of diverted funds, further investigations with a view to prosecuting offenders, and community mobilization to own and protect the projects in their domains are carried out.

While responding to enquiries about prosecution of lawmakers by the Commission, she emphasized that defaulters in the implementation of constituency projects are not necessarily the legislators but may also be contractors, staff of MDAs, and aides of the legislators.

She also stated that prosecution was not the only punishment meted out to defaulters. She added that refund of stolen/diverted funds (with an additional fine for gratification as contained in section 20 of the ICPC Act), administrative sanctions such as suspension and dismissal of public servants, and blacklisting of defaulting contractors are other forms of punishment.

"Since the objective of the CEPT initiative was to ensure that the services were delivered to the people and there was value for money in the implementation of the projects and due process in the award of contracts, prosecution was not top priority as punishment," she said. Speaking on the way forward to solving the

problem of corruption in the implementation of constituency projects, Ogugua listed on-going actions such collaboration with the leadership of the National Assembly to ensure that the legislators are made aware of what they are supposed to do, policy advisories issued by ICPC, working with civil society and the media, as well as a public enlightenment campaign to sensitize the communities to own and protect projects in their domain.

She said an advisory to the Federal Ministry of Finance which had resulted in funds for some projects domiciled in some MDAs being restrained is an example of policy advisories issues by ICPC.

Also speaking at the meeting, Mr Akintunde Babatunde of the Centre for Journalism Innovation and Development (CJID), stated that a consequence management framework or mechanism should be put in place to deal with defaulters.

Other speakers at the meeting included Mr Ameh Ejekwonyilo of Premium Times, Mr Nick A, and Mr Patrick Mendie who all agreed that more should be done to ensure that funds for constituency projects were not diverted.

EFCC nabs suspected internet fraudsters

● Tasks mortgage bank on money laundering

BY PAUL MICHAEL, ABUJA

Operatives of the Lagos Command of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) have arrested no fewer than 18 suspected internet fraudsters in Lagos.

According to a statement by the EFCC spokesperson, Wilson Uwujaren, the suspects were arrested at Victoria Crest Estate III, Gate II, Augusta Amadi Street, Off Orchid Road, Lekki, Lagos, following intelligence reports.

Uwujaren gave the names of the suspects as Tijani Olumide Ahmed, Balogun Olusola, Ukuhor Richie Ifemeluaona, Ologun Damilola,

Adetokunbo Yusuf, Olubiyo Timilehin, Oyegoke Gafar Olaitan, Agarawu Farug Okikiola, Kazeem Oluwadamilare Adebayo and Salau Rahmon.

Others include Abdulrahman Adeshina Olasunkanmi, Rasheed Remilekun, Adeyanju Kehinde Emmanuel, Owolabi Temidayo Habeeb, Ojora Usman Olawale, Mubarak Balogun, Rafiu Olusegun and Ayobami Habeeb Oyeleye.

"They were arrested on Friday, April 29, 2022 at Victoria Crest Estate III, Gate II, Augusta Amadi Street, Off Orchid Road, Lekki, Lagos, following intelligence reports received by the Commission about their alleged involvement in computer-related fraud.

LASAMBUS officials rescue, deliver stranded pregnant woman in labour

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

A stranded pregnant woman who fell into labour on a popular road in the metropolis has been delivered of a baby by a team of the Lagos State Ambulance Service (LASAMBUS) officials.

The woman, 27 year-old Shukarat Isa, who resides at 30 Akin Akinsheyinwa Street, Awoyaya, Lagos and the baby, a male weighing 3.3kg, have since been taken to the Ikate Health Center, for further care and management.

Speaking after receiving a report of the successful medical emergency response by the LASAMBUS team, the Lagos State Commissioner for Health, Prof. Akin Abayomi, explained that the incident occurred yesterday around the Law School Bus Stop; along the popular Ozumba Mbadiwe Road, Victoria Island.

According to him, "LASAMBUS received a distressed call of a pregnant woman in labour at 8.02am and promptly dispatched its closest response team to the venue of the incident.

The team arrived at the scene, the Law School Bus Stop, at 8:16 am, and quickly set parameters for the emergency response, helping the woman to deliver both the baby and the placenta."

He added that the team cleaned up both baby and mother whilst observing basic medical emergency procedures on the spot before conveying them to the Ikate Health Centre for further management.

He said: "This is a typical case of an obstetric emergency, which may arise at any time during pregnancy, labour and birth. The Lagos State Government realising the pivotal role of prompt emergency response, including transport of pregnant women during critical obstetric emergency in preventing maternal and child deaths, has continued to expand its ambulance services to offer prompt emergency service to residents.

"We are happy that our investment and effort in overhauling the Lagos State Ambulance Service is yielding the desired results. News



such as this are cheering and heart-warming, as it adds up to improve our health indices and showcase our resolve to provide efficient and equitable service delivery to Lagosians."

Speaking in the same vein, the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Health Dr. Olusegun Ogbeye, disclosed that

the Governor Sanwo-Olu-led administration is currently reviewing the performance of the ambulance service and currently implementing a strategic plan to significantly improve service delivery, response time and the quality of care delivered by the service to reduce morbidity and mortality from emergen-

cies.

He added that the present administration has put words to action by commencing the overhauling of the ambulance service with new state-of-the-art ambulances and equipment to further sharpen the operations of LASAMBUS and comprehensive and continuous capacity development for staff of LASAMBUS for improved performance.

"With over 200 staff, 25 ambulance points and a fleet of ambulances strategically located across the State, the Lagos State Ambulance Service is poised to provide prompt pre-hospital and emergency health care to Lagosians. Ours is a 24-hour medical emergency response service including weekends and public holidays," Ogbeye said.

Giving an account of the incident, the rescued woman, Shukarat Isa, explained that she was in transit from Awoyaya in Ibeju-Lekki Local Government Area to Orile on a public bus when she went into labour.

In her words, "I was on a bus to Orile from Awoyaya, I fell into labour in the course of

the journey and a man sitting beside me called the emergency number and requested help. The vehicle had a stop at the Law School Bus Stop for some passengers to disembark and this was where the LASAMBUS officials caught up with the vehicle and assisted with the delivery which was already in process.

"The team also assisted in cleaning me and my baby up before transporting us to Ikate health centre at Elegushi. At Ikate health centre, the nurses stayed with us and assisted with my admission and baby immunization before leaving. I have since been discharged and my baby and I are doing quite well. I would like to appreciate the medical team for their response and care, it means a lot to me and my family."

The LASAMBUS team that was involved in the life-saving emergency service include; Oyekanmi Inumidun Ayomibo, an Assistant Chief Community Health Technician; Uthman Nofisat Afolashade, Higher Community Health Technician and Yusuf Olanrewaju Rahmon, the Ambulance pilot.

COSON, Okoroji win court case

By **BENJAMIN OMOIKE**

Copyright Society of Nigeria (COSON) has won a major legal victory at the Federal High Court, Abuja.

It is the nation's biggest copyright collective management organisation.

On April 14, 2022, Justice A.R. Mohammed delivered a long-awaited ruling in Suit

No: FHC /ABJ/CS/389/2021, a suit in which the COSON Chairman, Chief Tony Okoroji; the COSON General Manager, Mrs. Bernice Eriemeghe Ashibuogwu; Deputy General Manager, Mr. Vincent Adawaisi and Head of Licensing, Mrs. Anne Okomi-Adeyemi, all joined COSON as Plaintiffs.

COSON and its officers

went to court in 2021 seeking a declaration that Nigeria's biggest security agencies have been unlawfully deployed against them by one Pretty Okafor, a judgment debtor to Chief Tony Okoroji and one Biodun Eguakhide and that the Defendants have been engaged in an unlawful, unconstitutional and coordinated brutal, horrendous, wicked, harassment and torture of the Plaintiffs who are innocent citizens of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and that the Defendants have orchestrated the unlawful freezing of the bank accounts of the Plaintiffs.

COSON and its officers

have also sought significant damages and injunction against the Defendants.

In his ruling, Justice Mohammed made an Order restraining the Inspector General of Police, the Department of State Services (DSS), the Economic & Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Mr. Pretty Okafor, Prince Biodun Eguakhide and Stanbic IBTC Bank, whether by themselves or their officials, privies, servants, agents or howsoever called from in any way or manner harassing, disturbing, continuing to disturb or preventing, continuing to prevent COSON from lawfully enforcing the constitutional rights of

its members, affiliates, assignees and reciprocal representation partners or interfering, continuing to interfere with the internal management, operations, funds of COSON or the bank accounts of any of the Plaintiffs or preventing, continuing to prevent COSON, its members, affiliates, assignees and reciprocal representation partners from earning income and sustaining themselves with their Intellectual Property, pending the determination of the motion for interlocutory injunction already filed and served in the suit.

Reacting to the development, the Chairman of COSON, Chief Tony Okoroji

said, "I am an unshakable believer in the immortal words of Martin Luther King Jr that the arc of the moral universe is long but it bends toward justice".

COSON lawyer, Mr. James Ononiwu, of Whitelove Solicitors who is lead counsel in the case, said about the development, "as lawyers to COSON, we remain solidly confident that COSON is an outstanding organization, transparent, accountable and never deviating from the law. COSON is an exemplary organization that the members and the Nigerian nation should be proud of. That is why we stand firmly with COSON."



Police arrest man for allegedly impregnating own daughter

By **ALEX OLISE**

Operatives of the the Ondo State Police Command have arrested a middle-aged man, identified as Sunday Udoh, for allegedly impregnating his own daughter

He was arrested inside a community hospital

at Ile Oluji Town, the headquarters of the Ile-Oluji/Oke Igbo Local Government Area of the state while trying to abort the pregnancy.

The state Police Command Spokesperson, Mrs Funmilayo Odunlami, confirmed the arrest to

The Trumpet, saying that the operatives of the Command acted on intelligence reports gathered within the community over the movement of the man with his daughter.

According to the police image maker, the suspect has been transferred to the

State Criminal Investigation Department (SCID), gender unit.

During the investigation, the daughter told the police that the father has been having sexual intercourse with her for a very long time, which led to the pregnancy.

Police arrest three suspected burglars, two alleged receivers of stolen items

By ALEX OLISE

Operatives of the Kwara State Police Command have arrested three suspected burglars and two alleged receivers of stolen items in Ilorin, the state capital.

The Police Command Spokesperson, Mr Okasanmi Ajayi, gave the names of the suspects as Ayo Rasaki Sakiru, Iiyasu Rasaki and Jimoh Mashood.

He said the arrest of the suspects was sequel to recent reports of shop-breaking and stealing around some areas within the Ilorin metropolis.

According to the police image maker, the Commissioner of Police, Tuesday

Assayomo, gave a marching order to the DPOs of the affected areas to go all out to stem the emerging trend and ensure all the perpetrators of the criminal acts were arrested.

"Consequent upon the CP's order, the DPOs swung into action wherein the suspects were arrested," he disclosed.

Okasanmi said "all the suspects confessed to the crime, and revealed they had burgled several shops at Fate and Stadium road areas in Ilorin and stolen valuables therein."

The police spokesman also revealed that Fatima Shuaibu and Olajumoke Yusuf, both alleged receivers and custodians of the stolen

items were also arrested.

"Investigation into the matter eventually led to the recovery of two deep freezers, four Elepaq generators, six pairs of shoes, 90 pairs of ankara materials, one Bajaj motorcycle with Reg No: DPG 589 OGUN and one Haque Lucky lady machine with Reg No: KSF 550 GP.

