

# Sowore publishes campaign account

By **TUNDE JOSHUA**, Abuja

**W**hile the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission

(EFCC), tasked with the responsibility of monitoring the financial activities of parties and politicians is yet to come up with guidelines, a presidential aspirant, Omoyele Sowore, has made a public statement of his campaign account. In what could be described as rare display of accountability and transparency, the Sowore Political Action Committee.

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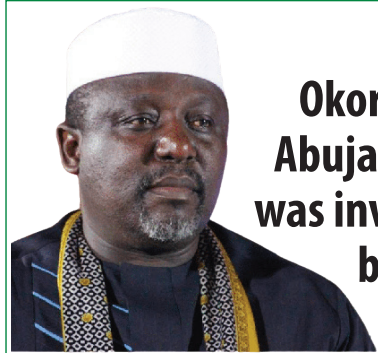


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# The Trumpet

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Members of a civil society coalition comprising many groups, led by Reverend David Ugolor, protesting against Shell Petroleum Development Company at the multinational oil giant's office in Lagos...on Tuesday. The protests which started last weekend are also being held in Europe and some other parts of the world. Story on Back page.



# Showdown in Delta guber primary, others, LP-led option emerges to fight APC, PDP

By **TUNDE JOSHUA**, Abuja

It is a battle of 'godson' versus 'godfather' in Asaba as Governor Ifeanyi Okowa and Chief James Onanefe Ibori go head-to-head at the Delta State in what is seen as a do-or-die gubernatorial primary election of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP).

The party and the rival All Progressives Congress (APC) are holding the governorship primaries nationwide on Wednesday and Thursday.

PDP has held state and federal assembly primaries which APC is getting ready to hold throughout the weekend with its presidential one that stretches to next week.

In Asaba, Okowa is believed to be supporting House of Assembly speaker Rt. Hon. Sheriff Oborevwori as against Ibori's former finance commissioner David Edegbie in what observers and many others see as the battle for the political lives of the ex-governor and the incumbent. Heavy financial inducement of the delegates by both sides is being alleged.

Also in the race are Deputy Governor

Kingsley Otuaro, former Okowa Justice commissioner Peter Mrakpor and Deacon Chris Iyovwaye among others while Chief Kenneth Gbagi and Comrade Donald Awolowo Egbo have dropped out and may be heading to other political parties to actualise their ambitions.

Egbo is a youthful aspirant with a mass grassroots appeal among the millennials.

Meanwhile, the opposition base against the ruling APC ahead of next year's election has been widened beyond the PDP as a third force or coalition alternative comprising about six registered political parties, labour groups and civil society organisations has emerged.

The coalition has adopted the Labour Party (LP) as the arrow head of the third option.

Parties in the coalition are Labour Party (LP), New Nigeria Peoples Party (NNPP), African Democratic Congress (ADC), Social Democratic Party (SDP), Allied Peoples Movement (APM), People's Redemption Party (PRP) and National Rescue Movement (NRM).

The third force which



Okowa



Ibori



Otuaro



Oborevwori

has been much awaited in some quarters was berthed after months of deliberations by progressive-minded democrats desirous of changing the political order.

It was said to have taken 15 months of continuous consultations, deliberations and agreements among allied political parties and the National Consultative Front (NCFront), to agree to field a joint presidential candidate on the platform of the Labour Party in 2023.

The decision was made known in a communique issued at the end of a meeting.

A spokesperson for the National Consultative Front (NCFront), Ms Bello Bilikis, disclosed that the formal endorsement of the Labour Party by the '3rd Force' Movement



Mrakpor

was ratified by separate political commissions of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) and the Trade Union Congress (TUC) with their allies like the The Political Alternative Movement (TPAM) and the Civil Society."

She said the new movement is set to reposition the Labour Party as an "alternative platform for rescuing Nigeria ahead of the



Edegbie

2023 general elections."

According to Bilikis, Prof Attahiru Jega of the People's Redemption Party (PRP), Professor Pat Utomi of the Labour Party and Senator Saidu Dansadau of the National Rescue Movement, are also on board with the arrangement and have been instructed to build a Mega Electoral Alliance and adopt a single line of candidates

among the seven allied parties involved in the '3rd Force' alliance talks for the 2023 elections.

"With the novel synergy between the Labour Party and the NCFront, the convening platform of the 3rd Force Movement, which is also today the largest political mass movement in the country, Nigerians can be rest assured that the glorious future we all desire for our dear country, is now achievable by 2023, especially with the brewing implosion hovering over the ruling cartels of APC and PDP, which will soon burst into unpreventable disintegration after their party primaries.

"To this end, an inclusive Consensus Technical Committee to screen presidential candidates and other candidates of '3rd Force' allied Parties towards the adoption of a single line of candidates across all 2023 elections, is expected to be set up next month after the conclusion of all party primaries," the communique read.

Going further, she said the '3rd Force' Coalition leaders and parties are expected to jointly address the nation soon to present its mission of saving Nigeria from imminent collapse and anarchy foisted by the ruling parties in Nigeria."

The 3rd Force may be a readily available platform for aggrieved aspirants that lost out of the power games ongoing in both APC and PDP.

## Sowore publishes campaign account

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

made its monthly account available on social media.

The Committee which coordinates the Sowore For President campaign promised to leave permanently online statement of the account into which willing Nigerians can pay money to support the presidential aspiration of the Sahara Reporters publisher and activist turned politician.

Information on the statement of the Nigerian bank account of the Omoyele Sowore

Presidential Campaign, according to the online statement, will be released monthly for "transparency purpose."

Nigerians politicians in leading parties, like APC and PDP, have in the past breached provision of the Electoral Act on campaign spending and sponsorship.

Before its amendment, section 93 of Nigeria's electoral law provides that "a political party sponsoring the election of a candidate shall, within three months

of the announcement of the results of the election, file a report of the contributions made by individuals and entities to (INEC)."

For the 2019 presidential election, just the Action Democratic Party (ADP), All Grassroots Alliance (AGA), Liberation Movement and YES Party, out of 73 parties complied with this provision by submitting financial details of their candidates.

Many Nigerians and civil society organisations are

concerned and wonder whether INEC will be able to monitor parties and candidates effectively.

Of grave concern is the fact that the law does not specify punishment for breaching campaign spending benchmark.

The new campaign spending ceilings in the fresh Electoral Act has been jacked up from between 150 per cent to 400 per cent.

The spending limit now allows presidential candidates to increase their cash haul from the current N1 billion to N5 billion (400 per cent

increase). Governorship candidates will be able to rake in N1 billion from the current N200 million.

Senatorial candidates can now legally raise N100 million, up from the previous N40 million (150 per cent increase). Candidates to the House of Representative are set to accept N70 million from the current N30 million (133 per cent increase). State Assembly candidates are free to raise N30 million, up from the previous N10 million (a 200 per cent increase).





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# Delta APC will conduct free, fair credible primaries, says chairman

By **KELVIN OHORORU**

All Progressives Congress (APC) in Delta State has assured all aspirants that bought the party's tickets of free and fair conduct of its primary elections.

Chairman of the party in the state, Engineer Omene Sobotie, gave this assurance on Tuesday while addressing all Delta South Senatorial District aspirants vying for elective positions. It was at an enlarged meeting of Delta South APC held at the Emede residence of Hon Joel-Onowakpo Thomas, its senatorial candidate.

He remarked: "APC is positioned and ready to take over Delta State. We are not going to compromise. We will ensure that APC wins all elective positions across the State, especially the Delta South Senatorial District seat.

"For those of us who are sensitive in the spirit, you will know that God has given us Delta State. From what is happening on the other side, we will reap more people into our fold most especially now that so many people have lost in the PDP primaries that has been conducted."

Delta South Senatorial District Chairman, Mr Austin Oribioye, said: "I am so elated to see everyone of you in this auspicious gathering of APC today. Delta State APC has come of age and I wish all of us fruitful deliberation."

Responding, APC Delta South Senatorial District candidate, Hon. Thomas, said: "the APC we have today is more united and hungry for victory. If you lose primaries as an aspirant, you are already a candidate for an appointment.

"Please let's jettison the idea of voting for



Delta State All Progressives Congress (APC) chairman, Engr. Omene Sobotie, in a handshake with the party's leader in Isoko, Chief Lucky Esigie, in Emede.

only one candidate. A total win will give us room to benefit for various appointments. We must commit ourselves to it."

Others who spoke in the same vein are, Chief Lucky Esigie- APC leader from Isoko nation; Chief Johnny Michael-

APC leader, Ijaw ethnic nationality; Chief Evans Omatsoguwu- APC leader, Itsekiri ethnic nationality and Chief Birinies Ojogri- APC leader, Warri South.

They all commended Sobotie over the level of playground and free, fair and transparent

primaries which he has promised all aspirants, stressing that, they will work assiduously to give APC victory in the forthcoming elections and take Dennis Osadebe House in 2023.

Responding on behalf of all the aspirants, Mr. Ekpoto Ekpoto

Emmanuel, APC candidate, Warri Federal Constituency, expressed gratitude to the state party executives led by the chairman over the assurance to conduct transparent primaries, pledging that they would be very orderly during the exercises.

## Ugwuanyi picks PDP senate ticket

By **CHARLES ONYEKWERE**,  
South-East Correspondent

Governor Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi has picked the ticket to contest for Enugu North Senatorial District seat to in 2023 general elections on the platform of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP).

The governor picked the ticket at the primaries of the PDP held on Tuesday at the Nsukka Stadium in Nsukka Local Government Area.

Announcing the results, the returning officer, Yandev Ammbai, said Ugwuanyi polled 299 votes to defeat his closest rival, Eze Godwin who scored 16 votes while Godsmack Ugwu and Okanye Celestine recorded zero votes.

The primary election, which witnessed large turnout of supporters of all the aspirants, was conducted on Tuesday after it was shifted from Monday due to the Mondays' sit-at-home in the South-East.

Ugwuanyi is seeking to replace Chukwuka Utazi, the incumbent senator representing the District.

Enugu North Senatorial District consists of six of Local Government Areas: Nsukka, Udenu, Igbo-Eze North, Igbo-Eze South, Igbo Etiti and Uzo-Uwani.

# Why Okorocho's Abuja home was invaded, by EFCC

## ■ Ex-governor risks missing APC presidential screening

By **PAUL MICHAEL**, Abuja

A raid and barricading of the Abuja home of a former governor of Imo State, Senator Rochas Okorocho on Tuesday by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) followed his alleged refusal to honour its invitation on several occasions.

In a statement by its spokesperson, Wilson Uwujaren, EFCC alleged that Okorocho jumped an administrative bail earlier granted him.

It also alleged that attempts to arraign Okorocho, who current represents Imo West senatorial district, were stalled twice due to his absence after reportedly evading service of processes.

"Operatives of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), today May 24, 2022, arrived at the Maitama, Abuja home of a former Governor of Imo state, Senator Rochas Okorocho, to effect his arrest.

"The move followed the refusal of the former governor to honour invitations after jumping the administrative bail earlier granted him by the commission.

"EFCC had on January

24, 2022, filed a 17-count criminal charge bordering on diversion of public funds and properties to the tune of N2.9 billion against Okorocho.

"The case was assigned to Honourable Justice Inyang Ekwo of the Federal High Court, Abuja but attempts to arraign Senator Okorocho, were twice stalled owing to the absence of the ex-governor who evaded service of processes.

"At the last adjourned date, March 28th, 2022, Justice Ekwo before adjourning until May 30th, 2022, had warned that it was 'the last adjournment I shall grant in this matter.'

"In the circumstances, the commission is left with no option than to effect the arrest of Senator Okorocho and bring him to trial," EFCC said.

Meanwhile, the embattled former senator earlier pleaded with operatives of the Commission who invaded and barricaded his home to allow him to go for the screening of presidential aspirants of the All Progressives Congress (APC) holding Tuesday.

Okorocho is one of the 24 presidential aspirants being screened by the APC.

The Senator told newsmen that he was under siege after

EFCC operatives on Tuesday barricaded his house.

He described the situation as an ugly development that does not portray the EFCC in good light.

He alleged that the Commission's invasion was a ploy to stop him from attending the APC presidential screening.

Contrary to the claim of the EFCC, he also claimed that no formal invitation was extended to him before the raid.

According to him: "Frankly speaking, I find myself in a situation of what I call hostage. Policemen and EFCC operatives are currently in my compound to possibly whisk me away and my gate is blocked.

"All I am asking is to be allowed to go for my screening because I am a presidential aspirant and our election comes up on Sunday. If I am not allowed to go for this screening, I might miss it.

"I am not an unknown person in the country. I have an address and people know me in the country. All that it takes for the EFCC is to send me an invitation and I will gladly oblige."

Also, his lawyer, Ola Olanipekun (SAN), described the attempt by the EFCC to arrest the Senator

without a search warrant as a violation of his fundamental human rights.

According to him, "I got a distress call that the Rochas family is under siege as the lead counsel who is handling all the matters that are in Court concerning this matter.

"I got here and I met a detachment of EFCC officers and security men and they are led by investigation officers who are familiar to us the legal team in this matter.

"My simple request is, what is going on here and the answer is that the Director Operations wants to have a meeting with His Excellency former Governor and Distinguished Senator Rochas Okorocho.

"Before now, there are issues on the ground. There are extant Court Orders restraining arrest. There are Court Orders made by the Federal High Court in Abuja restraining interrogation on this matter.

"So, what I have sought to do is to ask whether there are letters for an invitation? There are none. Whether there are warrants for the arrest? There is none.

"Are there court processes to be served? There are none. In fact, the processes are served by Court officials,

who are the bailiff of the Court.

"I then asked what is really going on? I've also requested that the invitee should be given time to report either later this week or early next or any other time other than the day of the screening of presidential aspirants on the platform of APC which the Distinguished Senator is a most prominent person who is to be screened for the presidency of Nigeria.

"Today is the day of screening and an invitation by any security agency not preceded by a letter of invitation or notice before now, to us is very prejudicial. That is why we requested that a day be fixed so that the senator can voluntarily go and keep an appointment with whoever it is that is inviting him again that has been turned down.

"As I speak to you now the siege continues but reasoning must be made to prevail. What normally happens in such a circumstance like this in a country governed by law and the Constitution is that a citizen has fundamental human rights to freedom even when you are being investigated for any alleged offence.

"I dare say it is a breach of the fundamental human rights of citizen Rochas Okorocho and it has to stop."



## APC chieftain cautions Biafran agitators

By **ATHAN AGBAKWURU**, Owerri

A chieftain of the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC), in Imo State, Chief Alan B. Onyemaechi, has warned agitators who claim to be supporting the detained leader of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), Mazi Nnamdi Kanu, to shun violence.

He said violent agitation would jeopardize their aspirations and

complicate their leader's treason case.

Onyemaechi who spoke to the press in Owerri pointed out that persons hiding under the cover of the IPOB to unleash mayhem in the South-East had continued were only do so to complicate the treason trial of the detained Nnamdi Kanu and mess up the entire agitations of the Ndigbo for fairness, equity and justice in the Nigerian project.

He noted that since the civil war that ended in January 1970 the Igbos cannot be said to be doing badly in the Nigeria nation but declared that "the issue is that when it comes to making appointments, those in-charge of such appointments become apprehensive of giving Ndigbo their fair share in order not to surrender power to them or to re-launch them into their premiere positions because of the war."

He expressed that, Orlu has become a theatre of violence with lives and properties belonging to APC members being destroyed daily insisting, "it is not out of place to accuse political opponents of Governor Hope Uzodinma of being responsible for this. "Orlu today has become a theatre of IPOB with lives and properties of APC members being destroyed daily and so it is not out of place to accuse political opponents of Governor Hope Uzodinma of being responsible for this. They want the crisis to continue unabated so as to frustrate Governor Uzodinma and possibly see a state of emergency in this state.

"They want the crisis to continue unabated so as to frustrate Governor Uzodinma and possibly see a state of emergency imposed in this state."

On the raging quest for a Nigeria's president of Igbo extraction come 2023, Chief Onyemaechi, who was Chairman of Aboh Mbaise LGA, declared his support for the Igbo aspirations saying it would go a long way to end separatist agitations by IPOB and other pro-Biafran groups.

## BMO dismisses PDP's alleged APC's tenure elongation plot

Buhari Media Organisation (BMO) has said that Claims by the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) of a ploy to extend President Muhammadu Buhari's tenure is a diversionary tactic in the aftermath of the crisis that trailed the opposition political grouping's primaries last weekend.

According to BMO, it is irresponsible of the opposition party to concoct a plot out of the President's delay in signing a further amendment to the Electoral Act 2022 at a time its primary election was marred by irregularities.

In a statement signed by its Chairman Niyi Akinsiju and Secretary Cassidy Madueke, the group said it was shocking

that barely 24 hours after PDP through its National Organising Secretary Umar Bature released guidelines for its primaries, "the party spokesman Debo Ologunagba threw caution to the wind with a spurious claim of a tenure elongation plot over the recently passed amendment to the Electoral Act that the President has yet to give his assent to.

"For us, there is no explanation for this volte-face other than the harvest of crisis and drama that trailed the PDP primaries across the country.

"From the kidnap of delegates in Osun State and the death of a PDP member in Bayelsa to factional elections in Delta State, there are clear signs that PDP has

not learnt from its past mistakes and this is what the party leadership wants to divert attention from, with its lame claim on the delayed Presidential assent.

"Our advice is for the party that has been boasting about 'rescuing Nigeria' to first rescue itself from its time-tested violent ways and learn to play decent politics.

"This advisory also extends to the need to act in a responsible manner instead of seeking to stoke crisis with unfounded claims".

BMO wondered why any individual or group could hold the Presidency responsible for what the National Assembly has since described as an unintended error.



President Muhammadu Buhari

## 'Killing of pregnant woman, kids terrorism, not ethnic cleansing'



Comrade Emmanuel Onwubiko

Human Rights Writers Association of Nigeria (HURIWA) has condemned the reported massacre by gunmen in Anambra State of a pregnant woman, the unborn baby and her four kids. It described it as a most gruesome and despicable crude terrorism of the 21st century which must be attended to swiftly with every might that the Anambra and federal governments can muster.

In a media statement, HURIWA through the National coordinator Comrade Emmanuel Onwubiko, called on governors of the South East region to as a matter of extreme urgency, take transparent steps to stamp out this emerging terrorism which is capable of instigate civil strife across ethnicities.

The group said: "We urge

Igbo governors to act swiftly because the killing of these innocent souls is beginning to take ethnic dimension especially after the Ebonyi State governor Dave Umahi appeared on television to mention the unknown gunmen as being Igbos even without providing any shreds of forensic evidence.

