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DO CHANGE OF NAME, ADDITION
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N250 **Weekend**

'APC united to win Delta, federal polls'



*All Progressives Congress (APC) leading aspirant for Delta South senatorial election, Hon. Joel-Onowakpo Thomas (middle), with delegates. Story on page 2.

Ex-General, media, others chart path to Nigeria's unity, growth → 2

'APC united to win Delta, federal polls'

By **KELVIN OHOROR**

Leading Delta South Senatorial aspirant of All Progressives Congress (APC) in the forthcoming general elections, Hon. Joel-Onowakpo Thomas, has said that the party is united to take over the state and retain power at Federal level next year.

He stated this at Warri, Oleh and Ozoro respectively when his campaign train visited Delta South Senatorial District and LGA executives in Isoko South and North.

He said that his decision to contest for the senatorial seat was as a result of pressure from the party's stalwarts

and the cooperation demonstrated by Delta South officials of APC.

His words: "I am here today to present myself to the Delta South Senatorial District executives by the mandate of our leader, DSP Ovie Omo-Agege, that I should contest for the Delta South Senatorial District seat come 2023 General Elections.

"I have also accepted his order to contest for the Senate seat to represent the good people of Delta South Senatorial because I also believe that we must join hands together to win all the elections in Delta State come 2023.

"When we work together as a group and win election at all levels the benefit will be more for us.



Hon. Joel-Onowakpo Thomas

And we are ready and prepared to win election in Delta State than before.

"I want to say that all of you in Delta South Senatorial District

are gate keepers. Please, support us in whatever way you can so that we can win the elections. We are closer to victory than ever.

"All Progressive Congress in Delta State is more united than ever. There should be no doubt in your mind, from what we have been able to do in the party in the last few weeks. You will see that we did not allow people who will destroy us to contest positions in the party.

"We have placed people who will contest and win because they are hungry to win and have the resources to make it happen. So, as gate keepers I want to beg you that there are no more divisions in the party. Let us work together and win."

Responding, Delta South Senatorial District Chairman, Mr. Austin Oriboye, said that his executives and all the party faithful are ready to work to

ensure that APC takes over the state.

According to him, "Hon. Joel-Onowakpo is well exposed and has the capacity to deliver and give the people of Delta South Senatorial District an effective representation come 2023. I will urge you to work diligently with the electorate and the APC faithful in order for our party to come out victorious in the forthcoming elections."

Isoko South Local Government APC Chairman, Mr. Vincent Egbogbo, assured Hon. Thomas and members of his team that they are ready to campaign to all nooks and crannies to ensure that the party wins all elective positions in Delta State and at the federal level.

The Trumpet, NGO hold leaders, media parley for Nigeria's unity

■ 'GCIO working on social security bill to check unemployment, poverty, others' ■ How Nigeria can be great, by Gen Gbor

■ Newspaper chief urges collective responsibility

By **TUNDE JOSHUA** and **GENESIS ERIRIOMA**

Recently happenings in Nigeria have revealed the depth of disunity, dishonesty, distrust, corruption and poverty in the country. In trying to find lasting solutions to these nagging problems, a non-governmental body, Good Circle International Organisation (GCIO), led by Engineer Esanerovo Trinity Agbodo, in collaboration with The Trumpet newspaper on Thursday, May 19th, 2022, held a leaders-media forum with the theme "Promoting Citizens Unity and Economic Empowerment for Sustainable National Development," at National Merit House, Abuja.

Editor-In-Chief of The Trumpet, Omokioja Julius Eto, while welcoming participants thanked everyone for coming and reechoed the purpose of the gathering. He said all citizens must be involved and take responsibility for good governance, development and security to enhance national unity.

The GCIO president said the aim of organizing the leaders-media forum is to try to find a solution to the disunity in the country so that Nigeria can have a common focus on promoting patriotism.

Highlighting the power of journalists to influence the country, he said leaders need to partner with the media to promote the unity of the country, stating that the major way to empower Nigerians is to have a social security system that takes care of the unemployed.

He revealed that his organization was working toward sponsoring a Social security bill at the national assembly to give hope to the unemployed where the government pays them till they are employed as obtainable in the western world.

The Chairman of the Forum, Major-Gen. John Gbor (Rtd), the 2019 presidential candidate of the All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA) and currently an aspirant, went down history lane to bring to the fore the beginning of Nigeria's problems in relation to disunity and

corruption.

He stated that the problem started in 1948 with Sir Arthur Richards who was brought in by the British from colonial Jamaica to govern Nigeria against the interest of the nationalists creating regionalism with a constitution that gave birth to the National Assembly in Lagos.

"The constitution magnified ethnicity above nationalism and gave the members of the National Assembly the opportunity to take what belongs to Nigeria to the tribes they represent, leaving others and creating sharp divisions among the ethnic tribes in the country.

"The nationalists agitated for the creation of Nigeria and not the British as believed in many quarters and schools of thought citing that the British wanted more than one country out of Nigeria. They agreed to make Nigeria one when they couldn't handle the pressure from the nationalist movement anymore.

"Instead of making Nigeria one country, they decided to make it three countries in one

to foster their original agenda of not making Nigeria one. They created regions (Northern region, Western Region and Eastern Region) instead of states creating an ethnic divide which is against nationalism".

He stated that when Gen. Aguyi Ironsi became military head of state, he tried to solve the problem by creating 24 administrative regions without properly consulting with the Nigerian people, worsening the situation. General Gowon came in and created 12 states the purpose of which was to eliminate regional powers built on the strength of ethnicity and to create the spirit of nationalism.

He stated: "The creation of states couldn't solve the problem of disunity because there was no national mindset. Nigeria has no heroes as a nation but heroes of ethnic nationalities. Why the existence of ethnic political pressure groups like AREWA, AFENIFERE, OHANAEZE NDIGBO, PANDEF? They are all established to take what belongs to Nigeria to their ethnic groups."

He said Nigeria has so much money but the

money does not go to the appropriate quarters to service the needs of the citizens. According to him, Nigeria is operating as three countries in one but needs a president that will eliminate ethnicity and regionalism and make it a nation. When that happens, Nigeria will be greater than China in about 10 years, he stressed.

Responding to questions from journalists and media personalities present, he spoke on how Nigeria can achieve national unity. He said that Nigerians must give up ethnic sentiments and embrace national ones stating that the military created states but mind restructuring which Nigeria actually needed was not done. He pointed to the creation of geopolitical zones which brought about sharp divisions among Nigerian ethnic groups. He noted that the British created an educational system that promoted ethnicity and not nationalism. He encouraged the youth to embrace nationalism citing the fact that the country needs a new constitution that is Nigerian. "Wherever anyone is, the basic thing

is being Nigerian and thinking of Nigeria," he said.

Gbor noted that Nigerians must obey the electoral laws and enthrone honesty beginning with the President. "The President must allow Nigerians to elect their President likewise the Governors should allow their citizens to elect their Governors," he remarked.

He lamented the level of insecurity under President Muhammadu Buhari's administration from 2015 to date stating that the government needs to do more to checkmate it to unite the country. The government has a responsibility to reduce the prices of essential commodities, discourage ethnicity and promote the Nigerian spirit. He praised Buhari's achievements in some areas like infrastructures.

The Deputy-Editor-in-Chief of The Trumpet, Mr. Obah Sylva, while giving a vote of thanks, commended General Gbor for making out time to attend the parley and speaking frankly on national issues, acknowledging his depth of understanding of the Nigerian situation.



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Save Nigeria from collapse, Ohanaeze begs APC, PDP delegates

By CHARLES ONYEKWERE,
South-East Correspondent

Recently happenings in Nigeria have revealed the depth of disunity, dishonesty, distrust, corruption and poverty in the country. In trying to find lasting solutions to these nagging problems, a non-governmental body, Good Circle International Organisation (GCIO), led by Engineer Esanerovo Trinity Agbodo, in collaboration with The Trumpet newspaper on Thursday, May 19th, 2022, held a leaders-media forum with the theme "Promoting Citizens Unity and Economic Empowerment for Sustainable National Development," at National Merit House, Abuja.

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African NGOs move against Shell over environmental degradation

By SHARON ONYEKA
ISAALAH, Head, Health
Environment, Science
and Tech Desk

Some African non-governmental organizations (NGOs) led by Africa Network for Environment and Economic Justice (ANEJ), working with Climate Justice activists in Nigeria and around the world, committed to limiting global warming to 1.5°C in line with Paris Climate Agreement and Glasgow 2021 Commitment for net-zero, will hold a People's Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Lagos next week. It will be held simultaneously with the AGM of Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC) scheduled for 24th, May 2022.

Reverend David Ugolor, ANEEJ's Executive Director, said: "The People's AGM

is designed to further bring pressure on the Church of England and other financiers of Shell to completely withdraw their moral and financial support to Shell, a major fossil fuel extracting company whose operations in Nigeria's Niger Delta have contributed to carbon emission, environmental degradation, destruction of livelihoods and human rights violations."

Last year, ANEEJ brought together 40 West African NGOs in a letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Most Revd. Justin Welby, asking the Church of England Pensions Board (and by extension other investors) to desist from lending its moral and financial authority to Shell, and voting for the oil giant's climate and energy plan. The letter was ignored.

A few days after Shell's last AGM, the company faced two strong challenges

to its energy transition strategy from official institutions. First, the International Energy Agency concluded that no new oil and gas fields should be approved for development after 2021 if the world is to reach its agreed 2050 net-zero emissions target.

Later, a Dutch court ruled that Shell must cut its carbon emissions by 45% by 2030, starting immediately. The judgment found that the same Shell policies praised by the Church of England "largely amount to rather intangible, undefined and non-binding plans for the long-term," concluding that the multinational firm is causing a danger to people's right to life.

Ugolor added: "Shell's bosses didn't feel accountable, didn't change the company's strategy, and appealed the verdict. Unfortunately, in all of these, the Church of England kept

quiet.

"Only recently, the Church alluded to the possibility of not granting its moral authority to Shell via its role in the \$68 trillion Climate Action 100+ initiative. But this has to be made loud and clear, hence this civil society mass action which will see to major civil society activists' participation and link up to actions of the Stop Cambo Movement in the UK, the Green Anglicans in Southern Africa, and with several other groups and networks around the world.

"The Peoples' AGM is therefore scheduled to hold back-to-back with Shell's AGM as follows:

*Sunday, May 22nd, 2022 - The people's AGM by 4 pm @ Spicery Hotel Campbell, 36/40 Campbell Street, Opposite Campus Mini-Stadium, Lagos Island

*Monday, May 23rd, 2022 - Rally in front of Shell Office, Lagos Island."



• Gen. Gbor (middle), use Agbodo (2nd left), Eto (2nd right), Sylva (right) and a participant at the leaders, media parley in Abuja on Thursday. Story on Page 2.

Chevron's host communities' body spends N98m on projects

By AHERHOKE OKIOMA,
Yenagoa

Dodo River Communities Rural Development Association, Ekeremor Local Government Area (LGA) in Bayelsa has said it spent N98.34 million on development projects in 2021.

The 2021 expenditure is marginally higher than the N95.43 million spent by the association in the previous year of 2020.

Mr Francis Amamogiran, its chairman, stated this while speaking during the 10th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the association in Yenagoa, Bayelsa capital.

He explained that the funding came from Chevron Nigeria Limited under the Global Memorandum of Understanding (GMOU)

with the oil firm's five host communities in Ekeremor LGA.

Amamogiran noted that the fund was deployed for infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects including town hall buildings, scholarships, adult education programmes, and cottage hospital staff salaries amongst others.

According to him, the association conducted its activities transparently and in line with the requirements of the GMOU funding framework which prioritises community participation in development projects.

He said the association was holding the last AGM under the GMOU model following the enactment of the Petroleum Industry Act and looks up to the government to provide further guides on

the host community funds administration.

Mr Christmas Mark, Secretary of the association applauded the peaceful disposition of residents of the host communities that resulted in the successful oil and gas exploration and urged them to sustain the peace.

In her speech, Mrs Ruth Etebu, Permanent Secretary, Bayelsa Ministry of Mineral Resources expressed satisfaction with the administrative structure adopted by the association in implementing projects.

She advised the residents to continue their peacebuilding efforts to attract further development to their communities as peaceful atmospheres attract investors.

Mrs Mien Sunday, who spoke on behalf of the

beneficiaries, expressed appreciation to Chevron and the leadership of the association for giving them another chance to learn to read and write.

She said that the knowledge acquired has improved their self-esteem and those engaged in petty trading can now keep records and track the progress they make in their various businesses.

She said that the adult education classes have also enabled them to participate in the education of their children as they can now help out with their homework, a development that has increased the bond of love in their families.

The high point of the event was the presentation of certificates to 10 female beneficiaries of the Adult Education Scheme by Etebu.

Exhibitors hail West Africa Automotive Show in Lagos

Participants from over 20 countries at the just ended second edition of the West Africa Automotive Show (WAAS), held at the Landmark Event Centre, between May 17 and 19, lauded the automotive show, which they said afforded them the rare opportunity to access the biggest economy in the West Africa region of Africa.

The exhibitors, who came from India, United Kingdom, Ireland, Thailand, Indonesia, Nigeria, Pakistan, the UAE, Poland, the United State of America, Turkey among others, expressed enthusiasm to return for the next edition.

Automotive parts at the three-day show were

displayed by exhibiting firms like GT Exhausts, Zamel, DPH South Africa, Reem Batteries and Power Appliances Co., Hunter Engineering Company, ADD USA, Samer Al Gaddah International general trading, Indonesia Trade promotion centre, as well as local firm, Rafey Investment Limited. Other firms at the show are Lubrex, R&G Automotive, AXCL Gulf FZC, Auto Truck, ATQ, ASPAMDA, EBN, Garage Mobility, ITPC Lagos, Jiji Nigeria, Transport Day, Moto Ngen, Oceanic Sg, Mecho Auto Tech among others. One of the exhibitors, a Business Developer of Poland-based Zamel, Mateusz Koprianiuk,

which specialises in autogas, Mateusz Koprianiuk, said his company provides complete solutions for autogas installers and distributors.

According to him, Zamel has the technical know-how to deliver a complete kit for autogas and also make spare parts available.

Koprianiuk noted that Nigeria has a rich deposit of natural gas, which makes the market very lucrative for foreign investors, adding that the company is open to Nigerians, who are ready to take up distributorship of its services and products.

International Hunter Engineering Company Regional Manager, Ranjeet Kumar Mahato, representing

a USA-based global leader in automotive service equipment, said that the Nigerian economy is attractive to outsiders because of the population and the potential therein.

He said that the company, which is currently in over 105 nations, offers state-of-the-art wheel alignment systems, wheel balancers, changers, inspection lane equipment, and lift racks with excellent after-sales support.

He added that the company would love to see many Nigerians becoming its distributors, which will aid the influx of products in the country.

Speaking on the show, the

Managing Director, BtoB Events, Jamie Hill, said the second edition of the automotive show, is the first edition in post-COVID-19 pandemic era.

"Our last edition was back in 2019 and the focus of this exhibition is to bring new technologies from the automotive sector from around Nigeria and across

the world together with local partners, assembly plants, and anybody within the automotive industry here to improve the safety and efficiency of the vehicles on Nigerian roads. And with that this obviously improves safety for the nation.

"We are very proud to welcome over 70 exhibitors from over five different continents. You will see we have exhibitors here from Asia, Europe, America, Africa and the Middle East and they are all here because they have a vested interest in the Nigerian market.

"They see a huge business opportunity, a huge opportunity for growth and they have invested a lot of time and money to come here and set their business up here in Nigeria," he said.

He added: "This edition would always be difficult because we are dealing with many different problems. As you all know the world had COVID-19 pandemic to contend with and as you know a lot of the automotive parts for the industry here are Chinese based."



Ranjeet Kumar Mahato

FAAN begins probe over body on Lagos airport runway

By **ADAKU WALTER**

Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN) said it has commenced investigation to unravel the circumstances surrounding a mangled body discovered on Runway 18R/36L of Murtala Muhammed International Airport (MMIA) Lagos.

The severely crushed body of a yet to be identified man was reported to have been found on Thursday, May 19, 2022, during a routine runway inspection, which led to the temporary shutdown of the runway, affecting international flights.

An Ethiopian airline flight heading to Lagos from Lomé, Togo was diverted back to Lomé as a result of the incident.

According to the spokesperson of FAAN, Mrs. Faithful Hope-Ivbase, investigations has since started, and a report on the incident will be issued.

She explained that the corpse was discovered by a motorized cleaner, that was cleared to carry out a derruberization and sweeping of the runway at about 0106hours, and escalated the situation to relevant departments.

"As a result,

between 0110 and 0343 hours, the runway was temporarily closed to allow for immediate evacuation of the remains. Flight operations resumed at 0343 hours. Investigations are ongoing, and a report will be issued accordingly", the statement added.

Similarly, the Airport Police Command also confirmed that it is looking into the death of the unknown man whose body was found on Runway.

The Police Public Relations Officer, Airport Command, DSP Olayinka Ojelade, said the unidentified body might probably

be that of one of the hoodlums who usually jump through the airport fence.

"I can confirm that a mangled, unidentified body was found at the International Airport runway on Thursday which was probably hit by taxing aircraft.

"We are still investigating the case of the dead body and once we are through we will communicate to you our findings."The Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria and the Nigeria Police Force yesterday evacuated the corpse from the runway," he said

NRC suspends resumption of Abuja-Kaduna train service

By Adaku Walter

Nigerian Railway Corporation (NRC) has announced an indefinite suspension of the Abuja-Kaduna passenger train services initially scheduled to resume on May 23, 2022.

The suspension followed outcry from families of kidnap victims of the March 28 attack on the Abuja-Kaduna train by gunmen suspected to be terrorists. The families had threatened to frustrate the resumption of the train service.

In a press statement by the spokesman of the NRC, Mahmoud Yakubu, the corporate apologised for the delay in the resumption of the service even as it assured the families of the kidnap victims that it was working very hard to safely rescue the kidnapped passengers.

The NRC said a new date would be announced to the public as soon as possible.

According to the statement, "The NRC will continue to cooperate and collaborate with the Federal Government in its uncompromising mandate

of protecting the territorial integrity and the internal security of Nigeria for safeguarding the lives and properties of its citizens especially as it concerns the rail sub-sector.

"We once again identify with the relatives of those in captivity on the account of the recent attack on AKTS to be rest assured that the Federal Government is alive to its responsibility for the safe rescue of all persons being held hostage.

"We, therefore, appeal, particularly to the relatives of persons held hostage to be patient and cooperate with the NRC and the security agencies as the Federal Government is exploring all possible ways and means to ensure the safe release of their loved ones from captivity, soonest. The NRC expresses its profound gratitude to the security agencies for the continued support."

However, a senior official of the NRC who craved anonymity, explained that the lamentations from the families of the kidnapped train passengers forced

the NRC to postpone the passenger train resumption indefinitely.

"After the NRC announced that the Abuja-Kaduna passenger train will resume on Monday, 23rd of May 2022, there was an outcry from the families of the kidnapped victims.

"Many felt once the trains

resume operations, the case of the 62 passengers still in the kidnappers' den will be forgotten. Many of them raised alarm about the continuous stay in captivity of their beloved ones and because the NRC feels their pain, the management felt the Abuja-Kaduna passenger train resumption should be postponed indefinitely.

Army clears IPOB/ESN den in Imo, recovers weapons

By **PAUL MICHAEL**, Defence Editor

The Nigeria Army said it has cleared an enclave of the outlawed Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) and its armed group, Eastern Security Network (ESN). Adding that cache of weapons belonging to the group were captured by troops.

This is disclosed by the Army's Director of Public Relations, Brig-Gen Onyema Nwachukwu, on Thursday, adding that firearms and ammunition were recovered during troops' operations to clear separatists' hideouts

in the general area of Amaifeke - Akkatta road.

Gen Nwachukwu, who said the troops engaged in a fierce gun duel with members of the group, also assured the people and residents of the southeast that peace would be restored to the region.

He said, "Troops of 34 Brigade, Nigerian Army (NA) have captured a cache of arms and ammunition belonging to elements of the dissident group, Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) and its armed affiliate, Eastern Security Network (ESN), after a gun battle at Amaifeke-Akkatta

Road in Orlu Local Government Area of Imo state.

"The firearms and ammunition were recovered during troops' operations to clear separatists' hideouts in the general area of Amaifeke - Akkatta road.