"Efforts are ongoing to arrest other members of the syndicate and possible recovery of already sold stolen items," Okasanmi added.

The Commissioner of Police, again warned criminal elements to vacate Kwara State and relocate elsewhere, declaring that a criminal who succeeds in



committing crime would never succeed in escaping arrest.

Assayomo advised any criminal minded individual

or groups in their own interest, to desist forthwith from their evil ways and embrace compliance with the law.

The suspects arrested in the instant case and others, would be charged to court as soon as investigation is concluded.

Three die, five injured in auto crash on 3rd mainland bridge



By BENJAMIN OMOIKE

Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC), Lagos Sector Command, has confirmed that three persons died in the Third Mainland Bridge crash on Sunday, and advised motorists to always be mindful of the status of their tyres, as well as avoid excessive speed.

The Sector Commander, Corps Commander Olusegun Ogungbemde, said this in a statement signed by Route Commander, Olabisi Sonusi, and made available to the National Association of Online Security News Publishers (NAOSNP), while giving details of the

early morning crash that occurred at the Adekunle inter-change end of Third Mainland Bridge.

The crash, which involved a lone grey Toyota Hiace bus with registration number FST 241 YC, and coming from Adekunle inter-change inward Iyana-oworo, happened when one of the tyres burst, leading to a somersault.

There were a total of 20 occupants (nine male, 11 female) in bus at the time of the accident. While three persons, all female, died, five others sustained injuries.

All first responders at the scene comprising FRSC, the Nigeria Police, LASTMA and LASEMA

Rescue Unit rescued the injured victims, and the corpses who were taken to General Hospital Marina.

At the time of filing this report, the crashed vehicle has been removed while FRSC and LASTMA officials remained on ground to manage traffic.

Meanwhile, the Sector Commander has assured all motorists of adequate deployment of personnel and logistics for a crash free Eid-el-Fitri celebration.

He further admonished motorists to always adhere to speed limits for all categories of road at all times, stressing that "Speed thrills but kills fast".

Police intercept drugs worth N3m

By ALEX OLISE

Operatives of the Lagos State Police Command have intercepted 10 bags of illicit drugs suspected to be Indian Hemp.

In a press statement e-signed and released to the National Association of Online Security News Publishers, NAOSNP, by the Command's Spokesperson, SP Benjamin Hundeyin, stated that, "Operatives of the Lagos State Police Command have intercepted 10 bags of illicit drugs suspected to be Indian Hemp."

According to the statement, "The drugs, packed in 10 sacks, were being conveyed in a Lagos colour commercial bus with registration number LND 995 XT from Iddo to

a destination in Mushin."

"Luck, however, ran out on the suspects, when vigilant Rapid Response Squad (RRS), operatives on routine patrol, stopped the bus at about 0400hrs on April 29, 2022, at Stadium Bus Stop, Surulere."

While two occupants of the vehicle escaped, the driver, Amodu Agbaje, was apprehended. The arrested driver claimed he was offered Twenty-Five Thousand Naira (N25,000) to convey the drugs with street value of Three Million Naira (N3,000,000).

The Lagos State Commissioner of Police, CP Abiodun Alabi, has directed the Commander RRS, CSP Olayinka Egbeyemi, to transfer the suspect and the exhibits to the Command Headquarters for further investigations.



Police launch manhunt for lady allegedly paid N1.1m for 'sleeping with dog'

By ALEX OLISE

Nigeria Police Force has launched a manhunt for the lady seen having an affair with a dog in a viral video in circulation.

Bestialising is the process of having a sexual intercourse with animal.

The report stated that the Nigeria Police will hunt for the lady seen having romp with a dog in a viral TikTok video.

The Force Public Relations Officer, Muyiwa Adejobi, said be@stial-natured won't be allowed as it is in the video. He vowed that the police would apprehend the lady in the viral video.

This is coming after the viral video of ladies having affairs with dogs. According to reports gathered, the ladies

get paid to involve in the bestiality act to make a livelihood.

A video of an alleged lady has been ravaging the internet with claims that she sleeps with dogs to earn N1.4m.

However, In a statement released by the NPL, it said, "I really want us to take necessary action on these ladies that are involved in unnatural offences (including be@stiality) and post same online. We want to urge you to give us any useful information on how to get these ladies. We need to fish them out please. Thanks." It said.

The statement added that the Nigeria Police will for sure get the girl who claimed to have been paid N1.1m for the doggy affair in a viral video.

2023: The politics of anointing successors

Anointing successors in Nigerian political space has taken deep roots. The fact that it almost always ends with disastrous consequences for the Godfather has not stopped the practice. The issue at the heart of the endings lies in the motive behind the anointing and the how. Is it to keep the skeletons buried or is it to enshrine continuity and good governance? Are the rules of decent politics followed during the anointing? Is the anointing process fair to all concerned or is it a do or die affair?

To understand the logic behind anointing successors the words of President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda readily come to mind. He is quoted as saying that 'I'm not ready to hand over power to people or groups of people who have no ability to manage a nation' Continuing, he said 'why should I sentence Ugandans to suicide by handing over power to people we fought and defeated?' Museveni then placed himself above the Constitution when he asserted that though the Constitution allows it, 'It's dangerous! The dictator then concludes that 'at times, the Constitution may not be the best tool to direct us politically, for it allows wrong and doubtful people to contest for power'.

Nigerian politicians share the same self-serving, and perhaps treasonable, position, which clearly undermines the Constitution. Anointment of successors is also attributed to the attempt on the part of the incumbents to cover the atrocities they committed while in office. Thus, in most cases, they would do everything possible to ensure the victory of their anointed successors.

Anointing successors has dire consequences on the political development of the country as the process more often undermines internal party democratic processes, encourages the Godfather to subvert instruments of state in favour of the anointed candidate thereby

weakening state institutions. It also compels the Godfather to deploy state resources to shore up the acceptability of the anointed candidate. The Godfather also often closes the political space for dissenting voices as well as. The Godfather oftentimes sets some conditions (in most cases personal to him) for the anointed to deliver on.

Public office is not the property of the incumbent. It belongs to the citizens who should be able to reclaim it in an orderly and peaceful way. Elections play a significant role in deepening democracy; it enables the governed to decide who governs them. By anointing a successor, the incumbent disenfranchises the party loyalists and machinery of the right to exercise their democratic entitlement. Anointing

of candidates is a direct descendent of the so-called Consensus candidature, which plain English name is imposition.

Democracy is about free choice; it is about giving people opportunities to choose their leaders without hindrance, but where obstacles exist such as anointed candidates, the people can hardly exercise their freedom of choice. In such situations they can expect to hardly gain anything from their rulers, who were imposed on them. Furthermore, democracy has an educative value and there is no better way of educating citizens than giving them the opportunity to participate directly in the election of their representatives. It is a fact that credible election remains a salient indicator of democratic consolidation and peaceful means of changing government.

The use of state resources and state instruments of coercion to assert the candidature of the anointed, which some Godfathers engage in a serious attack on institutions of state and the development of national institutions and democracy. We are witnesses the alleged muscling of INEC at the various levels to ensure the emergence of some aspirants.

Is zoning political office at whatever level also another way of anointing a successor? This has generated a lot of debate and litigation in recent times. It has been argued that Nigerians should opt for competence and merit instead of sectional leadership in choosing leaders, contrary to what zoning arrangements present. Others contend that though zoning can co-exist with our Constitution and fundamental human rights and even enhance national cohesion, it could negatively affect internal party democracy and political development.

In sum, Godfatherism is antithetical to the ends of democracy. The free will of the people should be allowed to determine who wins the elections. We say 'No to the Godfathers of the land! Enough is enough!



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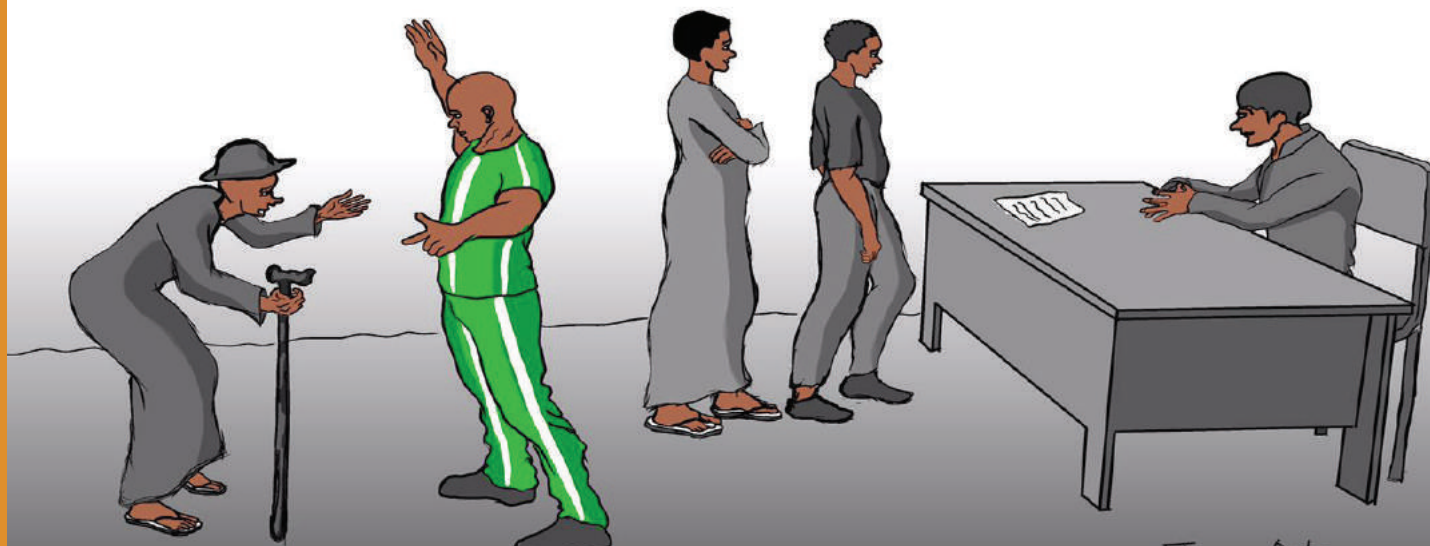
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PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES FORMS...



Politics without bitterness

Politics is all about a contest of ideas and programmes. When persons contest for a position, it is not possible for all of them to win one seat. A victor must emerge. Two persons cannot occupy the same seat at the same time. It is in the character of human beings to swallow the pill of defeat with disappointment. Some take a loss to the extreme- bitterness. Bitterness leads to violence or force or something destructive. To be bitter in the mind after a loss in elections is a sign of personal immaturity. Certainly, when the defeated candidate knows that he was cheated of victory, there could be bitterness. But bitterness is injurious both to the soul and the polity.

In the Second Republic, one Presidential candidate on the platform of Great Nigeria Peoples' Party (GNPP), Alhaji Waziri Ibrahim from Borno state consistently preached the doctrine of politics without bitterness. He preached against malice, rancour, hatred, and the divisiveness which came with losing an election. Of course, everyone was conscious of the bitterness and hatred which followed the general elections in 1965 and how the southwest and later Nigeria could not be the same again. The intense personal and political rivalry between Chief Obafemi Awolowo and Chief Samuel Akintola had thunderous and disastrous on the entire polity. The narrative of the 'wild wild west' came into the

political lexicon of Nigeria. When the southwest became ungovernable and the federal government took sides with Akintola, a new dynamic came into the polity. 'Operation Wetie' through which violence was unleashed on opponents of the mainstream southwest party defined the peak of violence in the annals of the country.