"HURIWA is appealing that there should be a security meeting between South East governors and governors of Northern region so steps are taken urgently to make it very clear that no sane person is supporting act of terrorism."

HURIWA condemned the mass murders on Sunday in Anambra State, following the killing of seven persons in various locations in the state. Out of the number, four were

siblings. Their mother was also among the dead.

The attack took place at Isulo in Orumba North council. The other two persons were killed at Abatete in Idemili North council.

"HURIWA recalled that the gunmen invaded the areas, opened fire on the victims and left showing that there is no ethnic colouration but pure act of terrorism which must be stamped out by first and foremost bringing the perpetrators to face the stiffest penalties.

"HURIWA is once more asking the Governor of Anambra State to urge his brother governors of the South East to work out regional strategies for stamping out this emerging terrorism which has nothing to do with any sort of political agitation but these are acts of terrorism.

## Edo, USA partner on agric, others

By **ISAAC OLAMIKAN**

Edo State and the United States, are exploring areas of investment to sustain the gains recorded by the Obaseki-led government in agriculture, economy, healthcare and education, among others.

Governor Godwin Obaseki disclosed this when he received the United States Ambassador to Nigeria, Mary Leonard, who was on a courtesy visit at Government House, Benin City.

The governor said his government is sustaining efforts at engendering sustainable growth and development and ensuring economic prosperity for Edo people. He said, "for us, it is all about our economy. We have been able to grow our economy to align with its potential. We are addressing a whole lot of issues, particularly security and healthcare to sort out the economy.

"We are working to fire our economy to the extent that we utilize the economy to the benefit

of our people, and one key driver for us is agriculture; food. The number one pressing issue in Nigeria today is food availability. We are going to make sure we focus on food production and economic growth. We are engaging with our young people and trying to position them to take advantage of the opportunities in culture and technology globally. In order to be competitive economically, the key asset you need are your people; the key driver they need is education. They have to be educated. We are emphasizing education, particularly basic education," he added.

Reaffirming his government's commitment to ending the menace of human trafficking and illegal migration in Edo, Obaseki further noted, "We realized that it is that lack of hope and poor education that fuels irregular migration, and we have tried as much as we can to curtail that menace of irregular

migration by creating hope for them; nobody wants to leave home if the home is comfortable."

Highlighting the success recorded by his administration in the health sector, the governor said the state partnered with the Association of Nigeria Physicians in the Americas (ANPA) to provide free medical outreach to Edo people.

He said, "A couple of weeks ago, we received 67 medical practitioners in our state and they worked with our personnel on ground to improve quality healthcare delivery to our people. For us, with healthcare, it's about the foundation. If we have the basic health footprint right, as well as the training of community healthcare heads, then it will not be too challenging dealing with diseases such as malaria and distributing vaccines."

On culture, Obaseki added, "For us as government, our goal is to position Edo for the subcontinent. We are working

with the European Government in the areas of storage and preservation facilities and the Nigeria Government, to strengthen the national museum monuments' facilities. We are looking forward to working with the Royal Palace in building a royal collection and the whole idea is to build the Edo Museum of West Africa Art (EMOWAA) where you will have a lot to see when you come in."

Earlier in her speech, the United States Ambassador to Nigeria, Mary Leonard, saluted the government for its anti-trafficking laws, noting that they have helped in curbing irregular migration among young people in the state.

While reassuring the support of the United States, she further hailed the Obaseki-led government for its various programmes to positively engage Edo youths. Leonard further revealed that museums in the United States of America are intensifying efforts to repatriate Benin artifacts in their possession.



# RCCG's King's Court empowers, urges inclusion of persons with disabilities

By CLEOPATRA EDEKI

Pastor Ben Akabueze of The Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG), The King's Court, Victoria Island, Lagos has noted that there is a great need to show compassion and cater for people with disabilities as individuals, groups and religious organisations since the government cannot do this alone.

He made the call at the launch of a Disability Inclusion event tagged as Diversity Sunday at The Kings Court, saying: "Since we have over 27 million people living with disabilities in Nigeria, the governments have a lot to do to cater for them. But today in our own spaces and environments, we should start to do some things for them, not waiting for the government."

Akabueze added: "Although we are different in physical and mental abilities, never discriminate or look down on them because God has richly endowed everybody including the special persons with great talents, gifts and purpose to benefit the society."

"Today, The Kings Court welcomes everyone with disabilities with loving and open arms. Though we are different, we are one in Christ. The Church has sign language interpreters, volunteers, braille bibles, wheel chairs, and more to ensure the comfort of persons with disabilities."

The event included celebrating the diverse abilities of persons with disabilities through song ministration, dance, testimonies among others. On the occasion, 17 visually impaired persons received white canes from the church, free gift packs for all participants among other foods and drinks.

Mr. Jake Epelle, Chief Executive Officer and founder, Albino Association of Nigeria and a special guest, relieved his plight as a person living with Albinism. Among the negative ordeals are isolation, neglect, self-education, abuses, domestic accidents, hurtful jests from school mates and society. He encouraged the audience to read more about Albinism and special persons and to relate with the first as humans beings created by God instead of discrimination.

Epelle disclosed that he would retire in a few years and groom persons to con-

tinue with the foundation's legacy and businesses to concentrate on his pastoral service.

Pastor Dapo Fesayo, Head of Protocol, observed that most persons are so engrossed with life challenges, families, finance and oftentimes forget about people with disabilities around them and outside the church.

He thanked God for putting the Disability Inclusion drive into Pastor Akabueze's mind and for his spearheading the laudable initiative.

He added: "God made us bright and beautiful; so we should love everyone regardless of colour, size, background or tribe."

"The Redeemed Christian Church of God has an Economic Kingdom Summit every January to empower everyone including people with disabilities. There is another annual Kingdom Summit in October, with the Disability Inclusion event too. We also have a free health care and treatment event for next week Sunday. They are invited too."

There was also an ex-



Pastor Akabueze with some of the beneficiaries

hibition of various crafts done by persons with disabilities. Among them were Wesley Schools of the Hearing I and II, Federal Nigeria Society of the Blind, Bethesda Home for the Blind and African Craft Shop Nigeria. They all displayed their different crafts such as handmade slippers, sandals, beaded bags, key holders, soap, hand sanitizers, Batik, tie and dye, designed clothes, materials, accessories made by students, people and communities of people with disabilities.

Speaking, Mr. Kelly

Blind, a radio OAP, urged government at all levels to support persons with disabilities and not only pay lip service, "Specially, the Federal and Niger Delta States governments to build schools, infrastructures for them," he urged.

According to him, as an indigene of the Niger Delta regions, blessed with the oil, he regrets that there are neither special schools for the blind and deaf nor even vocational training for people with disabilities." Sadly, most people with disabilities are languishing and unproductive in those



RCCG's Team Leader, Diversity Sunday and disability rights advocate (organizer), Adeola Obagun (left), with Senior Adviser to Lagos State Governor on Disability, Adenike Oyetunde -Lawal.

regions," he stated.

Kelly the Blind disclosed that he has been leading the cause of people with disabilities through his radio programme for over seven years with stiff opposition from various quarters. He emphasized that there are millions of special persons in Nigeria but despite the Disability Bills, these are not well catered for.

Mr Adebayo Muritala David, Creative Director, African Craft Shop Nigeria and a visually impaired man, charged the government to do more by giving scholarships to children of

people with disabilities and empowering others with vocational skills according to their interests.

He disclosed that he is based in Osogbo, Osun State and he has been training clusters of persons with disabilities in his community but not sustainable due to lack of funds.

He recalled his bitter experience from family and society for being blind and as a Christian from a Muslim background. But God stood for him and his family and so he will never denounce his Christian faith, he added.

## Joint military operation set to take place in Anambra, Imo

By ALEX OLISE

A Joint Task Force (JTF), consisting of soldiers and police, is set to conduct offensive operations in Anambra and Imo states, following the killing and destruction of property by unknown gunmen. The Trumpet gathered that aerial and land assaults will focus on Anambra South and Orlu Senatorial District in neighboring Imo State.

Meanwhile, the community vigilance groups in Anambra's 176 communities are to be disbanded by the state government following allegations of compromising the security operations. Also, a new community vigilante outfit is being formed by the state government towards defeating the gunmen.

As at the time of filing this report, no fewer than 57 suspects have been arrested in connection with the killings in Anambra, with over 18 criminals killed by government forces.

The Commissioner of Police, Anambra State Police Command, Echeng Echeng, who addressed a press conference in Awka, frowned upon the reluctance of residents to volunteer information on

the activities of criminals in their areas.

He insisted that there was nothing 'unknown' about the gunmen terrorising the state to warrant

the 'unknown gunmen' tag. Echeng said: "We are putting together a new community vigilante outfit because the group we have now has compromised the security operations in the state."

"The current one would be disbanded because people do not come up with relevant information about the activities of these criminals and you know that security is a joint thing and it is not for security officers alone."

"This thing you call 'unknown gunmen' is wrong because we know them and they are in

those communities and they are living with the natives. They are not spirits, they are human beings and we have made a lot of arrests and a great number of them were killed in the course of engaging them.

"They only have shrines where they force the natives to take oaths of secrecy and silences and all these things are basically psychological angles to cow them."

## Paternity crisis as herbalist claims impregnating woman

By ALEX OLISE

Sikiru Olaley and Lamide Afolabi are currently in a war of words over the paternity of a male child delivered by the former's wife, Sadiat. She, until delivery, had been patronising Afolabi, a herbalist, for fertility concoction, having been in marriage without fruit of the womb. The herbalist is now claiming he slept with the woman for her to conceive, while taking the concoction.

Sources said Mr. Olaley was not only shell shocked that his wife and the native doctor cheated on him, he is most distraught that the native doctor is claiming paternity of his boy, claiming that he was the one who impregnated his wife.

The 42 year-old native of Igbehin, also in Owode-Obafemi Local Government Area, said, "I had never seen anything like this before except in a movie. It happened that my wife, Shadiat and I had a disagreement and she left for her hometown in Iwo, Osun State, with our son. I visited her hometown and tried in vain to persuade her parents to reconcile us. I even gave Shadiat's parents N12,000 for her transportation back to my house, but she refused.

"So, I gave up on the possibility of her returning to my home and took solace in the belief that when the time is ripe, my son would come back to me since I had tried my best to make her return home. It was a shock when some people in our neighbourhood started mocking me that my son belongs to a herbalist in the nearby village called Malaka. His name is Lamidi Ifaloba, a herbalist whom my wife patronised and he actually made some fertility concoctions for my wife when she could not get pregnant for about six years."

"I was shocked and devastated and I could not pull myself together for a long time, especially when I learnt that a lot of people in the community already knew about the matter. I learnt that Ifaloba claimed to have named the boy Junior and even boasted that the matter would unsettle the community. My wife and I did not have any quarrel on the day she left my house. I only returned from work and found that she had left with all her belongings. Even our neighbors did not know when she moved all her belongings out of our apartment."

He noted that his wife could not have accused him

of being impotent or use that as an excuse to engage in extra-marital affairs with Ifaloba which resulted in the controversial pregnancy and child adding, "I have had three children from my previous marriage to another woman and my first child currently attends Abeokuta Grammar School."

"I am no longer interested in taking back my wife, but I want to have custody of my son, hence, I am crying out to the public to dissuade Ifaloba from taking what truly belongs to me after his escapades with my wife. He cannot take my wife and also take my son."

But reacting, the herbalist explained that he was lured to bed by Olaley's wife on a day her husband chased her out of their apartment during a quarrel and she rushed to his house around 1.00 am. He said: "Actually, his wife ran to my house in the night and accused her husband of beating her over a disagreement. The weather was actually cold that night and I asked her to stay till next morning, while I was busy fixing some things. But she told me that she suspected her husband's sperm was not fertile enough to get her pregnant."



# I didn't belittle Osinbajo, says Akeredolu

Stories By **FRIDAY OMOSOLA**, Akure

Governor Oluwarotimi Akeredolu, SAN, has faulted a statement by some politicians that he disrespected Vice-President Yemi Osinbajo during the latter's consultation visit to Ondo State.

Akeredolu explained that he did not humiliate the Vice-President, a presidential prospect of the All Progressives Congress (APC) and professional colleague, as conveyed by the campaigners of some politicians.

The circulating statement read: "When we were running around to ensure Buhari won the primaries in 2014, I sprained my ankle. My VP, Sir, you were not around. You were at the Holy Ghost night that day. You just moved from Holy Ghost Night

to Aso Rock."

Akeredolu, who doubles as Chairman of South-West Governors' Forum, maintained that discrediting Osinbajo would have been the most unpleasant way to play politics while receiving a visitor into the State. The Senior Advocate of Nigeria in a statement issued by his Special Assistant on Special Duties & Strategy, Dr. Doyin Odebowale, said he was not the one behind the evil statement. Besides, he stated that he would not be as arrogant as the statement purports.

Akeredolu said a situation which would have warranted the governor to engage in a needless diatribe against a most respected professional colleague, friend and the number two citizen in the country would have been most unwarranted, uncharitable and disrespectful.

"Putting what transpired during the visit of the VP, within the context of the convivial atmosphere, exposes the mischief in the deliberate slant put to the statement published to satisfy partisan interest," he said.

"The Governor of Ondo State is not only the Chairman of the South West Governors' Forum, his colleagues in the whole of Southern Region defer to him as their spokesperson, mainly because of his principled stance on important issues affecting the country. The VP addressed the delegates of the State in his characteristic erudition and candour. The message delivered was well received. The aspirant stated the purpose of his visit in a most brilliant and jocular manner, regaling the audience with his signature brilliance and elocution.

"It would have been most

unfortunate for anyone, let alone the host, to use this occasion to utter a statement that did not reflect the mood of the moment. The Governor acknowledged the contributions of Professor Yemi Osinbajo to the study and practice of Law and nation-building. He cited his case as typical of those who have benefited from uncommon divine munificence."

He scolded politicians to constantly remember the role of God in the relationships of human beings, as well as expressed deep conviction on providence. He noted that God gives power to anyone regardless of the scheming of people.

He stated that if it was the will of Almighty that the vice president would succeed President Muhammadu Buhari, nobody would stop it from coming to pass.



Osinbajo and Akeredolu

## Abducted clergyman, son regain freedom

An Anglican cleric, Venerable Olu Obanla, and his son who were abducted a few days ago by some gunmen have regained freedom.

They were reportedly abducted along Ifon-Okeluse Road, in Ose Local Government Area of Ondo State on Saturday.

The *Trumpet* gathered that the victims' families were contacted by the abductors to demand a sum of N10 million before they could release them, but the family could not afford the sum.

However, it was gathered that the victims were released on Monday to reunite with their family after a ransom -N1 million - initially rejected was paid to the abductors.

Confirming the incident, the Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO) of the state, SP Funmilayo Odunlami, said the victims were already with their family members.

## Another incumbent senator loses return bid

Senator Nicholas Tofowomo, representing Ondo South in the National Assembly, has lost his bid to contest as candidate under the umbrella of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in the forthcoming 2023 general elections.

He was defeated at the party primary election held on Monday a former deputy governor of Ondo State, Agboola Ajayi, who scored 78 votes. Tofowomo polled 74 votes, Godday Erewa, 12 and Iroju Ogundeji, 23.

Senator Tofowomo, who served as the Commissioner for Transport during the administration of former Governor of Ondo State, Dr Olusegun Mimiko, succeeded Yele Omoguwa and assumed office in June 2019 as well.

Speaking with newsmen after the election, the winners lauded the delegates and leadership of the party for a free and fair election. They urged other contestants to see their emergence as a victory for all of them, adding that the task ahead was huge.

## Senator blames Mimiko for loss

By **FRIDAY OMOSOLA**, Akure

Senator Ayo Pius Akinyelure, representing Ondo Central Senatorial District in the National Assembly, who was defeated by a lawyer, Ife Adedipe, at Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) senatorial primary election, has held a former governor of the state, Dr. Olusegun Mimiko, responsible for his defeat.

Akinyelure claimed that a collusion led to his doom in the PDP senatorial primary

held Monday in Akure.

Adedipe, a Senior Advocate of Nigeria, SAN, defeated Akinyelure who was pursuing a third term as a Senator.

Akinyelure, who doubled as chairman of the House Committee on Public Petition, polled 58 votes, while Adedipe gathered 82 votes in the primary.

Akinyelure said: "I did not anticipate to be paid this way for the percentage of work I did for the Ondo Central Senatorial District. But I'm on a purpose

that no one can stop.

"As a ranking Senator and with everything I've done for Ondo Central Senatorial District, the three ad-hoc delegates who endorsed Olusegun Mimiko were given money to vote me out.

"I comprehend what I'm talking about. In the Central, we have six local governments and by God's grace, I am still a Senator which makes me delighted. But I am sure God will never let me down."



Ife Adedipe,



# Undergraduate strangled to death by lover

Stories by **OROWO VICTORIA**  
**OROWO**, Education Correspondent

Edo State police command has arrested a 27-year-old man, John Aipoh, for reportedly murdering his 24-year-old lover, Precious Ikpikhumi, after she ended their four-year relationship.

Precious, a final year student at the University of Benin Teaching Hospital's Institute of Health Technology, was declared missing by her family on May 1 after she went to church and did not return.

The police, after a detailed investigation arrested John who confessed to have ambushed Precious while she was on her way to church on May 1, took her to an uncompleted building where he murdered her, and then moved to an unknown destination.

It was uncovered that Precious and John have been at loggerheads over some issues. It got so bad that Precious even sent a voice note to a friend of hers in which she expressed fears that John might kill her for calling off their relationship.

In the voice note Precious said;

"What I want to let you know is that it is not those two boys that are making me to do all these things. It has been long I have been telling John. John said I cannot tell him that I am tired of the relationship as he was the one who approached me and he is the one who can decide when it will end. I told him even if you force me to date you, hope you know you cannot force me to marry you. It is better we have a broken relationship now than a broken marriage.

"I can't please. I cannot die. If it happens that truly he harms

me or kills because I refused to continue dating him, I know it shall never be well with him. My blood will always cry over his head.

"I have made up my mind. If is that I will die in this relationship, a fly that fails to hear word is one that follows the corpse into the grave. Since I don't listen anything John does to me I will bear it."

Precious is said to have gone into hiding after calling off their relationship but was unfortunately found by John.

On May 1st, 2022, John dragged

her to an uncompleted building and killed her by using her scarf to strangle her. He then escaped to an unknown destination.

Following his arrest, he took the police to the uncompleted building where he dumped Precious's lifeless body.

When interrogated, John, who was found with the phones of the deceased, said he killed Precious in anger after she called off their four year relationship.