"Troops uncovered the weapons concealed in a black Toyota Camry, after they successfully surmounted ambushes staged by members of the outlawed dissident group, who, having been overpowered by the gallant troops, abandoned their vehicle and weapons in the heat of the combat and fled the scene.

Notorious kidnappers, criminals arrested in Kaduna, others

As Police recover 61 Firearms, 376 Ammunition, others

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

Men of the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) have arrested about 31 notorious criminals and kidnappers who have been terrorizing, killing, robbing, kidnapping and raping their victims in Kaduna, Borno and Adamawa States.

A statement by the Force Public Relations Officer, CSP Olumuyiwa Adejobi, said two of the suspects identified as Aminu Lawal (aka Kano), and Murtala Dawu (aka Mugala) who were working in synergy with the kidnap kingpin known as Yellow Ashana,

confessed to have killed two police officers and a vigilante member in 2021 as well as responsible over the abduction of Greenfield students.

"The Force Intelligence Bureau Special Tactical Squad (FIB-STs) operatives following directives from the Inspector-General of Police, IGP Usman Alkali Baba, psc(+), NPM, fdc, to clampdown on the perpetrators of crimes and criminality, as well as cutting off their supply of arms, have successfully effected the arrest of 31 suspects connected with major violent crimes including Kidnapping, Culpable Homicide, Rape, Unlawful Possession of Firearms etc.

"The FIB-STs equally recovered a total of 61 firearms including 41 AK rifles, 8 Type 06 rifles, 4 Light Assault Rifles (LAR), 4 pump action guns, 2 locally made firearms, 1 G3 rifle, 1 dane gun, 376 rounds of live ammunition of different calibres, and a cash sum of two million Naira, from the suspects in the course of investigations.

OKON

I formerly known and addressed as **MR. SUNDAY OKON** now wish to be known and addressed as **MR. SUNDAY UDOH**. All former documents remain valid. The general public should please take note.

Dane to die for killing Nigerian wife, daughter

By BENJAMIN OMOIKE, METRO EDITOR/LAGOS BUREAU CHIEF

A Lagos High Court sitting at Tafawa Balewa Square on Friday sentenced a Danish expatriate, Peter Nielsen, to death by hanging after being found guilty of murdering his Nigerian wife, Zainab, and daughter, Petra.

The judge, Bolanle Okikiolu-Ighile, convicted Mr Nielsen, 54, on two counts of murder brought against him by the Lagos State Government.

The judge sentenced Nielsen to death by hanging on both counts.

The Dane was charged with the death of his wife and singer, Zainab, and their three year-old daughter, Petra.

The Lagos State government accused him of smothering his wife and child to death at 3.45 a.m. at No. 4, Flat 17, Bella Vista Tower, Banana Island, Ikoyi.

Nielsen was arraigned on June 13, 2018.

He pleaded not guilty to the two-count charge of

murder contrary to Section 223 of the Criminal Law of Lagos State, 2015.

Nielsen had been facing trial for allegedly killing his wife, Zainab, and her three year-old daughter, Petra. In April, he was remanded in Ikoyi Prisons on the order of a Yaba Chief Magistrates' Court, Lagos.

The Magistrate in that sitting, K.B. Ayeye, who gave the ruling, had said the accused should be kept behind bars pending advice from the State Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP).

Effiong Asuquo, the prosecutor and chief superintendent of police,, had told the court that:

"The accused, who was always at loggerheads with his wife had hit her head on the wall several times leading to her death; he also proceeded to poison his daughter.

"He had dragged their lifeless bodies under the gas to create the impression that they suffocated to death as a result of a gas leakage."

The offences contravened Sections 223 of



the Criminal Law of Lagos State, 2015 which prescribes death sentence for offenders.

The case was then ad-

journed to May 8 pending DPP's advice, culminating in the weekend ruling that sentenced the Dane to death by hanging.

LASWARCO delivers paper on groundwater pollution to Int'l community

BY BENJAMIN OMOIKE

The Lagos State Water Regulatory Commission (LASWARCO), is scheduled to deliver a report on the Socio-Economic and health impact of groundwater pollution in Ejigbo, Lagos State, at an international conference scheduled to hold in Paris, France between May 18 and 20, 2022.

The conference, with the theme: 'Groundwater: Key To Sustainable Development Goals', is specifically organised by the International Hydrological Programme (IHP) of UNESCO in partnership with the French Water Agency to advance conversations on how to ensure access to clean water and sanitation for all in line with Goal 6 of the SDG.

Executive Secretary of LASWARCO, Mrs Funke

Adepoju, who is leading the Commission's team to the conference, said the report was chosen ahead of other entries from across the world, and that the study was prepared by the Lagos State Government, through the Commission on socio-economic and health impacts of groundwater pollution from petroleum products on the residents as evidenced by the lamentations of the residents in a national daily last year.

This situation, according to Adepoju, also presents itself in the Baruwa area of Lagos state.

"As a Commission, all activities that impact on groundwater quality are of interest to the Commission as enabled by law. The priority of the Babajide Sanwo -Olu's administration is to ensure that residents of Lagos State

have access to clean water in line with its T.H.E.M.E.S Agenda and SDG 6. This is why we have put measures in place to regulate the sector in line with global best practices.

"It is gratifying that the international community is taking note of the government's effort at regulatory reforms and impacts championed by the Commission and I must say that this scheduled presentation on the world stage represents a part of the solution architecture opportunities to these affected areas," Adepoju said.

Also, Adepoju has been invited to participate in the VIP (invitation-only) Global Water Leaders' Summit scheduled to be held in Madrid, Spain between May 16 and 18, 2022.

Giving details, Adepoju said the summit is a high-level

meeting of global water leaders that brings together water leaders from around the world and high-level representatives from development agencies, and financial institutions including the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the World Bank, German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) and the KWF to explore how they can better collaborate to improve water performance and access to water in relation to climate change.

"The global water leaders group is a CEO-level organisation with the mission to create a better story for water by bringing together water leaders from the water sector, utility directors, regulators, and water ministers to focus on the world's water challenge, facilitating vital partnerships across the sector

which will help shape the way the world values water now and in the future.

"The meeting will look at peer-to-peer collaboration for delivering bankability via the urban water catalyst fund and for going from good to great. It is a huge opportunity for all those involved in the delivery of SDG 6 for water and sanitation, ending with "how do we move ahead from here," she said.

Also expected at the Summit are the CEOs of International Water Bank, Rashad Shawa, Former Minister, Water and Climate, Morocco, Charafat Afailal, CEO, Zambia Regulatory Agency, Manila Water Regulatory Office, Empresa de Servicios Publicos Colombia, Leonardo Vargas, Guillermo Maisch Water and Wastewater Services, Tunisia to mention a few.



How police, military cooperation dislodged deadly armed robbers terrorising Lagos

BY ALEX OLISE

The route from Mile 2 leading to Agboju-Alakija before Barracks and Volkswagen Bus Stop in Lagos, are areas that have been dreaded by road users for the past 30 years due to incessant cases of robbery attacks.

These criminals unleash terror attacks and have sent many innocent Nigerians and visitors to their untimely graves, with many others losing their goods and hard-earned money.

The Badagry Road has been on the intelligence books of the Nigerian Police Force, as one of the most dreaded routes used by cross border robbers to come into Lagos, snatch exotic cars and use the same route to flee back to Cotonou, the Benin Republic capital.

For many years, this went on until the former Commissioner of Police in Lagos

State, now a retired Assistant Inspector General of Police (AIG), Hakeem Odumosu, on assumption of office, met with the Nigerian military, which also had a large facility in the route and they decided to work as a team to deal with the criminals and make the route safe for both Lagos residents and visitors to the country.

The decision was necessary because it is the only route that links Benin Republic, Ghana, Togo and other Francophone countries that frequently come into Lagos to carry out business transactions.

CP Odumosu then decided to change some positions by appointing a gallant operational officer, Smith Olanrewaju, a Chief Superintendent of Police (CSP), to be the Divisional Police Officer (DPO), Onireke Division, a station very close to Barracks Bus-Stop, along

the Mile Two Expressway.

Having in mind the huge security task along the route and what to do to get tangible results the DPO, CSP Olanrewaju chose one of the most active officers, Inspector Amos Augustine, to be the Station Officer (S/O), Onireke Division.

Now, the job began before the end of 2021, and no fewer than 26 armed robbers were nabbed along the route while attacking road users at various black spots.

In one of the raids, the police arrested five suspects who were robbing a businessman and recovered one English-made pump action from the suspects. The suspects were then taken to the State Criminal Investigation Department (SCID), Panti, Yaba, where they were later charged to court and remanded at the Kirikiri Maximum prison to date.

How jealous lover allegedly paid N100k to murder corps member

One of the suspects arrested by the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Police Command, has revealed how he was paid N100,000 to participate in the gruesome murder of Stephanie Terungwa, a female member of the National Youths Service Corps (NYSC), who was found dead days after she went missing.

Terungwa and her one-year-old son were last seen in the Lokogoma area of the nation's capital on April 14, 2022.

News of her death had sent a wave of shock across the country, with the NYSC confirming that her corpse was found in the Maitama area of Abuja.

In a statement, Eddy Megwa, NYSC's Director, Press and Public Relations, gave a chilling account of how Stephanie's body was found dressed in NYSC Khaki trousers.

"The corpse was found

wearing the NYSC khaki trouser with the face defaced beyond recognition," Megwa said.

Weeks after the tragic incident, the police announced that three suspects had been arrested.

The suspects were Jenifer Tsembe, a 26 year-old female, Monday Simon (aka Black), a 36 year-old male and Solomon Abu, a male of about 35 years of age; all residents of Oguta Lake Street, Maitama area of the FCT.

The police had said the trio voluntarily stated their involvement in the perpetration of the dastardly act.

Giving an update on the incident, CP Sunday Babaji, FCT Police Commissioner, said discrete investigation revealed that the deceased resided in City Homes Estate, Lokogoma, with one Edward Achadu.

He said it was discovered that she left home with her

one year and five months-old son and never returned home.

Babaji said: "A day later, the son was recovered at Holy Trinity Catholic Church, upon a call placed through to one of the paternal relatives.

"Discrete and painstaking investigations by Tactical and Intelligence assets of the Command attached to the Homicide Section of the State Criminal Investigations Department led to the arrest of three suspects."

He said that the suspects criminally conspired and murdered the victim to separate her from Edward Achadu, so as to pave way for the female suspect, an estranged lover of Edward, Jenifer to have him to herself.

The female suspect told newsmen that the deceased only came to her house to collect a phone the day she was found dead and denied any involvement in the act.

Protests rock Abuja over FCT tenure elongation

● *One allegedly killed in Giri*

● *It signals danger ahead of 2023, PDP tells EU*

By **TUNDE JOSHUA, ABUJA**

As expected, the capital city of Abuja and some parts of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) under control of the six area councils of Bwari, Kwali, Abaji, Gwagwalada, Kuje and the Abuja Municipal Council (AMAC) witnessed protests over court orders of one year tenure elongation for chairmen and councillors whose terms in office should have expired on Friday, May 20, 2022.

The FCT Minister, Malam Mohammed Bello on Thursday suspended the planned inauguration of the six area council officials following a judgment by the FCT High Court which extended the tenure of the chairmen and councillors from three to four years in line with the provisions of the recently signed Electoral Act of 2022.

As early as 7.00 am Friday, protesters who are mainly Abuja indigenes and supporters of the various council chairmen elect and their parties on Friday took to the streets of Abuja to protest the suspension of the swearing-in ceremony.

All entrances to the Federal Capital Development Area (FCDA) and the office of the FCT minister were blocked by protesters preventing workers, traders around the premises and even security personnel from entering or leaving the offices.

The peaceful protesters stormed the FCDA secretariat chanting solidarity songs, calling the FCT minister to do the needful by ignoring the court order and swear in the elected council officials.

The protesters were armed with placards bearing various inscriptions such as "You can't stop the inauguration of our chairmen", "We won't allow you to destroy democracy", "FCT Minister, we know you obey the law swear in as enshrined in the constitution," "You were sworn in with the old electoral act," the new Chairmen should be sworn in with the new electoral act", etc.

Roads leading to the Gwagwalada Area council secretariat were blocked by human barricades while the protest was violent in Giri area in which one person reportedly died.

The protest was also violent in the Kuje area council but no life was lost.

The Trumpet gathered that the protesters were bitter with the APC administration over what was described as a plot to ostracise the oppositions from governance.

Mr Yakubu Adaji told our correspondent that "the APC knowing fully that AMAC which is the centre of the Federal Government seat has been taken away from them by the PDP, they want to retain power through the back door with the purchased judgement.

"Looking at the amount of revenue being generated by AMAC, the APC did not want to let go of the area council.

"They know fully that one-year elongation will not affect area councils like Kuje, Bwari and Abaji where the same persons in power were asked to continue in office but how do you explain AMAC where power has changed hands"

A social crusader, Ahmed Adamu said "without playing politics with the issue, we are saying the extension is uncalled for, unjust and capable of putting the country up in flames".

Both the FCT minister, Mohammed and the Minister of State, Ramatu Tijani are out of the country as the protesters insisted they be addressed by one of them as well



FCT Minister, Malam Mohammed Bello

as ensure that their demands are met.

The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) had on Thursday raised the alarm that a chaotic situation is imminent in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) should the ruling of an FCT High Court elongating the tenure of chairmen and councillors of the six area councils be allowed to subsist.

This is as the party condemned impunity under the All Progressives Congress (APC) administration while submitting that the party wants to foist anarchy if such undemocratic tenure extension be allowed.

The party's spokesman, Debo Ologunagba at a press conference Thursday evening said the PDP totally rejected the court ruling while insisting that the inauguration of elected officers at the six area councils must take place on Friday, May 20, 2022, as required by law.

The party alerted Nigerians and the International Community of the "very dangerous design by the All Progressives Congress (APC) in connivance with certain judicial officers to abridge our democratic system and foist anarchy in our country."

This he said was because of "a bizarre judgement" by Hon. Justice Ibrahim Mohammed of the High Court of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja, in suit No. FCT/HC/W/910/2022, wherein he attempted to extend by one year, the tenure of the out-going Chairmen and Councilors of FCT Area Councils, which expires tomorrow, Friday, May 20, 2022.

"The clear intent of this judgment, according to PDP "is to abridge our electoral process, overthrow the entire outcome of the FCT Area Council election held on Saturday, February 12, 2022, which was overwhelmingly won by candidates of the PDP, and halt the swearing-in of the newly elected Chairmen and Councilors and impose an undemocratic government in the FCT."

Rejecting the judgement in its entirety, the party said "this judgment cannot be executed as it is unconstitutional, illegal, baseless and devoid of any legal foundation and reasoning for implementation.

"This is because the four years' tenure provided for FCT Area Council Chairmen

and Councilors in the newly enacted Electoral Act 2022, upon which the judgement is based, cannot be made retroactive to apply to outgoing Chairmen and Councilors who were elected under the 2010 Electoral Act which provided for a three-year tenure commencing from the date of their swearing-in.

"Alarming, the intent of this judgement by Hon. Justice Ibrahim Mohammed is to make the law retroactive to illegally favour the outgoing Chairmen and Councilors who were sworn in for a three-year tenure under the 2010 Electoral Act, whose tenure, by the provision of that Act, ends on May 20, 2022.

"It is instructive to state that the Electoral Act 2022 has a commencement date of February 25, 2022. It is trite in law that laws become effective from their commencement date and cannot be retroactive in effect as being attempted by Hon. Justice Ibrahim Mohammed.

"It is even more worrisome that the FCT High Court presided over by Hon. Justice Ibrahim Mohammed would allow itself to be used to a point where it can give a judgment which the judge knows or ought to know is illegal as no law can be made retroactive."

PDP noted that the Court gave judgement in the case with a set of individuals as Claimants and the Minister of the FCT as the Sole Defendant, leaving out necessary parties, including the PDP, whose candidates won the majority of seats in the February 12, 2022 elections; the National Assembly that enacted the law, the Attorney General of the Federation, who has the responsibility of executing the law and of course the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) which conducted the elections.

The PDP said it is "persuaded to believe that the judgment is a deliberate attempt to subvert the democratic process without regard to the consequential crisis and restiveness such portend in the FCT."

The party argued that seamless transfer of power from one administration to another is the bedrock of democracy which the PDP is noted for having peacefully transferred power to the present APC-led government in 2015.

"The APC should know that any breakdown of law and order in the FCT on account of an attempt to muscle or abridge the right and the will of the people will be inconsistent with the fundamental principle of democracy, which is the peaceful transfer of power from one administration to another.

"Moreover, we hope this is not an attempt to lay a foundation to use the court to actualize a veiled third term agenda being rumoured. The APC should know that such will be firmly resisted by Nigerians."

The party, therefore, cautioned the outgoing Chairmen and Councilors whose tenure under the 2010 Electoral Act upon which they were sworn in will effectively come to an end by the effusion of time on Friday, May 20, 2022, to steer clear of the respective Area Council offices henceforth.

The PDP went ahead to call on the people of the FCT to get ready for the swearing-in of their new Chairmen and Councilors duly elected on February 12, 2022, as our Party takes firm legal steps to address the orchestrated attempt by the APC and Justice Ibrahim Mohammed to frustrate the will of the people.

Petitioning the Chief Justice of Nigeria (CJN), the party urged him to protect the integrity of the judiciary by immediately

calling Hon. Justice Ibrahim Mohammed to order, especially for violating the CJN's persistent admonitions to judges not to open themselves to political manipulations.

"The Hon. Justice Ibrahim Mohammed by this judgment has brought the institution of the Judiciary into disrepute. Our party will ensure that this illegal judgment is set aside as well as take firm steps against Justice Ibrahim Mohammed including referring his conduct which is unbecoming of a judicial officer to the National Judicial Council (NJC) for sanction so as to restore the confidence Nigerians have on the very respected institution of the Judiciary," said the PDP.

However, the FCT minister expressed displeasure with the judgement in a statement he issued on Thursday.

The statement read "as you are all aware, in March of 2019, we held the Area Council elections in the Federal Capital Territory, whereby Six Council Chairmen and Councilors were elected after a very competitive and rigorous process.

"These six Council Chairmen of the FCT were then inaugurated on the 20th of May 2019, under the 2010 Electoral Act. Based on that Act, the tenure of the Chairmen would end today and the new Chairmen, based on the elections held in February this year, would be sworn in on 20th May 2022.

"But a few days ago, we received communication of a judgment by a court in the Federal Capital Territory directing us to suspend the inauguration of the new Chairmen, based on the fact that the current Chairmen's tenure would end today, 19th May 2022.

"According to the judgment, based on the recently signed Electoral Act of 2022, which stipulates that the tenure of office of the Chairmen of the Area Councils in FCT would now be four years instead of three years, the existing Chairmen whose tenure was meant to expire or end today, have another one year to continue, based on the new law.

"So, as a law-abiding government, the FCT Administration has no option but to suspend the planned inauguration of the Six Area Council Chairmen of the Federal Capital Territory who were duly elected some weeks ago as a result of this injunction of the court.

"Also, as an administration that is very conscious of the need to abide by the rule of law, even though we are not satisfied with the judgment of the court, we have no option but to comply."

"The administration will comply, while also making efforts to vacate the judgment and if the need arises, to appeal the judgment, so that the correct position of the law will be determined by the legal processes.

"In the interim, therefore, we are very conscious of the fact that the stand of the court has raised a lot of concerns within certain sections of the Federal Capital Territory residents. I wish to appeal to everyone to be calm, be law-abiding and await the outcome of the legal processes.

"FCT is a creation of law. The FCT has always been known to be a place of unity, peace and good governance and populated by law-abiding residents. Please let us continue the way we are and await the court processes. At the end of the court processes, the clear direction of what needs to be done would be clearly stated and then as an administration, we will do the needful."

Panellists urge INEC to extend party primaries

By TUNDE JOSHUA, ABUJA

Supporting the demand by political parties for an extension of the timeline for primaries, a group of experts have urged the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to shift its position.

The electoral management body had refused to shift ground as INEC chairman, Prof. Mahmood Yakubu at various fora recently said any alteration to the schedule of activities will affect the timing for the conduct of the 2023 polls.

But on Friday, a panellist at a round table organised by the Abuja School of Political and Social Thought in Abuja advanced reasons why INEC must grant the request for extension.

They argued that it is expedient for INEC to heed the clarion call by parties to allow them to complete all processes that will lead to rancour-free primaries.