So, when the military rulers finally allowed a return to civil rule in 1976, Chief Awolowo set up the UPN without much ado. In the southeast, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe along with some stalwarts from the southwest started the NPP, while NPN was started by a broad spectrum of politicians in the country. After a major disagreement with the NPP, Alhaji Waziri Ibrahim led a faction of political stalwarts from the NPP to start the GNPP as a breakaway faction. His doctrine of 'politics without bitterness' continued to ring a bell. To be sure, there was always allegations and counter allegations of rigged elections. The NPN was determined to rig or fight its way into the southwest led by Chief Richard Akinjide, Chief Adisa Akinloye and a few prominent stalwarts of the NPN whose brand and ideology of politics ran counter to that of the domineering personality in the southwest. Chief Awolowo fought Alhaji Shagari's victory up to the Supreme Court until verdict was given after Chief Akinjide made the infamous argument about twelve two thirds. Akinjide was

rewarded with the position of Minister of Justice and Attorney General. But bitterness was in the hearts of many. This erupted in the second term election of 1983 which the UPN alleged mass rigging after an unpopular candidate Chief Akin Omoboriowo was declared winner of elections in Ondo State, defeating the popular Papa Ajasin. The conflagration which followed was reminiscent of the 1965 violent eruptions.

Politics without bitterness was an is still relevant till date. Often intraparty fights are deadlier than interparty disagreements. We have also experienced interparty contestations which turned out to be fatal. But the seed of discord could either be internal or external. Fierce fighting within parties is deadly as I argued earlier on. This often happens when aspirants believe that once they are nominated at the primaries, victory at the polls is almost certain. Internal dissensions with AG and the UPN are apposite references. The NCNC and NPN at different times seemed to have managed their internal challenges better than the rest.

The journey towards 2023 has started. The political gladiators are more interested in grabbing power than addressing the problems facing the electorate. This was the point made by the Imam in the mosque at Apo that earned him a sack. The acrimony which has followed Professor Yemi Osinbajo's declaration of interest in running

for President has been very toxic. Why? What has a mere declaration got to do with betrayal?

Some extremists have started comparing the Osinbajo-Tinubu situation with that of Awolowo-Akintola disagreements. Nothing could have been so dissimilar. Some analysts have traced the Awo-Akintola disagreements to appropriation or misappropriation of state funds. In the case of Osinbajo, having served the nation with great humility under the incumbent President, he exercised his right to contest for the nomination just like any other aspirant. The filed is not too crowded because Osinbajo has thrown his hat into the ring. Tinubu loyalists consider the fact that he dared to express his interest as an affront. Come on? What law has he broken?

Democracy is bigger than all of us. No one should think that they can control the destiny and actions of anybody forever. It is against the rule of nature. It is possible that Tinubu does not carry the degree of venom in his heart which loyalists



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display in sponsored articles in mainstream newspapers and on social media. There is therefore no need to set the two men against each other. Let there be a contestation of ideas and a test of popularity at the APC primaries. If both men were placed on a scale at this time for popularity in line with the mood of the season, I can bet that Osinbajo will come out tops.

2023 is just another year for another set of elections. Those who violently took power by snatching ballot boxes in the First Republic have all gone away from the scene. Those who killed for power have all gone too. They will face their Maker for the acts of destruction which they carried out in the name of electioneering. The power of man is ephemeral. To be fixated in the gutter of calumny and violence, physical and verbal is not to grow. Let the people be the deciding factor in 2023.

•Professor Eghagha is a member of The Trumpet's Editorial Board

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The Minister of State for Education, Hon Chukwuemeka Nwajiuba, fired what may pass for a full scale 'crackdown' on ASUU and the contentious matter of IPPIS/UTAS. The minister is himself a product of the Nigerian educational system. He studied law in Nigeria. He attended three public owned universities. The first is the Imo State University, established by Chief Sam Mbakwe in 1985. He bagged his LLB at IMSU; then the University of Lagos, LLM and the University of Jos, PhD. He was called to the Nigerian bar in 1989. He served as the Chairman of TETFund Board of Trustees. Consequently, in TETFund, he has benefitted from a baby created by ASUU. If the records are correct the Honourable Minister was born on August 20, 1967.

Interestingly, the sector he is presiding over as Minister is in crisis, but our honourable minister has just purchased the APC form to enable him contest for the office of the

president of Nigeria. He paid N100 million. No doubt, the honourable minister is qualified to be an academic. Perhaps, he was wise in his decision not to be an academic. How would his salary of an academic give him N100 million to buy a mere form? What he paid for to express his interest to run for presidency can cover the salary of a professor at bar for 20 years. The Minister of State for Education and many others have expressed their interest to be the president of Nigeria by dishing out this amount of N100 million.

All are free to choose their life path. But to think that academics are merely workhands that should have no say on how they are paid is to cross the red lines of rational thought. Academics are not a colonised people under the subjugation of some Leviathans. Nigerians cannot be held hostage by those who ought to be ministers, i.e. servants. In addressing the facts of IPPIS and UTAS, the minister

The Nigerian University System and the Change Mantra

failed to tell the world how the peculiarity of an academic work, as reflected in Sabbatical leave, associate lectureship, and facilitators of external examinations, can be addressed by the IPPIS payment platform. Consequently, ASUU is simply telling the honourable minister that you cannot underpay academics and put the blame on a contrived ineffective IPPIS platform. The minister gave the impression that ASUU is against IPPIS. This is wrong. ASUU is only against the things IPPIS cannot do that it ought to do as a payment platform. This is a challenge the APC-led government must address. Honourable Minister Chukwuemeka Nwajiuba should demonstrate to the world that IPPIS has both the capacity to solve the problem of academic peculiarity, and overcome the shortcomings of IPPIS ASUU has pointed out.

The 2022 World University Rankings that was recently released showed that only two universities in Nigeria made the list of 15 institutions in Africa. The 15 African universities on the list of ranked institutions in the world were: (1) University of Cape Town, (2) Stellenbosch University, (3) Wits University, (4) University of Cape Coast, Ghana, (5) University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, (6) Addis Ababa University, (7) Aswan University, (8) Durban University of Technology, (9) University of Ibadan, (10) Ferhat Abbas

Sétif University, (11) Kafrelsheikh University, (12) University of Lagos, (13) Mansoura University, (14) University of Nairobi, (15) North-West University. This is an independent rating of universities in the world. How come the two Nigerian universities are among those at the forefront of ASUU strike? What happened to the universities others?

The main problem with our university system is that we have an elite that believe that the best they require are gotten abroad; and this 'best' is the preserve of their families. This elites' urge for the foreign is sustained by the sole most viable business in Nigeria – government!

Why would one care to build good hospitals when one can take a flight out of Nigeria to get the best of health facilities? Why should one be bothered about securing life and property in Nigeria when one can send ones family abroad to reside, and sustain them there with stolen funds? The same can be said of all other sectors; so long as these politicians are at the helms of affairs in Nigeria. Nigeria is now becoming a plague upon the black race.

Our institutions need encouragement. A vision to become the best in the world is never on the agenda of our government. Those clamoring for political offices today hardly speak about inflation, poor infrastructure, collapsed municipal services, poor schools, food crisis, and

collapsed university system. What they sell to the voters is promoting sentiments that it is their turn to rule! How would turn by turn governance solve the Nigerian problem? The Nigerian youth has been short-changed by their society. They can only achieve their potentials outside the shores of their so-called country. The crass boldness with which the ruling elite now sleaze the Nigerian State, and boast about it, is becoming worrisome.

Those who gain power on the mantra of change must know that Heraclitus thought that "everything is in a state of flux. You cannot step into the same river twice." It was Leo Tolstoy who said "Everyone thinks of changing the world, but no one thinks of changing himself."

Margaret Mead advised that: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed, citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." And the great Nelson Mandela also pointed out that "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."

If there is one important thing the Nigerian academia owes her youth, it is the philosophy of change!

•Dr Karo Ogbinaka lectures at the Department of Philosophy, University of Lagos. He is a member of The Trumpet's editorial board.

Snippets from PDP presidential aspirants screening

Seventeen aspirants of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) were screened at the weekend by its Presidential Screening Committee led by former Senate President, David Mark. Virtually all the aspirants commended the party for the calibre of personalities that served on the committee while appreciating the screening process described as smooth. However, some of the aspirants that spoke with journalists on exercise which took place at the PDP Presidential Campaign Office, Legacy House in Abuja held different views on the issue of zoning and consensus. Politics Editor TUNDE JOSHUA brings snippet from the exercise.

Peter Obi says PDP's decision on zoning final

The former Anambra State governor said whatever the party does is alright. But for him, he is more concern about what Nigerian people are looking for.

He said "the party has the final say. I can't have a thought, I'm a member of a party. If the party says this is where they want the party to go, if you're a member of an organization, you respect that organization. And that is why I said, whatever we do, the most critical thing is, what we do to pull Nigerians out of poverty and create a future for teeming unemployed youths of Nigeria."

"How do we create a future for the teeming unemployed Nigerian youths pulling Nigerians out of hunger."

On his chances, he said he is just for the delegates to decide. "I'm not going to impose myself on them. My chances is for the delegates to reflect on the nation and decide, what do we do to guarantee a future for our young ones?," he said



Obi

A'ibom governor believes delegates will elect PDP candidate who can rescue Nigeria

He expressed belief that any of the 17 aspirants is capable of the office of the President of Nigeria.

"I want to believe that all the people they've seen so far today any of us, is equal to the task to rescue and restore this country."

On what he think was his comparative advantage, Gov. Emmanuel said "I want to believe that so many things are to my own advantage, because if you look at my antecedents, if you look at my training, if you look at the capacity and above all, I think age is also on my side, because the problem is with Nigeria today needs a very strong agile young man. And I think all around, I think as so many factors are in my favor, and that will be decided by the electorate on the primaries."

However, he said the delegates will determine who will rescue and restore this country and that whoever they will bring up as the candidate of the party will be one of the best that the country has ever produced.

On agitation for zoning of the position to the South, he said "party is supreme, if the party has spoken we will all abide by what the party has said."

Former Governor of Ekiti State, Ayodele Fayose

Says best thing for PDP is to zone Presidency to South

He categorically stated that he is for zoning. "Well, I say it again, very expressly, that I am for zoning and I believe the best thing this party can do for posterity, for tomorrow, so as not to cause confusion is for this party to zone this presidential election.

"You know why, If we fail to do it, even if we say anybody can contest, you must officially zone it to the South.

"In 1999 it was zoned to the South which

brought Obasanjo and Olu Falaye. Rimi still contested within the ambit of the Constitution. But the party must remember, whatever we do today, will stand against us tomorrow. The system is not functioning in our country, the institutions are not functioning that is why we have all these problems.

"And we must be courageous enough to say this is going to South. If you want to contest the Nigerian constitution still gives you the leverage, the opportunity to do so. I support zoning this to southern Nigeria."

He made allusion to the APC saying largely those obtaining presidential forms are from the South and it because the party know the president of Nigeria currently is from the north, now it must come to the South.

Urging PDP leaders to be decisive, Fayose said "this is not a sign of weakness, but it's a sign to make sure that you don't have the leeway for some people who will be using it negatively in future. The party must make pronouncement and that may not necessarily stop anybody from contesting. The party must and should make a pronouncement."

Wike says Nigeria needs courageous leader like him.

While commending the screening process, Wike expressed confidence that he would scale through the screening hurdles.