Precious's body has been deposited in the morgue while the suspect is now in police custody and will be charged to court.

## FG to spend N999m daily on feeding 10m pupils

Approximately 10 million pupils will be fed by the Federal Government with N999 million daily under the National Home Grown School Feeding Programme (NHGSFP) across the country.

Hajiya Aishatu Digil, the Team Lead of NHGSFP, disclosed this at a stakeholders meeting in Abuja on disbursement modalities for the review of cost of feeding in the programme.

She said Hajiya Sadiya Umar Farouq, the Minister of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development got approval for spending N100 per person daily on the feeding programme.

She said 9,990,862 pupils from primary one to three in the programme would now be fed with N100 daily for 20 days in a month, which would amount to N999,086,200 million daily.

"Prior to this, we were feeding school children with N70 per child, per meal. This was since 2016 but the President has approved N100 upward review.

"We have all stakeholders like the World Food Programme, National Bureau of Statistics, National Orientation Agency (NOA), Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN), Ministries of Agriculture, Education and others to deliberate on the modalities of disbursements.



Hajiya Sadiya Umar Farouq

"We are here basically to look at how best we can realise the benefits of the programme based on the new approved cost to improve the standard and quality of the meal and menu for the children.

"The breakdown of the N100 is as follows; N70 is for the cost of all food items except egg, N14 for cost of egg to be implemented through the state structures in partnership with Poultry Association of Nigeria.

"We are planning of having 'Egg Wednesday', where each child in the programme will be giving one egg every Wednesday.

"N10 stipends for cooks, N5 and N6 for micronutrient fortification, payable to cooks and one naira for quality assurance, payable to supervisors, which is optional," she said.

Digil said the programme would ensure the elimination of poor implementation practices, adding that the ministry was looking out for reforms.

"After this meeting, we will collate inputs from stakeholders and present to the minister so that we will implement the reviewed feeding cost in the next feeding circle, which starts this month," she said.

Dr Umar Bindir, the National Resource Person of the National Social Investment Programme said that the programme was not the responsibility of the Federal Government alone.

The Programme Manager of NHGSFP Malam Musa Abubakar in Sokoto State said pupils and their parents were happy with the initial N70 per meal per child.

"However, with the upward review of N100, all of them will smile as this will also boost the rate of school enrolment."

Mr Chika Ebogha, the Chief Programme Officer at NOA said

the N100 per meal per child was a good improvement.

Ebogha called on Digil to step up in the area of compliance in states that have challenges, adding that NOA was willing to assist on monitoring and evaluation of the programme nationwide.

Mr Kingsley Anikwe from the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development suggested that formation of school gardens should be encouraged in schools to handle the production of agricultural produce.

Ms Irowa Irabor, the Project Manager, Enhancing Access to Safer Nutritious Diet Project (GAIN) said the organisation would provide technical and

capacity development to the programme.

Irabor said GAIN would be interested in the "Egg Wednesday Campaign", adding that the organisation could support in creating visibility in the implementation in states.

Mr Onallo Akpa, the Director-General, Poultry Association of Nigeria called for effective collaboration with the association to actualise the "Egg Wednesday" initiative.

However, some stakeholders suggested that state governments should actively involve others, saying that cooking of meals should be done within the school vicinity and that farmers should also be evaluated.

## ASUU denies rejecting new FUTA Vice-Chancellor

Academic Staff Union of Universities, (ASUU) of the Federal University of Technology (FUTA), Akure has dissociated itself from some concerned members kicking against the appointment of the institution's new vice chancellor.

There were reports on Thursday that the union rejected the appointment of Adenike Temidayo Oladiji.

A statement issued in Akure by ASUU's Chairperson, Prof. Oluyinka Awopetu and Secretary, Dr. E. Rasaki, described the alleged rejection of the new VC as misleading. The leadership of the union dissociated itself from the reports, saying it never rejected the appointment of the new VC.

"These publications, largely titled 'FUTA VC: ASUU kicks, says appointment fraught with fraud, lacks transparency, never originated from ASUU-FUTA secretariat.

"The said publication was signed, according to the reports, by two professors who are not members of the executive of ASUU FUTA branch. The two have no rights, neither were they authorised, nor have the capacity to speak for and on behalf of ASUU FUTA branch.

"All communications from the branch are duly released by the branch chairperson and secretary only.

"Similarly, in other publications, we learnt of a purported

position of FUTA Senate.

"As it is, the nation is aware of the ongoing total and comprehensive strike, which in part does not allow any meeting to hold. It was thus an embarrassment that our members were purported to have held a Senate meeting. "To the best of our knowledge and all facts on ground, no Senate meeting was held in our university to pursue this position.

"ASUU FUTA, by this statement, is calling on members of the union and the public to disregard the statement in its entity as this is not the position of ASUU-FUTA. ASUU is a union of intellectuals and will not result to any act that can mislead the public," the statement stated.

## Ekiti varsity resumes despite ASUU strike

Amid the ongoing strike by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), the management of Ekiti State University (EKSU), Ado-Ekiti has announced the resumption of academic activities from Tuesday, May 24, 2022.

Bode Olofinmuagun, Director of Information and Corporate Affairs, who issued a statement to that effect said the management of the institution took the decision to resume at a meeting on Monday.

Olofinmuagun disclosed that the management discussed the impact of the ongoing strike by all the four staff unions.

According to him, the administration was concerned about the pains experienced by students and parents.

He explained that one academic session of admission (2021/2022) is still open, and the second semester of 2020/2021 is still open.

The statement read, "The management of Ekiti State University, Ado Ekiti (EKSU), at its meeting held today, 23rd May, 2022, discussed the impact of the ongoing national strike embarked upon by all the four staff unions as it affects the university vis a vis academic and other activities.

"The management noted the pains being experienced by students and parents as a result of the on-going protracted industrial action.

"The management noted further that one academic session (2021/2022) of admission is still outstanding, while the second semester of the 2020/2021 academic session is yet to be concluded. Moreover, the admission process for the 2022/2023 academic session will commence soonest.

"Consequently, in the interest of the students, parents, guardians and indeed the society at large as well as the survival of the university, management decided to reopen the institution for normal academic activities with effect from Tuesday, 24th May, 2022."

ASUU had on February 14 declared a one-month warning strike to protest the non-implementation of its demands by the federal government.

On March 14, the union extended the industrial action by eight weeks, citing the government's failure to fully address its demands.

The union thereafter extended the strike by another 12 weeks.



# Delta South candidate Joel-Onowakpo tasks APC members on total victory

By **KELVIN OHOROR**

Delta South Senatorial District candidate on the platform of All Progressives Congress (APC), Hon. Joel-Onowakpo Thomas, has tasked all the faithful to work and ensure that they deliver all the party's candidates vying for elective positions in the 2023

general elections.

He gave the charge when his campaign train berthed in Warri South, Warri North and Warri South West Local Government Areas of Delta State, to seek their support for his senatorial ambition.

Speaking in Warri city, he said that the APC in Delta State was no longer the way it was dur-

ing the 2019 general elections, stressing that, "the party we have today is stronger, united, more positioned to win election.

"I urge you all to think positively on how you can deliver all candidates during the general election come 2023 from State House of Assembly to Presidency. You should not be deceived with the logic of working for a particular candidate in another party and work for another one in APC during the general elections. You should work for only APC."

"The Peoples Democratic Party

of yesterday that were like lion will become goat to APC."

Chairman of APC, Warri South, Mr. Mario Owumi, saluted the courage of Hon. Thomas for deeming it fit to come out to contest the Delta South Senatorial District seat election under the party. Owumi posited that the senatorial election is not about ethnicity but is about political party. He noted even under former governor of Delta State, Dr. Emmanuel Uduaghan, APC won Warri South Local Government Area. This time, there will be more commitment to win the

local government for APC again, he affirmed.

He described Hon. Thomas as a courageous man and dogged fighter whom they are ready and willing to support.

House of Assembly APC candidate in Warri North constituency, Hon. David Atie, assured that they are ready to work assiduously to ensure Hon. Thomas wins the senatorial election.

He stressed that Hon. Joel-Onowakpo Thomas is a man who has carved a niche for himself and has what it takes to win the senatorial election.

## At PDP senatorial primaries, gunmen run riot, kill one, destroy over 20 cars

By **ISAAC OLAMIKAN**

Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) Senatorial Primaries held in Edo State resulted in the death of a party chairman, Tunde Igbino and destruction of over 20 choice automobiles in Benin City.

Information gathered by The Trumpet is that the primaries which was held across the three senatorial districts of the state - South, Central and North - was done on factional/parallel levels as two contending groups, one loyal to the state governor, Godwin Obaseki, while the other group loyal to the party's South South Vice Chairman, Chief Dan Orbih, fight for relevance.

For the Edo South Primaries the venue of where the governor's loyalists held theirs was the indoor hall of the ultra-modern Samuel Ogbemudia Stadium. It was well secured with operatives of the security agencies and members of the state security network manning the venue outnumbering the delegates.

On the other hand the venue of the primaries of the faction loyal to Chief Dan Orbih was not made public.

However, *The Trumpet* learnt that information about the venue of the Chief Orbih's parallel primaries got to a top official of the state government who allegedly mobilised some gunwielding miscreants to the place with the

mission to disrupt the process.

On getting to the venue the gunwielding miscreants allegedly let loose their weapon of destruction which end up in the killing of Mr. Igbino said to be one of the party's chairmen in Oredo Local Government Area and also massive destruction of properties and choice automobiles within the vicinity.

In the wake of the bedlam security operatives ended up arresting four reporters namely: Sunny Ohioze Inarumen of DAAR Communications owners of AIT/RayPower and his camera man; Deborah Coker of the News Agency of Nigeria(NAN); Ogbomo Osamuyi of Independent Television/Radio. The newsmen were released hours later.

The results that emanated from the parallel primaries show that in the South Hon. Mathew Idurijekemwe emerged from the Governor Obaseki's camp defeating incumbent Senator Mathew Urhoghide. While Hon. Omoregie Ogbeide-Ihama was elected from the Chief Orbih's camp.

In Edo North, Hon. Pascal Ugbome was elected from Chief Orbih's group while Victoria Edelokun emerged from the governor's group.

Edo Central, Architect Mike Onolemenne was elected from the Chief Orbih's group while incumbent Senator Clifford Ordia got elected from the governor's camp.



Delta APC Founding Leader, Olorogun Otega Emerhor OON, Delta State APC Chairman, Elder Omeni Sobotie, Chief Fred Okpohworo Olorok, Chief Ayiri Emami and others welcome APC Presidential Aspirant, Senator Bola Ahmed Tinubu to Delta State for consultation with Delta APC delegates.

## Winning a Delegate Election in Nigeria

By **DOYIN OKUPE**

Those who have won delegate elections in Nigeria over the last two decades fall into the following categories:

1. Those backed by an incumbent government at national or state levels.

2. In the absence of a incumbent FG; those who are supported by a majority of "Super Stakeholders". These include sitting state governors, former governors & leaders in states where no sitting governors exist.

3. Aspirants who are able to dispense stupendous financial resources.

In the absence of an incumbent FG, a very rich aspirant can prevail against scenario 2 above.

Delegate elections are devoid of conscience, rational thinking, patriotism or the principle of right or wrong.

From my many years of experience, 70 to 80% of delegates vote along with the dictates of their leaders. It has nothing to do most often with their personal convictions.

**WHY IS THIS SO?**

It is so because at the end of the convention everyone returns

to his state. If at the convention you refused to toe the line, most assuredly you are likely to pay for it and certainly you will not be a delegate in the next election ...and so will many perks and privileges elude you in your state.

This is not restricted to ordinary delegates alone. Even if you were a former minister or senator or whatever, once you fail to align with party directives, be ready for sanctions from the powers that be within the party in your state.

**INFLUENCE OF MONEY**

This is a very interesting and intricate matter. \*Money in some cases may be the ultimate deciding factor. And in other situations where group or regional interest is crucial and compelling, it may be of little consequence.

"But without money or with an offer considerably much lower than the leading contender financially, the poorer aspirant irrespective of pedigree, competence or suitability, may have no chance of winning at all."

Mischievously, and quite treacherously, the new trend is that each state delegation collects monies from all the aspirants and thereafter do one of to things.

1. They still vote for the aspirant they had decided on from home based on several considerations.

Or  
2. Divide their votes pro rata in accordance to how the aspirants have faired financially.

In the last PDP convention in Port Harcourt in 2019, most delegates went home with between \$8000 & \$10,000.

This year, the figures are bound to be higher. The big spenders are prepared to go as far as \$10,000 per delegate.

As I write this piece, a delegate election to elect the state assembly member for my local government is underway. Information reaching me from the venue is that one of the two contestant is offering N200,000 per delegate while the other has offered N150,000.

We have 10 wards and 3 delegates per ward. That is, each aspirant will today dispense N6m for this delegate election!!!

Let no one fool you. This is what goes on nationwide and in all parties. Only the stakes differ.

**THIS PRACTICE IS NOT SUSTAINABLE AND IS INCONSISTENT WITH A PROGRESSIVE DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENTAL GROWTH**



Some of the cars destroyed at the Edo South PDP parallel Primaries



# Omo-Agege: An edge over others

By IMA NIBORO

Ovie Omo-Agege has a proven record of service.

Omo-Agege clearly has an edge over all the other aspirants for Government House, Asaba, and I chose to trust his promise to build a new Delta... I insist that every Deltan should... And after we win the governorship for him, we can together hold his feet to the fire, and as one united people ensure that he keeps his promises to us!

I fully expected some of the reactions I received from colleagues, friends and a few seniors when I was announced to design and execute the communications and media strategy for Senator Ovie Omo-Agege, the Deputy Senate President's bid for the governorship of Delta State.

Of the many reactions, two stuck with me. One was from a younger colleague and a close friend who currently edits one of Nigeria's biggest newspapers.

He said, "on this your appointment, I don't know whether to tell you congratulations or ask what the heck you think you are doing."

I chuckled. I knew what he wanted to say, but I asked him what he meant anyway.

"I am just here wondering why you a former presidential spokesman and former News Agency of Nigeria MD, would accept to run a state governorship campaign media", he said.

The second reaction that stuck was that of a senior colleague. A very well known retired TV executive of Delta State origin.

"Congratulations", he said. Before I could say thank you, he fired off rapidly, "I am happy you are doing this, but are you not backing the wrong horse? APC? Delta State? You know Delta is a PDP State, so what do you think you are doing?", and so on and so forth.

My response to both men forms the basis of what I'm going to say here.

To my bright young friend, I explained that Delta State is in a desperate situation. And where we are in our State, there's no longer any big or small man. There are no former presidential spokesmen or former NAN managing directors. It is just we the people against the government.

I told him that since the beginning of the 13 per cent derivation from crude oil receipts, Delta has earned close to N20 trillion. In simple maths, that's N20,000 billion. I challenged him to ask his reporters in Warri and Asaba to capture the State in one word. "Deplorable", he said; "I know Delta very well. I have been there many times."

The fact is that the situation is worse than deplorable. In Delta, poverty walks on four legs, in unpaved streets of filth and mud. There are only very few parts of our cities that you can come upon and say 'I want to live here.' Criminality seems to be deliberately condoned, maybe even encouraged in the State. Almost everywhere else, outside the capital, Asaba, seems besieged.

There are police and military checkpoints every few yards on almost every major road. But in between these checkpoints are black spots of horrendous criminality, and tales of woe and helplessness.

In private circles, there's conversation that suggests that criminality is condoned as a sublime weapon to scare well-to-do indigenes from coming home.

This way, thugs, goons and their sponsors in power won't have to answer too many questions to the elite and



Omo-Agege

others about how the State is being governed, and misgoverned.

Only recently, journalists in Warri who cover the two southernmost senatorial districts, Central and South, decided to stop reporting the activities of the state government. Their reason: the government has been totally unfair to the people of the area. The journalists, under the aegis of the Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ), in a statement, accused the government of not being in touch with the needs and challenges of the people. They said the government was distant and unable to give any coherent account of their activities in these very large parts of the State.

If the situation in Delta was caused by just corruption, it would have been a straightforward issue. But when you add incompetence, greed and man's sheer inhumanity to man into the mix, you will find that compassion, natural intelligence, a sense of balance and a record of performance, are perhaps all we need to reshape the narrative.

And in all these, Senator Ovie Omo-Agege stands head and shoulders above the entire field of governorship hopefuls in Delta today.

The quite unhelpful argument about Delta being a Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) State is naturally a non-starter. In the contest for the hearts and minds of Deltans, we are first individuals before we are party men. Then I ask, show me one politician of note and clout in Delta that isn't the product of the PDP. Those of us who left did so in protest of the wickedness that governance has become in the State.

With the weakest infrastructure possible, a sea of unemployed and sometimes unemployable young people, and governments that have since stopped pretending to offer anyone hope, Delta is today a bubbling cauldron of pain and anguish.

The resultant anger is expressed in inter-ethnic violence, street fights, armed robbery and prostitution, as each group engages with red-eyed vigour to grab the scraps from the tables in Asaba.

But the All Progressives Congress (APC) has a different plan. And it's not about a party playing sanctimonious

and being holier than thou. It is instead about a party that is a protest movement against the evil that currently stalks our home State. A national party that, warts and all, represents in Delta a powerful counterpoint to a band of very bad people. Persons denuded of conscience, and whose legacy is not on the streets of Delta, but in offshore bank accounts and acreages.

There's a common joke about Delta that surfaces often on Facebook and elsewhere. Young, angry Deltans would copy pictures of six lane highways and gleaming infrastructure from elsewhere and caption these "my xyz village in Delta State". Beyond the sardonic laughter that these posts cause is a story of total disillusionment and frustration over what is and what could have, and really should be.

Someone recently asked me, what is he going to do differently? This was the precise question I asked him when he requested me to execute this crucial aspect of the campaign.

This is what he told me.

"I will re-engineer governance in Delta. I would create wealth and employment by building industrial hubs and open them to manufacturers at rock bottom, but reasonably competitive leases.

I will invest our wealth in Independent Power Plants to power factories, streets and homes.

I will drive ICT and make my state the new Nigerian Silicon Valley.

My plan is to BUILD A NEW DELTA, so I will embark on an immediate infrastructure revolution as part of my industrial strategy.

The ultimate goal will be to create the best infrastructure possible without incurring untold, untenable and prohibitive costs."

Today's Delta, he maintained, is a reminder that as a people we must reflect on our journey and assess where we are as against where we ought to be. As part of this reflection, we have come up with a developmental blueprint within our manifesto that encapsulates nearly all aspects of our existence as a people.