Director of the School of Political and Social Thought, Dr Sam Amadi pointed out confusion over the comprehensive list of party delegates due to the uncertainty of President Muhammadu Buhari signing the amendment to the Electoral Act 2022.

According to him, aside from the short frame of time given by INEC to political parties, the controversy about whether statutory delegates will vote during the primaries has left parties stranded.

He said parties are shifting the date of the primaries because they are not sure of what President Muhammadu Buhari will do before Saturday when the primaries are expected to start in earnest.

Amadi noted that extending the time for political parties will give them ample time to do the right thing which will go a long way to affect the outcome of the 2023 political process.

Another scholar, Professor Udent

Udent said "there is room to make sure that we get the primaries of the parties right because it is critical to the election process. Nigerians need clarity, consistency and enough procedure for real political participation. People need to be involved. INEC needs to provide that enabling environment."

Dr Kelechi Akubueze said that INEC as a regulator of the election process has the administrative powers to clarify issues relating to the election, especially where there is controversy.

Akubueze wants INEC to assume its role as regulator and not a facilitator, adding that "INEC should take the report of its monitoring officials seriously, INEC should not say our hands are tired when it has to do with the election. Any issue that arises and is not covered by the constitution or the Electoral Act, INEC should make administrative pronouncements." he said.



Dr Sam Amadi

Senator concedes seat to Gov Lalong



Prof. Nora Dadu'ut

Senator representing Plateau South senatorial district, Prof. Nora Dadu'ut, has conceded her senatorial seat to Governor Simon Lalong.

The university teacher turned politician confirmed to journalists on Friday in Jos that she had no intention of running for the second time in the Senate.

Prof Dadu'ut in a statement made available to Senate Correspondents in Abuja said she is leaving the seat for other I tested persons to contribute their own quota to the development of the southern senatorial district.

Dadu'ut, who said a term is enough for her, said that Gov. Lalong will replace her to continue the legislative business at the Red Chambers in 2023.

She said her support for the governor is expected as Lalong has always supported her throughout her political sojourn.

The senator on the occasion used

the opportunity to clear the air on the purported rift between her and the governor, describing such as a ploy by her detractors to unsettle political harmony in the senatorial district.

She explained that political detractors have always wanted her to fall out with her political godfather who has given her the opportunity to explore the National Assembly.

She said it will be unwise for her to snub her political mentor just to fulfil the selfish wishes of political enemies who do not like the face of Governor Lalong.

According to her: "Let me use this opportunity to clear the air on some ongoing rumours and unverified reports carried by some online and electronic media alleging that I am seeking re-election and have been denied the opportunity by some major political actors in the State and that I was at-

tacked and threatened to back down from the race of the Senatorial seat.

"I Senator Nora Dadu'ut want to emphatically stress that I have never contemplated seeking re-election at any point in time, nor endeavoured to procure a nomination/Interest form for the Plateau South Senatorial District race.

"Secondly, I have never informed anyone that my life was threatened because of the Senatorial seat I currently occupy.

"I want to use this medium to say that no rift whatsoever exists between me and the Governor.

"Governor Lalong has been very supportive and I do appreciate all his support thus far.

"Any rumour that I have been threatened by Lalong is baseless, false and a mere blackmail which should be disregarded", she said

Buratai storms Bauchi for Amaechi

Despite being in the presidential race of the All Progressives Congress (APC), former Chief of Army Staff, Lt.- Gen Tukur Buratai, is on the campaign train of the immediate past Transportation Minister Chibuike Rotimi Amaechi.

Buratai was in Bauchi on Thursday to woo APC delegates for Amaechi.

The former Army boss who endorsed the presidential aspiration of the former Minister at a parley with Bauchi APC delegates stated that his loyalty and love for Nigeria and humanity is unmatched.

Buratai who is currently Nigeria's Ambassador to the Republic of Benin was among the dignitaries that accompanied the Presidential hopeful, Chibuike Amaechi to solicit delegates' support in Bauchi ahead of the party's primaries.

Buratai stated that he was spurred to give his support to Amaechi due to his outstanding profile and vast experience in governance.

He said, "the profile of Rt Hon. Chibuike Rotimi Amaechi is quite intimidating. He has proven to be a

sound administrator, a versatile leader, a good strategist and a politician par excellence", Buratai said.

The former Army chief who noted that Amaechi has shown good qualities in all areas he had worked, described him as first among equals during his tenure as Chairman of the Nigeria Governors' Forum.

He also commended the presidential aspirant for the dexterity and the quality of campaign he exhibited during the period President Buhari was contesting for the number one political seat in the country.

"He did that diligently with all his determination, loyalty and of course with love for Nigeria and love for humanity irrespective of what religion you belong to. This is quite commendable, that's why he's here today to solicit for your votes", Ambassador Buratai said.

Addressing the delegates, Amaechi said he is the only aspirant in the party with impressive records that would defeat the opposition party.

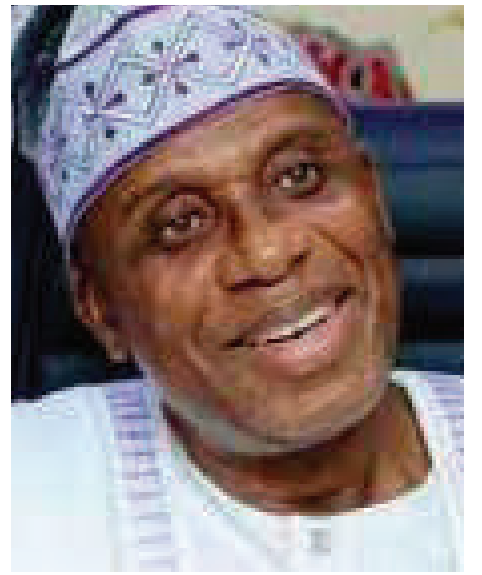
While urging the delegates to vote



Buratai

for him for the overall benefit of all Nigerians, the presidential hopeful said he has been in public office for 24 years as a speaker, Governor and minister.

"The footprint is there. There's a railway construction going on from Port Harcourt to Maiduguri. It includes Bauchi, and it's called the Port Harcourt-



Amaechi

Maiduguri railway. If you vote for me, that project will be completed and it will create employment", he promised.

"So vote for me, make me the candidate of the party. I doubt that the other aspirants have the capacity to defeat me. If you vote for me I will defeat PDP", Amaechi further boasted.



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3 x 2	37,413.09	40,219.07
4 x 2	49,884.02	53,625.42
5 x 2	62,355.15	67,031.71
6 x 2	76,142.50	81,853.18
7 x 2	87,297.21	93,844.50
7 x 3	166,172.00	179,229.37
7 x 4	197,125.00	211,909.37
8 x 2	99,768.24	107,250.85
9 x 2	112,183.69	120,597.47
9 x 3	168,358.90	180,985.39
10 x 3	187,065.45	201,095.35
14.5 x 2	260,395.00	279,924.62
8 x 4	199,536.48	214,501.71
9 x 4	224,478.54	241,314.43
10 x 4	299,302.72	321,752.57
14.5 x 4	520,790.19	559,849.45
7 x 5	218,243.02	234,629.74
8 x 5	299,304.72	321,752.57
8 x 6	359,165.65	386,103.08
9 x 5	404,061.37	434,365.97
10 x 5	448,957.08	482,628.86
11 x 5	493,852.78	530,891.74
9 x 6	484,873.39	521,239.16
10 x 6	538,748.49	579,154.53
11 x 6	592,622.16	637,068.82
HP 7.25 x 6	317,178.40	340,337.5
FP 14.5 x 6	560,500.00	602,537.50

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SIZE IN INCHES	AMOUNT (N)	TOTAL INCLUSIVE 7.5% VAT
1 x 1	5,664.59	6,089.43
1 x 2	11,294.45	12,141.54
2 x 2	22,588.91	24,283.09
3 x 2	33,987.48	36,622.04
4 x 2	45,177.83	48,566.17
5 x 2	56,472.29	60,707.71
6 x 2	67,975.12	73,073.25
6 x 3	101,962.78	109,609.99
6.5 x 3	110,459.64	118,744.11
7 x 2	79,304.29	85,252.11
7 x 3	128,456.43	138,090.67
7 x 4	158,608.73	170,504.38
7 x 5	198,260.25	213,129.77
8 x 2	90,633.42	97,430.92
8 x 3	135,950.22	146,146.48
8 x 4	181,266.93	194,841.95
8 x 5	226,238.74	254,477.52
8 x 6	271,900.48	292,008.02
9 x 2	101,962.78	109,609.99
9 x 3	152,944.01	164,414.81
9 x 4	203,925.29	219,219.69
9 x 5	305,373.04	328,276.02
9 x 6	367,065.92	394,595.86
10 x 3	169,651.36	182,375.21
10 x 4	226,258.00	243,176.28
10 x 5	354,037.54	380,590.16
10 x 6	424,845.04	456,708.42
11 x 5	389,441.887	418,650.01
11 x 6	447,303.49	480,851.24
14.5 X 2	197,128.09	211,912.70
14.5 X 4	394,256.19	423,825.40
14.5 X 5	472,286.06	507,707.52
HP7.25 X 6	269,191.05	289,380.38
FP 14.5 X 6	460,275.00	594,225.62

CORPORATE NOTICE

SIZE IN INCHES	AMOUNT (N)	TOTAL INCLUSIVE 7.5% VAT
1 x 1	4,587.47	4,931.53
1 x 2	9,174.94	9,863.07
2 x 2	18,349.89	19,716.64
3 x 2	27,524.84	29,589.20
4 x 2	36,700.09	39,452.60
5 x 2	45,866.19	49,315.34
6 x 2	55,049.68	59,178.41
6 x 3	54,074.55	61,200.90
6.5 x 3	89,455.78	96,164.94
7 x 2	64,224.63	69,041.48
7 x 3	96,336.94	103,562.21
7 x 4	145,965.10	156,912.48
7 x 5	182,500.19	196,187.71
8 x 2	73,399.58	78,904.54
8 x 3	125,871.78	134,674.05
8 x 4	167,043.40	179,022.80
8 x 5	208,805.79	224,469.23
8 x 6	250,284.32	269,911.09
9 x 2	93,773.60	100,872.44
9 x 3	141,108.54	151,691.68
9 x 4	187,921.52	202,015.71
9 x 5	281,288.07	303,022.10
9 x 6	337,805.68	363,141.11
10 x 3	156,602.81	168,348.02
10 x 4	208,808.58	224,469.23
10 x 5	325,815.11	349,966.25
10 x 6	390,978.13	420,320.48
11 x 5	358,396.62	385,276.37
11 x 6	412,916.45	443,885.19
14.5 x 2	151,178.45	162,516.84
14.5 x 4	362,827.71	390,039.79
HP7.25 X 6	246,131.63	264,591.50
FP14.5 X 5	423,373.39	455,126.39
Double Spread Half Page	832,371.68	894,805.68
Double Spread Full Page	1,334,669.15	1,434,769.344

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SIZE IN INCHES	AMOUNT (N)	TOTAL INCLUSIVE 7.5% VAT
1 x 1	3,786.98	4,071.00
1 x 2	7,573.97	8,142.02
2 x 2	15,147.94	16,284.03
3 x 2	22,721.91	24,426.05
4 x 2	30,295.53	32,657.70
5 x 2	37,863.00	40,710.09
6 x 2	45,443.82	48,852.10
7 x 2	53,017.79	56,993.61
8 x 2	60,591.76	65,136.14
9 x 2	80,454.83	86,488.95
10 x 2	86,147.92	92,609.02
14.5 x 2	124,915.92	134,284.61
5 x 3	56,804.77	61,065.13
6 x 3	68,170.86	73,283.67
7 x 3	79,526.68	85,491.18
8 x 3	103,375.58	111,130.80
6 x 4	100,634.10	110,944.41
7 x 4	120,404.56	129,434.90
8 x 4	137,692.17	148,019.082
10 x 4	172,301.37	185,224.22
14.5 x 3	187,057.43	201,086.73
14.5 x 4	249,838.03	268,575.88
7 x 5	141,001.98	161,793.93
8 x 5	172,116.65	185,025.40
9 x 6	278,649.91	299,548.66
11 x 5	295,636.20	317,808.91
11 x 6	340,573.10	340,466.08
HP7.25 X 6	218,226.87	234,593.89
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Earpiece Back Page 3x2	628,187.50	675,301.56
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Wrap around 1 Front Strip 1 Back Strip 4 Full Page Pull Out	25,650,000.00	27,573,750.00
4x6 Front Page	5,187,000.00	5,576,025.00
6x6 Front Page	6,982,500.00	7,506,187.50
7x6 Front Page	9,975,000.00	10,723,220.00
10x6 Front Page	14,250,000.00	15,131,875.00
FP (Strip) 2x6	641,891.25	690,033.09
BP (Strip) 2x6	625,452.64	670,319.08
Back Page 10x6	5,320,000.00	5,782,750.00
ROP 2x12	771,400.00	829,255.00
ROP (Strip) 2x6 Colour	266,000.00	285,950.00
ROP (Strip) 2.6 (B/W)	717,000.00	771,000.00
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Splendour and Majesty of Olowu of Owu Kuta Kingdom

By GABRIEL OMONHINMIN

Afin-Palace of Olowu Kuta is located in Aiyedire Local Government in Osun State, Nigeria, with a serene and expansive structure that bears adequate testimony to the residence and palace of a first-class African king.

Kuta, established by direct descendants of Owu and is an ancient town in Osun State. Other Owu descendants are today scattered across Yorubaland in the South-West Region of Nigeria and other towns around the world. Kuta-Owu is the second Owu settlement that was established in ancient times, long before the war that separated all the Owu people from their then headquarters known as the Orile-Owu. From the above fact, Kuta-Owu had long been in existence before the war that tore the former Owu Kingdom apart.

A first time visitor to this palace will be amazed at the level of activities in the place, and the professional manner each visitor is quickly attended to in a jiffy by the large retinue of the palace staff.

Visitors and business associates of the king, who visit from almost all the nook and crannies of Nigeria, and every region of the world, mixed freely with the locals (indigenes), who are regular in the palace. Activities in the Palace are structured and guided as visitors are made comfortable to feel at home, before they are eventually ushered into the presence of the Olowu of Owu Kuta, who sits on his throne, radiating the splendour and majesty of the throne, as expected of a first-class African Oba-King. The structure at the palace of Aafin Olowu Kuta is such that every visitor and business associate is quickly screened politely and admirably by well-trained palace officials.

The ways and manner the Olowu of Owu Kuta conduct his businesses, is a clear attestation too, to the fact that Nigeria's royalty has come of age. The Olowu of Owu Kuta exhibits quick reflexes and shows a grasp of how he wants his day to go. All this, he does quietly, while sitting on his throne, dictating the directions of what he wants to be done, in a polite, civilized and admirable manner. His bottlers and cupbearers all wear broad smiles while taking orders from the throne of Kuta-Owu.

As Palace Watch quietly observed proceedings, it was gratifying to note that a functional palace that can be compared to any modern palaces of ancient Roman Emperors in the world, can also be found in present-day Nigeria.

Palace Watch on that day asked the Olowu Kuta this particular question. Did Your Majesty ever dream of becoming a king? Hear his response, "Being a blue-blood, it is the birthright of every prince to aspire to become a king and I am grateful to God, who has ordained me to be a king of my people today."

Why is Olowu Kuta so confident? What is his antecedent before ascending the throne? These and many other questions were the jig puzzles Palace Watch tried to unravel during his interaction with the amiable king, and



Oba (Dr.) Hammed Adekunle Makama Oyelude-(Tegbosun III)

present to our readers.

Oba (Dr.) Hammed Adekunle Makama Oyelude-(Tegbosun III), The Olowu of Owu Kuta Kingdom was born in 1964 in Kuta. His parents were the direct descendants of the founder of Owu-Kuta Kingdom. He ascended the throne of his forefathers on the 15th of September, 2012.

He is presently the Permanent Chairman of the Supreme Royal Council of all Owu Obas and Chiefs in Yorubaland. The expansive Owu Kingdom which cuts across many cities, towns and villages, is made up of 43 Kingdoms of Owu Obas. It consists of 17 First Class Royal Fathers known as Obas in Yorubaland and 113 Chiefs and Magajis of Kingdoms and Chiefdoms across the entire South West Nigeria towns of Osun, Oyo, Ogun, Lagos, Kwara and some countries in West Africa, such as the Republic of Benin, amongst other countries in the Diaspora.

Oyelude in his right, as a First Class Traditional Ruler, is automatically a member of the Osun State Council of Obas headed by His Imperial Majesty, the Ooni of Ife, Oba Babatunde Enitan Ogunwusi. Oyelude is urban, educated and a highly detribalized Nigerian and traditional ruler. He is regarded as a pro-establishment person. He makes no pretence about his love for a one united and indivisible Nigeria. As far as he is concerned, he talks, breathes and works for Nigeria as a patriot. He is also very comfortable with people and traditional rulers from all parts of Nigeria. Very many of his brotherly traditional rulers are always trooping into his palace, paying courtesy visits. A palace Chief, Ayobami Oluwasukomi, was quick to tell Trumpet Newspaper about the traditional ruler's personal qualities that have endeared him to

the people of his kingdom.

"Our Kabiyesi is a man of immense integrity, who is able to adapt and integrate ideas effectively in solving business and communal problems. Unlike most kings like him, he has the ability to work as a team player, in the process exhibiting effective leadership qualities.

Surprisingly, he is very good at working under pressure, no matter the time of the day. He is an achievement-driven professional, who is also a very fast and good learner of new and strange ideas.

If you must know why our Kabiyesi is so well-loved by all, Chief Oluwasukomi continued, "It is simple. For a man like him who happened to achieve so much at a tender age, before ascending the throne, there would have been these tendencies to want to railroad roughshod over lesser mortals. But, that is not our Kabiyesi. Instead, his humility is disarming.

"He demonstrates daily that true royalty is not living in vain pomp, but in great virtue adorned with humility. In everything he does, he is moderate and modest. Especially while addressing the communities in the Kingdom. His speeches are usually measured. But his actions are irrepressible. Any surprise, that within a short period of ascending the throne, he has helped in the transformation of our hitherto rural town of Owu-Kuta.

"Kabiyesi has this uncanny ability and capacity to harness the assistance of friends and well-wishers, alongside an array of diplomats he has made over the years. They have all, in no small measure, assisted him in bringing about the developments, you know, see all over the town today. He has not only transformed Owu-Kuta, but

he has also succeeded in making this town one of the tourist destinations in Osun State. An admirable quality he has exhibited since he ascended the throne is his ability to woo friends and foes and make them work with him to develop our town. His tireless effort at persuading and winning over known detractors is known to everyone that has encountered him on the throne. These are qualities that are very rare in modern-day Kings. He is a special gift; we will continue to thank God for endearing him with such qualities.

"The virtues of his kingly discipline are not taught in any University. In the day to day running of this kingdom and his people, Kabiyesi exhibits forthrightness and honesty, as he is just and fair to all. Before his ascension to the throne, all Owu-Kuta home and abroad, prayed to God to give us a king, who will be compassionate, just and fair to our people, these prayers we are very proud to say today, our Kabiyesi possess. So we can thank God enough for giving us a good king.

"You know what? To be perfectly just as a king is an attribute of a divine nature. And to be just is the best ability a king must-have. This is another glory we will continue to thank God over."

The 58 years old Oba Oyelude is married and blessed with adorable children. He attended African Church Primary School, Kuta for his elementary education. He again attended African Church Secondary Modern School, Kuta/Ileogbo. He holds a BSc degree in Civil Engineering. He is one of the Structural Designs and Development experts in integrated Structural Systems we have around here.

As a result of his sound educational background, even as a First Class King, he occasionally acts as a facilitator in various Seminars and Conferences organized by different professional bodies in and outside Nigeria.

In the year 2004, Oba Oyelude initiated a national advocacy programme in support of the Nigerian Army and he has since then remained at the forefront of the people promoting professionalism in the Nigerian Military, especially the Nigerian Army.

Because of Kabiyesi's consistent advocacy for a good environment, he has been a regular guest on many radio and television programmes and Talk Shows on Environmental and Construction related issues and youth empowerment. Some of his research works include Stress Management – An Exhaustive Training Manual for Reduction and Management of individual and Corporate Stress.

Another research paper by the traditional ruler, which is currently in use, is the paper titled, "Business Communication, Manpower Development, Work Environment, Images and Perception Management.