He said his being in the race was to help solve myriads of problems bedeviling the nation.

Wike said "the major problem of this country today is insecurity. If you cannot tackle insecurity, then there is nothing to talk about. If you take this issue of security to a level were people are happy, then you can talk about economy.

"So you can't talk about economy without environment been safe.

You can't talk about agriculture when people cannot go to farm.

"This nation need a strong and coura-



Fayose

geous leadership and that is what I stand for."

Ovation magazine publisher Momodu urges delegates not to sell conscience

He dismissed the insinuation that he is in the race to front for another aspirant saying "anyone who feels Dele Momodu is here to waste time or to step down for somebody tell them that Dele Momodu is a man of principle."

Momodu sent a strong message to delegates expected at the May 28 and 29 presidential primary not to sell their votes.

He said "my message to the delegates is that they should not sell their conscience. They should vote their conscience? I don't have money. But I have integrity, I have reputation as a global brand, our founding fathers in Nigeria they all have journalism background. If you go to Ghana many of their leaders you know have journalism background. The world can only be changed by intellectuals and not by money."

He said he is a global brand "That is what I want to offer my country, everywhere in the world now people are electing superstars. You need somebody who will be president from day one who has been interacting with Presidents and will be able to take charge from day one," he said.

Bala Mohammed to step down if Jonathan runs

Affirming his loyalty to his former boss and erstwhile President Goodluck Jonathan, the Bauchi State governor vowed to immediately step down moment Jonathan decided to run for 2023 on the platform of any party.

He said: "I have told Nigeria and I am a man of my own words that I will not be contesting alongside with Jonathan and I have gotten his go ahead, before I came to this level, I have gone very far.

"I have gotten a consensus status from my section of the country, and I have



Momodu

gotten supporters we can see across the country, but certainly it's something that we are going to sit down and discuss.

"I'm not going to swallow my words. I respect president Jonathan so much and I know up to this moment, he has not declared, he is not here. And declaration is not the assumption or assumption of the ticket of the party. But certainly if he collect the ticket of any other party, I will not be joining issues with him."

Governor Mohammed said the issue of consensus is a settled one. He said "the party has a process of the emergence of candidates through the primaries, but what we did in the consensus is not a new one, it has been done before and some people have benefited on it.

"And I'm humbled that I've benefited on that attestation that sense of judgment, that appreciation by our elders and I'm carrying it as a booster, not as a free to accomplish the emergence or that it is all uhuuru."

He prayed that the primary will be without any rancour, without any provocation, without any attack on any member that is contesting with him.

Oluhambuwa says PDP must respect constitution on zoning

The industrialist said the party knows the implication of its action on any decision taken on zoning or otherwise.

But he emphatically said "PDP must respect its own constitution" but as a party man, he is ready to abide by the party decision.

"Whether the party made announcement on it or not we will all abide by the process towards a free and credible presidential primary," he said.

On his competence, he said he has the requisite qualification to emerge as PDP candidate and that if he picks the ticket, he is ready to rescue Nigeria, to restore dignity of the citizenry because Nigerians have been dehumanized under the present APC administration.

Lawan, Atiku seek amicable govt, ASUU faceoff resolution

● *Workers welfare should be accorded priority, says senate president* ● *Revive dying education sector, ex-VP tells FG*

By TUNDE JOSHUA, POLITICS EDITOR, ABUJA

As Nigerian workers celebrated this year's Workers Day, two prominent political leaders, Senate President, Ahmad Lawan and former Vice President, Atiku Abubakar joined other leaders to salute the nation's workforce, seeking a better welfare package for them.

Both leaders called on the Federal Government and the Academic Staff Union of Nigerian Universities (ASUU) to find lasting solution to the unresolved crisis rocking the nation's education sector.

While Lawan celebrated the workers for their immense contributions to the development of the nation, he asked governments across levels to give top priority to workers' welfare.

In a statement by his media adviser, Ola Awoniyi, the Senate President said "Nigerian workers deserve our appreciations and respects for their contributions to the development of our country.

"I also salute them for their patriotic cooperation with the government and other institutions in the collective efforts to address societal challenges.

"There is no gainsaying the fact that Labour creates wealth for the nation, the more reason that the welfare of the Nigerian workers should always be accorded priority.

"As Parliament, the National Assembly will continue to partner with the organised labour in addressing issues that affect workers and the generality of the Nigerian people.

"Despite the prevailing challenges, the relationship between Labour and the Government should be cooperative in the overall interest of the country.

"In the spirit of May Day, I appeal for a speedy and amicable resolution of the

ongoing negotiations between the Federal Government and the Academic Staff Union of Universities(ASUU) to ensure that our universities reopen for learning and research.

"We should always be mindful that no society can make meaningful progress without industrial peace and harmony."

On the other hand, Atiku who said he felt the pains of the Nigerian workers called for new approach to industrial dispute resolution.

The former Vice President of Nigeria described as "unbearable the pains and pang of hunger, hyper inflation, mass unemployment and insecurity challenges that Nigerian workers encounter in their daily lives", but says there's hope from this socio-economic slope.

He also admonished the Nigerian workers

at all levels, and all sectors - federal, state, local governments and private sector - to "adopt a new approach in industrial relations, and dispute resolution by pursuing labour-friendly policies and positions that will guarantee improved national productivity, better working conditions for workers, particularly low-income staff and casual workers who have suffered so much anguish and pains in their daily working lives and living."

In a special message marking May Day 2022, released in Abuja, Atiku enjoins workers and all Nigerians to know that he feels their pains and would do the utmost to better their lots, if given an opportunity to lead the country.

He expressed concern that wages and salaries have remained static, food scarcity

and inflation abound everywhere, children are out of school due to no fault of theirs, farmers can no longer go to farm for fear of bandits, traders cannot commute freely without being abducted, no energy to power industries and companies are shutting down geometrically; all conspired as burden on the citizenry.

"But all hope is not lost. We need not be forlorn; time is ripe to vote out bad governance and Nigerian workers should lead the way with their voter's cards at the next polls, to ensure the return of better days," he said.

Meanwhile, Atiku praised the resilience and determination of Nigerian workers, despite the myriad of man-made challenges confronting them.

"Nigerians are hardworking and industrious people, who can compete with the best in the world given a conducive atmosphere and good work environment: good training, welfare package and enabling laws," the PDP presidential aspirant said.

He urged Nigerian workers to keep hope alive, cultivate a new spirit of patriotism that will be geared towards nation building and peace.

The Waziri Adamawa appealed to the federal and state governments to work harder to bring the Academic Staff Union of Universities, and other striking labour unions back to the negotiation table in the interest of the Nigerian youths, and the educational system of the country, which is dying gradually due to these incessant labour unrests.

"Our country shall fare very well in the coming years if as a nation and people, our leaders and citizens imbibe a new spirit and approach in our attitude to managing the workplace, corporate governance and our nation's wealth," he said.



Lawan



Atiku

Group tasks ex-minister on Taraba governorship race

By SURU CHARLES, JALINGO

A coalition of solidarity groups in Taraba has unanimously resolved to drag Engineer Saleh Mamman, the immediate past Minister of Power, to court should he fail to adhere to their calls to contest the state governorship election in 2023.

The group stormed Jalingo, the capital, from all parts of the state for this purpose.

Spokesperson of the coalition, Suleiman Dada, said their call has become necessary because the former minister "is the only politician with widespread support and acceptability in the nooks and crannies of the state."

The groups urged him to join the race on the platform of the All Progressives Congress (APC), believing that he has the capacity to salvage the state from the dungeon of poverty and security presently bedeviling it.

According to them, the former Minister, "possessed the requisite experience, exposure,

track record and integrity capable of leading the APC and Tarabans generally out of this present state of confusion and uncertainty."

They further argued that he is the "only politician with solid structures across the 16 local government councils of the state and one who has over the years provided employment opportunities and empowerments to vulnerable groups, particularly youth, women and other less privileged members of the society."

Stressing that "we strongly believed that he is capable of cementing greater ties among Tarabans, promote unity, development and peaceful co-existence at all times" they vowed to drag him to court, if he fails to adhere to their calls

The groups vowed to go ahead and raise funds for him to purchase the governorship form, saying "at this crucial time when Taraba state is in dire need of a visionary leader, we

need him to come and refocus the state in addressing the myriads of socio-economic and security challenges facing the State."

Urging him to throw his hat into the ring and contest the forthcoming gubernatorial primaries of APC in the state, they said that they are ready to mobilise resources and obtained intention and nomination form to enable him to contest the APC governorship primaries.

'Search for result-oriented leadership informed our support for Odupitan'

By TUNDE JOSHUA, ABUJA

South South Youth Coalition Good Governance (SSYCGG) said its declaration for the support of Chief Samson Abiodun Odupitan was borne of its search for a result-oriented leader who can lead Nigeria in 2023.

At a press conference on Sunday in Abuja, the Coalition said as young people from South South extraction, it is committed to backing of the deepening of democracy, proactive, people driving and result-oriented leadership for the Nigeria people come 2023 and beyond.

Aigbomian Smart, Convener /Coordinator, South South Youth Coalition for Good Governance (SSYCGG) who addressed the press conference said the nation cannot afford to look on, while its economy sinks, accountable leadership seems more like a mirage and a number of Nigerians seem to be struggling with a crisis of confidence, as to whether or not 2023 will offer a better alternative.

He said the Coalition resolved "that we are tired of years of political rhetoric's by our professional politicians who have proven since independence time in and time out that they don't have the capacity and desire to

address the challenges facing us as a nation.

"That despite the current level of stagnation, there is seeming desperation by overly ambitious politicians to dominate the stage. But beyond these sharks, there are Nigerian professionals and business tycoon with proven records of good management of men and resources and the capacity to obliterate or, at least minimize conflicts in their domains. But they constitute a fraction of our current political leaders.

"It is high time Nigerians use an alternative political platform to mobilize Nigerians to vote for good governance.

"It is our belief that this nation, more than all else, needs a true game-changer with past experience of tackling crisis situations - whether political or economic.

"That there is an urgent need for professionals who are successful in their chosen careers to contest the highly exalted seat of President to fix the country from years of retrogressive development by Professional politicians.

"That Chief Samson Abiodun Odupitan should be supported to take a shot at the 2023 Presidency as someone with a proven record of good humanitarian and resources

management."

They called on Nigerian electorates across the country to join them in mobilizing electorate during the forthcoming general election to vote Odupitan as the next President come February 2023 presidential election.



Engineer Saleh Mamman



Chief Samson Odupitan

Controversies dog Delta speaker's certificates, guber bid

•Oborevwo, others cleared •Groups defend him

By **STEEP OFFI AND GABRIEL ELOZINO**, Asaba

There are strong indications that Governor Ifeanyi Okowa may have abandoned the speaker of the Delta House of Assembly, Rt. Hon. Sheriff Oborevwo, who until Thursday was his supposed preferred governorship candidate for the People's Democratic Party (PDP) gubernatorial primaries in the state.

Earlier on Friday, it was reported that the Speaker had been disqualified by the Governor Douye Diri-led gubernatorial screening committee over name discrepancies in certificates presented by Oborevwo.

It was learnt that the Delta Speaker's educational certificates which he tendered and attached to his forms had different names ranging from his First School Leaving Certificate (FSLC) to his Master's degree.

Furthermore, his National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) exemption certificate had OBOREVVORI SHERIFF F while his MSc certificate carries OBOREVVORI FRANCIS SHERIFF OROHWEDOR.