His words: "Our strategy is captured as Employment and Empowerment,

Development, Good Governance and Enduring Peace and Security. In the short form, we call it the EDGE to BAND (Build a New Delta), and it is our governance strategy from micro to small and medium enterprises, women and youth empowerment, skills acquisition, social safety nets, pension policies, infrastructure, agriculture, deliberate and forward looking industrialisation, sports, entertainment and the entire works.

"Take infrastructure, for instance, I plan to immediately embark on a large scale investment in industrial estates, schools, hospitals, good road networks, top class but affordable transportation systems, housing, potable water, power infrastructure, ICT, and more as part of the strategy to put industrial development back on track."

In my brainstorming session with Omo-Agege before I accepted the job, and in others thereafter, I have come to observe his passion for people and development. And he backs it with concrete evidence. As a senator and later, deputy Senate president, without any executive power, he successfully brought in a slew of projects to Delta State.

These include the Federal Polytechnic at Orogun, the elite Nigerian Defence Space School, a Federal University of Agriculture and Technology, and a campus of the Nigerian Law School, the latter two of which have been approved by the Senate.

He also embarked on an ambitious power programme with the aim of solving electricity distribution challenges: Bringing in brand new transformers and replacing obsolete ones in many areas state-wide. He also single-handedly embarked on the mass provision of solar street lighting across all towns and villages of Delta Central.

While a senator, Omo-Agege carried out mass renovations and furnishing of select schools across the state; he constructed water schemes, dragged in additional funding for several stalled and struggling federal infrastructure projects, and on and on.

There's so much more he has done that to chronicle all here will appear as a hagiography of sorts. But to my mind, Omo-Agege, has a proven record of service. And in such a short time (he's been less than three years as deputy Senate president).

His far reaching plans to lift Delta back to its feet ring true, and are punctuated with clear do-ables and concrete milestones. As for willpower, he made it clear to me, as he has to others, that he is not afraid of breaking eggs to make an omelette. Anyone who knows him well knows that he's a fairly tough guy.

"I am not going to pussyfoot over issues. I will be decisive and do what needs to be done when it needs to be done, in the interest of our State and people", he says.

Omo-Agege clearly has an edge over all the other aspirants for Government House, Asaba, and I chose to trust his promise to build a new Delta.

I insist that every Deltan should. And after we win the governorship for him, we can together hold his feet to the fire, and as one united people ensure that he keeps his promises to us!

•Niboro, a former Managing Director of the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN), leads the communications and media strategy team for the Delta State gubernatorial campaign of Senator Ovie Omo-Agege.



## Buhari, Bawa berate judiciary on anti-corruption war

By PAUL MICHAEL, DEFENCE EDITOR, ABUJA

President of the federation, Muhammadu Buhari, and Executive Chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, (EFCC), Abdulrasheed Bawa, have said the loss of cases in the courts on technical grounds cast a slur on the integrity of the judiciary and questions its commitment to the fight against graft.

The duo spoke at a three-day capacity building workshop, themed, "Judicial Dynamism: A Key Factor in the Fight Against Economic and Financial Crimes."

The event, which was organised for judicial officers, corruption investigators, and prosecutors, had Senate President Ahmad Ibrahim Lawan, House of Representatives Speaker Femi Gbajabamila, as well as President of the Court of Appeal, Justice Monica Dongban-Mensem, and other top government officials in attendance.

Buhari, represented by Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF), Boss Mustapha, said cases lost on technical grounds questioned the commitment of the judiciary in the fight against corruption.

"Every corruption case lost on technical ground raises questions about judicial commitment to the fight against corruption. Perpetrators of corruption, economic, and financial crimes should not be allowed to escape the justice they deserve on grounds of technicalities and conservatism.

"The judiciary should not see itself or act as mere spectators or bystanders whilst criminals exploit mere technicalities to escape with our commonwealth, get bolder, and embolden others to continue in the unwholesome act of



President Buhari

corruption," he said.

Buhari, therefore, charged judicial officers to, "consciously aim to plug loopholes being exploited in our laws by critical elements in our midst."

Earlier in his opening remark, Bawa expressed concerns about corruption cases lost to technicalities at various levels of court in the country, stressing that such development may serve as a disincentive to the fight against economic and financial crimes.

He said corruption cases lost on technical grounds had a way of boosting the confidence of corrupt elements and negatively affected the cherished image of the judiciary.

Bawa said, "As a commission, we do not expect every judicial decision to go our way, but there are instances the EFCC and many Nigerians have been left at a loss about certain judicial decisions, where defendants who obviously have stolen our commonwealth and those who have aided and abetted them have been allowed to go home to enjoy their proceeds of crime on technical grounds.



Bawa

"This has the tendency of affecting negatively the cherished image of and confidence in the Nigerian judiciary both locally and internationally.

"In the commission, we hold the view that corruption is a plague that does not select its victims. Those stealing and abusing our common patrimony do not wish us well.

"Judges are as much victims of corruption as the ordinary man on the streets. It is therefore in our collective interest that the gains of the fight against corruption are not reversed. This is also why we must aggregate fresh opinions and forge deliberate winning tactics and strategies to stem its ugly tide.

Reviewing the impact of the EFCC in the fight against economic and financial crimes, in its 19 years of existence, the EFCC boss stressed that the commission had carved a niche for itself with numerous milestones to its name.

"However, in the little over a year that I have had the privilege to superintend, the commission secured

an unprecedented record of 2,220 convictions. It is the highest ever in the history of the commission and as I address you this morning, we have already secured 1,222 convictions, thus far, this year," he said.

While commending the judiciary for its role in making the conviction record possible, the EFCC Chairman advocated for an enhanced welfare package for Judges and Justices. He also harped on collaboration between the legislative arm of government and the judiciary in drafting and enacting laws.

Meanwhile, Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Abubakar Malami (SAN), in his goodwill message, commended the EFCC and the National Judicial Institute for collaborating over the years in building capacity for judicial officers, stressing that technological advancement and globalization made it imperative for law enforcement agencies and the judiciary to be up to date with emerging trends.

"We are aware that technological advancements and globalization have brought about an increase in digital activities and transactions.

Economic and financial crimes have moved to the digital world and cyber-crime has become the focal domain of criminals.

"There is a need, therefore, to bring our judiciary and the law enforcement agencies up to date with emerging digital trends," he added.

Also, at the event, the Chief Justice of Nigeria, Justice Tanko Muhammad, assured that the workshop would identify factors that served as impediments to the effectiveness of the EFCC and the judiciary as veritable tools for the prevention and successful prosecution of financial crime cases in Nigeria.

## ICPC, NDLEA to synergize for better drug law enforcement

By PAUL MICHAEL, ABUJA

National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) has proposed to partner with the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) to rid the nation of illicit drugs.

NDLEA Commandant of Kano State Division, Abubakar Idris Ahmed, made the proposal during a courtesy visit to the ICPC Kano State office, stressing that he needed to work in partnership and in synergy with ICPC to defeat drug-related criminality.

According to him, "No single agency can defeat criminality alone in Nigeria, but the value and performance of the NDLEA, combined with that of ICPC would be greater than only the effort of NDLEA fighting the menace of illicit

drugs in Nigeria.

"Behind every crime, the motivating factor is money. This is where the two agencies should collaborate. It is critical that we establish a relationship so that we can achieve greater success in drug law enforcement. The majority of crimes committed in the country today are committed while under the influence of drugs."

On his part, the ICPC Resident Anti-Corruption Commissioner (RACC) of Kano State, Ibrahim Garba posited that there was a relationship between illicit funds and illicit drugs trafficking, thus the need for NDLEA and ICPC to move quickly to check illicit financial flows and drug trafficking in Nigeria.

Garba expressed his delight with the request for synergy and added that the Commission had always welcomed inter-agency collaboration with other law enforcement agencies in its crusade against corruption because it recognized that the war on corruption and crime could only be won through a collaborative approach.

The highlight of the event was the recognition of the ICPC RACC as an Ambassador for the War Against Drug Abuse (WADA) by the NDLEA Commandant Kano, on behalf of the Chairman of the NDLEA, Brigadier General Mohamed Buba Marwa (Rtd).



Marwa

## 'Improvement on money laundering investigation, prosecution imperative'

By PAUL MICHAEL, ABUJA

Provost of the Anti-Corruption Academy of Nigeria (ACAN), the research and training arm of ICPC, Professor Olatunde Babawale, has

reiterated the importance of effective investigation and prosecution in money laundering cases.

He stated this while giving a welcome address at a workshop on Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Financing at the ICPC headquarters recently.

According to him, the workshop was a follow-up to an unfavorable mutual evaluation carried out by the Inter-Governmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa (GIABA) 2019 which rated Nigeria low in the investigation and prosecution of money laundering.

Professor Babawale opined that financing of terrorism and money laundering are crimes with economic effects which only differ in the sense that money laundering often comes from an illegal source, whereas terrorism finance has to do with 'who' the money goes to and 'what' illegal group or activity it supports.

He likewise referred to the UNODC's report which estimated that about 2-5% of

global GDP (\$800 billion to \$2 trillion) is being laundered around the world annually.

He lauded the ICPC for doing a lot in building and continuously applying modern strategies to aid its enforcement mandate as stated in section 6a of the Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Act 2000.

"The primary reason for establishing the Academy is to facilitate the effective implementation of ICPC's mandate, cardinal among which is enforcement, and to equip ICPC officers with the necessary skills and knowledge that will enable them to perform at the required level," he said.

He, however, added that the ever-changing nature of terrorism and money laundering requires the Commission to do more. "It is to this effect that the academy is expected to provide a system of training and re-training that will continually produce sound anti-corruption policies, operational efficiency, and good management culture," he added.

The provost stated that the content of the workshop was carefully put together to ensure maximum learning by participants and also equip them with enhanced skills of investigation and prosecution with a view to laying the foundations for a sustainable assault on corruption.



# Corruption in Passport Offices

The Nigerian Immigration Service (NIS) needs to address the corruption that has taken over its Passport Offices across the country. An article was recently published in a daily newspaper detailing the nature and depth of deep-rooted corruption among NIS officials in the Lagos and Oyo Passport Offices. The problem is, however, not peculiar to these two states alone. Corrupt officials extort Nigerians applying for passports, making them pay sometimes up to double the legitimate fee of N27,000 for a 32-page passport.

The registration is supposed to be done online, but applicants who follow this due process and submit their print-out to the Passport Office almost certainly face a delay of weeks, if not months. One is spared only if the palms of certain officials are "greased" with cash. People who are willing to pay could get their passports in as short a time as 24 hours depending on how much they are willing to give as bribe. For this reason, many applicants, are forced to defer or even cancel their travel plans. Some may lose out on a job opportunity that requires one to present an international travelling passport.

Nigerian students who have gotten admissions into universities abroad are forced to defer or cancel their registration since they require a passport to apply for a travel visa. Every Nigerian has a right to own a Passport and it is not fair that corrupt NIS officials are making it difficult for honest Nigerians to acquire one. The Comptroller-General of NIS and Comptrollers of passport offices need to sit up and deal with the corruption among their officers.

Touts have taken over the passport application and acquisition process, working together with corrupt officials for selfish gain. This needs to be addressed. The practice

of charging 45,000 for 32-page, and 90,000 for 64-page passports respectively must be stopped. These corrupt officials are well known because they carry out their "business" openly. They abandon their posts in the interests of going about "fast-tracking" their "client's" applications. They work together with so-called business centres located near the passport offices where applicants are directed to pay to have their application done online. The online application process itself has been compromised in such a way that the applicant is forced to seek the help of these touts or officials, who in turn charge hapless applicants for their services. These services sometimes include arranging for fake birth certificates, state of origin certificates

and other required documents for applicants who do not have them. In such a case, even wanted criminals could be assisted to acquire a passport that would help them get a visa to flee the country.

The NIS therefore needs to put its house in order. The narrative out there is that top officials in the NIS are seriously compromised by giving a tacit approval to corrupt practices. The sites and channels that applicants can use to get assistance should be upgraded and run smoothly to make the passport application process easier. Corrupt officials should be arrested and punished to serve as a deterrent to others. More outlets should be opened to clear the bottlenecks that currently characterise the whole process. Officers of the NIS need to be sensitized that corruption among them is a dent in the image of Nigeria.

Immigration officers are the point of first contact with foreigners at the port of entry; so, integrity and credibility become extremely important to ensure that the dealings of NIS officials with foreigners is honest and professional. These same NIS officials are in the habit of soliciting for funds from travelers. It is unethical, unpatriotic, and disgraceful to the image of the country.

The passport offices must rid themselves of touts and expel any person from their premises who is not there to apply for a passport. As it stands right now, the NIS has a very poor image among Nigerians because people believe that without paying a bribe to NIS officials one will not get a passport on time. The NIS must therefore curb corruption among its ranks and treat all passport applicants equally. Professionalism is being eroded from the NIS; Nigerians have lost confidence in the integrity of NIS officials. The Trumpet therefore calls on the Minister of Interior to take a decisive action to correct the ills in the system.



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## Stooges as parties' delegates, disastrous

Today, all the state capitals will be bubbling with the so-called delegates of the PEOPLES Democratic Party, PDP, who will be filing out to elect their governorship candidates. The All Progressive Congress, APC, will also be doing their own at the weekend. In fact, the whole of this week is being taken over by the primaries of various political parties to beat the deadline set for them by the Independent National Electoral Commission, INEC. Most of the primaries are indirect. That makes the use of delegates inevitable. So, ordinarily, this week should be devoted to the celebration of a crucial step in Nigeria's democratic process. Unfortunately, this is not to be. Reason: the whole process of selecting delegates is a glaring travesty of democracy. Most of their voting does not reflect the positions of their constituencies. Rather, they often vote according to the selfish motives of their political godfathers. I have carefully observed the whole electoral processes of the past few weeks. Precisely, in the PDP. First of all, the


party conducted elections at all the ward levels, most of which were really no more than mere formalities to rubber stamp predetermined delegates. These so-called elected delegates, were mainly the core loyalists of some political bigwigs. They have no minds of their own on political decisions. They are mere conduits that strictly carryout their ogas' directives. They are the 'yes sir' boys and girls who have been on the monthly pay rolls of their political bosses for years. They would, therefore, rather die than disobey the self-serving orders of their benefactors. These mentally enslaved party members, who have been robbed of their personalities and self-esteem, may be because of poverty, greed or ignorance, are the ones assigned the crucial democratic responsibilities of selecting our political leaders, come 2023. The season of parties' primaries, is often misconstrued as the time for the bumper harvest by the delegates and their leaders. They enjoy a sudden cash boom through corrupt and crafty

manipulations of the aspirants. That is exactly what is playing out in the past weeks till now. They will organize several fora ostensibly for the aspirants to market themselves. This will be at ward levels, local government levels, state level and various leadership platforms. Every meeting is really no more than a veiled device to extort humongous amount of money from the aspirants. The extortion is beautifully colored as 'kola nut support'. All aspirants to the State Houses of Assembly, House of Representatives, the Senate, Governorship and even the Presidency are held at the jugular. They have no choice. They just have to play ball. That has unfortunately been the political culture which has dangerously deteriorated, particularly in the run up to next year's general elections. A night before any primary is the night of mind boggling bribing of delegates and those in control of their voting pattern. For instance, since PDP is conducting its gubernatorial primaries today, most of the delegates and their godfathers will be smiling broadly to the banks. The same is true of all the big political parties. This is mostly evident in states where there are stiff competitions. In the ongoing primaries, there have been clear instances in which delegates were mindlessly bribed in millions of naira each. This may sound incredible, but it is very true. The evidences are common knowledge all over the place.

In the PDP's Senatorial primaries of last Monday as well as those of the State Houses of Assembly/ House of Representatives a day before, I was reliably told, by several sources, that some aspirants, particularly those sponsored by Governors, gave more than three million naira to each delegate. In fact, at a stage some high-ranking delegates started rejecting naira because of its valuelessness. They openly demanded for dollars, instead. And of course, some of the well-loaded aspirants responded appropriately. Then, the dollar rain started to the admiration of the delegates, who knew what the exchange of dollars will give them in naira terms. It is heart-rending that the future of Nigeria is up for sale to the highest bidders. This is coming at a time when our economy is comatose, direly in need of a messiah like Lee Kuan Yew, who ingeniously transformed Singapore from a miserable third World country to a prosperous first World nation. Rather regrettably, most delegates of APC and PDP, seem not to be interested in the quality of the persons they elect as candidates. They would not care voting for certified armed robbers, kidnappers or drug addicts as long as the money is right. What a shame. What a deleterious price to pay for corruption. That our country has degenerated to this abysmally low level of money politics should be blamed on APC which charged a whopping N100,000,000 as

fees to obtain a presidential nomination form. Surprisingly, 28 Nigerians, most of them public servants, were able to effortlessly pay that humongous amount, which is more than the six year's legitimate salary of a Nigerian President. What further evidence do we need to confirm the humiliating ranking of Nigeria as one of the most corrupt countries in the world by Transparency International? The total monetization of our electoral process will only worsen the already very bad corruption index of our country and the current deplorable standard of living of our highly impoverished people. The delegates of all the political parties still have a window of opportunity to ensure that they vote for quality and achievement-driven candidates in their remaining primaries. Their ogas, who are probably more enlightened, should chest out and give patriotic directives to them on the right candidates to vote for. Candidates who have what it takes to move Nigeria to the next level. Doing otherwise, will be seriously detrimental to the future of our children and grandchildren. Certainly, no sane person wants an expensive immediate gratification at the expense of our future national development. So, let patriotism rather than greed and avarice guide their voting henceforth.

•Chief John Araka, FNGE, is the Chairman of The Trumpet Editorial Board.