His business interest is global, especially in Aviation, Real Estate and Property Development. Also Specialized in Products, Human and Material Resources Development and Management, while his business concerns are spread across some foreign and African countries

How insecurity can be overcome, by Obasanjo

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

Former President Olusegun Obasanjo has said insecurity can be overcome in Nigeria within two years if the leaders are serious.

Obasanjo said this on Thursday while adding that Nigeria's inability to meet its security challenges was a choice by the country's leaders and not by God's design.

He said the country was going through a more difficult time than any other period in its political history.

According to him, he has no apology for having a "mad passion" for Nigeria, "because I have no other country I can call my own and I have no other country I can go to and say, yes, I have come to live here."

Recall that recently the Kaduna State Commissioner for Internal Security and Home Affairs, Samuel Aruwan, stated that between January and March this year, a total of 360 people were killed by terrorist groups in the state, while 1,389 others were abducted.

Kaduna State Governor, Malam Nasir El-Rufai, in his assessment, said the epicentre of insecurity in Nigeria had moved from the northeast to the northwest.

He added that what is currently happening in his northwest geopolitical zone was far more serious and potentially more dangerous than what happened in the northeast.

The governor said Kaduna State was becoming a haven for terrorists because they saw its forests as a comfortable fortress for their activities.

Obasanjo reacted to the security challenges in the country at his penthouse residence within the Olusegun Obasanjo Presidential Library (OOP) in Abeokuta, the Ogun State capital, when he played host to a presidential aspirant on the platform of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Mohammed Hayatu-Deen.

The former president said Nigeria required a leader, who had passion, innovation, and vision for Nigeria, someone who possessed adequate knowledge of the challenges faced by the country.

The former president insisted Nigeria could overcome its security challenges within two years with the right leader willing to make tough decisions. He urged Nigerians to brace up and be ready to make sacrifices to put the country back on the right path.

Obasanjo explained, "Some people say the human memories are short, maybe



Obasanjo

they are right, because if human memories are not short, some of the mistakes that we are making, we will not be making them.

"Yes, we have a record, which some people may find a little bit not what they want to hear, but whatever people want to hear, I believe, like you (Hayatu-Deen) have rightly said, this period is not like any other period in the history of Nigeria and you used two words, decomposing and dissolving. I can't find any better words to describe the situation we have found ourselves.

"It is an agonising situation for you, obviously,

and also for me. I want to emphasise the point that the Nigerian situation, bad as it is, will only be put right by Nigerians at the forefront of our situation. So, Nigerians have to brace themselves up to do what needs to be done to put Nigeria back on the right path.

"And you talk about security and people ask me about it and I say I know that we can put all insecurity in Nigeria behind us within a space of two years. That we have not done or that we are still in the situation we are in is a choice that has been made by our leaders, not the way God wants us to be.

"As you said, I couldn't agree with you more, that no individual in Nigeria, no political party, no smuggled person can make a critical mass that will resolve the situation that we are in today. It has to be an all Nigerian hands on deck. No section of the Nigerian community should be left out."

Earlier at the PDP secretariat in Ogun State, Hayatu-Deen, a former Managing Director of FSB International Bank, declared that Nigeria was "decomposing and dissolving very fast". But he said he had the capacity, experience, and knowledge to turn things around for the country.

The aspirant, who said he had been to several parts of Nigeria, including the Southwest, described himself as a passionate and complete Nigerian.

According to Hayatu-Deen, "My blood is Nigerian blood. I had seen Nigeria with the eyes of a Nigerian and not from the perspective of a tribal man. I am prepared to govern Nigeria from the first day of the inauguration on May 29, 2023.

"We are suffering from self-inflicted wounds. As an economist, I know how to fix the economy. I will provide social security, I will provide energy security, I will deal with the issue of national insecurity."

NPF restates commitment to comply with extant laws

■ Professionals laud IGP for upholding NIPR Act, PR tenets

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

The Nigeria Police Force (NPF) led by the Inspector General of Police, IGP Usman Alkali Baba, has restated its commitment to comply with the laws governing the country.

According to a statement on Thursday by the Force Public Relations Officer, CSP Olumuyiwa Adejobi, the IGP gave the assurance following a commendation from Public Relations professionals.

He reiterated his policy of putting round pegs in round holes, a basis, he said gives resounding success in every sphere of the police, especially in specialized sections such as Accounts, Medical, Air-wing, Engineering, and ICT, among others.

The Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR), had in a letter dated April 27, 2022, circulated by the National President and Chairman of the Council that was received from its Abuja Chapter and signed by the Chairman, Mrs Maryam Sanusi, lauded the IGP for his compliance with the provisions of the NIPR Act, CAP N114, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004, that only qualified and certified members of the Institute shall be appointed spokespersons of organizations in both private and public sectors.

NIPR specifically commended the IGP for the re-appointment of the former Force Public Relations Officer, CP Frank Mba, on the assumption of duty as the 21st Indigenous IGP, and the appointment of his successor, CSP Olumuyiwa Adejobi, who are both members of the NIPR and the International Public Relations Association (IPRA), in line with the provisions of the NIPR Act.

The PR professionals also hailed the IGP for the establishment of the Nigeria Police Public Relations School, which will soon be commissioned.

"His zeal towards public relations development in the Police and nationwide cannot be overemphasized," the letter stated.

IGP Baba equally received the assurances and readiness of the NIPR to partner with, and offer professional assistance, where necessary, to the Force Public Relations Officer towards achieving the set organizational goals of the Force.

The professional body decried the gross violation of its Act by some Institutions and Agencies that appoint public relations officers that are not NIPR certified.

Army clears IPOB/ESN den in Imo, recovers weapons

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

The Nigeria Army said it has cleared an enclave of the outlawed Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) and its armed group, Eastern Security Network (ESN). Adding that cache of weapons belonging to the group were captured by troops.

This is disclosed by the Army's Director of Public Relations, Brig-Gen Onyema Nwachukwu, on Thursday, adding that firearms and ammunition were recovered during troops' operations to

clear separatists' hideouts in the general area of Amaifeke - Akkatta road.

Gen Nwachukwu, who said the troops engaged in a fierce gun duel with members of the group, also assured the people and residents of the southeast that peace would be restored to the region.

He said, "Troops of 34 Brigade, Nigerian Army (NA) have captured a cache of arms and ammunition belonging to elements of the dissident group, Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) and its armed affiliate, Eastern Security Network (ESN),

after a gun battle at Amaifeke-Akkatta Road in Orlu Local Government Area of Imo state.

"The firearms and ammunition were recovered during troops' operations to clear separatists' hideouts in the general area of Amaifeke - Akkatta road.

"Troops uncovered the weapons concealed in a black Toyota Camry, after they successfully surmounted ambushes staged by members of the outlawed dissident group, who, having been overpowered by the gallant troops, abandoned

their vehicle and weapons in the heat of the combat and fled the scene.

"After a thorough search, the troops recovered ten Pump Action Shotguns, seven locally fabricated guns, one locally made Revolver Pistol, eighty Live Cartridges, one Baofeng Radio and substance suspected to be gun powder. Others include Sachet of Improvised Explosive Device (IED) and a Toyota Camry Saloon car.

"The Nigerian Army commends members of the public for their continued

support to the military and security agencies, as they protect the citizens from atrocious activities of the outlawed dissident groups, who in defiance of law and good order have annihilated innocent Ndigbo and other Nigerians, in their enforcement of an illegal sit at home order, foisted on the good people of the South East.

"The NA urges all to continue to provide timely and credible information in support of ongoing operations to restore peace and security in the South East and other troubled parts of the country."

Suspected notorious kidnappers, criminals arrested in Kaduna, others

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

Men of the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) have arrested about 31 notorious criminals and kidnappers who have been terrorizing, killing, robbing, kidnapping and raping their victims in Kaduna, Borno and Adamawa States.

A statement by the Force Public Relations Officer, CSP Olumuyiwa Adejobi, said two of the suspects identified as Aminu Lawal (aka Kano), and Murtala Dawu (aka Mugala) who were

■ **Police recover 61 Firearms, 376 Ammunition, others**

working in synergy with the kidnap kingpin known as Yellow Ashana, confessed to have killed two police officers and a vigilante member in 2021 as well as responsible over the abduction of Greenfield students.

"The Force Intelligence Bureau Special Tactical Squad (FIB-ST) operatives following directives from the Inspector-General of Police, IGP Usman Alkali Baba, psc(+), NPM, fdc, to clampdown on the perpetrators of crimes and criminality, as well as cutting

off their supply of arms, have successfully effected the arrest of 31 suspects connected with major violent crimes including Kidnapping, Culpable Homicide, Rape, Unlawful Possession of Firearms etc.

"The FIB-ST equally recovered a total of 61 firearms including 41 AK rifles, 8 Type 06 rifles, 4 Light Assault Rifles (LAR), 4 pump action guns, 2 locally made firearms, 1 G3 rifle, 1 dane gun, 376 rounds of live ammunition of different calibres,

and a cash sum of two million Naira, from the suspects in the course of investigations.

"Prominent among the cases include a case of kidnapping where the duo of Aminu Lawal (aka Kano), and Murtala Dawu (aka Mugala), both working in synergy with the kidnap kingpin known as Yellow Ashana, confessed to the kidnap and murder of two police officers and one vigilante in 2021. They equally confessed to the kidnap of students from the Greenfield

University in Kaduna State, the mindless murder of five victims before the payment of ransom, and the eventual release of the others.

"Intelligence shows that their area of operations includes Dan Hunu, Kekebi, Dan Busha Rido, Maraban Rido, and Kumi Sata, all in Kaduna State. FIB-ST operatives caught up with them in March 2022, after being on their trail upon the mention of their names in connection to the kidnapping of Bethel Baptist School students in 2021," the statement said.

Spectators' unruly behaviour and FIFA sanction

Following spectators' unruly behaviour at the World Cup qualifying play-offs on March 29, 2022, the world football governing body, FIFA fined Nigeria the sum of N64 million (150,000 Swiss francs). Other countries were also fined by FIFA. Senegal, N75 million (175 Swiss francs) for fan unsportsmanship behaviour. The Senegalese used shining laser pointers to blur the sight of Egypt's pharaohs' star, Mohamed Salah, in the decisive penalty shootout for their Qatar 2022 World Cup qualifier in Dakar. FIFA also imposed fines of 125,000 Swiss francs (\$128,000) on Congo, and 100,000 Swiss francs (\$103,000) on Lebanon. Chile and Colombia were also fined 95,000 Swiss francs (\$98,000) and 55,000 Swiss francs (\$56,500), respectively. Most of the countries' stadia, including Nigeria's MKO Abiola Stadium, Abuja, would be closed to fans as punishment.

Crowd invasion of fields of play is a common phenomenon even when teams win their matches. FIFA has consistently kicked against this life threatening behaviour whether positively or negatively engaged in by the host fans. Sports is a passionate activity that arouses emotions in all stakeholders. The case of Nigeria is peculiar since it was alleged that a CAF doping physician/official from Zambia, Dr. Joseph Kabungo, died from suspected cardiac arrest as an aftermath of the crowd invasion. There are many lessons the NFF and Ministry of Sports must take home from this incident that has brought negative publicity to Nigeria.

It was noteworthy that the NFF accorded the Black Stars of Ghana a five-star treatment on arrival in Nigeria. Arsenal FC fans were even on ground to welcome their star player – the Captain the Ghana's team, Thomas Partey, who incidentally scored the goal

that stopped Nigeria from qualifying for the World Cup. This is praiseworthy especially against the backdrop of the near inhuman treatment given to the Nigerian team at the Accra Airport and Press Conference. Nigeria, irrespective of the result of that game, ought to lodge a formal complaint to the authorities in Ghana and demand a formal apology from the Ghanaian Football Federation.

The common saying is that you cannot offer what you do not have. For a very long time the Abuja stadium has been hosting teams with near empty stands. To mobilise crowd for this crucial match, offices were closed before the normal official time. The MKO

Abiola Stadium gates were thrown open and made ticket free. This gave room for all sort of characters – including hoodlums – who lack the culture of sportsmanship to access the stadium. Unfortunately, the Nigerian team played a draw that was not good enough to secure us a World Cup ticket. The anger of fans was vented on the newly rehabilitated MKO Abiola National Stadium facilities.

The time has come for the NFF to begin to encourage fans' participation in our football matches at the local level. The first step towards achieving this is to bring back TV live coverage of the Nigerian Professional Football League. Things like raffle draws, lotteries, and entertainment at sport venues before, at half time and after the matches should be encouraged. Athletes should be well-remunerated so that they will be the stars that they are. There is also need to look at the management of our various stadia, especially their security architecture. Some persons may have failed in their job at the MKO Abiola Stadium, Abuja. The NFF also failed to set up an investigative committee to look into the incident immediately it occurred. This should be done even after the FIFA's fine.

Next time pupils, undergraduates and civil servants with valid identity cards and uniforms should be the ones to enjoy the largesse of a ticket free entrance into our stadia. There is no good in cheating to win in sports. It is shameful that Senegal allowed fans to dent a victory that would have otherwise been well-deserved. That FIFA has fined her federation is a subtle acknowledgement that Senegal cheated her way to the World Cup. We commensurate with Zambia and the family of the late Dr. Joseph Kabungo. Our warm congratulations to teams Ghana, Senegal and all the other African teams. We hope they will be worthy representatives of Africa at the Qatar tournament.



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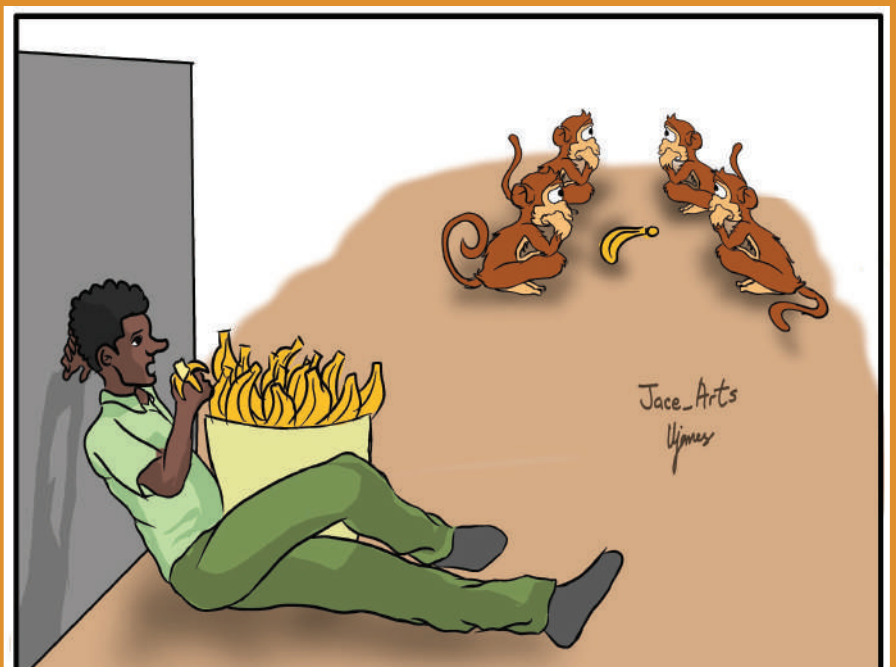
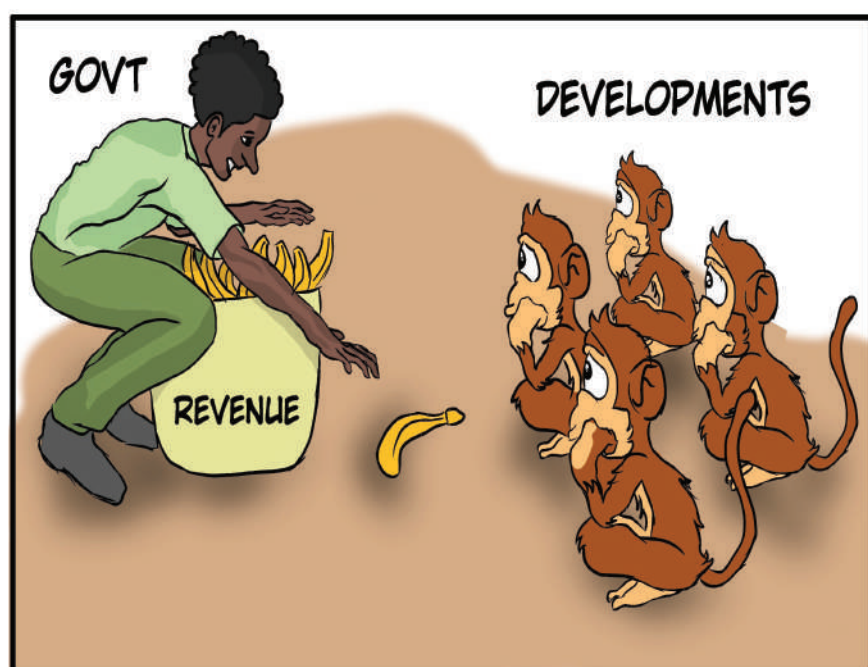
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Jace_Arts
Ujmas

Replacing the old life, embracing the new life

The Psalmist writes, "Thou who hast made me see many sore troubles wilt revive me again; from depths of the earth thou wilt bring me up again Thou wilt increase my honour and comfort me again" (Psalm 71:20-21). This is an attestation to the power of God to save and restore both body and soul of man. It speaks of the restitution of the body and the soul's liberation from Sheol. It affirms the ultimate immortality of the body, soul, and spirit; so long as it is with God. In 2 Peter 3:11-13 we read, "Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of persons ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming day of God, because of which the heavens will be kindled and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire! But according to his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells."

There is always the 'old' and the 'new'. Today may be in the present, but it will soon pass away to become the 'old' of tomorrow. For human beings, the 'old' will occupy a space those in today will call yesterday, and therefore 'old'. The 'new', we always hope, will be better and an improvement of the 'old'. Therefore, we aspire to achieve the 'new'. This progression is what we are taught in Deuteronomy 6:20-25. "And the Lord commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the Lord our God, for our good always, that he might preserve us alive,

as it is at this day." The new life must be one that rests on God, His statutes, and on our "fear of Him."

Nevertheless, the Christian's option between the old and new life must be guided by Christ who is the divide. Christ Jesus bestrides the two. The old life is one of death, but the new life is one of being alive; one of living. Hence Paul writes: "Our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed that henceforth we should not serve sin" (Romans 6:6). Death is sustained by sin. Life is supported by righteousness in Christ. "But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the return you get is sanctification and its end, eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:22-23)

Believers should therefore choose between Christ and the world. This is a choice between death, the old way; or choosing life, the new way. "Likewise, my brethren, you have died to the law through the body of Christ, so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead in order that we may bear fruit for God. While we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death. But now, we are discharged from the law, dead to that which held us captive, so that we serve not under the old written code, but in the new life of



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the Spirit" (Romans 7:4-7). This implies that: (i) in Christ's body we are dead to the law; we are married to another body, (ii) It propels us to bring forth God's fruit, and (iii) It reminds us that the flesh brings forth sins and the wages of sin is death. (iv) In Christ, we are delivered from the law, sin, and death, and (v) Jesus Christ makes it possible for us to serve in the "newness of the Spirit."

In the Gospel of John (15:5-11), Jesus Christ Himself says: "If a man does not abide in me, he is cast forth as a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire and burned" (John 15:6). Only dead and dry woods are used for fire; living woods

are not engaged as firewood. For wood to be living; it is called a "plant" or "tree"; it must have roots and be in a space that has water. Jesus Christ is the "root" and "water" to which we must abide.

By 'abide' Christ is telling us to "remain", "continue", and "dwell" in Him (i.e. His person), His commandment, His ways, and His teachings. It is a command! We should remain in Him in order to live and be fruitful. If we do this, God will be glorified (v8); and we shall be His true disciple (v8); enjoy the full joy of Christ (v11), and benefit from His life laid down for us (vv13-14).

As believers, we should forgo the old life and its consequence of death. We should embrace the new life and its consequence of eternal life. "Blessed are those who washed their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates. Outside are the dogs and sorcerers and fornicators and murderers and idolaters and everyone who loves and practices falsehood" (Revelation 22:14-15; also read Galatians 5:16-26).

Be Blessed. Shalom!