The Chief Press Secretary to the Speaker, Comrade Denis Otu could not be reached for confirmation or denial of the report as his phone could not be reached.

Group debunks allegations
But a group, "The Sherification Movement (TSM)" debunked the report insisting its principal was duly cleared by the committee.

The group in a statement by its Director General, Palmer Ogheneyole, said the Speaker was cleared before dashing back to Asaba the state capital to receive the National Chairman of the PDP, Iyorchia Ayu.

A personal staffer working closely with Okowa told The Trumpet that contrary to speculations that Okowa was in a dilemma over the disqualification of Oborevwo, the governor was very much at peace with himself.

The source said, "Okowa is even happy if I can use that word. Okowa's candidate has already been screened successfully, so whatever is going on with Oborevwo cannot trouble him. Although I cannot say whether it is true or not that the speaker has been screened out but what I can assure you is that Okowa has a preferred

governorship candidate that has been successfully screened.

"Let's even assume that Sheriff was screened out, do you think Okowa will be foolish enough not to have a plan B or C, the governor is a smart politician, he is well experienced in the game.

"I won't say more than this, just take it from me, Okowa's candidate has been successfully screened and cleared, when the time comes, before the primaries, you will know the person. But I don't know whether it is true if Sheriff has been disqualified but that doesn't matter as it bears no consequence."

Activist reacts on Speakers as committee screens Oborevwo, 11 other aspirants

Niger Delta youth activist, Chief Vincent Oyibode, has said the Speaker of State House of Assembly, Rt Hon Sheriff Oborevwo, is duly qualified to stand for the primaries for the governorship election in Delta State.

Reacting to widespread rumours

of possible disqualification of Rt Hon Sheriff Oborevwo from the governorship race over discrepancies in certificates tendered before the screening Committee in Port-Harcourt, Oyibode condemned the negative media reports in social media platforms.

He described them as mischievous campaigns of calumny against the frontline gubernatorial aspirant, Rt Hon Sheriff Oborevwo, warning his detractors to stay away from their path of infamy and join hands to "build a better Delta State for all instead of dwelling on a completely unfounded claims of discrepancies in the certificate of the Speaker.

Oyibode said: "I went to the same Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, Edo State with the Speaker and we were in the same faculty of Social Sciences. The Speaker was also in the same University with me during his Master program, Delta State University, Abraka from where he graduated with Masters of Science degree in Political Science (Msc).

"It is obvious that some persons who

dread the rising political profile or do not know Rt Hon Sheriff Oborevwo too well on issues of Educational attainment have gone to town with some blasphemous claims of possible disqualification.

"Rt. Hon Sheriff Oborevwo is a second class Upper Division graduate of Political Science from Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, Edo State in 2004. Anyone who doubts this should go to the 16th Convocation Brochure of the aforementioned institution for quick verification. Oborevwo wouldn't have been admitted for a degree program without the requisite documents and qualification.

"He later obtained a master of science degree in Political Science (Msc) from the Delta State University, Abraka. Sheriff was a full time Student in both degree programs and not a part time Student. Did sheriff submit his credentials to be elected a member of the Delta State House of Assembly before electing him as Speaker? If yes, what happened to the certificates he submitted that qualified him to run for House of Assembly?

Same qualifications can make him Governor as well as president of the Federal Republic of Nigeria

"I read Public Administration in my first degree and Sheriff Oborevwo, as mentioned earlier studied Political Science. The institution's Exams and Records section is there for anyone to visit and verify. We later met at DELSU Abraka where he was a year ahead of me in our master program.

"Abraka is close by. Those doubting my claims should go and verify instead of resorting to wild and dubious publications against a man who has laboured hard to build a reputation for himself. Politics and electoral victory is not by cheap blackmail but hard work and God's favour.

"Those disgruntled elements spreading the unfounded rumours must stop their evil act. They should confirm or verify every information and not write anything based on assumption. To the best of my knowledge, there is no confusion in the camp of Governor Ifeanyi Okowa.

"Everything is intact and the project is very much on course. The family is united and focused. Deltas are Sherified and no evil rumour can change what has been ordained by God. Sheriff is the next governor of Delta State. You can take that to the bank."

Meanwhile 12 aspirants have so far been cleared by the Governor Douye Diri's led screening committee.

Although the committee has not released an official report but The Trumpet gathered that a former Minister of State for Education, Olorogun Kenneth Gbagi; Speaker of the Delta State House of Assembly, Chief Sheriff Oborevwo; former Principal Secretary to Late President Musa Yar'Adua and former Chief of Staff, Olorogun David Edebe; Senator James Manager, representing Delta South and Deputy Governor of Delta State, Deacon Kingsley Otua have all been cleared for the party's primaries slated for May 21, 2022.

Others are former Delta State Attorney General and Commissioner for Justice, Mr. Peter Adogbejire Mrakpor (SAN); former commissioner for Housing, Olorogun Fred Majemite; Managing Director of Wellmann Group, Deacon Chris Iyovwaye; former Sapele Council Chairman, Omizu Ejaiife Odebal, Uvwie-born politician, Sir Onajefe-Gift Bright Edejewhro; Mr. Lucky Ohworode Idike and Chief Abel Oghenevo Esievo.

Oborevwo's clearance certificate



Oborevwo's clearance certificate

Delta State House of Assembly speaker, Rt Hon Sheriff Oborevwo, is deeply enmeshed in an alleged certificate scandal. Documents show dislocated certificates bearing multiple names from primary school through universities.

This was contained in a memo sent by a powerful politician (name withheld) stating that the speaker was not qualified to run for the coveted office of Delta State Governor.

Also another letter addressed to the National Chairman of the Peoples Democratic Party PDP, by Messrs. Augustine Oritsarfunsaho of INEC ward 1 Obodo/Ureji, Warri South Local Government Area, Delta State, Kanabar Ovie Duke Orogwu ward 1, Ughelli North Local Government Area,

Speaker in alleged certificate scandal Documents bear different names

Delta State and Osigidi Amos Uvwie, ward 7, Uwie Local Government Area, Delta State through their counsel averred that certificates submitted by the speaker were spurious.

The petitioners in the petition insisted that the speaker is parading questionable certificates bearing different names (copies sighted) right through his primary school certificate, secondary and two university degrees from Ambrose Ali University and Delta State University.

Part of the petition states:

"Our clients are concerned members of the Peoples Democratic Party, Delta State chapters. We have their instructions to bring to your attention an issue they felt strongly about.

"There is no doubt, the elections are here again of which all stakeholders are leaving no stone unturned in putting their houses in order to enable them win the elections at all levels.

"As you are well aware of, the People Democratic is one of the major stakeholders in Nigeria politics and not just a stakeholder but the main opposi-

tion party at the National level. So far the party has not fare badly particularly in Delta State since the inception of the present democratic dispensation in 1990. It has always maintained the lead in all elections into offices in the state. The secret behind this is not far fetch - It is by keeping to the rare tradition of fielding the best and most qualified candidates in all the elections.

"Our Clients are aware that many persons have expressed their interest and desire to contest for various offices in the state including the office of the governor of the state. One of

such persons is Rt. Honorable Oborevwo Francis Orohwedor Sheriff.

"This is the name he stated/bears in INEC form CF 001 he presented to the party and to INEC in other occasion when he contested for the seat in the state house of Assembly. Our Clients stumbled on other documents he attached to the said form and a careful scrutiny of these documents reveals that Rt. Hon. Sheriff is not qualified to context the election. This is due to the obvious inconsistencies in the names in the documents.

"The names transform from one form to another. For instance, in the Master Degree Certificate issued by the Delta

CONTINUED ON PAGE 17



Gov Okowa



Oborewori



Ibori



Gbagi

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 16
State University,

Abraka, the name on it is at variance with the one in the said form 001.

“The certificate bears Oborewori Francis Sheriff Orohwedor. In his 1st degree certificate issued by Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, the name Oborewori Sheriff Francis is what it was issued with. Again this is at variance with the one in the said INEC form 001. Not only so, in his NYSC Certificate, the name is Oborewori Sheriff F. and nothing more. It did not end there, in his West African Senior School Certificate, the name Oborewori O. Francis is what is on it. And in his Primary School Leaving Certificate Oborewori Francis is what he bears.

“For the benefit of doubt, the documents are attached herewith for your ease of reference, perusal and necessary action.

Our Clients are compelled to instruct us to bring this to your attention because in the past, political parties have lost elections due to situation such as this. A recent case which is in all fours with this case

is the case of David Lyon of Bayelsa State where his deputy Biobarakuma Degi-Eremieoyo presented certificates/documents of different level of his academic career with inconsistent names and the People Democratic Party challenged the election on this ground. The matter went to the Supreme Court and the Supreme Court agreed with the People Democratic Party and overturned the election of the All Progressive Congress that the said deputy was not qualified to contest the election on this ground. For the benefit of doubts, this is what happened: The name he stated on INEC Form CF 001 was Degi-Eremienyo whereas the name written in his Primary School Certificate was Degi-Biobara. In his Secondary School Certificate, a different name – Adegbi Biobarakumo was shown and when he entered the University, the name changed again to Degi Biobarakuma.

“And lastly in his MBA Certificate, the name again mutated to Degi Biobarakuma Wangaha. As a result of these unstableness, the Supreme Court while overturning the election declared that none of the certificates has any bearing

with the Degi-Eremienyo.

“Our Clients’ fear is that the party will be taking a very disastrous and catastrophic risk if it fields Rt. Hon. Sheriff in the upcoming election in 2023 as its gubernatorial candidate. As faithful members of the People Democratic Party, they cannot fold their arms and allow the party makes the same error the All Progressive Congress made in Bayelsa State hence the need to call your attention to this.

“It is their concern that if the People Democratic Party must maintain her leads in the upcoming elections into various political offices in Delta State particularly the office of the governor, as it has always done hitherto, then the right and the most qualified person should be fielded. Such a person must certify the basic requirements for the election.

“Our Clients are not candidates gunning for the position of the governor of the state but are persons who have party’s interest at heart. Their desire is that the party must not lose the election on technical ground but on merit if assuming without conceding it has to lose. This information is brought

to you to assist party in exercising her discretion when nominating/presenting the candidate that would represent her in the gubernatorial election.

Please accept our highest regards.”

Again, in a secret memo by a popular Delta politician, the breakdown of how the speaker’s certificates with different names appeared were clearly shown.

DISCREPANCIES IN NAMES IN CERTIFICATES: HON. SHERIFF OBOREWORI 2.1 DISCREPANCIES IN NAMES IN CERTIFICATES

We have identified discrepancies A the certificates submitted with his Form CF001 to the Independent National Electoral Commission [INEC] in 2018 and those submitted with the POP Party’s Brief Form In 2022 provided to us for this exercise. The various name discrepancies are highlighted as follows:

SN CERTIFICATE/DOCUMENT NAME PROVIDED 1. FSLC WAEC OBOREWORI FRANCIS OBOREWORI O. FRANCIS L, BSC OBOREWORI SHERIFF FRANCIS 4. NYSC OBOREWORI SHERIFF S. MSC OBOREWORI FRANCIS SHERIFF Affidavit dated 17/7/2003

OROHWEDOR OBOREWORI OROHWEDOR FRANCIS Age Declaration dated 19/2/1982 FRANCIS OBOREWORI

The above-mentioned certificates and affidavits are annexed as Annexures 9 -15 Ar ease of reference.