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## Deborah Yakubu: A different perspective

Recently, Nigeria's newsreel was inundated with accounts of how a 200 level student of Shehu Shagari College of Education Sokoto, Deborah Samuel Yakubu was stoned and burnt to death. The dastard act was carried out by demented, rabid, savages who alleged that she blasphemed Prophet Mohammed (PBUH). The event reminds one of a similar incident in T.S Eliot's play Murder In the Cathedral. While the circumstances in Sokoto and the play are different, the dialectics of religion and its nodal tensions are at the heart of both murders. We can rightly title the Nigerian incident Murder In Sokoto College, a fitting title for a work of literature which will permanently consign Shehu Shagari College of Education Sokoto to the sordid hall of infamy. Since the gruesome murder of Deborah by lunatics from the pit of Hades, many people have reacted to the incident. While some people, clinging tenaciously to religion, expose their morbid intolerance and a yawning gap in knowledge, other people have objectively condemned

the heinous act tagging it a crime against God and humanity. Still, there is another perspective to the whole issue. By every stretch of the imagination, Nigeria is one of the most religious countries in the world. Our religious piety and assumption of holiness are contagious. Yet, in this country, you find the most wicked, corrupt, morally retrograded group of people. While some people through these religions have embraced peace, truth, freedom, and liberty, for many others, the religions have become a facade to perpetrate evil, defraud the gullible, murder people in the defence of a God they know nothing about, destroy properties, commit crimes against humanity, and carry on like feral beings from the netherworld. No religion is evil. You only find evil adherents of these religions - the fanatics who misinterpret portions of their religious manuscripts and twist them for their selfish, inordinate intentions. The Christian religion accommodates millions of people in Nigeria and the world. There are

many Christians who demonstrate exemplary character and live out a godly life which is a function of their close association with God. There are also many Christians who hardly read or understand the Holy Bible. They are a disgrace to the very religion they profess. Sometimes, they turn the Holy Bible on its head and interpret it to suit their reprobate purposes. Many Christians are thieves, armed robbers, fraudsters, murderers, drug pushers, and many more. Yet, every Sunday, they take the front seat in a church, paying the highest amount of title from their ill-gotten proceeds. Many pastors are fraudsters. They make money by misleading their congregation and leading them to Satan. Such people have no values or standards of existence. Yet, there are wonderful pastors, real men of God who exemplify the tenets and teachings of Jesus Christ. All of these people abound in our society. I am aware of Muslims who are honest to a fault, kind to high heavens and forthright to all the ends of the world. They read and interpret the Holy Quran the way it should be read and understood - kindness to humanity, peace and love for all. Also, as with the Christian religion, there are millions of depraved people around the world who adhere to the Islamic religion. They read the Holy Quran upside down and only see violence, death, and murder where peace and love are written. I am aware that Islam is advertised as a religion of peace. Those who hide under Islam to promote evil,

and kill, are certainly not aware of the maxim that Islam is a religion of peace. The scoundrels who show no mercy to those around them, are they aware that Allah is regarded as the most merciful, compassionate, and loving? It is unfortunate and regrettable that agents of Satan have been hiding under the religion of Islam to unleash mayhem on humanity ranging from arson, murder, bombing, and wanton shedding of blood. From the above, it is clear that while religion has done mankind a lot of good, it has also brought anguish and death to humanity. It is indefensible that any religion will encourage someone to kill for God Almighty or any of His prophets. Therefore, when people indulge in satanic behaviour hiding under religion, we must collectively condemn them and not the religion. Deborah Samuel Yakubu was gruesomely murdered in Sokoto by some deranged maniacs who, I am sure do not know the provisions of the Holy Quran or even understand the correct tenets set out by Allah. No one has the right to take the life of another person no matter the level of provocation. It is condemnable, brutish, and primitive. I have read some perverted comments where people talked about crossing the red line and I recoil in nausea. To encourage such a narrative is to support incessant killing in the defence of religion. Those who murdered Deborah were not defending Allah or Prophet

Mohammed (PBUH). They were living out an innate, intolerable consciousness partly concealed by the seal of civilization. From reactions across the country, it is evident that condemnation of the murder of Deborah has come more from the South although some eminent, distinguished people from the North, including the venerable Sheikh Gumi have condemned the murder. No one should kill another person for any reason. When it happens, we must condemn it no matter who is involved. Let us isolate the bigots who hide under religion to advance evil. We must condemn the act and not the religion. No one has the right to condemn another religion but even when someone condemns another religion, the laws of the land should prevail. Jesus Christ was meek, gentle and holy. He advised his disciples to follow in his footsteps. Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) was gentle and non-violent. I have read that when he was alive, people insulted him to no end, yet he never retaliated. So, how do you describe those who war and fight for a prophet who, in his lifetime was peaceful? We must embrace and pursue peace with all men unless we all agree that the Nigerian fabric must be torn to pieces, every part to its enclave. Peace is what we all need as violence and grief do not benefit anyone. The killers of Deborah must face the consequences. •Dr. Adiele is a member of The Trumpet's Editorial Board and can be reached via Promee01@yahoo.com.



## Nigerians appreciate your sacrifices, Lalong tells troops

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

Plateau State Governor Simon Lalong has commended the sacrifices of troops of the Nigerian Army at the forefront in the fight against terrorism and general insecurity in the country.

Lalong gave the commendation while opening the Nigerian Army Small Arms Championship (NASAC) 2022. It was at the 3 Division Small Arms Shooting Range in Miango, Jos, Plateau State.

Lalong, the Special Guest of Honour at the opening ceremony, noted that troops have over time, demonstrated the requisite skills and competencies necessary to enhance the nation's security.

He added that the Nigerian Army has been

professional in addressing cases of insecurity, where lives and property were threatened.

The Governor observed that the shooting competition will present a veritable avenue for the participants to discover their hidden potentials, as well as sharpen their shooting skills, which he maintained are essential to enhance ongoing operations of the Army.

He enjoined the participants to leverage on opportunities provided by the Championship to perfect the impressive work that the Army is doing across the country.

Lalong expressed appreciation to the Chief of Army Staff (COAS), Lieutenant General Faruk Yahaya, for finding Plateau state worthy of hosting one of the significant events of the Nigerian Army.

Earlier, in his welcome



Gov Lalong

remarks, the General Officer Commanding 3 Division, who also doubles as Commander Operation SAFE HAVEN, Major General Ibrahim Ali, thanked the COAS for approving the upgrading of the 3 Division Small Arms Shooting Range, Miango.

He Stated that the

Championship will assist in improving troops' proficiency in weapon handling.

Gen Ali also disclosed that the exercise is in furtherance of the actualization of COAS' vision for the Army.

The GOC expressed gratitude to the people and Government of Plateau State for their

untiring support to 3 Division, adding, that the Miango range will remain a permanent venue for Nigerian Army Small Arms Championship in the future.

While presenting a souvenir to the Special Guest of Honour, Lt Gen Faruk Yahaya, who was represented by the Commander Training and Doctrine Command, Major General Stevenson Olabanji, urged the participants to exhibit the spirit of sportsmanship throughout the week-long event. He extolled the people of Plateau state for their hospitality.

The Deputy Governor of Plateau State, Prof Synny Tyoden, members of Plateau State Executive and Legislative Councils, senior officers both serving and retired, heads of security agencies, and royal fathers were present among others.

## Minister lauds NAF, promises enhanced fleets recapitalization

By **ALEX OLISE**

Minister of Defence, Major-General Bashir Salihi Magashi (Rtd), has assured the leadership of the Nigerian Air Force of President Muhammadu Buhari's commitment to sustain the trajectory of the capabilities of the service.

In a press statement e-signed, the Minister's Special Assistant on Media and Publicity, Mohammad Abdulkadri stated, "The Minister of Defence Maj Gen Bashir Salihi Magashi has assured the Air Marshal Oladayo Amao-led Nigerian Air Force of the President Muhammadu Buhari's commitment to sustaining the trajectory of the Airpower attacks capabilities of the Service.

"This according to him will be a catalyst towards reinforcing its National defence constitutional role assuring that the President is poised to providing new platforms for its operations. General Magashi stated this in his inaugural speech as Special Guest of Honour at the NAF 58th anniversary seminar held at the NAF base Kano, Kano State."

He commended the strategic role of the Nigerian Air Force in the ongoing joint Forces Operations towards keeping the sanctity and integrity of the nation's sovereignty.

The Defence Minister said that the theme of the seminar, "Enhancing the Nigerian Air Force's Operational Efficiency in Joint Operations for Effective Response to Contemporary National Security Imperatives" is apt, pointing out that it couldn't have come at a better time.

In his opening remarks, the Chief of Air Staff Air Marshal Oladayo Amao justified the hosting of the NAF Day / Reunion 2022 in Kano as a mark of respect and honour in honour of the Minister of Defence Maj Gen Bashir Salihi Magashi whose guidance and support to the Service he said are impacting greatly on its operations in various ways.

While appreciating the totality of the huge support of the Commander-in-Chief of the Nigerian Armed Forces, President Muhammadu Buhari to the service, Air Marshal Amao stressed that the Service has come a long way in fulfilling its constitutional mandate of defending National territorial integrity and cohesion in a joint Operational environment.

## Anambra CP vows to hunt down killers of lawmaker, aide

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

Commissioner of Police, Anambra State Command, CP Echeng E. Echeng, has vowed that the Force (NPF) would work closely with other security agencies to bring to justice the killers of Hon Okechukwu Okoye, who was beheaded after being kidnapped alongside his aide, Cyril Chiegboka.

Echeng made this known during a press briefing on the state of security in Anambra State while lamenting the nefarious activities of gunmen in the State, saying that "no stone will be left unturned until purveyors of violence are totally eradicated

to make Anambra State safe for growth and development."

The Commissioner expressed solidarity with the Governor of the State, Prof Charles Soludo, in his bid to end insecurity and restore peace across the State.

He said, "On 21st May, 2022 a relation of Hon Okechukwu Okoye reported to the Police in Ekwulobia, Aguata LGA that he had reason to believe that a headless corpse allegedly lying along Nnobi-Ideani Road was that of the lawmaker who was abducted alongside his aide, Cyril Chiegboka on 15th May, 2022 at Oraefi in Aguata LGA of Anambra State.

"Police Operatives accompanied him to the

scene and found the claim to be true. The headless body was recovered for preservation and autopsy.

"Later same day information was received that the head of the lawmaker was seen at Amichi in Nnewi South Local Government Area which in recent times has been the epicentre of attacks by unknown gunmen on security forces, Vigilante groups and defenceless civilians. Again, Police personnel mobilised to the scene and recovered the severed head of the lawmaker.

"The body of Cyril Chiegboka, an aide to Hon Okechukwu Okoye who was also murdered in cold blood by his abductors, has been recovered. All

leads so far gathered are being explored with a view to bringing perpetrators of this senseless crime to justice.

"Anambra State Police Command condemns this barbaric act by savages pretending to be fighting on behalf of the people. Indeed, the Police, other security agencies and defenceless civilians have been at the receiving end of similarly gruesome attacks in the past by these enemies of society and progress.

"The Nigeria Police Force, Anambra State Command stands solidly with His Excellency, the Executive Governor, Government and people of Anambra State in this moment of grief and at all times. The Command will

work in concert with sister security agencies to ensure that the mastermind and foot soldiers responsible for this heinous crime against the society are speedily brought to justice."

CP Echeng commiserated with the family and kinsmen of the lawmaker, the State House of Assembly and the State Governor on this tragic incident.

"Anambra Police Command appreciates the unequivocal stand of the Governor and the State House of Assembly on improving security and enhancing the safety of the general populace. May the souls of the departed citizens rest in perfect peace. Amen," he added.

## Terrorists kill 60 farmers, others missing in Borno

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

Terrorists believed to be members of Boko Haram have launched a massive attack at Rann, the headquarters of Kala-Balge Local Government Area of Borno State, killing over 60 farmers.

It was gathered that several bullet wounds were seen on the bodies of the deceased farmers, who were buried on Monday.

Residents told newsmen that many

others are yet to be accounted for.

One of the villagers said, "Over 50 people were buried in Rann on Monday. As at this morning, more dead bodies have been found; the death toll is over 60 now.

"The Boko Haram terrorists on motorcycles armed with guns and machetes surrounded their farms and started killing them one by one."

Boko Haram has increasingly targeted

farmers, herders and loggers, accusing them of spying and passing information to the Nigerian military.

They have also been raiding herding communities, and stealing cattle, a valuable commodity in the region to fund their operations.

In 2020, the insurgents invaded a rice plantation in Zabarmari, a community in the Jere Local Government Area, killing at least 43 farmers.

Boko Haram and its offshoot, Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP), have become more ferocious in recent times.

Although the Nigerian Army has repeatedly claimed that the insurgency has been largely defeated and it frequently underplays any losses the terror group has caused over 100,000 deaths and displaced millions of individuals mainly in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe States.

Just a few days ago,

the officers of the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) arrested about 30 suspects fishing and farming around terrorist camps belonging to Boko Haram and the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) in a bid to end terrorism around the Lake Chad Basin (LCB).

The farmers are now targets of both the military as well as the terrorists, with both group accusing them of being informants to rivals.





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1 x 2	12,448.80	13,382.46	1 x 2	11,294.45	12,141.54	1 x 2	9,174.94	9,863.07	1 x 2	7,573.97	8,142.02	
2 x 2	24,941.96	26,812.61	2 x 2	22,588.91	24,283.09	2 x 2	18,349.89	19,716.64	2 x 2	15,147.94	16,284.03	
3 x 2	37,413.09	40,219.07	3 x 2	33,987.48	36,622.04	3 x 2	27,524.84	29,589.20	3 x 2	22,721.91	24,426.05	
4 x 2	49,884.02	53,625.42	4 x 2	45,177.83	48,566.17	4 x 2	36,700.09	39,452.60	4 x 2	30,295.53	32,657.70	
5 x 2	62,355.15	67,031.71	5 x 2	56,472.29	60,707.71	5 x 2	45,866.19	49,315.34	5 x 2	37,863.00	40,710.09	
6 x 2	76,142.50	81,853.18	6 x 2	67,975.12	73,073.25	6 x 2	55,049.68	59,178.41	6 x 2	45,443.82	48,852.10	
7 x 2	87,297.21	93,844.50	6 x 3	101,962.78	109,609.99	6 x 3	54,074.55	61,200.90	7 x 2	53,017.79	56,993.61	
7 x 3	166,172.00	179,229.37	6.5 x 3	110,459.64	118,744.11	6.5 x 3	89,455.78	96,164.94	8 x 2	60,591.76	65,136.14	
7 x 4	197,125.00	211,909.37	7 x 2	79,304.29	85,252.11	7 x 2	64,224.63	69,041.48	9 x 2	80,454.83	86,488.95	
8 x 2	99,768.24	107,250.85	7 x 3	128,456.43	138,090.67	7 x 3	96,336.94	103,562.21	10 x 2	86,147.92	92,609.02	
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14.5 x 2	260,395.00	279,924.62	8 x 3	135,950.22	146,146.48	8 x 3	125,871.78	134,674.05	7 x 3	79,526.68	85,491.18	
8 x 4	199,536.48	214,501.71	8 x 4	181,266.93	194,841.95	8 x 4	167,043.40	179,022.80	8 x 3	103,375.58	111,130.80	
9 x 4	224,478.54	241,314.43	8 x 5	226,238.74	254,477.52	8 x 5	208,805.79	224,469.23	6 x 4	100,634.10	110,944.41	
10 x 4	299,302.72	321,752.57	8 x 6	271,900.48	292,008.02	8 x 6	250,284.32	269,911.09	7 x 4	120,404.56	129,434.90	
14.5 x 4	520,790.19	559,849.45	9 x 2	101,962.78	109,609.99	9 x 2	93,773.60	100,872.44	8 x 4	137,692.17	148,019.082	
7 x 5	218,243.02	234,629.74	9 x 3	152,944.01	164,414.81	9 x 3	141,108.54	151,691.68	10 x 4	172,301.37	185,224.22	
8 x 5	299,304.72	321,752.57	9 x 4	203,925.29	219,219.69	9 x 4	187,921.52	202,015.71	14.5 x 3	187,057.43	201,086.73	
8 x 6	359,165.65	386,103.08	9 x 5	305,373.04	328,276.02	9 x 5	281,288.07	303,022.10	14.5 x 4	249,838.03	268,575.88	
9 x 5	404,061.37	434,365.97	9 x 6	367,065.92	394,595.86	9 x 6	337,805.68	363,141.11	7 x 5	141,001.98	161,793.93	
10 x 5	448,957.08	482,628.86	10 x 3	169,651.36	182,375.21	10 x 3	156,602.81	168,348.02	8 x 5	172,116.65	185,025.40	
11 x 5	493,852.78	530,891.74	10 x 4	226,258.00	243,176.28	10 x 4	208,808.58	224,469.23	9 x 6	278,649.91	299,548.66	
9 x 6	484,873.39	521,239.16	10 x 5	354,037.54	380,590.16	10 x 5	325,815.11	349,966.25	11 x 5	295,636.20	317,808.91	
10 x 6	538,748.49	579,154.53	10 x 6	424,845.04	456,708.42	10 x 6	390,978.13	420,320.48	11 x 6	340,573.10	340,466.08	
11 x 6	592,622.16	637,068.82	11 x 5	389,441.887	418,650.01	11 x 5	358,396.62	385,276.37	HP7.25 X 6	218,226.87	234,593.89	
HP 7.25 x 6	317,178.40	340,337.5	11 x 6	447,303.49	480,851.24	11 x 6	412,916.45	443,885.19	FP14.5 X 6	379,943.00	408,438.72	
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Page 4 (Full Page)	1,187,500.00	1,276,562.50	3x6 Front Page	1,140,000.00	1,225,500.00
Page 5 (Full Page)	1,064,000.00	1,143,800.00	2x6 Under Mast Head	3,990,000.00	4,289,250.00
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## Jaiz Bank, FCMB, TransCorp emerge investors in equities market

Stories by **JOHNMARK UKOKO**

For the week ended Friday, May 20, 2022, investors in the Nigerian Stock Exchange (NGX) equities market were bullish on the shares of First City Monument Bank (FCMB), Jaiz Bank and Transnational Corporation (TransCorp), as combined turnover of the three stocks

### FG boosts livestock sub-sector with veterinary equipment

The Federal Government has started the distribution of procured veterinary equipment laboratory reagents and consumables to state ministries of agriculture Veterinary Teaching Hospitals (VTHs) and research institutes.

A statement issued by the Chief Information Officer in the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Ezeaja Ikemefuna, disclosed this during the official distribution of the veterinary equipment on Monday in Abuja.

The minister, Dr. Mohammad Abubakar, who was represented by the Director, Federal Department of Veterinary and Pest Control Services/Chief Veterinary Officer of Nigeria (CVO), Dr. Maimuna Habib, said this was to enhance effective diagnosis and efficient animal health services delivery to livestock farmers in the country.

Abubakar said part of the ministry's mandate was to ensure the production of safe and healthy foods of both crop and animal origins adding that the Federal Government's commitment was to ensure the prevention and control of animal diseases, especially trans-border animal, zootic and other contagious diseases.

He told the beneficiaries that the laboratory diagnostic and vaccination equipment and consumables were procured through Federal Government's special intervention fund.

"These laboratory diagnostic and vaccination equipment cold chain facilities and sample collection and packaging items you are about to receive from us were procured fund by federal government of Nigerian

"It is to complement the efforts of state ministries of Agriculture/Livestock and the veterinary teaching hospital in research and development epidemiology and survive control," he said.