•The Rev'd Dr Karo Ogbinaka, an Anglican priest of the Diocese of Lagos West, lectures at the Department of Philosophy, University of Lagos. He is a member of the editorial board of The Trumpet

How to stop generational curses, enjoy blessings

God created Adam and Eve perfect but from the day they sinned, imperfections came into their lives and the lives of their children and to all humans on earth from generation to generation. The truth is that from the understanding of the story of creation, physical death was not the initial intention of God for man but when Adam and Eve sinned, death came in. So, physical death for humans came as a result of sin because God pronounced a judgement against Adam and Eve after they sinned that they had to go back to the dust because they were formed from the dust. Sufferings, poverty, diseases and all the rest problems humans are being afflicted with today are the results of these imperfections from sin.

The word of God cannot fail and the consequences of the sins of the fathers and mothers are being visited on subsequent generations just as the blessings as a result of the obedience of fathers and mothers to the word of God are being transferred to the children too.

So, all humans were born with different categories of inherited curses like poverty, untimely deaths, barrenness, and loads of other problems but Christ has come to deliver us from all these curses and loads of problems.

So, spiritual and physical deaths as well as pains during child birth and over labouring before getting food and comfort were all part of the initial curses that came on Adam and Eve, and through the law of inheritance, these curses were passed to all humans on earth. Therefore, once a baby is born into this world, the chains of curses as well as bundles of blessings from the time of Adam and Eve according to the judgement of the Word of God will start to hover around the new born baby and wait for the right time to manifest.

We should also understand that the levels of blessings and curses on humans differ from person to person.

Some people inherited generational



Dr. Agbodo

blessings and get things done with ease while others with strong generational curses struggle and struggle before achieving any little thing.

In some cases, the people enjoying the generational blessings in an area of life may not necessarily be living a holy life according to the Bible.

Also, you may have heard some people pointing to people who are sinners yet are enjoying their lives with riches and wealth and even good health while others who are trying to live a holy life are struggling continuously, it is the factor of inherited blessings and curses according to the Word of God that is responsible. Fortunes and misfortunes of men today and mainly traced to ancestral factors, although some of the happenings around many destinies today are also traced to personal sins or obedience to the Word of God.

Please note that some curses and problems are heavier than others and that is why people need different levels of prayers to tackle their particular loads. However, anybody who is determined to be

free from all curses and problems can be free because that is why Jesus Christ was crucified and hung on a tree to deliver us from all curses of the law.

The Word of God has clearly stated that the curse on any sin committed is death because it is written that the wages of sin is death and that is why Adam and Eve had to die. In the same way, unless we depart from sin, the spirit of death will also chase us to establish the word of God, although the seed of death takes different shapes in form of curses and different problems until the final death and internment occurs.

Also, the strength of curses from sins differ. Some curses can take just one day prayers and fasting to break while some can take longer days of prayers and fasting to break even when you are already a Christian, but the good thing is that once you are in Christ and have received the Holy Spirit, all curses and problems will surely expire as you continue the journey of salvation in holiness, righteousness and in regular prayers.

However, apart from generational curses, also note that most of our problems stem from our personal sins because once you already know the commandments of God and disobey them, the spirit of death will start fighting to actualise the Word of God in that life. In fact, most humans have complicated their destinies through continuous sins and the only way out is repentance and forsaking the sins. Some people are accusing witches and wizards as responsible for their problems but they don't know that it is their sins that attracted the problems they may be passing through.

God will not excuse anybody for committing sin because God is just and fair to everyone.

In all, if only we can choose to accept the Lordship of Jesus Christ over us and change our ways from sin to holiness, God will cleanse us from all our past sins and generational curses with the blood of Jesus Christ and start a new and holy platform

for us to live our new life in Christ to be blessed and also pass generational blessings to our children. Salvation is so simple but you must make up your mind to depart from the high way of sin.

Furthermore, we also need to understand that what we need to do after repenting from our sins and asking God for forgiveness is to stay off committing sin in whatever guise and it will be well with us always.

If you commit even the sin of lying which many of us think is not as serious as idolatry, fornication, adultery and murder etc, you will still pay for it even when you repent because sin demotes.

Also note that every sin you commit delays your journey to your promised land because everybody actually has a God's promised destination and that is why God said in Jeremiah 29:11 that His thoughts for us are good and not evil and are to bring us to the expected end of good. Imagine, the sin of the children of Israel delayed them from entering the promised land at the right time.

So, the best thing to do is stay off sin totally and worship and serve God in holiness and in truth, and it will always be well with you. Always remember that your miracles are tucked in the total submission and obedience to the word of God and not in anybody.

A Pastor can pray for someone and God can honour the request of the Pastor by intervening in solving a problem, but the best gift you can give yourself in life is to love God and fellowship with Him personally, and depart from all kinds of sins, and once you practice this as a habit, you will grow from glory to glory. This is the secret of continuous progress without sorrow in life.

God bless us in Jesus name.

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Blasphemy: Perspectives of Christian, Islam and Traditional Religion

By GABRIEL OMONHINMIN, Culture and Religion Editor

Nigerians and non-Nigerians alike, were shocked when they watched the video clip of Deborah Yakubu Samuel, a 200 level student of the Shehu Shagari College of Education, Sokoto that went viral on social media. She was killed and her remains set ablaze, on Thursday, May 12, 2022, by her schoolmates over an allegation of blasphemy.

As the controversy surrounding Deborah's death rages, Trumpet Religious Desk decided to look at the pros and cons of blasphemy from the Christian, Islam and Traditional religions' perspectives. Although some alleged culprits in the gruesome murder of Deborah have been arraigned before a court in Sokoto, a Lagos based Human Rights Lawyer, Ebun-Olu Adegoruwa, in a press statement dated 16th May 2022 titled; "The Conspiracy in Sokoto" said, "for there to be genuine reconciliation in this matter of Deborah, the charge of Criminal Conspiracy and Inciting Public Disturbance as framed by the Sokoto State Government against hardened murderers is an insult to the sensibilities of the parents of the deceased, the people of Nigeria and God, who created Deborah.

"This crime took place in an enlightened environment in a higher institution, under the watch of security men, who were said to have been overpowered. It all started from a Whatsapp group, which has identified leaders. There are students who send messages and threats of death on that platform. Their phone numbers are registered with NIN identification. They belong to a class in the school so they are known individuals.

"Images of persons, who openly and boastfully confessed to partaking in the murder abound, with one displaying the match stick with which the deceased was set ablaze.

"The government of Sokoto State has by these charges shown itself complicit in this whole drama and it is most unfortunate, for a State that is headed by a lawyer, a former Speaker of the House of Representatives and who is aspiring to rule Nigeria as its President.

He stressed, "It is most uncharitable of His Excellency to have condoned this baseless charge. It is better to set the suspects free rather than claim to try them. The aftermath of this gruesome murder, the watery charges filed and the consenting attitude of those concerned have depressed me more than the act itself.

"Nigeria cannot work this way at all. I'm truly saddened by this development." He added.

Adegoruwa said, "I expected the Governor as the Visitor to that school to have visited the parents of the deceased, who trusted the authorities and sent their ward to school from Niger to Sokoto State, in furtherance of the mantra of a United Nigeria.

"If the impression we get with all these charges is that the State itself endorsed the murder of the deceased, then we are sowing the seeds of discord and fragmentation.

"The political ambition of Governor Aminu Tambuwal should not override the life of a citizen entrusted to his care but who was murdered in cold blood. It is better for His Excellency to resign now, rather than go down in history as the Governor under whose watch a citizen was murdered and the Governor could not enforce the laws of the land but rather aided and abetted its cover-up. It is Governor Tambuwal, who is actually on trial in this case", he concluded.

Professor Farooq Kperogi, who is saddened by the gruesome murder of Deborah, reacted on his Twitter handle while taking a wipe no the large number of Northern lawyers, who are representing the alleged murderers in the case, he writes, "That such a large number of highly credentialed, full-grown northern Nigerian Muslim adults in full control of their mental faculties (who repeat the mantra that "Islam is a religion

of peace," no less) would countenance, defend, justify, and even revel in the insensate slaughter of Deborah Samuel Yakubu because of "blasphemy" makes me question my entire existence."

Another Nigerian, Utaz Abu Jabir Abdullah Penabdul said, "Insulting our beloved Prophet, SAW, is A-No-Go-Area. Muslims and non-Muslims must be aware of this.

"However, Mob action against one that is guilty of blasphemy is not Islamic.

"If the door of mob action is generally opened in Islam then people will claim the lives of others at the slightest provocation. People could also be killed innocently. The ruler or the Judge or their representatives carry out the ruling once it's proven beyond reasonable doubt.

"As much as we stand by the rule that the ruler or the judge or their representatives are those to carry out the capital punishment for the one that insults or denigrates the personality of our beloved Prophet, SAW, we want the WHOLE WORLD to know that it is not a light matter to joke with. Why will anyone deem it normal to insult the Prophet, SAW? Of what benefit? Alas! Some non-Muslims are careless about this and it is a great matter in the sight of the Muslims and the Shariah. When we talk of tolerance, we should be circumspect about it.

"The intoxicating effect of liberalism coupled with the arrogance of an ignorant for what is sacred to us, the Muslims, are responsible for the blasphemy that some non-Muslims have taken as a past-time. We love the Prophet, SAW, more than ourselves.

He warned, "People must stop being insensitive to the sensitivity of others. DO NOT CONTEMPLATE INSULTING the Prophet. Allah prohibited us from insulting what others worship besides Him. This shows the world our standard. If everyone desists from insulting the Prophet, we won't be debating mob actions. Governments at all levels have to do something by strengthening and establishing existing Laws to deter people from insulting our beloved Prophet, SAW. I believe this type of action, when taken, will equally prevent mob actions".

In his reaction, a Traditional religious practitioner, Chief Shamsudeen Gbadamosi, said, "Just like Christianity and Islam, the traditional religion also frowns at blasphemy. This is the reason why children, who are not of age, people who are not properly schooled in traditional religion and traditional matters, are oftentimes, not admissible into the inner circle of traditional religion worship unless and only when they come of age. People who are flippant and have anger problems are never allowed to take leadership positions in traditional religious matters. As traditional religion worshippers, we are daily being confronted and insulted by some Christians and Muslim adherents.

"We are cursed and insulted and called names such as pagans, infidel and unbelievers by these groups of people. We have never attempted to pull down heaven because of these affronts. We ignore all these insults and move on with our worship. Some of them even go the extra mile of not only insulting our cherished and revered deities but also attempting to destroy them. All we do, in extreme moves like this, is to prevent them from carrying out their intentions. We take all these nonsensical acts because we want to maintain a harmonious relationship with other religions.

"This sad experience is the bitter pill of medicine some of these Christian and Muslim adherents administer on us, the traditional worshippers. Sadly, most of them can't take what they try to administer to other people, when it is their turn, to take these types of treatments.

"A classic case of how liberal and tolerance the traditional religion practitioner is, is a case, in the mid-50s in Lagos, when a man then, who called himself a Muslim cleric kept on insulting our



Deborah

religious practitioners in Mushin, Oshodi, Agege, Shomolu and Ebute Metta just to mention a few. He was daily insulting, denigrating our deities in the process. When his behaviour was becoming intolerable to some of our members, a representation was sent to advise him to stop. Instead of heeding to our advice, he became more aggressive like most Muslims and Christians today behave.

"He did not take us seriously, invariably he was killed. The Colonial Masters, thereafter, waded into the case. We did not have the type of cover-up, which is so obvious in most of the religious murders in the Northern part of Nigeria today. To cut a long story short, the Colonial Masters were able to arrest, prosecute and sentence to death all the people, who were involved in that man's killing, just because members of our sects co-operated with them. The Police officer who investigated the case was our member. The judge that pronounced judgment in the case was also our member. They did not use their offices to protect, or aid and abet all the people that carried out that dastard act, as it is the case today, just because they were our members and because they belong to our religion. The reason why we cooperate with the police then is because we did not want to embolden our members to carry on more killings or people opposing their religion. If we had covered up those people then, there would have been numerous other killings. That was what we did then, which they are no longer doing now. Just look at the number of high calibre Northern lawyers, who made appearance in court to defend the people, who allegedly murdered Deborah in cold blood in the name of religion. What signals are they sending to other people "Go ahead and kill and maim, we are solidly behind you people? Shameful."

Nigeria National Law on Blasphemy

Nigeria has general laws against blasphemy for the Muslim north and Christian south adjudicated by Customary Courts as well as specific Islamic laws against blasphemy adjudicated by Sharia Court in the twelve northern states of the country.

The Customary law against blasphemy is found in Section 204 of the Criminal Code, which prohibits any act that publicly insults any religion and stipulates a prison sentence of up to two years. The Sharia Court, on the other hand, is exclusively concerned with acts considered insulting to Muslims, the punishment for which can be as severe as execution. Most blasphemy accusations are made by Muslims against Christians and frequently trigger mob

violence before any official actions like police arrests and judicial trials can be taken. Blasphemy is thus primarily a driver of sectarian violence rather than legal proceedings in the Nigerian context.

The word blasphemy is derived from a Greek term meaning "speaking evil," but in the Christian religion, the word refers to verbal offences against sacred values or beliefs. A seventeenth-century Scottish jurist epitomized blasphemy by calling it, "treason against God."

The concept of blasphemy has never remained fixed. It has ranged from the ancient Hebrew crime of cursing the ineffable name of God to irreverent statements that outrage the religious sensibilities of others. What is deemed blasphemous varies from society to society and may differ with time and place, but what is condemned as blasphemy is always regarded as an abuse of liberty and reveals what society cannot and will not tolerate. Blasphemy, therefore, constitutes a litmus test of the standard a society feels it must be enforced to preserve its religious peace, order, morality, and above all, salvation. Wherever organized religion exists, blasphemy is a taboo.

Every society will punish the rejection or mockery of its gods because blasphemy is an intolerable verbal violation of the sacred entity. It affronts the priestly class, the deep-seated beliefs of worshippers, and the basic religious values that a community shares.

Punishing blasphemer may serve any one of several social purposes in addition to setting an example to warn others. Punishment is also supposed to propitiate the offended deities by avenging their honour, thereby averting their wrath in the form of earthquakes, infertility, lost battles, floods, plagues, or crop failures. Public retribution for blasphemy also vindicates the witness of believers, reaffirms communal values and avoids the snares of tolerance.

Islam and Blasphemy

Blasphemy in Islam is an impious utterance or action concerning God, but broader than in normal usage, including not only the mocking or vilifying the attributes of Islam but denying any of the fundamental beliefs of the religion. Examples include denying that the Holy Qur'an was divinely revealed; the prophet hood of one of the Islamic prophets, insulting an angel or maintaining God had a son.

The Qur'an curses those who commit blasphemy and promises blasphemers humiliation in the Hereafter. However, whether any Qur'anic verses prescribe worldly punishments is debatable. Some Muslims believe that no worldly punishment is prescribed while others disagree. The interpretation of the hadiths, which are another source of Sharia, is similarly debated. Some have interpreted the hadith as prescribing punishments for blasphemy, which may include death, while others argued that the death penalty applies only to cases where the perpetrator commits treasonable crimes, especially during times of war.

Different traditional schools of jurisprudence prescribe different punishments for blasphemy, depending on whether the blasphemer is a Muslim or non-Muslim, man or a woman.

In the modern-day Muslim world, the laws about blasphemy vary from country to country. While some countries prescribed punishments, consisting of fines, imprisonment, flogging, hanging, and beheading.

It is however imperative to note, that capital punishment for blasphemy was rare in pre-modern Islamic societies. This could be the possible reason why Sheikh Gumi said, "The Holy Prophet Mohammed (pbuh) was insulted severally while on earth, yet he did not kill anybody." In the modern era, some states and radical groups have used charges of blasphemy to garnish their religious credentials and gain popular support at the expense of liberal Muslim intellectuals and religious minorities.



Analysts canvass FG's intervention to avert collapse of wheat value chain

• Seek removal of 15% cassava levy, access to forex, others

By **EDU ABADE**, Business Editor

Local industry analysts have urged the Federal Government to take swift and deliberate actions to cushion the effects of the disruptions in the global wheat market on Nigeria's wheat value chain.

The analysts made the call in a recently published review of the global wheat market, following the war between the two top wheat exporting countries—Russia and Ukraine. They lamented that the multiple value chain crises, exacerbated by the shortage of foreign exchange, mounting freight charges and increase in the price of diesel, worsened by the war, continue to impact the wheat value chain negatively.

Flour millers have continued to battle with the rising cost of production and low local wheat production. The rising costs have passed down to bakers as well as raise the hardship and cost of living index of the hard-pressed local consumers who continue to bear the burden of the increase in the prices of wheat derivative foods and household staples.

The experts said the millers and bakers have come under intense cost pressure as the price of the all-important grain continues to skyrocket in the international market and freight charges have spiralled out of control.

The review showed that the price of wheat in the global

market rose to \$1,000 per bushel in March 2022 from \$761.25 in January. In addition to that, the millers are expected to spend more on shipping the commodity from the exporting countries, as their combined freight bill prediction rose from N21.6 trillion in 2019 to N28.8 trillion in 2021.

"The demand for wheat-based products being fairly price-elastic implies that the burden of every new rise in costs is primarily absorbed by the millers and bakers.

"The upward trend in the global wheat and freight costs continues to frustrate the millers, who have for long borne the cost burden to keep the retail price stable and avoid passing on the costs to the poor consumers, who rely heavily on wheat-derivative foods such as bread, which remains a significant part of their daily diets in feeding their households.

"A basket of similar food commodities has increased in price by an average of 50 per cent, and bread prices have only increased by 30 per cent. The millers and bakers have borne the rest of the inflationary burden. Under the present circumstances, anyone can guess how much longer they can keep prices moderate," the experts said.

Citing urgent actions that must be taken to avert production and major food inflation crisis, they proposed the wider adoption of the agriculture value chain

intervention model developed by the Senegalese government. The Senegal Agriculture Programme (SAP) provides access to key inputs such as seeds, and fertilizers, as well as technical and marketing assistance for local smallholder farmers.

Other measures proposed by the analysts to help the millers, bakers and consumers include the removal of the 15 per cent cassava levy imposed on the importation of wheat grain, increased access to forex through

the Import and Export (I&E) window, tax concessions in line with the key backward integration programmes index and provision of logistics support, among others.

While making a case for the removal of the 15 per cent cassava levy in a recent interview, National Secretary-General of the Association of Master Bakers and Caterers of Nigeria (ABCON), Jude Okafor said: "We had earlier made a plea to the government to cancel the 15 per cent wheat and cassava levy."

They further argued that the 15 per cent cassava levy

was meant to drive up local cassava production to the point of substituting cassava flour for wheat flour in most bakery products, but there has been no significant improvement in the cassava value chain since the introduction of the cassava substitution policy and the levy.

Considering the crisis in Ukraine and the global food crisis, the experts urged the Federal Government to reconsider the removal of the 15 per cent wheat import levy, stressing: "This is necessary to prevent a wider supply chain breakdown and recession."

NOA canvasses patronage of local products to create jobs for Nigerians

By **JOHNMARK UKOKO**

The National Orientation Agency (NOA) has enjoined Nigerians to patronise made in Nigeria products to grow the economy and create more jobs for the teeming unemployed youths.

Kano State Director of the agency, Alhaji Haruna Lawal, who gave the charge while addressing newsmen during a sensitisation programme in Kano recently, described the patronage of local products in preference for foreign products, as a strategic means to encourage local industries and grow the nation's economy.

The sensitisation programme with the theme: *Change Begins With The Patronage Of Made In Nigeria Products*, attracted many Nigerians to the occasion.

"If we don't patronise our products, our economy will crash. The need to patronise made-in-Nigeria products and services cannot be overem-



Alhaji Haruna Lawal

phasized, as it is one major way to economic growth and development.

"The economy of any nation grows rapidly when we patronise and promote our locally made products. First, it is people and then exports because as they say, charity begins at home. No nation can truly develop when its economy is at the mercy of

foreign products and services. Most developed nations of the world are sustained by production," he said.

Lawal explained that if made-in-Nigeria products were adequately patronised, the economy would improve and more jobs would be created for the youths, adding that Nigerian producers should be proud of their products and charge Nigerian industries to be competitive by producing quality goods and services.

He added that the NOA would educate, enlighten and also use motorised method of sensitisation by going to markets with banners to talk to them and engage media practitioners to effectively disseminate information across the state.

Lawal noted that the agency would soon embark on advocacy visits to district, village and ward leaders to sensitise them on the importance of patronising local products and services.