The above discrepancies in the names of the candidate makes his case exactly the same as that of DEGI EREMIENYO which led to the disqualification of David Lyon by the Supreme Court in the case of PDP & 2 ORS v. DEGI - EREMIENYO & 3 ORS, where the victory of Deputy Governor - Elect. Senator Degi - Eremienyo used different names in all his educational certificates and affidavits submitted to INEC.

This same position was established earlier by the Supreme Court A the case of ESENOWO v. UKPONG [1991] 6 NWLR PT.608, where the issue bothered on the arrangement of the Appellant’s 10100 20 “El. Esenowo” as opposed to “Esenowo, IE.”, the Supreme Court aptly held that both names connote different individuals and emphasized 70 1110 great importance for one to always insert names correctly in professional matters.



UBA's earnings rise by 18%, posts N44.5b profit

By EDU ABADE, Business Editor

United Bank for Africa (UBA) Plc has released its unaudited results for the first quarter ended March 31, 2022, recording growth across its income lines.

The bank's financial result, which was released to the Nigerian Stock Exchange showed that gross earnings rose by 18.3 per cent from N155.4 billion in 2021 to N183.9 billion; while operating income, which stood at N106.6 billion as of March 2021, grew by 18 per cent to N125.9 billion in the year under review.

The results revealed that the bank's total assets also rose by 4.1 per cent to N8.9 trillion in the period under review, compared to N8.5 trillion recorded in 2021, while shareholders' funds grew by 2.6 per cent to N825.7 billion from N804.8 billion in the corresponding period.

Leveraging on the growth in interest and non-interest income, the bank's profit before tax (PBT) rose to N44.5 billion as of March 2022, up from N40.6 billion in the previous year, while profit after tax stood at N41.5 billion. The bank also sustained its strong profitability by recording an annualised 20.4 per cent Return on Average Equity (RoAE).

Group Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, Kennedy Uzoka, explained that despite the myriad of economic

challenges on the global front which shaped the first three months of the year, the bank's business model continued to show resilience.

These challenges among others, he noted include the ongoing crisis between Russia and Ukraine that has resulted in a huge supply shock, pushing up commodity prices; and the hike in the interest rates in most advanced countries aimed at tackling spiraling inflation, sparking capital flow reversal from emerging and frontier markets.

"Notwithstanding these developments, we were able to leverage gains from our large customer base and vast geographical spread to bolster earnings. We recorded double-digit growth of 18 per cent in gross earnings to N183.9 billion, with our Nigerian operation raking in 65 per cent of the revenue, while our operations in other countries accounted for the remainder, showing the diversity in our operations," he said.

Stressing the bank's commitment to sustain value for its shareholders in the 2022 financial year, he said: "With strategies in place to further increase revenue and drive costs lower, we are determined to achieve our Cost-to-Income ratio target of below 60 per cent by year-end; and for 2022, we are committed



Kennedy Uzoka

to consolidating on the strong start, surpassing our goals and targets, as we look forward to

delivering stronger returns to our esteemed shareholders."

Breaking down the figures,

Group Chief Finance Officer (GCFO), Ugo Nwaghodoh, said: "Our Q1 2022 financial numbers show that we have a good start. Particularly, I am pleased with how we deployed our balance sheet in the period to grow revenues and increase our market share in a number of West African markets.

Driven majorly by interest from customer loans and our investments in long-dated instruments, we grew interest income by an unprecedented quarterly rate of 15 per cent to N125.1 billion.

"We drove down our annualised cost of funds by 11 basis points to 2.1 per cent. This was achieved despite the uptick in the interest rate environment in the period," he said.

He expressed confidence that the bank will meet and surpass its target for the remaining three quarters of the year, adding: "We remain well-capitalized and liquid to fulfill our growth strategy, take up opportunities in key sectors, while navigating impending macroeconomic headwinds."

ASCSN to pay gratuity of public service employees

By JOHNMARK UKOKO

Association of Senior Civil Servants of Nigeria (ASCSN) has declared that restoration of payment of gratuity to public servants is paramount to the association.

It stated this, yesterday, as the association joined millions of workers throughout the world to celebrate this year's May Day.

In a statement made available to journalists, Secretary General of ASCSN, Comrade Alade Bashir, assured its members of the commitment of the current national leadership to their welfare.

"The current national leadership of the association is committed to the pursuit of welfare issues, including restoration of payment of gratuity to public service employees.

"We wish to use this opportunity to commend the teeming members of our great union for remaining steadfast and United which enable the association to always overcome organisational challenges whenever they arise.

"On behalf of the central working committee and the national executive council, we wish you all a very pleasant May Day celebration," the statement reads.

Nigerian oil sector content grows to 42%, says NCDMB

By JOHNMARK UKOKO

Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB), at the weekend, disclosed that it has grown local content in the oil and gas sector to 42 per cent.

Executive Secretary of NCDMB, Simbi Wabote, while giving an update recently at a local content workshop for judiciary workers in Bayelsa State with the theme: *Philosophy And Imperatives Of The Nigerian Oil And Gas Industry Content Development (NOGICD) Act*.

The workshop was aimed at ensuring better understanding of the Nigerian oil and gas industry Content Development (NOGICD) Act for lawyers and judicial officers in Bayelsa State.

In his keynote address at the workshop, which held virtually, Wabote provided update on the level so far attained in the nation's quest to grow local participation in the oil and gas industry, saying: "So far, 42 per cent growth has been attained in the projection aimed at reaching 70 per cent by 2027.

According to Wabote, the growth translates to retention of over \$8 billion of the \$20 billion yearly spend of the industry within the

Nigerian economy and part of the NCDMB's 10 year plan spanning 2017 to 2027 with a projection to achieve 70 per cent by 2027.

Wabote noted that with less than five per cent local content before the enactment of the NOGICD Act 2010, Nigerians were reversing the dominance of foreign companies and players.

He said that currently Nigerian owned oil companies produce 15 per cent of the country's daily oil output and account for some 60 per cent of domestic gas supply.

On ownership of oil and gas industry's equipment, he said available records indicate that 40 per cent of vessels deployed in the sector were owned by Nigerians.

In his remarks, Head of legal Services at NCDMB, Another Onyeso, noted that although oil and gas was on the exclusive legislative list, some conflicts arising from implementation of the NOGICD Act might be brought before the state judiciary.

He said the NCDMB sees all levels of judiciary at state and federal levels as critical stakeholders who need to understand the NOGICD's Act.

On her part, Chief Judge of

Bayelsa State, Mrs. Kate Abiri, who served as resource person in one of the technical sessions on *The Role Of The Judiciary In Attaining The Goals of NOGICD Act*, said a detailed understanding of the contents and intent of the legislation was crucial for the judiciary to give an unbiased interpretation of the law.

Abiri commended the agency for the workshop, stressing that it would enable all the stakeholders to fully understand their roles towards attaining NCDMB's mandate.



Simbi Wabote



FIRS boss, Muhammad Nami

FIRS appeals against VAT ruling in favour of Rivers

By JOHNMARK UKOKO

The Court of Appeal sitting in Port Harcourt will on Monday, May 9, 2022 resume hearing on the appeal filed by the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) against the Rivers State government over the collection of Value Added Tax (VAT) and Personal Income Tax (PIT).

Counsel to the Rivers State government in the case disclosed this at the weekend adding that

parties to the suit have been asked to submit written applications ahead of the sitting.

The issue of VAT collection had generated litigations between FIRS and some state governments.

It would be recalled that Rivers and Lagos State governments had enacted laws and canvassed decentralisation of collection, while some states, especially in the North favoured centralised collection.

Agro project to build N68.6b veterinary reference laboratory

By **JOHNMARK UKOKO**

Kano State-Agro Pastoral Development Project (KSADP) has awarded a contract worth N68.6 billion for the construction of a veterinary reference laboratory at the Gwale Veterinary Clinic.

Veterinary reference laboratories are service facilities in which several vital functions related to veterinary sciences such as diagnosis, determination of treatment options, prevention and monitoring of animal diseases are undertaken.

The laboratory plays key role in animal health protection through prevention and control of livestock diseases, as well as have major implications for human health due to animal to human transmission of diseases.

Contract for the project was awarded to an indigenous firm, Golden Ripples Construction Company Limited with a completion period of 12 months.

Shortly after signing the contract documents the state Project Coordinator for KSADP, Ibrahim Garba Muhammad, hinted that "the

project which is the first of its kind in Northern Nigeria is aimed at securing both livestock and human health, in view of the large population of livestock and the increasing demand for animal - derived foods in the state."

He added that when completed, the facility will not only serve Kano, but the neighbouring states and will also drastically reduce the cost of managing animal health problems in the communities.

"One of the key activities of the KSADP is to enhance

livestock health productivity and production and this intervention is one of the activities in that regard," he added.

Responding, Managing Director of Golden Ripples Construction Company Nigeria Limited, Dr. Ibrahim Alkali, who pledged that professional standards would be adhered to in executing the project,

assured that the edifice will be a model for other states.

While handing over the site for construction of the veterinary laboratory, Permanent Secretary of the Kano State Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Balarabe Hassan Karaye, charged the contractor to deliver quality work promptly.

SEC, others approve Flour Mills acquisition of Honeywell Flour

By **JOHNMARK UKOKO**

Flour Mills of Nigeria has obtained required regulatory approvals to acquire a 71.69 per cent stake in Honeywell Flour Mills, formerly a portfolio company of Honeywell Group and 5.06 per cent stake in HFMP held by First Bank of Nigeria (FBN) Limited.

In a terse statement, Flour

Mills said the transaction has been consummated by the parties to the deal, adding that the acquisition had been approved by the relevant regulators, such as the Federal Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (FCCPC), Nigerian Exchange Limited (NGX) and the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC)

The statement disclosed that the

agreement of the transaction was announced on November 22, 2021 and that it would bring together two businesses with shared goals to create a more resilient national champion in the Nigerian food industry.

The Trumpet recalled that Flour Mills is a giant in the country's food industry with over five decades in the sector.

Power failure at \$2b Anambra airport forces flight's return to Lagos

By **ADAKU WALTER**

There was pandemonium on Saturday evening at the Umuleri Cargo and Passenger Airport in Anambra State, as over 100 passengers of Air Peace Flight P47336 were forced to return to Lagos on emergency following power failure at the tarmac and the airport.

The aggrieved passengers in an online video said the pilot had told them that the tarmac and the Umuleri Airport was engulfed by darkness at 6:00p.m. on Saturday.

According to them, the pilot delayed the flight at 6:00p.m., shortly before landing and announced that the darkness was due to power failure at the tarmac and the entire airport,

which made it impossible for the aircraft to land.

It would be recalled that the Umuleri Cargo and Passenger Airport was constructed by the immediate past Governor, Willie Obiano at over \$2 billion and was commissioned earlier this year shortly before Obiano left office on March 17, 2022.

The project was reported to be developed through a public-private sector partnership with Orient Petroleum Resources Refinery and Elite International Investments, who would provide all funds under the a build, operate, manage and transfer arrangement.

Meanwhile, the stranded passengers told journalists that the pilot returned them to Lagos, touching the Murtala Muhammed

Airport (MMA) 2 tarmac a few minutes after 7:00.m.

One of the passengers said trouble started when they suspected foul play and were ready to cause commotion at the Lagos Airport, saying that friends and relatives who were waiting to receive them at the Umuleri Airport since 3:00p.m. on Saturday, informed them that another flight from Abuja landed at the airport barely an hour later.

"A lot of people are stranded here and as at the time we disengaged from the airplane in Lagos, we were told that an Abuja flight was landing in Anambra. Apparently, it would not have been ideal to return to Lagos. The pilot told us that there was darkness everywhere and there was no light on the tarmac and no light in the entire airport, saying that their primary concern was the safety of the passengers," the passenger said.