He also pointed out that the production of safe and healthy livestock population would consequently leave for the human population since it has been reported that about 75 per cent of emerging and re-emerging origin.

Examples of such diseases are Tuberculosis, Lassa fever, rabies, ebola and even the COVID-19 pandemic," he stated noting that the Federal Government is a signatory to the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA), which provides a huge opportunity particularly for investors in the agricultural sector to explore the international market at zero tariff.

generated 56.21 per cent of market volume.

Analysis of activities in the bourse during the week, showed that trading in the top three equities namely FCMB Group, Jaiz bank and TransCorp measured by volume accounted for 1,698 billion shares worth N4.095 billion in 2,188 deals, contributing 56.21 per cent of the total equity turnover volume and value.

Meanwhile, a total turnover of 3.021 billion shares worth N31.784 billion in 29,153 deals was traded in the week by investors on the floor of the Exchange, in contrast to a total of 1,816 billion shares valued at

N27.194 billion that exchanged hands in the previous week in 36,286 deals.

The financial services Industry measured by volume, sustained lead in the activity chart with 2,244 billion shares valued at N12.399 billion traded in 10,817 deals, thereby contributing 39.01 per cent to the total equity turnover volume and value.

The conglomerates sector followed with 345,806 million shares worth N558,873 million in 1,676 deals, the third place was the Consumer Goods Industry, with a turnover of 149,009 million shares worth N2,750 billion in 5,632 deals.

A total of 141,582 units of Exchange Traded Products (ETPs) valued at N3.107 million were traded in the week in 17 deals compared with 175,5016 units valued at N6.803 million transactions in the preceding weeks in 36 deals.

Also, a total of 31,003 units of Bonds value at 33,165 million were traded on the week in 11 deals compared with a total of 43,629 units valued at N48,535 million transacted in the prior week in 33 deals.

The NGX all share index (ASI) and market capitalisation depreciated by 0.22 per cent to close the week at 52,979,96

and N28.562 trillion.

Similarly, all other indices finished lower with the exception of NGX Main Board, NGX Insurance, NGX Oil and Gas indices, which appreciated at 1.60362 per cent 0.14 per cent and NGX Asem index and NGX sovereign bonds closed flat.

Market breadth for the week showed 37 equities appreciated in price week lower than 50 equities in the previous week.

Also, 42 equities depreciated in price higher than 32 equities in the previous week, while 77 equities remained unchanged, higher than 74 equities recorded in the previous week.



Director, Monitoring & Evaluation Directorate, Nigerian Content Development & Monitoring Board (NCDMB), Tunde Adelana (left); Minister of State for Petroleum Resources, Chief Timipre Sylva; Executive Secretary of NCDMB, Simbi Wabote and Director Planning, Research & Statistics of NCDMB, Patrick Obah, at the 2022 Nigerian Content Midstream-Downstream Oil and Gas Summit in Lagos.

## Heifer international announces \$3.5m additional funding for tractor financing in Africa

International development organisation, Heifer International, has announced an additional \$3.5 million funding for its tractor financing initiative in Africa to facilitate agricultural development on the continent.

The investment comes two weeks after the launch of Hello Tractors Innovative Pay-As-You-Go (PAYG) tractor financing for agricultural entrepreneurs in Nigeria with \$1 million from Heifer International, raising the organisation's investment in catalytic funding for tractor financing in Africa to \$4.5 million.

Heifer International investments in tractor invoicing support increased mechanisation of smallholder farmers, promote increased food security and entrepreneurship across Africa.

The investment is being deployed through Heifer International's Tractor 4 Africa project.

President and Chief Executive Officer of Heifer International, Pierre Ferrari, said increased mechanisation and tractors in particular are vital as smallholder farmers to scale up their production and build profitable and sustainable farming businesses.

"We are particularly impressed by Hello Tractor's Pay-As-You-Go tractor financing model an innovation that emerged from the AYuTe Africa challenge, an agricultural technology competition for young entrepreneurs run by Heifer International.

In 2021, the company created the AYuTe Africa challenge, which awards grants yearly to the most promising young agricultural technology innovators across Africa. It also supports Heifer International goal of helping more than six million African farmers earn a sustainable living income by 2030.

The AYuTe Africa challenge \$1 million award enabled Hello Tractor to finance 17 tractors for 17 entrepreneurs in three countries of Nigeria, Kenya and Uganda.

At a stakeholder event held in his honour in Abuja recently, he said he was impressed at the enthusiasm shown by smallholder farmers booking agents and tractor owners to transform the agricultural landscape in Nigeria and other African countries.

Heifer International's additional \$3.5 million investment announced recently will finance an additional 75 tractors in Nigeria, Uganda and Kenya. Its total investment of \$4.5 million would provide affordable access to tractor services at affordable rates, boost farm productivity and employment, food security and farmers livelihood in the next decade.

"The investment will create 6,969 new jobs as booking agents, tractor operators, technicians and tractor owners in 10 years. Africa has the lowest number of tractors per farmer globally and as a result, yields per hectare remain low," Ferrari added.



Pierre Ferrari,



# SDGs: NGX CEO canvasses increased investments in Nigeria

Stories by **JOHNMARK UKOKO**

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Nigerian Exchange Limited (NGX), Temi Popoola, has canvassed increased long-term investments in Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Nigeria and sub-Saharan Africa.

He made the call while speaking as a panelist at the CEO Breakfast roundtable hosted by the United Nations Global Compact Network Nigeria, when during the Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations Global Compact, Sandra Ojiambo, visited Nigeria to solicit the commitment of the leadership of the private sector to the UN Global Compact Africa strategy.

Highlighting the unique role securities exchanges play within the global capital market in driving progress towards sustainable development, Popoola said: "Securities Exchanges have a critical role to play in the reallocation of capital towards the achievement of SDGs and the Paris Agreement on climate change, particularly in sub-Saharan

Africa (SSA) were countries are lagging behind all other regions in various development indicators.

"At NGX we remained committed to fostering the growth of sustainable financial risks and help issuers leverage the opportunities associated with the SDGs the fight against climate change."

Speaking on the green bond market and sustainable finance in Nigeria, he noted that NGX has been played a leading role over the years in developing financial instruments that address sustainable development and promoting financial inclusion in the Nigerian capital market.

In recognition of Nigeria's climate finance needs and the urgent action required to combat climate change as enshrined efforts along with government and industry stakeholders that culminated in the issuance of the maiden N10.69 billion and \$25.5 million 13.48 per cent five-year green bond in 2017.

The exchange also played a leading role in promoting the development and issuance of the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) Ijara Sukuk,

which has proven to be a highly attractive instrument that supports inclusion from Nigeria's ethical investors and Sharia's compliant investors, who prefer non-interest instruments.

He also said the NGX has partnered with International Finance Corporation (IFC) on training for issuance of sustainable financial instruments, adding that through the training, NGX and IFC shared best practices in sustainable finance insurance and educated potential issuers on the unique characteristics of green, social and sustainable bonds, the specific advantage of each instruments, as well as the detailed step-by-step process for issuing such instruments.

"The Africa Strategy aspires to recruit and support the 100 most exemplary companies in Africa along with the top 10 companies in each of the 10 countries with effective local network.

"Business leaders should support the United Nations Global Companies Africa strategy to develop innovative financing solutions to deliver impact towards achieving the SDGs in Africa," he added.



Temi Popoola

## Opara emerges as CIBN president, unveils agenda

The Chartered Institute of Bankers of Nigeria (CIBN), has inducted Dr. Ken Opara as its 22nd President and Chairman of Council

Opara, who took over the CIBN leadership on Saturday,

May 21, 2022 in Lagos, after the exit of his predecessor, Dr. Bayo Olugbemi, promised to transform and move the institute to greater heights.

He also pledged to ensure the institute's primary business

shaped the future of financial intermediation, maintaining that he had crafted the strategic focus of his administration in the next two years into the acronym 'FUTURE.'

Opara, who was sworn in

by retired Justice Adesuyi Olagbegi, will oversee the affairs of the institute for the next two years between 2022 and 2024).

He is expected to bring his over 30 years experience in diverse areas of banking including credit, treasury, retail, consumer, commercial banking, international operations and corporate banking to bear on the running of the institute.

He had held senior management positions in the industry, including divisional head, managed Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), development fund review committee 2014, sub-committee on capacity building for SMEs by the National Council on Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), among other positions.

In his acceptance speech, Opara commended the founding fathers of the institute, who sacrificed and contributed immensely to its growth and development over the years.

He said: "Our strategic focus is crafted into the acronym 'future,' which focuses on six key strategic pillars: financial innovation and transformation, dealing with uncertainties, as well as trade and finance

collaboration.

Others are unveiling pathways for membership growth, reengineering and rebranding the industry's business model around ethical conduct and governance.

A former governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Ernest Ebi, who gave the charge at Opara's investiture, charged the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and other stakeholders in the country to emulate the seamless transition of power within CIBN through peaceful elections.

Ebi pointed out that peaceful elections lead to economic growth and development.

Speaking, Olugbemi thanked the CBN Governor, Godwin Emefiele, Chief Executive of the National Deposit Insurance Corporation (NDIC), Hassan Bello, body of bankers, chief executive officers and other stakeholders for their support during his tenure.

He said: "As I pass the baton to my successor whom I have known for many years as a seasoned banking professional, who is very passionate about the institute, I am firmly convinced that he will take the institute to greater heights."



Dr. Ken Opara, being decorated by retired Justice Adesuyi Olagbegi as the President and Chairman, Chartered Institute of Bankers of Nigeria (CIBN), in Lagos, recently.



# Lagos approves eight e-hailing operators, cautions residents against using Rida, In-Drivers, others

Stories by **ADAKU WALTER**

The Lagos State Government has warned residents to be careful of unlicensed e-hailing operators as they pose security threats to safety of life and property.

This followed as the state government said only eight registered operators of the several e-hailing services were recognised in the state namely: Lagos Ride, Uber, Bolt, Let Me Run, Global Taxi, Zoom Run, Treepz (Plenty Waka) and Shuttlers.

The state government, however, disowned Rida, In-Drivers and others operating in the state.

Commissioner for Transportation, Dr. Frederic Oladeinde, disclosed this in a statement, saying the state government has observed high level of non-compliance by some unlicensed operators, who violate the guidelines put in place to regulate their

activities.

Expressing the state government's displeasure over the refusal of the App owners and partners (drivers) to comply with the law guiding their operation in the wake of criminal activities in the state, the transport commissioner further revealed the use of unauthorised operators by driver partners and commuting public.

Maintaining that the state government has held several meetings geared towards compliance with the regulations guiding e-hailing operations within the metropolis, Oladeinde urged residents to ensure that they patronise only the licensed operators, as most of the unauthorised operators do not have traceable operational base within the state in case of emergency or safety concerns.

Highlighting the importance of safety of life and property in the state, he stressed that only

eight of the several e-hailing operators were registered and recognised by the state government.

According to him, Lagos Ride, Uber, Bolt, Let Me Run, Global Taxi, Zoom Run, Treepz (Plenty Waka) and Shuttlers remain the legitimate e-hailing operators recognised and licensed to operate by the state government, while In-drivers, Rida and others were not licensed.

He appealed to anyone transacting business with them to be cautious, while assuring that the state government would soon begin to clamp down on the violators.

Oladeinde, who also enjoined residents of the state to collaborate by reporting any e-hailing operators different from the ones listed above to the Ministry of Transportation, maintained that the state government will not relent in its efforts to make Lagos safer for residents.



Dr. Frederic Oladeinde

## Terrorists threaten to kill train passengers

Terrorists who abducted the passengers of the Abuja-Kaduna train have threatened to start killing their captives if the Federal Government refused to release their children allegedly kept in a Yola detention facility.

Recall that on March 23, some terrorists attacked the Kaduna-bound train, killing eight passengers and abducting several others.

Speaking with Tukur Mamu, the spokesman of Sheikh Ahmad Gumi, via atelephone conversation, the leader of the terrorists, Abu Barra claimed that the abduction was a retaliation for the arrest and detention of their children by the security agencies.

Barra said, "Our children numbering about 8 between the ages of one to seven years are currently being held at an orphanage in Jimeta, Adamawa State under the supervision of the Nigerian Army.

"The names of our children are Abdulrahman, Bilkisu, Usman, Ibrahim and Juwairiyah. They were forcefully taken from our wives in Nasarawa and taken to the orphanage in Yola.

"For any continued discussion on the release of these passengers and a safe resumption of the train service, our children must be released

unconditionally.

"Only then we will release some of the abducted victims, especially the women while other passengers will be released on a prisoner exchange with some of our arrested comrades by the government."

He threatened that if within seven days the government does not respond to their demands, they will stop feeding the victims and will start slaughtering them one after the other.

The terrorists leader further added that if the government does not respond after that, then Nigerians should forget to use the Abuja-Kaduna rail line as well as the Kaduna-Abuja highway.

According to him, "If the government decided not to respond, so be it.

We are warning Nigerians, especially those that are patronizing the train, that if this matter is not resolved peacefully, the day they decided to attack us or do anything funny, passengers or commuters should forget to use the train or follow the Abuja-Kaduna road because we will be consistent and they can't stop us. We believe that you will deliver this message as it is.

"Therefore, we rely on you and urged you to convey this important message to everyone."

Barra further claimed that the Federal Government suspended the resumption of the train service because of their threats.

He said, "The government suspended the resumption of the train service indefinitely because of our threats and we repeat, if our conditions are not met, the resumption of the train service is to the detriment of the government and the passengers.

"We don't need money. We have a good reason for doing what we did, until our demands are met none of the victims will come out alive even if it means we all die with them. They are well taken care of as you can see from the pictures, we sent to you via WhatsApp but we assure you that this will not continue.

"We choose you (Tukur Mamu) to convey this important message to the government, the families of the victims and Nigerians in general because we believe you won't alter our message and we have seen you severally with Sheikh Gumi in the forest, therefore, we recognized the fearlessness in you."

## Put your best foot forward, Awhana urges Nigerians at Tourism Awards

By **OKIEMUTE BLOSSOM CHUKWU**, Tourism Correspondent

Nigerians have been urged to be their best in all their endeavours and grab every opportunity to always work with the mentality of putting their best foot forward.

Promoter of the Nigerian Tourism Awards, Efetobo Awhana, who gave the charge during the awards, which held at the Radisson Blu Anchorage Hotels in Victoria Island Lagos, said the award had proven to be a platform for celebrating those making positive impacts in their different fields across the country.

In his welcome address, he said being an award for celebrating those who positively impact society, it was not limited to one sector and cautioned against social media craving for negative news that go viral within seconds, pointing out that the positive impact people make was hardly commented on or commended.

"This is one of the reasons for the Nigerian Tourism Awards, a platform for commending those who have contributed positively to making things work better in tourism-related sectors, thereby projecting a more positive image of our country to the world," he said.

The awards included categories like the Best Tourism Journalist, which went to Taiye Olayemi of the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN), Best Tourism TV Station, which went to TVC Media, while Park Vega Water Park emerged the Best Family Amusement Centre.

Jara Beach emerged the Best Resort for tourists, while Lifetime

Achievement Awards were presented to Tope Ogbeni-Awe, a marketing communications expert, who has contributed immensely to the growth of the tourism industry for decades and Chairman of Elizade Motors, Chief Michael Adejo, who was honoured for his Tourism Investments in Nigeria, spanning several decades.

Responding, Adejo thanked the organisers and reminded everyone that he built a Golf Course that cost over \$120 million some years ago. Acknowledging the fact that he is now 84 years old, he encouraged Nigerians to invest more in tourism, as the country was blessed with several untapped potential.

Other recipients like Air Peace and Qatar Airways were commended for their support for the aviation sector locally and internationally, while Transcorp Hilton Abuja, Envoy Hotels, Abuja and Radisson Blu Anchorage Hotels were awarded Special Tourism Innovation in the hospitality industry.

In the food sector, Dominos Pizzas got three awards for encouraging family events and outings in the country.

Awhana reminded those who attended the event that the winners emerged following a rigorous process introduced in 2020, as they were judged and scored based on the set criteria for their categories.

He explained why the Lagos State Governor, Babajide Sanwo-Olu, emerged the Best Tourism Governor, while Chief Abiodun Odusanwo was named Tourism Personality of the Year and Mrs. Uzamat Akinbile-Yusuf the Best Tourism Commissioner.



## Maritime stakeholders reject 29% women representation in workforce

Stories by **ADAKU WALTER**

The maritime community has rejected the high level of gender bias in the sector following the newly published 2021 International Maritime Organisation's (IMO) Women International Shipping and Trading Association (WISTA) in its maritime survey report.

The report, which was launched during a virtual symposium to mark the first IMO International Day for Women in Maritime, reviews the proportion and distribution of women employees in the maritime sector among IMO member states and the global industry.

According to the report, which highlighted variation among individual sub-sectors, women account for only 29 per cent of the overall workforce in the global industry and 20 per cent of the workforce of national maritime authorities in IMO community.

According to data gathered from member states, search and rescue teams in national maritime authorities account for significantly fewer women employees with only 10 per cent, compared to female diplomats with 33 per cent and training staff members at 30 per cent.

Industry data showed that women seafarers constitute only two per cent of the crewing workforce and are predominantly found in the cruise sector, while in companies that own ships, they are 34 per cent of the workforce and women in maritime associations make up 16 per cent.

Also, in the towage, salvage, dredging industry, women accounted for 10 per cent, the bunkering industry recorded 10 per cent, while women employed in the surveyed offshore sector accounted for a paltry four per cent.

In marine insurance, women

made up 51 per cent of the workforce, while crewing agencies and crew training segments had 55 per cent. Of the companies that had boards, the overall share of female members was 28 per cent.

Secretary-General of IMO, Kitack Lim, in his welcome address at the symposium, said while women were working in all facets of the maritime sector globally to support the transition to a decarbonised, digitised and sustainable future for the industry, gender imbalance in the sector remained high.

He frowned on the result of the global survey, which he said, exposed the gender gap in the sector, maintaining that diversity benefits the entire sector, hence, the need to commit to recognising, facilitating and supporting the contributions of women as key stakeholders to help address the challenges of decarbonisation for a green future.

Speaking on the survey, President of WISTA International, Mrs. Despina Theodosiou, said the report pointed out the low representation of women in the maritime industry as it exposes some sectors where there are almost no women presence and others with modest level of parity.

She said the survey underscored the low number of women at sea despite the ongoing seafarers shortage and how shipping companies have a reasonably high level of women in senior management and board positions, while workboat, bunkering, offshore and dredging companies barely reach double percentage figures across their workforce.