Ondo State lifts oil palm farmers with N2b to boost production

By **JOHNMARK UKOKO**

In a bid to boost production and increase output in palm oil production, the Ondo State government has supported oil palm farmers with N2 billion.

Governor Olurotimi Akeredolu made this known during the Cocoa Conference at the Government House in Akure.

Chief Press Secretary (CPS) to the governor, Richard Olatunde, said the state government supported palm oil farmers with N2 billion for producers of palm oil to put the state on the world's map as a major palm oil producer.

He said: "Since February 2017, our government has been striving hard to put everything in place to ensure the sustainability of the scheme and to inculcate the necessary entrepreneurship skills into our youths with a view to making them employers of labour.

"The state government through the Ondo State Agricultural Enterprises Commission (OSAEC) has provided all necessary requirements like land, equipment, shelter, basic facilities, technology, training and other

logistics to achieve the objective, thereby creating a new generation of farmers that can move into the sector and compete anywhere in the world."

Also, the governor said his administration was making efforts to see that the state become the largest producer of palm oil in the country, adding that 70,000 hectares of land had been allocated to investors for palm oil and cocoa production to make agriculture more attractive to the youths.

On the security situation of the state, Akeredolu noted that the Amotekun Corps stations would be built in farming areas to protect farmers, saying the state government had approved the recruitment of additional 350 personnel into the Amotekun Corps to strengthen its operations.

The governor also said the state had trained no fewer than 400 indigenous and Fulani Pastoralists on the feedlot operational system of livestock management at the instance of the state government in partnership with the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) and the United Nations (UN).

Dangote Cement posts N413.2b revenue, N106b profit in Q1 2022

By **JOHNMARK UKOKO**

In the first three months of 2022, Dangote Cement Plc recorded a 24.2 per cent increase in its profit after tax (PAT), as its unaudited results for three months ended March 31, 2022, showed revenue of N413.2 billion and profit of

N105.9 billion.

Analysis of the company's three-month performance indicated that Dangote Cement sold 7.2 metric tons of cement across the group with its Nigerian operations accounting for 4.8 metric tons, while the rest of Africa did the balance of 2.4 tons.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Dangote Cement, Michael Puchercos, said the company started the first quarter on a positive note despite the uncertainties brought caused by the volatile global environment.

He stated that increases recorded in revenue and profitability drove strong revenue generation across the group, adding that the PAT rose to N105.9 billion, amounting to 18 per cent compared to last year.

He said: "On the operational side, we are ramping up production at our Okpella Plant and progressing well to deploy grinding plants in Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire. Demand remained

strong across all markets and we remain confident that Dangote Cement is positioned to meet customers' expectations despite the temporary challenges.

Dangote Cement is Africa's leading cement producer with nearly 51.6mta capacity across Africa. A fully integrated quarry-to customer producer, it has a production capacity of 35.25mta in its home market in Nigeria.

"The Obajana Plant in Kogi State is the largest in Africa with 16.25 metric tons capacity across five with 16.25 metric tons capacity in five lines, Ibese Plant in Ogun State has four cement lines with a combined installed capacity of 12 tons, while the Gboko Plant in Benue State has 4 metric tons and Okpella Plant in Edo State has 3 metric tons," he said.

Through recent investments, Dangote Cement has eliminated Nigeria's dependence on imported cement and transformed the nation into an exporter of cement by servicing neighbouring countries.



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We've lost over 500 buildings to sea incursion—Ayetoro residents lament

By FRIDAY OMOSOLA, Akure

Ayetoro community also known as "Happy City" a utopian Christian settlement of the Nigerian Holy Apostles' Community was established in January 12, 1947. The community rose to become one of the strongest towns in the present Ilaje local government with an estimated population of 14,000 in 1991 Nigerian census; which increased to 26,000 in 2006.

The ruler of the religious community took their mode of worship and Christian practice from the white garment Cherubim and Seraphim (Aladura), headed by a King referred to as the Ogelayinbo of Ayetoro and His Spiritual Majesty of Holy Apostles Church, Ayetoro Worldwide.

The community is currently being faced with the challenge of sea incursion over the years, the problem was said to have emerged as a result of the oil exploration which resulted in the loss of over five kilometres of the community's coastline to the Atlantic Ocean, affected the fishing profession and made life unbearable for the fishermen, as many have left for greener pastures.

On Wednesday afternoon, *The Trumpet Newspaper* arrived at the community to ascertain the level of damage done by the sea incursion and discovered that many people have become homeless in the riverine community following the devastating effect of sea incursion.

According to findings, the sea incursions most of the time rise around 5:00 am when residents of the community were still fast asleep which had left many of the dwellers in a state of perpetual fear of being swept away while sleeping.

The constant sea incursion with its latest incident had destroyed property worth billions of Naira and fishing, which is the mainstay of the local economy of the Ayetoro people, has been paralyzed, ditto the aquatic life of the people.

The Trumpet gathered that as the sea incursion persisted, the community leaders had cried to the government at all levels in Nigeria for intervention—in 2004 the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) established in the year 2000 awarded a Shoreline Protection contract to Gallet Nigeria Limited at the sum of N2.4billion to construct a defence on the river bank for the community against the threatening ocean surges.

However, four years after the contract was awarded to the company, the community then made exhibitions to the government and the contract was cancelled for the justification of

non-execution of the contract. However, the contract was re-awarded in 2009 by the NDDC to another company, dredging Atlantic at the sum of N6.5billion, and up till now, there is no shoreline protection on site, as the community members continued wallowing in fear.

In an interview with *The Trumpet*, the Spokesperson of the community, Prince Victor Akinluwa summarised the current situation facing Ayetoro as unbearable for its inhabitants, adding that failed promises were what they got despite consulting relevant authorities for help.

Prince Victor revealed that the community has over 32 houses per street, but as a result of the surge, the number has drastically dropped, adding that the major road in the community (Broad Street) alone has an estimated 500 houses that have been swept away since the incursion started in early 2000.

The spokesperson disclosed that some submerged buildings could be specified with their pegs evident in the ocean, while others had been missed without any evidence. "We are powerless, we have not received any relief from the Ondo State government and representatives, not even heard from them despite many promises," he added.

"The incumbent representative representing Ilaje/Ese-Odo, Kolade Akinjo made a promise to us, but nothing was done. He never came down to Ayetoro and we have vowed not to allow

them to campaign come 2023.

"We cannot say the federal government is not aware of our plight, because many international television stations have aired our story."

Prince Akinluwa divulged that Ayetoro was a largely autonomous community with most of its amenities, such as electricity and water, provided with community funds. He, however, stated that in 2019, the water reservoir and underground pipes supplying water to all houses were destroyed by the windstorm.

"Our People no longer feel safe. We have sought the attention of the government and international communities but got no response."

The spokesperson further stated that the two palaces of the community had been submerged; King—the Ogelayinbo of Ayetoro—had to host visitors at his private residence.

Prince Victor also told *The Trumpet* that apart from over 500 houses washed away, the Community Primary School, Ayetoro, established in 1955 and the secondary school, Happy City College, Ayetoro had been washed away, saying pupils and students of the community could not resume for the current academic session on time.

"The pupils and students are learning where there is no class. We've moved both the primary and secondary schools six times from their initial site. Where the schools are currently, once the sea rises, the pupils

and students run away till it comes back to normal before they return to class.

"The Students currently writing their West African Examination Council, WAEC, faced a lot of challenges from the sea incursion. Sometimes they flee for their lives once the sea rises."

In the same vein, the Youths Secretary, Aralu Emmanuel, expressed his dissatisfaction with the neglect of the community by the government, revealing that in the past, the landmass between the town and the seashore was kilometres apart, but now the ocean is already at home endangering their existence.

"I had been inside the water since morning to raise my submerged place of work, just to make money and feed my family, most of my properties had been swept away," he said.

Aralu, who said all the experience had as a teenager was very interesting, bemoaned that all their historical assets could be swept away by the ocean to the degree that no land would be left for social activity and agriculture as was in the past.

He said if the state and the federal government failed to save the town which became popular through its embrace of communal systems of living and technical education urgently, it would go into extinction.

"When this community was formed by our forefathers, there were roads along the coastline with other facilities built with the community money, but now,

all these have been lost to the ocean. With the loss, if I am to estimate the assets that have been lost by the community to the sea, it will stand at N300bn and above.

Aralu said many lives had been lost because of the incursions and many members of the community have scattered all over the Ilaje communities, even up to Igbokoda as a result of houses and properties lost to the sea.

A woman who simply identified herself as Funke, who currently managed a small shop where she sells provision, revealed that her provision shop was five times the current one. "I sell provisions and my shop was along the major road in the community (Broad Street) but immediately the sea incursion started, it swept the shop away including some of my goods," Funke said.

She explained that to avoid being idle, she had to relocate her shop to a safer part of the community. "I cannot say this place is safe because if the sea rises, this place will not be left alone." She maintained.

Other community members such as traders and fishermen among others who granted *The Trumpet* interview lamented that things are not as easy as they used to be in the past.

"Now that the entire place has been submerged by the ocean it is now costly to buy our commodities from other neighbouring communities as well as storage for the fear of being swept away."

LASG gives Alaba Market occupant 14 days eviction notice

By BLESSING OZIWO

The Lagos State Government has issued a 14-day eviction notice to the occupants of the Alaba Rago Market in the state. The government gave the eviction notice through a joint team of Rapid Response Squad and Lagos Taskforce.

The government of the state is seeking to modernize the market along the Lagos-Badagry Expressway.

In a statement on Thursday, the government said the decision was reached after several months of negotiation with representatives of the occupiers of Alaba Rago over the modernisation of the market.

The statement was titled, 'Alaba Rago: Lagos serves eviction notices'.

The Commander, RRS, Chief Superintendent of Police, Olayinka Egbeyemi on Thursday, during a sensitization visit to the market with a joint team including the Chairman of Lagos State Environment and Special Offences Unit (Taskforce), Sola Jejeloye, met with traders of the market in clusters to inform them of the 14-day vacation order.

According to Egbeyemi the emerging intelligence security



Gov. Babajide Sanwo-Olu

reports from the area have shown that "Alaba Rago has become a den of criminals", stressing that the state government has concluded plans to modernize the place in the shortest possible time in the

best interest of the residents.

He said, "last week's recovery of several guns in the market by Ojo Police Division and the revelation by drug dealers that they regularly funnel drugs through the area to

several parts of the state is the reason why the government has decided to move swiftly to modernise the area and beget orderliness.

"that the demolition of the area conforms with Government's T.H.E.M.E.S agenda on Environment and Security", adding that Government was worried by the shanties and the filthy conditions of the area, hence, modernising it would be in the best interest of the occupiers.

Egbeyemi, therefore, pleads with the occupiers not to read ethnic and religious motives into the exercise, saying that "Lagos State is a convergence point for all Nigerian, irrespective of religion, ethnicity or tribes."

Jejeloye noted that series of meetings had been held with all the major stakeholders in the past and that the demolition should have taken place during Ramadan.

He added that Government was sensitive to delay it in order for those who travelled for Ramadan to be around.

"After the 14-day ultimatum for occupiers to temporarily relocate for the cleaning up and modernisation, the team will not listen to further excuses from the affected traders," Jejeloye stated.

LASRERA begins sensitisation for unregistered real estate practitioners

By **OZIWO BLESSING**

In a bid to regulate, sanitise and effectively monitor the Real Estate Sector, the Lagos State Real Estate Regulatory Authority (LASRERA) enforcement unit has extended its execution drive to some parts of the State to ensure that real estate practitioners operating in Lagos are duly registered with the Authority.

According to the statement made before the commencement of the exercise on Thursday, by the Special Adviser to the State Governor on Housing, Mrs Toke Benson-Awoyinka, said the initiative would be replicated across other divisions of the State as part of strategies by LASRERA to raise public awareness about the government's efforts to sanitise the real estate sector.

She emphasised that it is an offence to practice real estate in any form, including those displaying "To Let, To Lease, For Sale etc" in their offices or on a property, without being duly registered with the Agency.

Benson-Awoyinka, represented

by the Director, Enforcement Unit of LASRERA, Mr Deji Badejo, stated that there is a need to restrict the posting of banners on Residential and Commercial property by unregistered Real Estate Individuals/Organisations who can easily swindle unsuspecting members of the public of their earnings.

She added that many members of the public have been defrauded in the past by imposters and fraudulent real estate practitioners, stressing that the government cannot continue to fold its arms and excuse irregularities that are capable of driving many genuine investors away from the sector.

The Special Adviser informed that the Agency had earlier written letters to over 1000 Real Estate Individuals/Organisations in the State to honour the government's call for regularisation of the sector, just as it is increasing the market confidence of those in the diaspora to invest in the sector.

"Let me state clearly here that following the letters earlier

delivered to practitioners across the State, only a few of these practitioners responded to the content of the letters, hence the need to embark on this enforcement and compliance exercise so that relevant stakeholders in the built sector and the general public can attach importance to the call by the Agency to sanitise real estate transactions in the State", she emphasised.

Mrs Benson-Awoyinka assured all Lagos residents that the enforcement drive will be a continuous exercise until all practitioners in the Real Estate Sector of Lagos State are captured under LASRERA's database in line with international best practices.

The Special Adviser also used the opportunity to call on members of the public to report dubious Real Estate Practices via the Agency's email: lasrera@lagosstate.gov.ng, or call the following numbers: 0901 999 9977, 0901 9999 997, 0904 0000 333, 0904 0000 444, 0904 0000 555 or contact the headquarters of LASRERA at Block 21, First Floor, Alausa Secretariat, Ikeja.



Mrs Toke Benson-Awoyinka,

NGC commissions Primary Healthcare Centres for Delta Communities

By **KELVIN OHOROR**

The Nigerian Gas Company (NGC) Limited, a subsidiary of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), built, commissioned and handover a fully furnished Basic Primary Healthcare Centre to Umu-Eziogoli Community in

Ukwuani Local Government Area and Umuseti-Ogbe Community in Ndokwa West Local Government Area of Delta State.

While handing over the edifices, the Managing Director of Nigeria Gas Company Limited, Engr. Seyi Omotowa, who was represented by Mrs Uche Ossai, Executive Director of Support Services, said that

the company is committed to developing a robust and sustainable relationship with its host communities.

According to Seyi; "The wellbeing of our host communities is paramount in our Corporate Social Responsibility thrust, and this is simply why we are here today. Therefore, we present to you these Basic Healthcare Centres as a token of our contribution to the development of both communities which we cherish dearly as one of our peace-loving communities.

"On our part as a company, we shall continue to solicit your cooperation and assistance in the maintenance of peace in order to support our business growth aspirations for the benefit of our people in these communities and Nigerians generally.

"Let me reiterate, that NGC will always encourage and appreciate communities that promote peace, dialogue and understanding in the resolution of any issue. This, indeed, is the hallmark of our community relations engagement process. We would appreciate direct contact with NGC management through our Public Affairs Department on any community issues and

not through a third party. Problems are better solved where there is constant communication between entities with vested interest, for the mutual benefit of all.

"Finally, let me appeal to you as communities, that this Health Centre is yours, we, therefore, urge you to safeguard it by putting in place adequate security measures to protect it."

Ogochukwu Nwose, Chairman Umu-Eziogoli community, Barr. Nelson Enumah, and Mr Kingsley Chukwutem Ndiom, Chairman CDC, Umuseti-Ogbe, Mr George Oliseh for Umu Odia/Achi family who responded on behalf of the communities, thanked NGC for their contribution towards the development of the communities.

They all commended Nigeria Gas Company Limited for the kind gestures, promising to secure both facilities and ensure that they both serve the essence of which it was provided, and also urge the Delta State Primary Healthcare Board and local government council to work in synergy in order to put both facilities into use in no distant time.

In his remarks, the Secretary to Delta State Government,

Chief Patrick Ukah and Delta State Commissioner for Oil and Gas, Prince Emmanuel Amgbaduba, who was represented by Mrs Gladys Prieger, commended NGC for establishing these Health Centres as parts of its Corporate Social Responsibility, noting that both projects will complement the efforts of the State Governor, Senator Ifeanyi Okowa, who is interested about the health and well-being of Deltans.

He added; "In no doubt, the event of today testified to an existing cordial relationship between NGC and the host communities (Umu-Eziogoli and Umuseti-Ogbe). With a peaceful environment, Corporate Social Responsibility can be attracted to a community.

"Therefore we want to appeal to both communities to sustain the cordial relationships they have shown to the company. By doing so, we know the company will put more developmental infrastructures in these communities. In the same vein, I enjoin all companies operating in the state to fulfil their Corporate Social Responsibility to their host communities."



Engr. Seyi Omotowa

Civil servant jailed for employment scam

By PAUL MICHAEL, ABUJA

The Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) has secured a seven-year jail term for a public officer in the Office of the Head of Civil Service of the Federation, Mr Amdii Monday Gideon, for his involvement in an employment scam.

According to a statement ICPC spokesperson, Azuka Ogugua, the convict was accused of demanding the sum of N250,000 and receiving the sum of N162,500 from an applicant with the promise to procure a job for him at the Federal Civil Service Commission.

The victim had reported the matter to ICPC after the convict failed to procure the said job and refused to refund his money. ICPC, therefore, arraigned the convict before the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) High Court 17 in Gwagwalada.

"During the trial, counsel to ICPC, Michael Adesola, had in a 5-count charge told the court of how the action of the convict negates Sections 8 and 10 of the Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Act 2000 and Section 1 (3) of the Advanced Fee Fraud and Other Related Offences Act 2006," the statement said.

The charge reads in part, "That You Amdii Monday Gideon (M) on or about

the month of June 2015 at Abuja Federal Capital Territory while being a Public Officer at Registry Unit of the Permanent Secretary (Special Duties) office of the Head of Civil Service of the Federation corruptly asks for the sum of N162,500.00 (One hundred and sixty two thousand five hundred naira) from (name withheld) to secure a job for him and you thereby committed an offence contrary to section 8(1)(a) and punishable under section 8(1)(ii) of the Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offence Act 2000."

The prosecution was able to prove its case beyond reasonable doubt which formed the premise upon which the Court found Mr Monday guilty of the charges against him.

"He was therefore convicted and was sentenced to seven years imprisonment without an option of fine," the statement added.

It would be recalled that as part of measures to curb recurrent cases of job racketeering, ICPC had in recent times organized a Policy Dialogue on Entrenching Transparency in the Public Service Recruitment Process in Nigeria during which the Chairman, Prof. Bolaji Owasanoye (SAN) disclosed that the Commission received almost 100 petitions on recruitment scam from victims, institutions and complicit individuals saying that the situation festers due to lack of transparency.

Regulate arbitrary defections of politicians, Agbakoba urges INEC

By PAUL MICHAEL, ABUJA



Agbakoba, SAN

Former president of the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA), Olisa Agbakoba SAN, said the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) needs to act as a strong regulator of the electoral process.

In a statement on Thursday, Agbakoba said INEC has allowed the National Assembly to encroach on its powers concerning the electronic transmission of results.

The learned silk said it is important to restate the constitutional powers of INEC as the ultimate regulator of the electoral process.

He expressed disappointment that INEC appears to have forgotten the powers assigned to it regarding the political and electoral process.

"For example, when the National Assembly voted to reject electronic transmission of election results, INEC in the course of the debate, was mostly silent and did not assert itself even when the Constitution confers on INEC the powers to 'organize, undertake and supervise' elections," the statement said.

He added, "The arbitrary defections of politicians from one party to another call for strong regulatory control by INEC. The lack of internal democracy in most political parties has failed to receive a robust regulatory response by INEC.

"The Nigerian political system needs INEC to act as a strong regulator. I suggest that INEC is entitled to withdraw certificates of return issued to elected officeholders who defect. INEC ought not to be afraid of getting it wrong. INEC must be seen

as a firm referee with clear rules and a determination to enforce those rules.

"To demonstrate this, INEC needs to clarify its position on how the 2023 elections will be conducted. INEC's recent statement that elections will be conducted manually and electronically is confusing – as it allows politicians opportunity for mischief. The rules set out by INEC must be clear on how votes will be counted.

"Finally, INEC must be impartial in election petitions. It must be neutral. INEC's proper role is to assist the courts to resolve election disputes. Unfortunately, generally, INEC has acted as a defendant in election petitions. This is very wrong.

"I hope the 2023 election will enable INEC to play its proper role as a strong impartial regulator of elections."