Governor of Anambra State Governor, Prof. Charles Soludo, recently celebrated his first landing at the airport, although he said investing such huge amount in the airport project was to fulfill his (Obiano's) 2017 campaign promise that an international airport would bring economic development and increase the state revenue.

The airport, which was initiated in 2017 has been developed on a 1500-acre site has two runways, an aviation fuel facility, aircraft maintenance facility, airport hotel, business park and an international

The Anambra State government explained that the project was envisaged to create no fewer than 1,200 direct and about 3,600 indirect jobs.



Ibrahim Garba Muhammad



Prof. Charles Soludo

FAAN beefs up security at airports for Eid-Fitri celebration

By **ADAKU WALTER**

Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN) has beefed up security around the nation's airports ahead of the Eid-Fitri break.

In a statement issued by the Acting Spokesperson of FAAN, Mrs. Faithful Hope-Ivbaz on Saturday, the agency assured that all airports under its management are ready to host air travelers during the Sallah celebration.

"As part of our preparations to ensure seamless facilitation of our passengers during the Sallah celebrations and beyond, security has been beefed up at the airports.

"Also, facilities at the airports have been generally improved upon and are func-

tioning optimally. In addition, all other logistics have been upgraded and strengthened to provide for the expected increase in passenger traffic in and around our airports.

"Travelers are enjoined to look out for directional signs at the airports for guidance and abide by all safety and security instructions at the airports," the statement reads.

FAAN also advised members of the public and intending travelers to make early preparations towards completing their travel requirements on time, noting, however, that receiving dignitaries at restricted areas by security agents and airport officials was prohibited and that anyone who flouted the directive would be sanctioned.

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2 x 2	24,941.96	26,812.61	2 x 2	22,588.91	24,283.09	2 x 2	18,349.89	19,716.64	2 x 2	15,147.94	16,284.03	
3 x 2	37,413.09	40,219.07	3 x 2	33,987.48	36,622.04	3 x 2	27,524.84	29,589.20	3 x 2	22,721.91	24,426.05	
4 x 2	49,884.02	53,625.42	4 x 2	45,177.83	48,566.17	4 x 2	36,700.09	39,452.60	4 x 2	30,295.53	32,657.70	
5 x 2	62,355.15	67,031.71	5 x 2	56,472.29	60,707.71	5 x 2	45,866.19	49,315.34	5 x 2	37,863.00	40,710.09	
6 x 2	76,142.50	81,853.18	6 x 2	67,975.12	73,073.25	6 x 2	55,049.68	59,178.41	6 x 2	45,443.82	48,852.10	
7 x 2	87,297.21	93,844.50	6 x 3	101,962.78	109,609.99	6 x 3	54,074.55	61,200.90	7 x 2	53,017.79	56,993.61	
7 x 3	166,172.00	179,229.37	6.5 x 3	110,459.64	118,744.11	6.5 x 3	89,455.78	96,164.94	8 x 2	60,591.76	65,136.14	
7 x 4	197,125.00	211,909.37	7 x 2	79,304.29	85,252.11	7 x 2	64,224.63	69,041.48	9 x 2	80,454.83	86,488.95	
8 x 2	99,768.24	107,250.85	7 x 3	128,456.43	138,090.67	7 x 3	96,336.94	103,562.21	10 x 2	86,147.92	92,609.02	
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10 x 4	299,302.72	321,752.57	8 x 6	271,900.48	292,008.02	8 x 6	250,284.32	269,911.09	7 x 4	120,404.56	129,434.90	
14.5 x 4	520,790.19	559,849.45	9 x 2	101,962.78	109,609.99	9 x 2	93,773.60	100,872.44	8 x 4	137,692.17	148,019.082	
7 x 5	218,243.02	234,629.74	9 x 3	152,944.01	164,414.81	9 x 3	141,108.54	151,691.68	10 x 4	172,301.37	185,224.22	
8 x 5	299,304.72	321,752.57	9 x 4	203,925.29	219,219.69	9 x 4	187,921.52	202,015.71	14.5 x 3	187,057.43	201,086.73	
8 x 6	359,165.65	386,103.08	9 x 5	305,373.04	328,276.02	9 x 5	281,288.07	303,022.10	14.5 x 4	249,838.03	268,575.88	
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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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Real Madrid celebrate title win to herald Champions League clash

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

Real Madrid Coach Carlo Ancelotti said the overwhelming celebration of the La Liga Santander title on Saturday was worth it.

The Italian explained that it was an avenue for Madrid players and staffers to commune with the fans after some quarters objected to it that they have a pressing Champions League tie on Wednesday.

Barcelona lost to Rayo Vallecano at Camp Nou on 24 April which gave Los Blancos the point difference to win the league, despite having four league matches left on

schedule.

With Real Madrid on the hot seat to upturn the result of the first leg of the Champions @League tie at the Etihad at the Estadio Santiago Bernabeu, Ancelotti believed that the celebration of the La Liga title heralds the preparation for Wednesday's clash against Manchester City.

Madrid's head coach believed that building a bond with Madrid fans by celebrating the trophy majestically will go a long way to complement the team's triumph on Wednesday.

Real Madrid lost 4-3 to Manchester City on Tuesday and host the latter on a return leg at the Santiago Bernabeu in what will be termed an explosive tie.



How renowned agent Mino Raiola died at 54

Renowned football agent Mino Raiola has finally given up the ghost after battling an underlying ailment at the Intensive Care Unit of San Raffaele Hospital.

Raiola was rumoured to have died earlier, prompting Alberto Zangrillo, a professor of anesthesiology to rebuff it. However, he died yesterday at 54.

According to a statement by his family, Raiola fought with the same strength he exerts at the negotiating table to defend players for his life.

They acknowledge that the contributions of the former football agent to Paul Pogba, Erling Haaland, and other renowned players in Europe, will continue with the same passion after his demise.

The statement read: "In infinite sorrow, we share the passing of the most caring and amazing Football Agent that ever was.

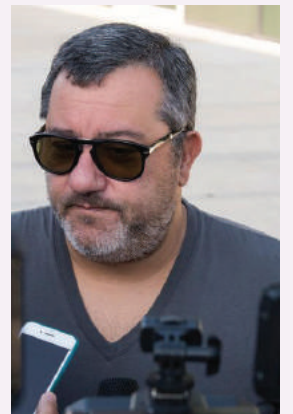
"Mino fought until the end with the same strength he put on negotiation tables to defend our players. As usual, Mino made us proud

and never realised it.

"Mino touched so many lives through his work and wrote a new chapter in the history of modern football. His presence will forever be missed.

"Mino's mission of making football a better place for players will continue with the same passion.

"We thank everybody for the huge amount of support received during these difficult times and ask for respect to the privacy of family and friends in this moment of grief," the statement added.



Milan, Newcastle eye Lille's Botman



Sven Botman says he will consider leaving French side Lille at the end of the season if there are reasonable offers in the summer.

The highly sought defender that was instrumental to the Lille's success last season when they won the Ligue 1 trophy, is wanted in Italy by AC Milan.

The Dutch international who has featured 29 times this season for Lille in all competitions, scoring 3 goals with 1 assist in the process, refused to leave the French side in January.

Consequently, after due consideration, the player remained with Lille to help the French club in the Champions League and Ligue 1 campaign by shelving interest from European clubs.

Retrospectively, the 22 years old in January could not miss his first-ever Champions League experience in lieu of growing interest

from clubs.

"I accepted the situation. There were opportunities to leave. But we also had the Champions League, my first Champions League. And we were in a good position in Ligue 1. I think these offers will come back," he told L'Equipe.

The French Ligue 1 defender, who has kept 10 clean sheets this season, hinted that he would welcome offers during the summer having helped Ligue 1 finish a successful campaign.

He said, "I'll see. If things go as planned, then yes. But first of all, I want to finish this season well. The club deserves it. After that, we'll see. I haven't decided anything."

The media is also inundated with rumours that Newcastle United is also interested in the Lille defender whose contract with the French club runs until 2025.

Stevenson defeats Valdez in WBC featherweight bout

Shakur Stevenson dominated and defeated Oscar Valdez in a unanimous decision to win the unified WBC super-featherweight title.

Both fighters fought to the final 12th round which resulted in a decider that saw Valdez win through the judges' scores 118-109, 117-110, and 118-109 at MGM Grand Garden Arena, Las Vegas.

American Stevenson's win over Valdez extends the boxer's unbeaten run to 18 while Mexican Valdez records his first defeat in 31 bouts.

After conceding a defeat, Valdez expressed that the WBC featherweight champion proved very good in the bout, adding that he is a true champion.

Valdez said, "He has a

very great boxing quality and today he was the best in the ring.

"He moves very well, he's a champion. He has speed, he's a great boxer," he added.

However, this is the first fight Stevenson has fought since testing positive for a drug test last year.

Despite failing the drug test, the champion was left to defend his WBO title against Robson Conceicao last year after he won fellow compatriot Jamel Herring in the 10th round.

"I wanted to show everything tonight," Stevenson said last year after the fight.

"I wanted a fun fight: show my skills, my boxing, my power.

"I want to be a superstar in the sport; I'm here to last," he added.



Liverpool, M'City: who slips first

Liverpool has been closely trailing league leaders Manchester City over the Premier League (PL) title this season.

Both teams, having left an unprecedented gap between them and Chelsea in third, drew the red line to see who finishes ahead of each other to clinch the 2021-22 Premier League (PL) trophy.

Liverpool boss Jurgen Klopp is focused on winning a quadruple for the season with a Carabao Cup already in the kitty. He dislodged Chelsea boss Thomas Tuchel in the final at Wembley.

Manchester City boss Pep Guardiola is prepared for the mind games being played by the Red boss, winning all matches in a row except

the draw recorded with his title contender.

Liverpool, yesterday, heaped loads of pressure on Manchester City after they narrowly won a high-spirited Newcastle at Saint James Park to leapfrog Manchester City to the top spot.

However, the Blues of Manchester returned to the top spot after bashing Leeds United 4-0 at Elland Road. Hernandez Rodri, Nathan Ake, Gabriel Jesus, and Roza Fernandinho all found their names in the romp.

With four Premier League matches left for both clubs to round up the season with the Champions League to compete for, one team is deemed to slip for the other before the season's end.

Liverpool Line of PL Fixtures

- Saturday, 7 May: Home v Tottenham
- Tuesday, 10 May: Away v Aston Villa
- Tuesday, 17 May: Away v Southampton
- Sunday, 22 May: Home v Wolves

Manchester City PL Fixtures

- Sunday, 8 May: Home v Newcastle
- Wednesday, 11 May: Away v Wolves
- Sunday, 15 May: Away v West Ham
- Sunday, 22 May: Home v Aston Villa

India 2022: Flamingos cripple Egypt in Cairo, to play Ethiopia for ticket

Flamingos are to play Ethiopia in the final and last round to qualify for the FIFA U17 Women's World Cup hosted by India in October.

The Nigeria U17 female team displaced the Egyptians in Cairo at the Petrosport Stadium with a 2-0 win to slate a tie with the Ethiopians who won South Africa on goals aggregate.

Flamingos first humiliated the North Africans in the first leg of the qualifying tie at the MKO Abiola National Stadium with four unreplied goals, before sealing the thunderous victory at Cairo, yesterday, with two first-half goals to proceed to the final and deciding tie with the East Africans.