"We want to push for this collection of industry data to fuel those who are in positions to create the change to do so. This data will hopefully give people across different industries, but interlocked sectors, sub-sectors, and geographical locations, the

inspiration to focus their efforts on creating greater gender diversity," she said.

Speaking at the panel session, the Former Secretary-General, Abuja Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for West and Central Africa, Mfon Usoro, said women have not been accorded due recognition in the work place.

She said the world needed to embrace a culture of gender diversity and inclusiveness, especially as governments have committed to it by signing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) five and IMO gender resolution.

Usoro, who is also the President of Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT) Nigeria, said the IMO should ensure governments of member states and their agencies show commitment to their national policies.

She urged IMO to take a cue from the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) policy on 40 per cent women representation on boards of all banks, which has opened opportunities for more women in the country's banking sector.

The CILT president also urged the IMO to require governments of member states to submit reports on the status of implementation of the resolution of gender policies and practices as part of their scorecards.

Executive Vice President, Operations and Assets, CMA-CCGM, Mrs. Christine Cabau-



Mrs. Despina Theodosiou,

Woehrel, pointed out the need to provide the right training to attract more women into the maritime industry.

While lamenting the low number of female seafarers, Cabau-Woehrel advocated more enhanced conditions at sea, such as crew changes and compatibility to attract more women for efficiency and best practices.

Compliance and Safety

Manager of Papua New Guinea Maritime Administration, Ms. Dinah Inape-Omenefa, highlighted the importance of mentorship and coaching programmes to encourage women into maritime and support them in the sector.

She said while working in the sector was more extensive and technical, there was the need to improve safety and better working conditions for women, as well as build technical competence in them.

Also, Permanent Representative of Saudi Arabia in IMO, Essam Al Ammari, said more needed to be done on visibility as an important part of the process, as women were underrepresented in the sector.

He warned that while women face challenges in the sector, governments needed to invest in implementing policies for women education to remove gender barriers and ensure their visibility in the shipping industry.

On his part, Executive Vice-President, Maritime Policy and Government Affairs, MSC Group, Bud Darr, said the maritime sector needed more talents and skill sets recognition to facilitate its development.

He said bringing women onboard the sector offers an array of skills, especially in the achievement of de-carbonisation, which required a diverse workforce for better decision making.

## ANLCA seeks FG's intervention to reduce levy on imported vehicles

The Association of Nigerian Licensed Customs Agents (ANLCA) has urged the Federal Government to reduce the levy on used cars payable in the relaunched Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) from 15 to five per cent to make them more affordable.

Public Relations Officer of the Tin Can Island Port Chapter of ANLCA, Onome Monije, who explained that with the new policy, imported vehicles might remain unaffordable to many Nigerians, called on the government to review the levy downwards.

Monije, who is also Chief Executive Officer of Onas 100 Resources Nigeria Limited, said freight agents were ready to abide by the new regime as long as it intends to facilitate trade and increase the efficiency of revenue generation.

According to her, the VIN

valuation was a welcome development for importation of vehicles into the country, noting that freight agents had engaged their importers and car dealers on the importance of the new valuation.

"The VIN valuation, for us, is not as if there is an increase in charges or tariff, some prices are intact, but the only concern we are looking at is the aspect of import levies. For VIN, we have no issue but the levy, because it is not about us the agents or the Nigeria Customs Service, but for the government to look into the levy by reducing it to five per cent instead of 15 per cent.

"Some cars are stuck in the port because of the levies. It is not that we are crying more than the bereaved, but this is our country and we need to look at the holistic approach on the levies and see how best to reduce it," she added.

## FG to rehabilitate narrow gauge rail lines to connect West Africa

Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Transportation, Dr. Magdalene Ajani, has said the Federal Government is striving to rehabilitate the existing narrow gauge rail lines to standard gauge lines with a view to connect Nigerian cities with West Africa.

Ajani stated this at the ninth Nigeria Annual Transport Lecture titled: Nigeria Transportation For Development, Sectional Achievement, Prospects And Challenges, held in Abuja.

She said the Federal Government remained resolute and undeterred in its vision to revolutionise the transport sector into a world class system, noting that the development of Deep Sea Ports and automation of the country's ports operations would facilitate the ease of doing business at the ports.



Dr. Magdalene Ajani

She also disclosed that to strengthen this position, the ministry has ongoing public-private engagement in the development of a world class transport system within the properties of the National Inland Waterways Authority (NIWA) in Lagos State and encourage other states to key into the initiative.

Ajani further stated that the current administration recognises the importance of the transportation sector to the industrialisation and diversification of the Nigerian economy.

She said the government was doing everything possible to ensure infrastructural development to drive the sector even as the ministry was challenged by insufficient funding, minimal private sector participation and duplication of functions that tend to cause inter-agency conflicts.

In her presentation, a former Director of Road Transport and Mass Transit Administration, Federal Ministry of Transportation, Anthonia Ekpa, decried neglect for the road sector by the Federal Government as against huge sums of money earmarked for other modes of transport.

She said prioritising the road sector was cheaper and would have more coverage on roads constructed and buses bought contrary to money spent to build just an airport runway or rail track.

She revealed that the United

Nations records in 2018-2019 showed that people died mostly in road accidents and enjoined all to advocate better development of the road sector.

In his speech earlier, Director-General of the National Automotive Design and Development Council (NADDCC), Jelani Aliyu, stated that the theme of this year's lecture was aptly chosen in view of the fact that transportation remains the backbone of economic development of any nation and a critical investment sector that stimulates economic growth.

He also stated that the theme is in line with the policies of the NADDCC geared towards promoting and enhancing value addition in the transport and automotive sector of the economy by creating a friendly business climate to further enhance investments inflow and industrialisation.

Towards the realisation of the theme, Jelani stated that the agency was rapidly working towards developing and promoting advanced transport technology in the automotive industry in line with the global paradigm shift to a carbonless transportation system.

"Currently, one of our top focus areas is scaling up production of applicable electric vehicles locally to enable Nigeria meet its target for the Paris Accord and 2060 net zero commitment," Jelani stated.



# How my growing up influenced my charity foundation- Dennis Aikoriogie

He is the founder of a nonprofit and non-governmental organization registered in Nigeria and the United States, Dennis Aikoriogie Foundation. Dennis Aikoriogie is also the co-founder of Go Read Information Technology Limited, a tech company that impacts education across the world. Aikoriogie is also the CEO of Global Hobnob Nigeria Limited and Global Hobnob LLC New York, that is involved in shipping, residential services, household items and portfolio investments. Aikoriogie remains a force and an inspiration to other budding entrepreneurs. In this chat with **OMONIYI ALLI**, he bares it all.

**Did your childhood prepare you for what you do right now?**

Yes, having lost my dad after secondary or high school, many people thought I will not have a university or college degree. My Mom, who was a civil servant, had to see me and my sibling through school, though the resources was not too lacking plus support from relatives, we acknowledged it would have been easier and better if my dad was around.

My Christian background as a Catholic also shape what I do right now, the brotherly and agape love taught had a deep root in me, I understood the importance of the corporal of works of mercy.

**What is the inspiration behind Dennis Aikoriogie Foundation?**

I have relatively fair number of friends and followers on Facebook, very frequently they kept on asking me to show love, which I did by sending call cards and cash support. While growing up I have seen many people struggle through school and everyday life, this coupled with the experience of losing my dad and how my mom had taken care of us, made me come to the realization that I must give back to the society no matter

how little. On June 2021 to mark my birthday that year the Dennis

Aikoriogie Foundation was born and I reached out to widows and the needy, before the launch of my Foundation, I had supported other charities in Nigeria.

**What impact has your foundation had since inception?**

A: As an emerging non-profit that is solely funded by me we have been able to impact lives of the underserved and unserved in Nigeria, with fundraiser I have initiated, I have had the support of family and few friends and we have served people in Benin, Abuja, Port Harcourt, Uyo,

Imo and Abia. We believe we could do more with the right sponsors and partners; we are currently restructuring the board of the foundation.

**Tell us more about your companies, GoRead Information Technology Limited and Global Hobnob Nigeria Limited?**

GoRead is an emerging company I co-founded with a friend to introduce an innovation to private and public schools, that makes learning easy, educational materials accessible and affordable. Global Hobnob Nigeria

Limited is the production and exporting arm of Global Hobnob LLC New York, where we ship food and cash crops overseas.

**You've worked in different capacities, across sectors. How did these work experiences impact your life?**

I have worked in the banking, insurance, public and private sectors.

Every sector comes with its own unique experience and these experiences have shaped and impacted me greatly.

**Tell us about your other projects and activities?**

I am working on an outsourcing and HR companies in Nigeria and the

United States to provide services to American companies and provide jobs to teeming Nigeria youths. I also intend in the nearest future to dabble into Oil



and Gas, Fashion, Real Estate and invest in some Franchises.

**As a businessman with vast experience, how would you rate the economic growth of Nigeria?**

Post-independence, Nigeria has not experienced much economic growth, I believe we have the potential to compete in the business world, we have not had the right policies to put us in the right footing, issues like access to capital, ease of doing business, lack of industrialization for which epileptic electricity could be the contributing factor, we keep on exporting products with no value addition and makes Nigeria products less competitive on the global stage.

**Tell us some of the activities in your foundation?**

Free medical missions and outreaches, which we have organized in Abuja, Port Harcourt and Benin. Scholarship and tuition assistance programme, we have helped indigent students pay their tuition and have given scholarships to see them through school, recently, we also distributed free notebooks, pens and other materials to Ancilla orphanage school in Imo State.

Widow programme, from time to time we have reach out to widows in the community, we have provided food items and cash donations to support their families.

Youths and women empowerment- we intend to equip youths and women with the right kind of entrepreneurial skills and financial literacy to survive in modern business world and upon completion of such training we set up them up in the skilled area they have

just acquired knowledge, we also intend to leverage on fintech.

Water access, sanitation, and hygiene, we are working on providing clean and portable water to rural communities and educate them on sanitation and hygiene.

These are short and medium term or operational goals, the long term or strategic goal is having an orphanage, in the orphanage we are going to build school and hospital to provide services freely to the community.

**If you could have an audience with the President of Nigeria, what would you tell him to do differently?**

I would advise him to ensure that there is stable electricity in the country because it plays a catalytic role in small and medium enterprises, which are the drivers of any economy. To ensure a credible electoral system is in place, strengthen and liberalize democratic participation and try as much as possible to demonetize the political process, simply put. To build strong institutions.

Lastly, my word to him will be to ensure the security of lives and property appointing capable people in position of authority.

**You are a man of many parts; how do you unwind and still have time for family duties?**

I try as much as possible to spend time with my family despite the busy schedule. Occasionally, we go out to events church, parties and see movies together. I plan to spend more quality time with my family, going on vacation, sights seeing etc. We are currently working building the foundation to financial freedom to enable us ample time for family and leisure.



Home Affairs

# Bedroom ideas little girls will love

Decorating a little girl's bedroom is no small feat! You want something that she'll take pride in and appreciate right away, but you also want it to be something that she'll appreciate for years to come.

The key is to take her unique interests and passions into account while sticking with a more timeless approach to design and décor.

Here are some tips on setting up the girls' bedroom

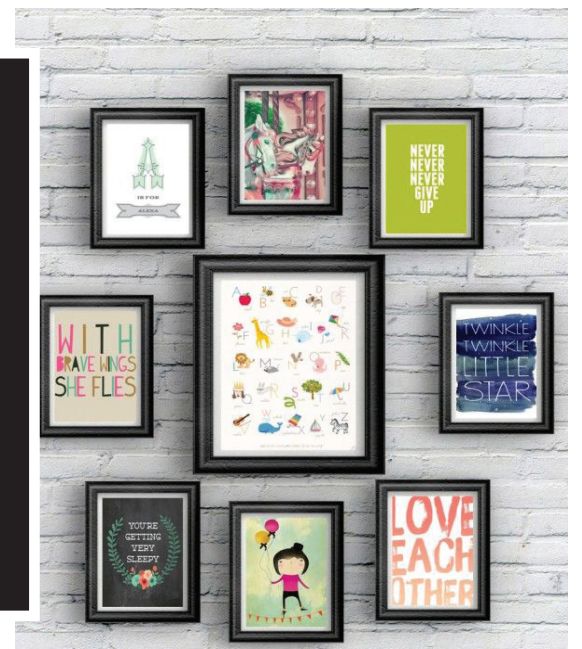
Choose Something She Can Grow In

When designing for little girls, it's important to remember children grow up quickly so you want to work with things that she can grow up with and not age out of too quickly. This includes such elements as cartoons, children's murals, or anything juvenile. Instead, Brown suggests focusing on implementing furniture, accessories, and design elements that are still playful and imaginative but also allow for long-term use. For example, instead of a princess or safari mural, opt instead for fun block patterns, different shapes, or something still visually stimulating like a custom woodwork pattern that doesn't age out.



\*Get Creative with Wall Art

Allowing your daughter to personalize her room will give her a sense of autonomy and creativity; hang a magnet board or word art board low down on a wall so she can see it and add to it herself. If she's too young to create her own art, consider putting up printed photos of family, friends and pets



Go for Light and Airy Window Treatments

In little girls' bedrooms, I suggest replacing the heavy custom drapery with lighter window treatments, light and airy linen and soft cotton curtains in more natural shades will allow for more natural light without sacrificing privacy or shade from the outdoors come bedtime.



Create a Reading Nook

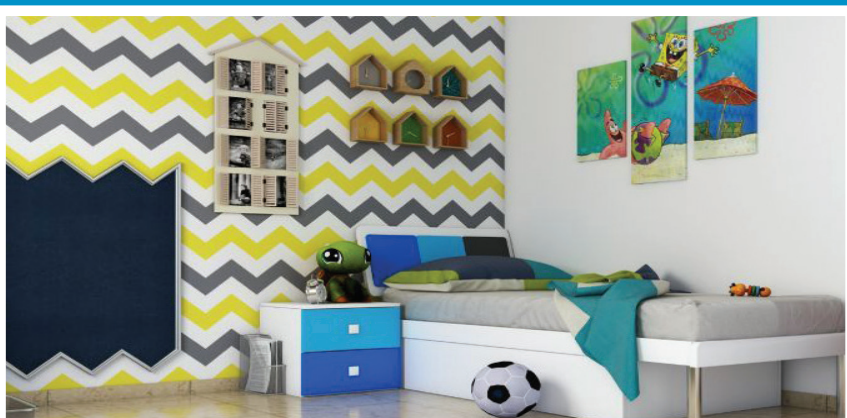
You can never go wrong with a reading nook outfitted with a corner tent or chair/beanbag setup. Reading is such a cornerstone of children's lives and having a designated area for that educational and developmental process is a good thing to keep in mind."

Make sure it's comfortable and allows for children to invite their friends, siblings, and family members into the space to comfortably read and grow with them.



Wallpaper Accent Walls

This is such a simple yet effective design element. Having an accent all of wallpaper behind a bed or in a nook is an easy and attractive way to add additional interest to a space and, again, incorporate a visual element that will age gracefully over time and not necessarily need to be changed out too soon.



Make Storage Solutions Fun

Bookshelves and storage solutions can be practical and pretty when you choose them carefully and add some decor to them to make them appear more attractive.







## Madueke wins CBN Open championship

### As Adewale defends title

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

**N**onso Madueke defeated Henry Atseye 2-6 7-6(10) 0-2 to win the men's singles in the 44th edition of the CBN National Tennis Competition to claim the coveted prize.

Madueke, four seeded in the tournament, having fallen in the first set to top seed Atseye, recovered to displace his opponent in the second set who later conceded defeat in the third set after sustaining an injury.

Atseye had qualified for the grand finale of the men's singles after beating the defending champion of DavNotch Open, Wilson Igbiovina, 4-6, 7-6(6), 6-4 in the semi-finals.

The 18-year-old Igbiovina was on course to lift his second championship title in two weeks before being hampered in the last two sets despite winning the first in the semi-final against Atseye.

On the other semi-final tussle, Madueke strolled past unseeded Friday Gabriel with ease in the championship to record 6-0 6-0 flawless victory.

"It was not an easy match, but I knew that as long as I kept

on fighting, I was going to scale through," Madueke told the media after Atseye conceded defeat.

"We both had to play two consecutive matches today and even though my opponent's semi-final game was quite tougher than mine, I knew that I couldn't rest on my oars.

"I had to keep pushing and stay focused. Thank God I had the victory at last," he added.

Meanwhile, in the male wheelchair singles event, Alexander Adewale defeated Yusuf Wasiu in the 44th edition of the CBN Senior National Tennis Open Championship held at the Moshood Abiola National Stadium, Abuja.

The event scheduled from May 13 to May 21, saw the defending champion, Adewale beat second-seed Wasiu 6-2 7-6 7-5 to clinch the title.

Speaking to the media, the excited Adewale, who won the male wheelchair singles event, thank the organisers, CBN and Nigeria Tennis Federation (NTF), for putting up such a wonderful event that keeps athletes in shape.

He further appealed to the federation to organise more tournaments which will galvanise Nigerian tennis players' performances on the international stage.



"I won the last year edition and I have won more than four championships consecutively," Adewale told News Agency of Nigeria.

"My opponent today has always been my rival in any competition.

"I thank the Nigeria Tennis Federation (NTF) and Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) for organising this championship," he added.

Adewale continued: "We want the Federation to organise more national championships. We really need their support so that we can participate in major international competitions.

"This is the road to take for us to feature at the Paralympics. We all have the same challenge as wheelchair tennis players, and that is that we want to participate in international championships," he appealed.

Meanwhile, in the women's category, top-seed Kafayat

Omisore defeated number four-seed Oluwakemi Oluwasegun into two straight sets 6-1 6-2 to win the championship.

Omisore, despite emerging victorious, admitted that her opponent had put up a worthy challenge but was able to see her off with her fountain of experience garnered in the sport over time.

"It was a tough work, but I thank God I ended well. My opponent also played well, but I defeated her based on experience," Omisore said post-match.

"I did not relent and I continued to work hard to achieve my target. I will go back home and continue to train for any competition ahead," she added.

The 44th edition of the CBN Senior National Tennis Open Championship was contested by 32 players comprising 16 males and 16 females.

## French Open: Osaka falls in first round

Four-time Grand Slam winner Naomi Osaka has been defeated in the first round of the French Open by 2019 semi-finalist, Amanda Anisimova in straight two sets 7-5 6-4.

Anisimova also defeated the 20-year-old this year in the third round of the Australian Open, to pose herself as a nightmare of the Japanese.

Osaka, who pulled out of the 2021 French Open in Roland Garros citing mental health issues may decide to withdraw from next month's Wimbledon following the reduction of tournament points by the tennis governing body.