EFCC arraigns fake aides of Patience Jonathan in Maiduguri

● Court remands man over alleged N693,000 fraud

By PAUL MICHAEL, ABUJA

The Maiduguri Zonal Command of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) has arraigned two fake aides of former First Lady, Patience Jonathan before Justice Kumaliya of the Borno State High Court, sitting in Maiduguri.

The defendants are identified as Goni Muhammad and Seidu Seriki Haman.

They were arraigned on Monday, May 16, 2022, on two-count charges bordering on conspiracy and obtaining by false pretence to the tune of N26, 492,000.00 (Twenty Six Million, Four Hundred and Ninety-Two Thousand Naira).

According to EFCC spokesperson, Wilson Uwujaren, the defendants allegedly conspired and obtained the sum, under the guise of selling two grams of gold belonging to a former First Lady, Patience Jonathan to a buyer.

Count two of the charge read: "That you, Goni Muhammad and Seidu Seriki Hamman sometimes in January 2020 at Maiduguri, Borno State within the jurisdiction of this Honourable Court, with intent to defraud, did obtain 2 grams of gold at the rate of N26,492,000.00 (Twenty Six Million Four Hundred and Ninety Two Thousand Naira) allegedly belonging to the wife of the former President, Dr Goodluck Ebele Jonathan under the false pretence which you knew to be false and thereby committed an offence contrary to Section 1(1) of the Advance Fee Fraud and other Fraud Related Offences Act 2006 and punishable under Section 1(3) of the same Act."

The defendants pleaded 'not guilty' when

the two counts were read to them.

Justice Kumaliya thereafter adjourned the matter to May, 25 and 26, 2022 for hearing and ordered the remand of the defendants in a Correctional Centre.

In the same vein, the Maiduguri Zonal Command on Thursday, May 19, 2022, re-arraigned Mamman Alhaji Jalomi before Justice Musa Mustapha of Borno State High Court, Maiduguri, on one count charge bordering on criminal misappropriation to the tune of N693,000.00

The defendant allegedly fraudulently sold 33 bags of beans belonging to one Babagana Abdullahi and diverted the monies to his personal use.

The one-count amended charge read: "That you Mamman Alhaji Jalomi sometimes in the year 2020 or thereabouts, in Maiduguri Borno State within the jurisdiction of this Honourable Court dishonestly converted to your use the sum of Six Hundred and Ninety Three Thousand Naira (N693,000.00) only being proceeds from the sales of 33 bags of beans at Twenty One Thousand Naira (N21,000.00) each belonging to one Babangida Abdullahi and thereby committed an offence contrary to and punishable under Sections 308 and 309 of Penal Code Law Cap 102, Laws of Borno State respectively."

The defendant pleaded 'not guilty' to the charge preferred against him by the EFCC, prompting prosecution counsel, Mukhtar Ali Ahmed to pray for a trial date.

Justice Musa Mustapha adjourned the matter to June 9, 2022, for trial and ordered the remand of the defendant at the Maiduguri Medium Security Custodial Centre.

NEIP: ICPC, Police partner in sensitization of officers

By PAUL MICHAEL, ABUJA

The Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) is partnering with the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) to sensitize police on the National Ethics and Integrity Policy (NEIP).

The Resident Anti-Corruption Commissioner (RACC) of ICPC Lagos, Mr Kabir Elelu, made this statement when he and his team visited the Commissioner of Police (CP), Lagos Command, CP Abiodun Alabi, while re-emphasizing the importance of restoring public trust and confidence in governance.

He explained the role of public education and enlightenment as an effective method of sensitizing the public on and against corruption, re-orientating the ethical values of the society and building a better nation.

He introduced the National Ethics and Integrity Policy (NEIP) with its seven core values of Human Dignity, Voice and Partici-

pation, Patriotism, Personal Responsibility, Integrity, National Unity and Professionalism, noting that these will enhance transparency and accountability, especially in the public and private sectors, in line with global best practices.

Speaking further, the ICPC RACC acknowledged that the Police had been of tremendous support to the Commission and sought its continuous support, especially in the area of the deployment of more officers to the Commission as they assist in executing the enforcement aspect of the Commission's work.

CP Alabi in his response stated his willingness to partner with the Commission on sensitization programmes for his policemen and lauded the visit as an opportunity to know other areas where the two law enforcement agencies can work and assist each other in the fight against corruption.

The CP also promised to increase the numerical strength of the policemen attached to the office.

EFCC tasks MDAs on financial crimes

By PAUL MICHAEL, ABUJA

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) has called for more collaboration among Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) of government in the fight against economic and financial crimes.

The call was made in Abuja on Wednesday, May 18, 2022, by the Deputy Chief of Staff of the EFCC, Sambo Maiyana Muazu at a two-day sensitization program on the Eagle Eye Application for Assistant Directors of the Federal Ministry of Finance.

He stated that Section 6(j) of the EFCC's Establishment Act, "mandates the EFCC to collaborate with government bodies, within

and outside the country that carries out functions similar to that of the commission concerning the identification and determination of the whereabouts and activities of persons suspected to be involved in economic and financial crimes and also the identification and tracing of proceeds derived from economic and financial crimes. This is part of what informed the development of this app by the EFCC to make it easy."

Highlighting the importance of information to the Commission, Muazu further urged stakeholders to use the Eagle Eye App to provide information and report all forms of economic and financial crimes.

Fuji is most travelled genre of music-K1 De Ultimate

Alhaji Wasiu Ayinde Marshal otherwise referred to as K1 De Ultimate is sure known for his immense contribution towards the growth of Fuji Music. In this chat with TRUMPET ENTERTAINMENT, K1 spoke on the future of Fuji music in Nigeria, why it was necessary to celebrate the late pioneer, Sikiru Ayinde Barrister, amongst others



12 years after Barrister's death, there have been no significant new entrants. Most of you were already established before Barrister's passing. Any new Fuji star?

Shanko Rasheed is a new fresh voice, and I would say he is one of the youngest. Kolade Onanuga and many others are the future. The fact that we don't showcase them doesn't mean there are none. We simply could not accommodate everyone to come in and hold the microphone to say something today, but they were present and there are more to come. Even those that are not in the country were part of this colloquium, it is a success story everyone wants to be part of.

9ice, one of the most vibrant and talented voices in entertainment that this country has produced started as a Fuji artiste. What informed many not being able to categorically say they are playing Fuji is the notion behind the large crowd that goes with forming a band. You must have a minimum of 15 to 20 band members. Why did those who came before us and those who play now have 20-piece band standing on stage? It is because they are all playing different instruments that have different meanings.

So young stars of today are not ready for such an expensive project.

They simply want to do samples. 'Aanu Mo Rigba' was a sample track with few back-ups. Fuji music is getting there, and soon you will see one man playing Fuji, knowing that the notes are available. In the last 10 years, part of our pursuit and journey has been that Fuji music must be written as a note. Successfully, we have been able to achieve one with Wasiu's 'Aanu Mo Rigba'. Today, it can be played anywhere because it is on the note. Music teachers and people with experience have come together to realize

that we must get something. Whether you like it or not, you will be surprised to see a white band or orchestras playing 'Aanu Mo Rigba'. So, for those artistes that are unable to carry 15-piece band, they will be able to achieve it with as little as two to three samplers and it will be original because there would be notes and three to four backups.

Speaking of digitization, how can Fuji artistes latch on to the offerings of music streaming platforms so they can also make money off streaming and sharing?

We are in a hurry; we want to see magic overnight. But common sense tells us that as much as we are in a hurry, we must be very careful. I can't do everything by myself, hence the need to keep searching for people to bring us ideas and how to go about it. I have very many hands working with me, and by the time we start to move from one success narrative to the next, you will see the effects. Everything that happened here today, you will begin to see the effects in the next year.

After more than a year of your hit track, 'Aanu Mo Ri Gba', we are yet to get a video. Why is that?

Not all successful albums of the world had a video. Video for me takes a very serious mind; we must make a statement with it, not just that it will only cost me five outfits and a few people on hand to dance. If you listen to the lyrics there is deep meaning, and we are being careful to not create a video that will alienate some listeners.

But is there a video coming?

Oh, yes! The video that is coming will be one with multiple directions to give people

the opportunity to enjoy it in their own way. White folks have been seen dancing to that song, and we want to ensure that the video embraces all listeners.

There is a notion among music artistes, especially at concerts and performances that they must use drugs or smoke something to deliver.

What are the elders doing to sensitize the younger ones against this trend?

There must be a lot of education from the media on how things should be done. I don't smoke. But the issue of drugs goes beyond mere smoking.

Today, people inject and sniff all sorts of things. But we must all teach artistes that they must be right when going on stage and give good account of themselves. It is all about education. But this problem is not peculiar to Fuji, it is the same with all genres of music.

Speaking on the present event, what informed the decision to organize a colloquium for Alhaji Sikiru Ayinde Barrister?

If we all agree Barrister is the symbol and face that attracted a lot of people to that genre of Fuji music, then we should be able to put our foot down that he must be well-celebrated. We should be able to create an institution out of that establishment he made so that many years to come, there would be reason for people to learn. For instance, the whole world believes the role of Bob Marley as far as Reggae is concerned, and all credits today go to him and Jamaica. That is the same thing with Barrister when it comes to Fuji and Nigeria. As we grow, we discover

that our music, especially in southwest Nigeria, serves as an eye-opener and is full representation of the fact that Fuji music is a genre that has travelled far with its origins in Nigeria. Why do we have to wait till it is gone before we think that it is time to create our own Jamaica and our own Reggae that God has blessed us with through Sikiru Ayinde Barrister? That was what informed the organization of the colloquium.

In what other ways are you looking at immortalizing him?

What informs a better society is when there is an avenue for people to come together and talk? That is what will ginger us and open our eyes to a lot of things we cannot see. In the course of talking, discussing, holding meetings, symposiums, you would see a lot of development. If we don't open discussions through forums like this, how do we know the problems and how to tackle them?

Though FUMAN (Fuji Musicians Association of Nigeria) while Barrister was very much around; why is it that you are still the major person championing this cause?

There must be someone God will use. There was a point in time when there was no American constitution. Today, they are one of the biggest political successes in terms of rule of law. The people that formed America at that time were not running that system of governance; it was those who came after them that discovered the importance of running a system of government and created the idea that is America today.

Barrister was my direct boss and mentor. He nurtured me so well to realize the responsibility he was placing on my shoulders. I need not be told that I am his future. Some other person will be the future after me, so we have to start now. That was why we decided that we must first get ourselves together and then draft a document that would guide us and help us forge ahead like a responsible, knowledgeable set of people.

Music before ours, that was not done like this, was maybe done for the fun of it. And before FUMAN, I sought his permission that I wanted to form the Fuji Musicians Association of Nigeria. He saw it as a laudable idea and project, and he gave me his blessings.



Taiwo Ajai-Lycett, receives AMVCAs Industry Merit Award

By OMONIYI ALLI

Veteran actress, journalist and television presenter, Taiwo Ajai-Lycett, was honoured with the Industry Merit Award at the 8th Africa Magic Viewers' Choice Awards (AMVCA) on Saturday night.

The AMVCA continued its tradition of recognizing veterans in the film industry who have in no small way contributed to the development of the

African film and television industry. The screen doyen admitted to being short of words as she received the AMVCA award that solidifies her status in Nollywood's Hall of Fame. She

joins other industry stalwarts to have clinched the award. They include Olu Jacobs, Pete Edochie, Amaka Igwe, Bukky Ajayi, Sadiq Daba, Chika Okpala, Tunde Kelani and Peter Igho.

Full of emotions, she described how

happy she was to receive the award. "I've lived to carry this. This is a major surprise to me. I've been to places but there's no place like home," the legendary filmmaker said. Her statement made a case for honouring our legends while they are still alive.

Ajai-Lycett, 81, is renowned for her charismatic acting, wit, grace and eloquence. After she made her acting debut in 1966 in Wole Soyinka's two-act comedy 'The Lion and the Jewel', she went on to become a regular in British sitcoms such as Comedy Playhouse, Angels, Some Mothers Do

'Ave 'Em alongside Michael Crawford, better known as 'Frank Spencer', among others

Her Nollywood portfolio boasts of watched films and series such as Dazzling Mirage, Oloibiri, Madam President and more recently, King of Boys: The Return of the King



Nigerian Idol: Progress, Zadok battle for grand prize

● As Showmax streams live across Africa and Europe

By OMONIYI ALLI

It's been months of explosive performances on the 7th season of Nigeria's biggest music reality show, Nigerian Idol, and the show is down to two finalists, Progress and Zadok battling it out at the finale tomorrow 7pm on Sunday, 22 May, 2022.

Progress, the 21-year-old singer, songwriter, performer and music minister has proved to be a vocal master. He was able to thrill the judges with his audition performance of All of Me by John Legend and it has been a thread of awesome performances ever since.

Zadok is a 27-year-old recording artist, songwriter, record producer and entertainer who have always delivered a show with his performances on the Nigerian Idol stage. He got a shout-out from legendary artist, Michael Bolton when he performed his song 'Soul

Provider'. Timi Dakolo

also took to his Instagram to give him a shout out for doing justice to his song, 'Wish Me Well' on the show.

Fans and lovers of the show can stream the action live on Showmax, across Africa and abroad in the United Kingdom, Italy, France, Australia and New Zealand.

The music reality show which kicked off with over 10,000 hopefuls at the auditions, came down to the final 12 that proceeded into the live shows and now the top 2 battling for the crown of being the next Nigerian Idol. With the crown comes N100m worth of prizes, the highest reward for any singing competition in Nigeria.

The 6th season of the show was won by Kingdom Kroseide following months of the intense musical contest and the suspense of who becomes the next Idol is back on.



Ifedili, Omecheoko win N2m as Naija HoodRep promotes entrepreneurship

By OMONIYI ALLI

The ongoing reality television show, NaijaHoodRep has rewarded two Hood Representatives- Ifedili Uwamma and Omeche with one million naira each for winning the Hood Innovation Challenge.

Following the show on Nevada Tv YouTube, The Organisers stated the idea of the challenge is to promote entrepreneurship amongst the hood reps in a way that they make meaningful impact in their different communities.

The Innovation Challenge was adjudged by Mr. Kelvin Orogun of Quickraiz and Azubike Emodi of Asset Management Company Limited.

Speaking on the achievement, Ifedili said he was already poised for winning the competition at the sight of the task.

"I feel good and feel happy at the same time. When I saw the task, I told myself I was going to win this. I feel big winning this task." He said.

Speaking also, Omeche stated that the need to present hood-related business idea overrides her personal inspiration.

Okolauded her mother for being the source of inspiration to her, adding that it would not have been possible if not

for her doggedness in business.

She, therefore, said a lot of thoughts were put into the presentation and expressed satisfaction for yielding reasonable gains.

"At first, I wanted to do something that was personal to me but then they said it has to impact your hood.

"I know my mother will be so proud of me because I have seen her grind some maize with small machines.

"So, I can tell her now that mummy you can make it bigger. I never thought I was going to be called. I am really really excited. I put a lot of thought in it and it yielded me one million naira seed capital." She said.

Meanwhile, The Landlord told the reps that no one would nominate anyone else because they are all up for possible eviction except the caretaker.



Zee world's Dance Naija contest set for airing

● Announces Kunle Remi, Sashin Kandhai, others as judges

By OMONIYI ALLI

Leading content company, Zee-Entertainment has announced that all is now set for the airing of the 'Dance Naija Dance' Reality show an extension of the just concluded Zee World Dance Africa Dance which recorded huge success.

The Dance reality show is a fusion of Nigerian and Indian culture with a successful selection of 16 dance crews across the 36 states in Nigeria; the show is expected to take off on screen from August 2022 with the grand prize of N5Million naira and other consolidation prizes.

Speaking on the show, the Chief Executive Officer for Sub-Saharan Africa and Indian Ocean Islands, Somnath Malakar, disclosed that the contest was specifically designed

for Nigerians and Indians, explaining that the similarities between the two countries in terms of family values and lifestyle are things to reckon with. He however noted that the reality show recorded over three hundred and fifty entries across all 36 states.

It is pertinent to note that Nollywood hunk, Kunle Remi alongside Keneth Agabata, Pelumi Buari, Sashin Kandhai were unveiled as the judges for the show while multi talented Hero Daniels will be the residence host.

Speaking the new role, Kunle Remi said 'It feels good to be on the other side of the table as I have never been a judge in life and I am honored to be saddled with this huge mantle as I expect each dance crew to tell a story with their several dance moves.



Ban on Basketball: D'Tigress disagrees with FG

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

The Nigeria women's national basketball team also called D'Tigress have disagreed with the federal government on the recent ban on the nation's basketball teams from partaking in any international competitions in the next two years.

D'Tigress, who lamented over the government's last resort to checkmate the imbroglio engulfing the basketball federation, protested through a letter that they wish to feature in the FIBA Women's Basketball World Cup in Australia.

According to them, they have worked very hard to be crowned three times African champions, and Olympians and would not want to see the opportunity to represent the country in Australia slip away.

Despite the federal government's resolve being hinged on the leadership crisis rocking the basketball federation that has seen two



parallel executives emerge from parallel congresses conducted in Abuja and Benin, they added that their performance in the international scene and records created is a testament to the successes recorded by the team which has made them role models to other Nigerian athletes.

In a press statement tagged: "D'TIGRESS DISAGREE WITH 2 YEAR BAN", they said, "We, as the Women's National Team of Nigeria, would like to speak on the government's recently placed two-year ban on all Nigerian Basketball International competitions.

"The D'Tigress team

would like to state that we do not agree with this ban. This ban is taking away all our future competitions, accomplishments and goals to elevate, inspire, and make Nigeria proud!

"We would like to be given the opportunity to play for our country that we passionately love to represent in this upcoming FIBA Women's Basketball World Cup competition.

"We have worked very hard to be three times Afrobasket Champions, Olympians and now we are blessed with another opportunity to continue that representation for Nigeria.

"We want Nigerian

Basketball to continue to grow and succeed on every level; from the local leagues, grassroots and even on the international stage!

"We believe that all levels of Nigerian basketball can excel with the proper attention, togetherness, and organization. Our team is a testament to how successful Nigerian Basketball can be and how we have been an inspiration to all Nigerian athletes across the globe.

"We wish to express our gratitude to all the coaches, medical staff, organizers, and fans. This ban not only penalizes us but you all as well. Your commitment and loyalty to our team will never go unnoticed.

"Our goal is to play and represent Nigeria proudly! We, as the Nigerian Women's National Team plea for the reversal of the International Basketball ban for Nigeria. We hope to be heard! Thank you," they concluded.

The leadership crisis resulted in producing two federation presidents, Musa Ahmadu-Kida, who heads one faction and Mark Igoche leading the other faction.

Everton extends 71 years Premier League stay

Everton have survived the Premier League relegation struggle after a late minute header from Dominic Calvert-Lewin crumbled Crystal Palace 3-2 to extend their 71-years stay in the English topflight League.

The terrific clash would have kept the home team at Goodison Park to seek their qualification at the hands of top-four fighting side Arsenal in the season's final fixture after the Eagles blasted in two goals in the first half.

But the undeterred Toffees came all out like wounded lions in the second half to turn around the outcome in what will forever be indelible in the history of the club.

As the second most-long serving club in the top tier of the English topflight league, Frank Lampard's side ensured that preserved the record to see them included on June 16, 2022, Premier League draws for the 2022-23 season.

In doing so, the resilient Toffees on the resumption of the second half redefined their priority in the game which is, a must-win. Michael Keane's 54 minutes goal paved way for the resurgence that catapulted Richarlison and Dominic Calvert-Lewin's goals to earn a vital 3-2 win.

Toffees manager, Frank Lampard expressed the character of the club and its fans help propelled the team to survive the relegation scare.

"What we've just seen, it's Premier League safety, it's not Champions League. But what it means to the club and the circumstances they were given in," Lampard said in a post-match interview.

"The character of this club, the fans, players, just got us through. The spirit of the club was immense.

"There are a lot of people who work so hard for that, the players, the board, the fans, my staff. It's a huge night for Everton and now we want to take that forward," he added.

Lampard, who inspired the players in the dressing room after a disappointing first half, stressed that he worked more on the Toffees' emotions and psyche than resort to tactical changes.

He continued: "If you're honest you have to fake it, act a bit. Not show your feelings. You have to turn people and inspire them. Dele Alli came on and was amazing.