Ethiopia defeated South Africa 3-0 in the first leg of the qualifying tie in Johannesburg and fell to a lone-goal defeat in the second leg to South Africa in Addis Ababa, but qualified on aggregate to face Nigeria.

Ethiopia on its campaign to the final round had played Uganda in a competitive clash that ended 3-3 on aggregate but proceeded on away goal rule.



Despite Flamingos yet to concede a goal in all the qualifying matches, they parade the highest goal scorer, 20peyemi Ajakaiye, in the qualifying series with five goals.

Ajaikaye's record of five goals results from scoring in all the four qualifying matches with a brace against the Congolese.

However, U17 head coach

Bankole Olowookere after the win against Egypt, praised the team's performance while he lamented that the home support and unfavourable weather condition made the game a bit tough.

Olowookere conveyed that the Flamingos were able to dislodge the Egyptians in the last explosive minutes by sticking with his tactics and

adhering to instructions.

The U17 gaffer revealed that ahead of the last round, he is going to formulate match tactics after doing a proper assessment of the opponent's strengths and weaknesses.

The first leg of the Nigeria/Ethiopia final round fixture will hold on 21st May, with the second leg taking place two weeks later.

Enyimba baptise Gombe United in Aba

Enyimba whitewashed Gombe United in a baptismal feast of fire in Aba to close in Akwa United in the fifth position of the Nigeria Professionals League (NPFL) table.

The Aba Warriors, who have maintained three consecutive home wins after they shared the spoils with Plateau United, MFM, and Niger Tornadoes, have proven that Enyimba Stadium is a fortress to invaders.

Enyimba on Saturday scored three unreplied goals in matchday26 that was highly dominated by the home team.

The home side took an early lead in the first half through Chukwuemeka Obiora 6 minute close range and doubled the

lead 9 minutes later from exchanges of passes that engineered Victor Mbaoma's goal.

However, the insatiable Aba Warriors known for devouring their prey if the avenue is provided, tripled the lead a minute before the half-hour mark from a poor defensive clearance that saw Cyril Odisema registering his name on the scoresheet.

The head coach Finidi George, in the match against Gombe United, stuck to the outfield players that started against the Shooting Stars of Ibadan with Noble Barinyima replacing Bassa in the goal post.

Enyimba travel to Uyo on matchday27 to battle with Akwa United next week Sunday, May 10 to continue their NPFL campaign.



Ugbade to build formidable Golden Eaglets

Golden Eaglets head coach Ndoka Ugbade has confidently said he was going to build a formidable Nigeria U17 squad within a short time.

Ugbade, appointed alongside other coaches to superintendent over Nigeria's national football teams by the Nigeria Football Federation (NFF), has commended the number of talents that are being scouted through his rigorous training process.

The Nigerian gaffer during an interaction with NFF media noted that it will be easy to pass tactical information to a team that is filled with talents which according to him, is the starting point to building capacity.

Ugbade assured that he will continue to work on the capacity of the players as they play continuously while impacting the needed information to raise a formidable team.

He said, "The issue is wherever a football thing is called for, you only see a lot of youths, inclusive of those that can play and those that are just finding their improvement.

"So this morning, I saw a few very good players and a lot that are just finding their, not form, they're finding their skills and their good ability.

"Having a team that is filled with quality players on the level of talents, I can impute a lot of information so that when they are able to retain it.

"We will work on their capacity to deliver the information during every match that we play, so, at the end of the day, most probably, what we're going to have is a very formidable team at the end of four weeks," he added.

The Golden Eaglets' head coach stressed that despite the time constraint that has modelled his

coaching type to a short term, he is confident in delivering the expected results.

Although Ugbade could have needed more time to prepare the team adequately, the 52 years old is grateful to have a month to build the team through rigorous training procedures that comprise impacting tactical and technical information.

He continued: "I am very confident because you know, when you're talking about long-term, you're talking about short-term, you're talking about macro, a microcycle, or period of development.

"This one is short-term. So all you have to do is that the introductory aspect must be well strengthened; the introductory aspect of the technical and tactical information with the capacity to deliver it which is fitness.

Thank God we have four weeks. So this will be built right from the first day till the very end of the four weeks. Then with a lot of information, sometimes we come up three times a day just to push forward the stress on the youth so that they can develop more capacity," he added.

Ugbade, who played for Nigeria's national team with 11 caps as a defender, was an assistant coach in 2013 to the Golden Eaglets when they came as runner-up in the Africa U-17 Cup of Nations.



Niger Tornadoes snatch late winner

Musa Wakili rescued Niger Tornadoes as they came from behind to defeat Kano Pillars 2-1 at Ahmadu Bello Stadium, Kaduna.

Kano Pillars had taken an early 5 minutes lead from team captain Rabiu Ali's freekick and struggled to keep the scoreline in a check by curtailing Niger Tornadoes throughout the first half.

Niger Tornadoes kept the push for their opener but could not find the back of the net.

In one of their attempts,

Najeem's made a long-range effort that was punched to safety by goalie Bassey Akpan.

Consequent to the consistent pressure on Sai Masu Gida's defence, Niger Tornadoes recovered from a one-goal deficit in the 52nd minute through a cool finish by Jonah Emmanuel.

Both teams struggled to edge each other in the game as it progresses but could not find the perfect opportunity to launch a goal-bound strike.

However, Niger Tornadoes were fortunate



to snap a late winner after Musa Wakili scored a spot-kick which resulted from

Goalkeeper Bassey Akpan fouling Munir Idris in the 18-yard box.

Akwa United rejuvenated under Ayeni



After it last lost a match against league leaders Rivers United at the Yakubu Gowon Stadium on March 20, 2022, Akwa United have maintained a good form in April going six matches

unbeaten.

Presently fifth on the Nigeria Professional Football League (NPFL) table with 39 points from 25 games, the Promise Keepers of Uyo trail Remo Stars on fourth by a point difference.

Onward the unbeaten run, Akwa United held Rivers United to a one-all draw and extended it to the northern part of the country to couple Kano Pillars to a barren draw.

Following the goal stagnation, Akwa United reverberated a thunderstorm over Nasarawa United in a 6-1

humiliating defeat after they had drawn Gombe United at Gombe Township Stadium, Pantami, and narrowly slipped past Shoot Stars in a 2-1 victory.

However, head coach Ayodeji Ayeni has praised the team's performance during this time stating that in his brief stay in charge, he has been able to assess the capacity of the Promise Keepers.

Ayeni, who has barely spent over a month with the team, boasts that Akwa United can take on any team

base on the towering strength of his team.

He said, "My first six games in charge of Akwa United have given me a great deal of knowledge about the capability and strength of my players and I'm confident that they can hold their own against any team in this league.

Ayeni joined Akwa United last month from Sunshine Stars after a poor run of results that saw the club wobble in 6th position with 15 points before the NPFL mid-season break.

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Pelosi backs Zelensky in 'fight for freedom' on Kyiv visit

By **OROWO VICTORIA OJIEH** with agency report

United States House Speaker Nancy Pelosi made an unannounced trip to the Ukrainian capital on Saturday, becoming the most senior American official to meet with President Volodymyr Zelensky since the Russian invasion began more than two months ago.

Her office confirmed the trip in a statement on Sunday, saying that the Speaker had led an official congressional delegation to Ukraine.

The trip by a Congressional delegation

had not been previously announced.

"Our delegation proudly delivered the message that additional American support is on the way, as we work to transform President Biden's strong funding request into a legislative package," Pelosi's office said in a statement.

Pelosi, who is second in line to succeed the president, is the highest-ranking American leader to visit Ukraine since the start of the war. Her visit to Kyiv marks a significant measure of commitment to supporting Ukraine from the most senior level of US leadership.

Ukraine's President



Pelosi and Zelesky

shared a video on Sunday of their meeting in Kyiv, and thanked the US for its powerful support of Ukraine against Russian

aggression.

"We believe that we are visiting you to say thank you for your fight for freedom. Our

commitment is to be there for you until the fight is done," Pelosi told Zelensky, according to a video from the Ukrainian presidency.

President Volodymyr Zelensky tweeted, "Thank you to the United States for helping protect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of our state".

US President Joe Biden last week proposed a huge \$33 billion package for arming and supporting Ukraine.

Biden also outlined proposed new laws to allow using luxury assets stripped from Russian oligarchs to compensate Ukraine for the destruction wreaked

by the invading Russians.

"When we return to the United States, we will do so further informed, deeply inspired and ready to do what is needed to help the Ukrainian people as they defend democracy for their nation and for the world," Pelosi added.

Pelosi was joined by several other senior members of Congress, including Gregory Meeks, Adam Schiff, chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, and the chairman of the Intelligence Committee.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin visited Kyiv last month.

'Lifting sanctions against Russia part of peace talks with Ukraine'

By **OROWO VICTORIA OJIEH** with agency report

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has said that lifting sanctions imposed on his country is part of peace negotiations between Moscow and Ukraine, which are "difficult" but continue daily.

Kyiv had warned that talks on ending Russia's invasion, now in its third month, were in danger of collapse.

"At present, the Russian and Ukrainian delegations are actually discussing on a daily basis via video-conferencing a draft of a possible treaty," Lavrov said in comments to China's official Xinhua news agency published on the Russian foreign ministry's website.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has insisted since the invasion began

on Feb. 24, the Western sanctions on Russia needed to be strengthened and could not be part of negotiations.

Ukraine and Russia have not held face-to-face peace talks since March 29, and the atmosphere has soured over Ukrainian allegations that Russian troops carried out atrocities as they withdrew from areas near Kyiv. Moscow has denied the claims.

Moscow calls its actions in Ukraine a "special operation" to demilitarise and "denazify" its neighbour. Ukraine and the West say Russia launched an unprovoked war of aggression.

"The agenda of the negotiations includes, among others, the issues of denazification, the recognition of new geopolitical realities,

the lifting of sanctions, the status of the Russian language," Lavrov said, without elaborating.

"We are in favour

of continuing the negotiations, although they are difficult," Lavrov said.

Western allies of

Ukraine have placed sweeping sanctions on Moscow. They have frozen around half of Russia's state gold

and foreign currency reserves, hammering Russia's economy and putting it on the brink of sovereign default.

Ghana's KNUST emerges Africa's best varsity

By **OROWO VICTORIA OJIEH**

Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) has been ranked the best University in Africa in terms of quality education.

This was contained in the 2022 Times Higher Education Impact Ranking published on the 28th of April 2022.

The Times Higher Education Impact Rankings, founded in 2019 are the only global league tables that assess universities against the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The World University Impact Rankings adjudged KNUST as the best university in quality education in Africa and fourteen globally in 2022.

This year's rankings encompassed more than 1,600 universities across 99 countries and territories, making them the largest and most diverse university rankings to date.

The result is based on 13 meticulously calibrated performance measures that assess a university's performance in four areas of quality education: teaching, research, knowledge

transfer, and international outlook.

The 2022 ranking analysed more than 108 million citations across over 14.4 million research publications and included survey responses from almost 22,000 scholars globally.

The outcome of this year's rankings demonstrates how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected worldwide higher education sustainable indicators.

In a statement signed by KNUST relation officer Dr. Daniel Norris Bekoe, he mentioned that the Ghana based University beat

1,166 out of the 1,180 universities from 106 countries that were in that category. KNUST emerged 14th Globally with a score of 83.7% and topped all Universities in Africa in terms of quality education.

The University of Johannesburg came closest at 39th position with a score of 77.7% in Africa.

The management of Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology appreciated and congratulated the hardworking staffs, students and stakeholders for the great achievement.