According to Osaka, performing in an event that has been reduced to a mere exhibition will affect her mental psychology which may see her not performing to the utmost capacity.

She said, "I would say like the decision is kind of affecting, like, my mentality going into the grass like I'm not 100 per cent sure if I'm

going to go there.

"I would love to go just to get some experience on the grass court, but like at the same time, for me, it's kind of like - I don't want to say pointless, no pun intended, but I'm the type of player that gets motivated by... seeing my ranking go up.

"I think the intention was really good, but the execution is kind of all over the place," Osaka added.

She continued: "I'm not sure why, but I feel like if I play Wimbledon without points, it's more like an exhibition.

"I know this isn't true, right? But my brain just feels that way. Whenever I think something is like an exhibition, I just can't go at it 100 per cent.

"I'm leaning more towards not playing given the current circumstances," Osaka said.

27th seed Anisimova, who ended Osaka's French Open campaign in the first round in a two-set win, will play 100th world-ranked Donna Vekic in the second round.



## Ndah appreciates Akwa United, Pirates' fans after CAFCC loss



Orlando Pirates defender and Nigeria international, Olisa Ndah, has expressed his deep appreciation to Akwa United and Orlando Pirates fans for their support during the CAF Confederations Cup final in Godswill Akpabio Stadium, Uyo.

Ndah, who joined the

South African club last season's summer after completing two years at Akwa United, in what was more like a reunion, landed Uyo for the CAFCC final against Moroccan RSB Berkane.

The outcome of the game which went sour to deny the two national-capped Super

Eagle his first continental club diadem, ended 5-4 on penalties after both teams played a barren full-time draw and recorded 1-1 in extra-time.

The 24-year-old defender after earning 3 caps for the Flying Eagles in the 2019 U23 African Cup of Nations, got his first call up to the Super Eagles in the 2019 AFCON where Nigeria finished third.

However, notwithstanding the outcome of the CAF Confederations Cup, the Buccaneer took to social media to extend his warm appreciation to both Akwa United and Orlando Pirates for their unwavering support.

"My greatest of thanks goes out to all the Akwa United supporters who came

through to the CAFCC Final in Uyo to support my team. It was a pleasure to play the beautiful game at home in front of you all," Ndah tweeted.

"Playing in Uyo was overwhelming for me and a special thanks to Akwa United Chairman, Paul Bassey.

"My thanks to the faithful Pirates, for their support throughout the season. Come what may, we strive to make you proud," he added.

The Buccaneers, who would have rejuvenated their season with a first continental CAFCC title win, trail behind six South African clubs in the South African top-flight league on seventh position with 40 points.

## Ronaldo to harvest goals for Man U, says Ten Hag

Following the season's end, Manchester United manager Erik ten Hag has held the first press conference confirming a lot of issues which include Cristiano Ronaldo's continued stay at Old Trafford.

The 52-year-old Dutch coach, who signed to manage the Red Devils after interim manager Ralf Rangnick's rein, noted that the Portuguese forward will remain in the

club to harvest goals.

Why it is important to clear the air, there have been emerging reports lately that Cristiano Ronaldo may become surplus to requirement to the former Ajax manager's plans.

Cristiano Ronaldo, 37, joined Manchester United last summer from Juventus to become the highest goal scorer for Ralf Rangnick's side from 30 appearances in the

2021-22 season.

In the course of the Erik ten Hag maiden's press conference where he was asked if Ronaldo fits into his plans, he said, "Of course."

He added that Ronaldo will help the club harvest goals.

He, however, noted that his quest for Ronaldo to assume the leadership of the team is an issue that will be discussed personally with the player.



## Minister awarded Sports Personality of the Year

Minister of Youth and Sports Development, Sunday Dare, has been honoured. It is for his immense contribution to social-economic and sports development by popular lifestyle and showbiz magazine, Global Excellence.

Dare, who was honoured with the 'Sports Personality of the Year' on Sunday, May 22, 2022, at the award ceremony tagged, "Excellence Recognition Awards 2022", held at the Balmoral Hall, Kudirat Abiola Way, Oregun, Ikeja, Lagos, is a proponent of homegrown talents and grassroots sports development.

According to Mayor Akinpelu, Publisher and Editor-in-Chief of Global Excellence magazine, the Sports Minister deserved to be honoured for the excellence and innovations he has brought into the Youth and Sports Development Ministry.

Akinpelu noted that Dare's

tenure as Sports Minister has witnessed a lot of initiatives that have positively impacted the sector leading to the nation's best performance in 13 years at the Tokyo Olympics and her best-ever outing at the 2020 World U20 Athletics Championships in Nairobi, Kenya.

The publisher stressed that since Dare ascended into the helms of the Ministry of Youth and Sports Development, the welfare of athletes, both able-bodied and special, has taken a prominent and central place in the activities of the Ministry.

Akinpelu underlined that the rehabilitation of national sports edifices like the Moshood Abiola National Stadium, Abuja, the National Stadium, Surulere, Lagos, and the Obafemi Awolowo (formerly Liberty) Stadium in Ibadan have now taken centre stage under Dare's administration.



# Attack on Villa's Olsen: Keane, Neville react

Former Manchester United player Gary Neville has condemned an attack on Aston Villa goalkeeper Robin Olsen at Etihad Stadium. It was after fans invaded the pitch at the sound of the final whistle to award Manchester City the Premier League title.

Aston Villa had shocked City with an unexpected lead in the first half and doubled it in the second in what looks like the end of the latter's fourth clinching of the title in five seasons.

However, in a twist of event, Ilkay Gundogan got one back for City, heralding a supersonic comeback victory that ignited the tense atmosphere over the Etihad.

Following the unprecedented outcome, thousands of fans rushed into the field uncontrollably to celebrate the victory and in the process, assaulted Olsen who was on his way out of the pitch.

Neville lamented that the actions of the fans are despicable which of yore have not been experienced in the English Premier League.

"What is it happening? The last 30 years we've brought the



fences down in English football and 99 times out of 100, the fans have respected the fact that you don't run on the pitch because they enjoy the family environment," Neville said on Sky Sports.

"We've obviously got far more children coming to the games, far more women coming to the games, and all of a sudden in these last few weeks and months, we've got these idiots not just running on the pitch but attacking players. What the hell are you doing?"

"Running on the pitch is obviously delirious because City have won the league,

so I get that, but attacking opposition players on the pitch - where has this come from? Why is it happening? I've got no idea. It's absolutely ridiculous," He added.

Neville's former teammate, Roy Keane, has called the fans 'scumbags' for encroaching into the pitch to celebrate City's victory.

He stressed that a fan who could have resulted in punching a player would have the effrontery to stab a player.

"It's disgraceful. It really is and I tell you what - a player or a manager is going to be seriously injured," Keane said.

"If you're mad enough to

come on and punch a player, then you're mad enough to come on and do something silly like stab a player. Something crazy will happen. People have come back from Covid and forgotten how to behave themselves.

"Idiots, scumbags. It's a disgrace. We've seen it a couple of times at Forest and with Patrick Vieira. It's absolutely disgraceful," he added.

Reportedly, this is the third incident of stadium invasion in the English leagues, Championship and Premier League, after Sheffield United's and Everton's.

# 'Injured Thiago may miss UEFA final'

Liverpool midfielder Thiago Alcantara may be on his way out of the Champions League final for the Merseyside club after he sustained an injury in the final Premier League match against Wolverhampton Wanderers.

Thiago, a Spanish playmaker and an instrumental figure for the Reds in the matchday 38 fixture, set up Sadio Mane's 24th minute opener with a backheel pass to herald the 3-1 rout of Wolves at Anfield.

However, the 31-year-old midfielder who joined

coach Jurgen Klopp's side last two seasons from German giant Bayern Muchen, featuring 48 times in all competitions with two goals to his name, limped off the pitch before the close of first-half.

Reacting to the incident, Liverpool's manager Jurgen Klopp said the player may not be available for the Champions League final's cracker with Real Madrid at the Stade de France, Paris, on Saturday, May 28, 2022.

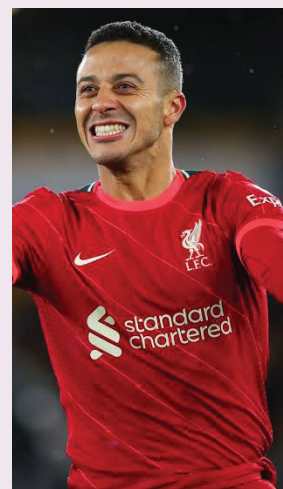
Klopp, who deliberately refused to avail the press of the kind and extent of

Thiago's injury, muttered he was affected only from the lower part of the body.

Klopp said, "I think he'll be out of the final but I don't know. He's limping, so it may be not the best sign.

"The lower part of the body. I know what it is but don't want to say," he explained when asked where the injury affected Thiago.

Liverpool, whose quest for a quadruple this season has been hampered by Manchester City after winning the FA Cup and Carabao Cup on penalties, will seek to galvanise their



season with a win against Los Blancos to lift their seventh UEFA Champions League trophy next week.

# Relegation scare: 'We reached our goal'

Everton underwent a tumultuous journey to qualify for the 2022-2023 English Premier League (EPL) season having battled in the relegation zone, unfortunately.

The Toffees never hoped or ever dreamt to bargain or struggle to preserve a 72-year Premier League history but it happened to avail Frank Lampard the opportunity to steer the Merseyside club out of the Red Zone.

The former Chelsea manager, who was appointed after Everton parted ways with Rafael Benitez following the club's poor results that resulted in their drop into the relegation zone, was able to, with a game handy, survive

the relegation scare.

Penultimate the last EPL game against Arsenal at the Emirates Stadium where they lost 5-1, Toffees had staged a brilliant comeback against Crystal Palace from two goals down to win 3-2; sparking a climax atmosphere.

It is a campaign that will forever remain indelible in the hearts of Toffees as their relentless efforts and commitments to remain in the English topflight league paid off to give room for Donny van de Beek to express his gratitude.

Midfielder Donny van de Beek, who joined Everton on loan from Manchester United in January 2022, featuring 7



times to record two Premier league goals for the Toffees, pointed out that the club reached its goal at the end of the season.

"Not the way we wanted to finish the season but we already reached our goal a few days ago

I want to thank all the players, staff and especially

the fans who were there in the good and tough times," the Dutch tweeted.

Everton, in the course of battling for survival to retain their English Premier League status, contended with Leeds United and Burnley to succeed relegation to the English Football League (EFL) Championship.

# Minister charges NFF to develop indigenous leagues

Minister of Youth and Sports Development, Sunday Dare, has charged the Nigeria Football Federation (NFF) to support the development of the domestic leagues in the country.

Dare, who made this call when he received the triumphant U20 National team in the recently held WAFU Zone B championship in Niamey, Niger Republic, added that the future of football is in the hands of the young generation.

The Sports Minister, keen on sustaining the feat on all sides of the sport, expressed that only by developing our indigenous leagues can such a vision be attained.

Furthermore, he reiterated that the Ministry under his leadership will continue to provide all the necessary support that is needed to boost the growth of our indigenous leagues.

"I want you to maintain the same level of discipline on all sides," Dare said on receiving the triumphant Flying Eagles led by NFF Secretary-General, Sanusi Mohammed.

"The future of football is in the hands of these young ones and we must do all to ensure it remains the same.

"One way is to ensure that is the rebirth of our leagues and give it the quality it desires.

"This is the only way we

can have players who will go on to play for Super Eagles as well as top clubs in Europe.

"We will continue to work and support you where necessary and I must say that I am proud of what you have done," he added.

In response to the Minister's charge, NAN reportedly stated that Mohammed Sanusi lauded the call and appreciated Dare's efforts in ensuring all teams, not limited to any, are improved on all sides.

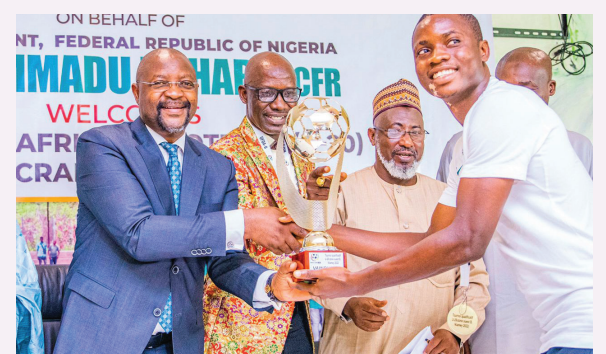
He said, "In a meeting, the Minister once had with the NFF board, he challenged us to ensure that we focus on other teams as well alongside the Super Eagles.

"That challenge has been in our minds and that is what we have seen today in the Flying Eagles team.

"The team left days earlier to Niger Republic ahead of the event and participated in friendly matches, which helped them acclimatise and better prepared for the tournament.

"This team has worked hard and I am happy to present them to you and Nigerians," Sanusi added.

The Trumpet reports that the U20 Nigeria team whose player Daniel Daga picked up two man of the match awards in four games, qualified alongside Benin Republic, for the U20 African Cup of Nation in Egypt next year.



# Man United boss eager to end Liverpool, City's EPL dominance

Manchester United manager Erik Ten Hag said he will battle Liverpool and Manchester City to end their dominance in the English Premier League (EPL).

Ten Hag, admitting that both English teams play good football, stressed that there comes a time when their dominance will come to an end.

The former Ajax manager, who held his maiden press conference on Monday barely 24 hours after he watched United's defeat by Crystal Palace, opined that other clubs want to end the era of Reds and City's dominance.

"In this moment, I admire them both. They play really fantastic football, both Liverpool and Man City. But you always see an era can come

to an end and I'm looking forward to battling with them," he responded to journalists' questions.

"And I am sure all the other clubs in the Premier League want to do that," Ten Hag added.

The Red Devils' boss reiterating that no era lasts forever, is confident in propagating a new era with Manchester United disassembling the dominance.





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

— Leo Tolstoy



## Obi meets with British PM, others, on Nigeria's problems

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

People's Democratic Party (PDP) presidential aspirant and former Anambra State Governor Peter Obi has bemoaned the problems of Nigeria which he described as mostly economic.

Obi spoke in London shortly after a meeting of selected persons from Commonwealth countries with the Prime Minister of Britain, Boris Johnson, at the latter's 10 Downing Street office. He disclosed that

the meeting basically deliberated on trade and investment among Commonwealth countries.

Obi also said it touched passionately on how the United Kingdom and other Commonwealth countries would encourage investment on the continent and the African Free Trade Agreement should be made to function actively so that the countries would reap positive benefits from it.

Obi lamented that trade among African countries was very low and called on African leaders to look inwards

and concentrate more on the economic problems facing the continent that often result to political problems.

The frontline presidential aspirant asserted that when a continent gets her economy right, it would pull a lot of people out of poverty, therefore reducing tension and insecurity usually associated with poverty.

Obi, who also took the opportunity to meet the UK Minister for Africa, Vicky Ford, disclosed that he discussed issues affecting Africa, especially Nigeria,

with her.

“We discussed about democracy and political stability, trade and investment, education, especially the out-of-school issue, as well as security matters with her,” he said.

Obi while lamenting on the state of the country, he said what was happening now was a challenge to statesmanship and called on everybody that has the capacity to help to come forward and do so.

Peter Obi disclosed his arrival at Downing Street on Monday morning on his official Twitter page.



Obi poses with Jonathan Peter Maryland before going in for a meeting with British Prime Minister, Boris Johnson in London.

## Groups protest against Shell

By **JOHNMARK UKOKO**

A coalition of civil society organisations has protested against the activities of multinational oil company, Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC) in the Niger Delta area.

The coalition, led by the Africa Network for Environmental and Economic Justice (ANE EJ), headed by Reverend David Ugolor, staged the protest at the Lagos Corporate Headquarters of Shell carrying placards with different inscriptions such as We Demand A Just Energy Transaction and We Say No To Carbon Emissions, among others.

The group lamented the level of pollution, poverty and agony the activities of Shell's and other oil giants had

subjected Nigerians to, especially in the host communities and demanded an immediate end to what they described as the perennial inhuman activities of the International Oil Companies (IOCs) in the Niger Delta.

“We call on the Church of England and other financiers of Shell to withdraw their financial and moral support, having known that Shell had not respected the global warming agreement, neither had the company aligned its strategy with the Paris Climate Agreement and Glasgow 2021 commitment for net-zero.

“We are calling 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 emissions, environmental degradation, destruction of livelihoods and other human rights violations.

“Last year, ANEEJ brought together 40 West African Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in a letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Most Reverend Justin Welby, asking the Church of England Pension Board, and by extension, other investors to desist from lending its moral and financial authority to Shell and voting for Shell's climate and energy plan, but the letter was ignored.

“Few days after Shell's last Annual General Meeting (AGM),

the company faced two major challenges to its energy transitions strategy from official institutions. First, the International Energy Agency (IEA) concluded that no new oil and gas fields should be approved for development after 2021, if the world is to reach its agreed net-zero emissions target of 2050,” the coalition stated.

Shortly afterwards, a Dutch Court ruled that Shell must cut its carbon emissions by 45 per cent by 2030 with immediate effect. The judgment found that the Church of England applauded Shell for the same policies.

“Shell is causing a danger to peoples' right to life. Shell bosses are not accountable,” the group said.

## Youths protest over killing of youth leader

By **ISAAC JOB**, Uyo

Angry youths of Ikot Andem Village in Ukanafun Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State have protested against the killing of one Ufot Joe. The youth president of the community was killed by suspected cultists along the village road on Monday. The Trumpet gathered.

A witness, Akaniyene Inyang, said the incident occurred on the lonely village road linking Ekparakwa axis of the community about 7.00 pm after the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) Senatorial District primaries. It was gathered that the victim was waylaid and shot dead by the hoodlums while riding his new motorcycle back home.

“The late Joe was riding on his motorcycle from his village, Ikot Andem, and was ambushed by suspected cultists. who opened fire on him and fled with his motorcycle, leaving him dead in the pool of his blood.”

Continuing, he said it was too late for him to be rescued as neighbours arrived

following alarm raised by passersby, who discovered that the victim has lost much blood from the gunshot wounds. He disclosed that the motorcycle snatched from the deceased was an empowerment gift to him by a politician representing the area in the House of Representatives, Mr. Unyime Idem.

One of the youths' leaders, who spoke on condition of anonymity, explained that “the matter had been reported to the Police for immediate investigation with a view to apprehending the suspects.”

Meanwhile, the Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO) in AKwa Ibom SP Odiko Mcdon when contacted on phone said the command has not received the report but promised to investigate when there is official report on the incident.

“I am in a meeting,” he said, promising to revert, when fully briefed on the incident from the Divisional Police Officer (DPO) in-charge of the area.