"My point was it's not the tactical change, it's the emotions and the character. Can you energise the crowd and score an early goal? Then it's the energy, the players deserve immense credit.

"If we don't get that first goal, it's difficult to win. I expected Burnley to get something. That goal was crucial, once it went in you felt the players, and the night, there was something special there. The crowd reacted, and we created a special night in Everton's history.

"We needed the fans tonight and at 2-0, it was easy to expect the worst.

But they've been doing it for a long time, since the Chelsea game. After the Burnley defeat, it was difficult. Again, the atmosphere was on another level, and it was great to see them on the pitch. We don't condone it but it was in such good faith," Lampard added.

With their heads up high after sealing their Premier League fate, Everton travels to the Emirates Stadium for their final fixture to crack down a top-four struggling Arsenal on Sunday to end the season.

Wash your mouth before you talk about me, Richarlison tells Carragher

Everton's Richarlison de Andrade has lambasted Liverpool's legend, Jamie Carragher, after the Merseyside club secured a qualification to feature in next season's Premier League whose draws will be released on June 16, 2022.

The Brazilian, who scored the second goal for the Toffees in the 3-2 comeback win against Patrick Viera's Crystal Palace at Goodison Park yesterday, responded to Carragher whose comment in the Merseyside derby infuriated him.

Carragher had in

the Merseyside derby, lamented that Richarlison was feigning being injured after the player fell a series of times due to hard tackles.

However, the player did not respond but waited till the perfect moment when Everton retained its Premier League status to post on Twitter.

He said, "Wash your mouth before you talk about me and Everton and I don't respect you."

This action taken by Richarlison against Carragher has further endeared him into the hearts

of Everton's fans who are in close rivalry with Liverpool.

Carragher during the Merseyside derby said, "Honestly, get up, every week I watch him play like that.

"Get up, carry on. He's been down three times already, [there's] nothing wrong with him," he added.

Richarlison, who joined Everton in 2018 from Watford that have been axed down to Championship next season, has featured 143 times, scoring 43 goals in all competition for the Toffees.



Djokovic, Nadal, others set for French Open showdown



World number 1 and Italian Open champion, Novak Djokovic will kick start his French Open campaign against Japan's Yoshihito Nishioka.

Djokovic, who recently

won his first 2022 title in Italy after seven months of trophy drought, may likely meet Australian Open champion, Rafael Nadal in the quarter-finals.

Both tennis stars, who

suffered stunning defeats in the hands of wunderkind and promising tennis talent, Carlos Alcaraz, in the Madrid Open, would probably have met in the Australian Open Championship.

However, Serbian Djokovic, denied a visa over his unvaccinated Covid-19 status, saw the Spaniard defeat world number 2, Daniil Medvedev, to clinch the Australian Open title to record 21 Grand Slam wins.

The 13-time French Open champion Rafael Nadal, Djokovic, Alcaraz and German Alexander Zverev have been drawn in the top half of Roland Garros.

While world number 2, Daniil Medvedev, fourth seed Stefano Tsitsipas, and Russian Andrey Rublev all occupy the second half.

Nadal's first game will be against Australian Jordan Thompson while Madrid Open champion, Alcaraz has drawn a qualifier in the opening round.

Meanwhile, Scottish Andy Murray has withdrawn from competing in Roland Garros following a food poisoning that saw him pull out of the Madrid Open.

The Scot recently returned to action after hip surgery to defeat wildcard Dominic Thiem and Denis Shapovalov in Madrid Open to set a clash with Djokovic which could have been their first since 2017.

Murray deliberately abstained from competing in Roland Garros to build his form ahead of the Wimbledon scheduled for next month, June 27 to July 10, 2022.

Selected 129 World Cup officials to meet 'quality first', says FIFA

Edo Queen's head coach, Wemimo Mathew, has insisted that the Nigeria Women Football League (NWFL) topflight club has improved more than the way it was before she assumed duty.

Unperturbed by the sack, Mathew, who was recently relieved of her job by the Edo State Sports Commission, citing the level the team were before she came on board, noted that last year the team lost 4-0 and qualified for the Super Six by finishing the season on fourth.

According to the coach, the team was in a bad shape and were unable to win on away soil, losing to Adamawa Queens in home and away clashes, but this year was different as they dismantled Adamawa Queens with payback wins at home and away fixtures.

Mathew added that this season has been different to portray a clear distinction between her contribution to the development of the team which finished second this season to qualify for the Super Six as against the previous season.

"Well, if that is what they

want, I do not see anything bad about it. But this is not the team that I met here," She told the News Agency of Nigeria.

"Last year, they were beating them 4-0 in the Super Six. Last year in qualifying for this event, they took fourth, but we took second this year to qualify for the Super Six.

"They lost all their matches last year. We played a draw in our first game yesterday (Monday). Even during the league, we played 10 matches and stayed unbeaten. We were winning away and home matches.

"They could not even win any away match last year. They lost to Adamawa Queens home and away last year and this year we went to beat Nasarawa Amazons home and away.

"So, if they have any secret reasons as to why they have done this (her sacking), no problem."

Mathew insisted that she did well for the team because it takes time to build a team. "I brought players from 12 different clubs and it takes time for them to work together."

Minister tasks sports federation on grassroots development

Sunday Dare, Federal Minister of Youth and Sports Development has appealed to the Nigeria Volleyball Federation (NVBF), Confederation of African Volleyball (CAVB) and the International Volleyball Federation (FIVB) to set up the necessary structure aimed at developing the sport from the cradle, the grassroots.

The Minister, who is a proponent of grassroots development and homegrown talents in sports, noted that volleyball is one of the sports that has improved overwhelmingly since he assumed office and charged NVBF, FIVB and CAVB to sustain the feat when he received a delegation led by the President of NVBF, Mr Musa Nimrod.

He urged the Federation therefore to develop more interest in the game in schools

and colleges to ensure Nigeria is shot to the topmost category in international volleyball.

He said, "Work towards developing the game from the grassroots, schools, colleges and ensure Nigeria produces the volleyball teams and clubs that can compete favourably with other countries."

The Minister, who also said volleyball is part of the nation's DNA, opined that Nigeria is a sports-loving country where the government is ready to support all games to thrive for the harvest of talents and socio-economic development.

In his remarks, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry, Alh Ismaila Abubakar assured that the Ministry is ready to join hands with the volleyball federation and other federations to ensure the development of sports in the country.

Also speaking, the President of Nigeria Volleyball



Federation (NVBF), Mr Musa Nimrod commended the present administration for their contribution to the development of the game in Nigeria.

He assured that the federation will do its best to ensure that volleyball is given pride of place in the country.

The delegation from the International Volleyball Federation (FIVB) was led by

Mr Mushtaqe Mohammed and included Hitesh Malhotra and multiple Olympic medalists and legend, De Good Amauri Giba.

More so, the President of the Nigeria Olympic Committee (NOC), Engineer Habu Gumel, who is an Executive Committee member of the International Volleyball Federation, was also part of the visit.

Ten Hag arrives London to discuss transfer plans



Manchester United manager Erik ten Hag has flown into London with one of his associates, Mitchell van der Gaag, to discuss the transfer arrangement for the summer ahead of next

season's campaign.

Ten Hag, not expected this time soon since Ralf Rangnick was in situ, has raised the confidence the club have reposed in him for coming ahead of time before Rangnick plays his last match on Sunday at Selhurst Park against Crystal Palace.

Van der Gaag, who is expected to be confirmed as one of the former Ajax Boss' assistants alongside Steve McClaren, who was also assistant to Sir Alex Ferguson from 1999 to 2001, accompanied Ten Haag to discuss the transfer strategy to adopt for the season and other structural issues.

The Red Devils' boss earlier thought would accompany

Ajax to a tour, jetted into London through a chartered flight to meet with the club management to discuss a wide range of issues.

According to reports, the 53-year-old football manager will be at Selhurst Park on Sunday to watch the team play against Crystal Palace in the last Premier League fixture for the season.

More so, Erik ten Hag is keen on United confirming Mitchell van der Gaag and Steve McClaren as his assistant and backroom staff and his energy has been described by the club hierarchy as "authoritative" and "clear in how to implement his vision."

The Dutch coach is

determined to succeed in Manchester United, cancelling his post-match trip with Ajax to begin the journey of a tumultuous task at Old Trafford.

Meanwhile, Manchester United players, Anthony Elanga and Scott McTominay have expressed their readiness to work with Erik ten Hag to win trophies and return the club to its glory days.

Erik Ten Hag, who becomes the seventh manager and the fifth permanent manager to be engaged by Manchester United to manage the team after Sir Alex Ferguson retired in 2013, led Ajax to win their 36th Eredivisie trophy in history.

PSG Gueye refuses to wear gay-supported jersey

Senegal's Idrissa Gueye refused to play on Saturday for Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) against Montpellier which has raised criticism from a section of French football promoters.

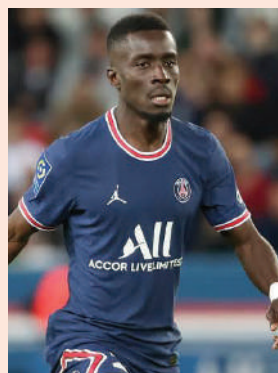
Gueye, a former Everton and Aston Villa player, withdrew from the contest and was the only player that did not feature in Le Parisiens' 4-0 win according to PSG coach, Mauricio Pochettino.

The resolve by the Senegalese to abstain from the match which is still sketchy is said to be related to the inclusion of the rainbow design added to the team's jersey to show solidarity for LGBTQ rights.

Gueye, a moslem and from a country that prohibits same-sex marriage, issuing up to a five-year sentence as a penalty to anyone found guilty of the crime, has been asked by the French Football Federation (FFF)

to explain his absence from PSG's encounter with Montpellier.

Recently, precisely on Monday, 17-year-old Blackpool's forward, Jake Daniels, openly came out to announce he is gay. This makes him the first British professional footballer after thirty years of Justin Fashanu's demise, a known gay, to accept



his same-sex status.

However, Gueye, since he joined PSG from Everton for a fee of £30m in July 2019, is the second time he has refused to wear the rainbow-designed numbered jersey to mark 17 May's International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia.

The AFP news agency said on Wednesday it had seen a letter from the FFF's ethics board calling on Gueye to explain why he missed Saturday's game, BBC Sport reported.

The letter, says AFP, calls for him to "issue a public apology" or to say that the rumours he refused to play are "unfounded".

The letter reportedly adds if he did refuse to play he would be "validating discriminatory behaviour".

Meanwhile, Gueye's fellow national teammates, Crystal

Palace's Cheikhou Kouyate and Watford's Ismaila Sarr have taken to social media to throw their weight behind the PSG's midfielder.

According to Kouyate, who posted a picture of himself alongside Gueye on Instagram captioned 'a real man', Gueye did the right thing to respect his faith while Watford winger Sarr posted a picture of him and Gueye with three heart emojis and caption, "100%".

Reports emerging from Senegal reveal the country is in support of the player's action. The report said that the country's president Macky Sall wrote on Twitter that Gueye's Muslim beliefs must be respected, while sports minister Matar Ba wrote that Gueye was backed by his country's people, alongside a picture of the midfielder on pilgrimage to Mecca.

Debutant Anambra Queens wins first match

Anambra Queens Volleyball Club have won their first match since the National Division One League started last week Friday, May 13, at the indoor sports hall of the MKO Abiola National Stadium, Abuja.

The eastern volleyball team, who are debutants, after losing their first two matches against Chief of Naval Staff (CNS) Spikers and Life Camp Volleyball Club, recovered with a straight three-set win against Bayonet Spikers of Kaduna in their third fixture.

In a statement by the coach of Anambra Queens, Uche Okafor, the team was hurriedly put together to expose the young players to a competitive tournament.

He conceded that despite the team having a scrappy start that resulted in their two defeats, they are determined to dismantle any team that comes along their way.

Okafor said that the environment affected the players in one way or the other noting that this is the first time they have played the sport indoors. He added that the team comprises students from secondary schools and higher institutions.

"This is our first appearance in the Division One League. This is the first time they are playing indoor games," Okafor told NAN after the match.

"It's the will of God, I am

FIVB, Nigeria collaborate to develop volleyball sport

The Vice President of the Federation of International Volleyball (FIVB), Mushtaqe Mohammed, has assured of FIVB's willingness to assist Nigeria in developing the volleyball sport to increase its participation in international competitions.

Mohammed, who made the statement the moment he landed at the Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport, pointed out that the lower cadre of the nation's volleyball team is very good and should be groomed through a developmental roadmap into the senior team.

The FIVB Vice President stressed that Nigeria like some other countries is instrumental to the development of the sport in the world.

He added that his mission in Nigeria is to know the area the nation is deficient in the sport so that FIVB can fashion out the possible solutions to add the needed flair that will improve Nigeria's participation in Olympics and

happy. It's not that we are fully prepared but we are determined. We are happy about this victory because we lost our previous matches.

"Some of them are still in secondary schools and some are in higher institutions. I decided to select them to come and expose them for this type of tournament.

"This is the first time playing indoor games and some have been travelling to the FCT before. I just decided to choose the set of players that are still young and full of discipline and ready to play according to the instructions given to them. Now we have learnt from our mistakes and we will win all our subsequent matches," he added.

According to the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN), twelve teams are participating in the first phase of the championship.

The male teams are Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS), UCEM Spikers, Wikki Spikers of Bauchi, Spartan Spikers of Yola, ABM of Katsina and Caliphate Spikers of Sokoto.

The female teams on the other hand are; CNS Spikers, Bayonet Spikers of Kaduna, Life Camp VC of Abuja, Yelwa Spikers of Bauchi, Olalomi Royal Spikers of Ilorin and Anambra Queens.

The 2022 National Division One Volleyball League which started on Friday is expected to end on Sunday.

international competitions.

"There is a need to help the development of the sport and to enhance the participation of Nigeria in world championships and Olympics," Mushtaqe told newsmen at Azikiwe international airport.

"Nigeria, like most countries, is really important in the development of world Volleyball.

"We are here to discuss with the National federation what types of support we can bring to Nigeria so that volleyball can develop in a big way," he added.

According to Mushtaqe, Nigeria participated in two consecutive world championships but must do better by exploiting the younger talents if the country is desirous of excelling in the international scene.

He continued: "The junior category is one of the most important categories for development because Nigeria is doing well in the junior category.





India 2022: Nigeria U17 defeats Ethiopia in Addis Ababa

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

Nigeria's U17 female team also called the Flamingos have defeated Ethiopia in the first leg of the final round of the FIFA U17 Women's World Cup qualifiers to India.

Flamingos, who are yet to conceive a goal in the qualifiers, dismantling every stumbling block as they surge towards clinching the ticket to India, took a giant step further into the Asia continent by winning Ethiopia 1-0 in Abebe Bekila Stadium.

As the duel kicked off, Nigeria U17 started on a good note in the early minutes of the game as Opeyemi Ajakaye's 5th-minute weak attempt was resisted by the Ethiopians.

The Flamingos kept on the push to break the deadlock and sustain it till the 36th-minute when Ajakaye's strike finally saw the back of the Ethiopians' net. Thanks to Taiwo Afolabi's through pass.

However, the home team



after the first half closed tightened their defence a bit and tried to curtail the firepower of the Super Eagles.

In the course of the match, both teams made some changes to dictate the scoreline but were unable to effect it until it ended 1-0 in favour of Nigeria.

It is noteworthy that Ajakaye's only goal in the match increases her tally in the FIFA U17 Women's World Cup qualifiers to six.

Consequently, Nigeria will on Saturday, June 4, 2022, host the Ethiopians in the deciding and second leg clash for the FIFA U17 Women's

World Cup qualifying ticket at the MKO Abiola National Stadium, Abuja.

Furthermore, the winner on aggregate from the double ties will qualify as one of Africa's three representatives at this year's FIFA U17 Women's World Cup finals in India.

Police arrest man over Sheffield United captain's attack

The Nottinghamshire police have arrested a 31-year-old man in connection with an assault on the captain of Sheffield United, Billy Sharp, at the Nottingham City Ground, yesterday.

Sheffield United, after sustaining a defeat at the championship playoff where they lost 3-2 on penalties to Forest, were being guided off the pitch by Sharp before the incident happened.

Several reports state that Billy was on the sideline of the pitch guiding the Blades out to the dressing room when his attacker invaded the pitch and hacked him down.

Reviewing the footage, the Nottingham police swung into action and arrested a man who has been taken into custody for interrogations.

"A 31-year-old man has been arrested on suspicion of assault in connection with this incident. He remains in custody and will be questioned by officers," Chief Inspector Paul Hennessy briefed the press.

"Our enquiries into the circumstances surrounding the incident are ongoing. We have spoken to the player concerned and we are working with both clubs who are supporting us with our investigation," he added.

In a statement by Sheffield United manager, Paul Heckingbottom, Sharp was actually minding his business when he was attacked unaware, resulting in an injury that needed stitches.

Heckingbottom said, "We've seen one of our players attacked. He shook up, bleeding, and angry.

"Bill was minding his own business off the pitch, trying to get our players away. He was blindsided, it was cowardly. He was knocked to the ground [and required] stitches, he was shaken up," he lamented.

Meanwhile, Nottingham Forest have apologised to the Blades and Billy Sharp over the ugly incident which they described as appalling.

The club assured of their full cooperation with the police authorities to bring the penetrator to justice adding that the culprit will be banned for life from City Ground.

"Nottingham Forest Football Club are appalled to learn that our former player, Billy Sharp, was assaulted leaving the pitch after tonight's match at The City Ground," the club's official statement read.

"The club will work with the authorities to locate the individual in the order they are held to account for their actions, which will include a life ban from Nottingham Forest.

Balotelli's incredible freekick silent booing fans

Former Milan and Inter striker, Mario Balotelli, silent booing Galatasaray fans in a Turkish Süper Lig match with Adana Demirspor on Monday at NEF Stadyumu.

Though the match ended 3-2 in favour of Galatasaray, with an edge-of-box effort from the Italian forward hitting the crossbar on one occasion, the 67th-minute freekick kept overwhelming the

home fans.

Balotelli, 31, has scored a total of 14 goals in 32 appearances for the club this season in all competitions. He scored his only goal in the Turkish Cup in the 5-0 win against Serik Belediye in the fourth round of the competition.

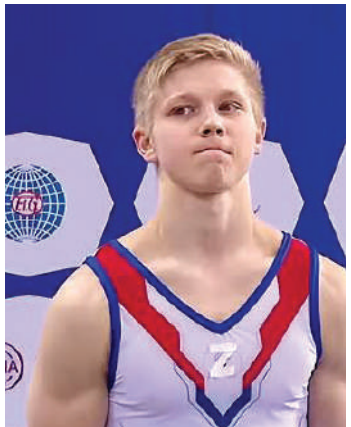
Despite the result, Monday's event was very dear to the former Manchester City player due to the scenario that played out when he

was about to take the freekick. Dear to his heart to the extent the player had to upload the footage on Twitter.

The 128th and 5th ranked players in Süper Lig and Adana Demirspor respectively, join the Turkish side last summer from Monza, an Italian Serie B team that got promoted to the second tier of Italy's football division in the 2019-2022 season.



FIG slams Russian Ivan Kuliak with one year ban



The International Gymnastics Federation (FIG) has banned Russian gymnast Ivan Kuliak for one year from all FIG-organised events and other affiliate bodies.

According to the pronouncement by the Gymnastics Ethics Foundation (GEF), the disciplinary organ of FIG, Kuliak will have to forfeit his bronze medal earned in the parallel bars final and repay the prize therewith.

Kuliak in a FIG competition in March, Apparatus World Cup, in Doha, Qatar, was found to

have indented a 'Z' symbol on his chest. A symbol which has been promoted by Russia since its military invaded Ukraine.

GEF stressed that Kuliak violated FIG rules in doing so which necessitated a corresponding sanction but handed a 21-day appeal lifeline to the Russian gymnast.

The 20-year-old Russian gymnast was found to have displayed the symbol on the podium close to the competition's gold medalist, Ukrainian Illia Kovtun.

Although nothing was found against the head of the Russian delegation, Valentina Rodionenko and coach Igor Kalabushkin, FIG added, "If the protective measures keeping Russian athletes from competing are still in place on 17 May 2023, the ban shall continue and expire six months after the removal of said measures."

If Kuliak fails in his appeal, he will therefore repay 2500 Swiss francs as the prize money and the contributions to the costs of the proceedings.